

## BUSINESS INTERESTS

Abner Coburn's first job was laboring on the family farm. In his late teens, he taught school in the winter. He also began assisting his father, Eleazer Coburn, a noted surveyor, who was involved in surveying large tracts of land in Maine. By age 22, Abner Coburn had become an expert surveyor himself. In 1830, Abner Coburn, his brother, Philander and his father, Eleazer formed a lumbering business, E. Coburn & Sons. When Eleazer Coburn died in 1845, Abner and his brother, Philander, continued the business under the name of A. and P. Coburn. They were very successful. Abner Coburn came to own over 450,000 acres of land in Maine and more than 60,000 acres in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Washington and Dakota Territory.

Besides his land holdings, he had investments in manufacturing, banks, railroads, stock markets and more. At one time he was considered to be the richest person in Maine, having accumulated assets that would be worth the equivalent of over \$100 million dollars today.

In 1825, Samuel Weston and Abner Coburn formed the Somerset Bank. He later served as a Director and as President of Skowhegan Bank and its successor, the First National Bank of Skowhegan. In 1869, he was one of the incorporators of Skowhegan Savings Bank and also served as a Director and as President.



from postcard

In 1833, he was one of the incorporators of the Somerset Central Agricultural Society.

Abner Coburn and his brother, Philander, founded the Coburn Steamboat Co.

In 1842, he became President of the Kennebec Log Driving Co. He was also an original incorporator of the Dead River Log Driving Co. and the Moose River Log Driving Company.



In 1847, he was one of the incorporators of the Moosehead Lake Railway, a 3-mile long ox-powered logging rail line to Moosehead Lake.

from [The Ox Railroad at Moosehead Lake, Northeast Carry, Maine](#)

**In 1854, he helped finance the necessary funds for the Somerset and Kennebec Railroad Co. so that it could complete the rail line to Skowhegan. He later served as President and served on the Board of Directors of both the Portland & Kennebec Railroad and the Maine Central Railroad. He was also involved with the Northern Pacific Railroad.**

**In 1849, he and his brother, Philander, and others formed the corporation, Moosehead Lake Steam Navigation Company.**

**From 1855 to 1866, he and his brother, Philander, operated an oil cloth manufacturing business in Skowhegan.**



*Courtesy of Skowhegan History House*

**In 1866, he and his brother, Philander, and others, formed the corporation, Skowhegan Excelsior Works, a manufacturer of carpets and mats.**

**In 1867, Abner Coburn, his brother, Philander, and others formed the Temiscouata Pine-Land Company.**

**Abner Coburn and his brother, Philander, owned a cotton plantation in Alabama.**

**Abner Coburn was President of the Coburn Aqueduct Company which provided water for some of Skowhegan's residents.**

**In 1870, he became one of the incorporators of the Canada Falls Dam Co., a corporation formed to erect a dam on the Penobscot River.**

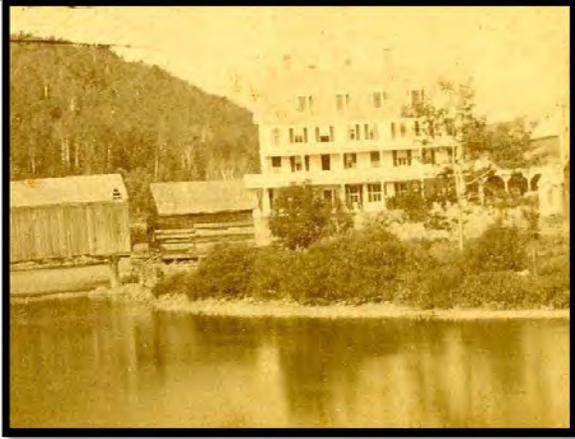


*Courtesy of Skowhegan History House*

**In the 1870s, he purchased land on Mill St. in Skowhegan and formed a company that built the Coburn Woolen Co., which later became the American Woolen Co. He also served as the Company's President.**

**He was the leading promoter of the Skowhegan Hall Association, which built Coburn Hall, on Water Street in Skowhegan. Several merchants rented space in Coburn Hall.**

**Abner Coburn also donated 15 acres of land for the site and helped form the Skowhegan Shoe Manufacturing Co., and also served as its President.**



*Courtesy of Old Canada Road Historical Society*



*from postcard*

**Abner Coburn and Joseph Clark Jr. built a 100- room hotel in The Forks, The Forks Hotel, which burned down in the early 1900s.**