

THE SEA CLIFF DRIVE

THIS TABLET IS ERECTED  
TO THE MEMORY OF

GEORGE BORWICK COOKSEY  
1851 — 1922

WHO BUILT THIS ROAD IN 1895  
AND WHOSE WISE PLANS FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF SEAL HARBOR  
HAVE BROUGHT PLEASURE  
AND HEALTH TO MANY

*The Cooksey Memorial on Cooksey Drive, Seal Harbor*

# THE MEMORIALS OF ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

DON LENAHAN

*Editor's Note: The author is writing a guide to memorials across Mount Desert Island. For this article he has selected several memorials that help tell the story of the Park and of people who have been honored for their professional or family connections to Mount Desert Island.*

Memorials related to the history of the Park can be found throughout Acadia National Park and in a few of the villages of Mount Desert Island. Some memorials are in the form of plaques, some have been carved in blocks of granite, and others mark named paths that recognize a person's connection to a particular site. Some memorials have honored individuals who gave land to the Park. Several have been created by spouses and friends. One honors a man who lost his life in the Park.

Seeking out these memorials will take you on a journey to little-known corners of the island – and to places you might have passed many times without a second thought as to the story behind the plaque or stone or sign.

## THE COOKSEY MEMORIAL (*left*)

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Born in England, George Borwick Cooksey (1851-1922) emigrated to the United States in 1873 and became a New York grain broker in partnership with George Ledyard Stebbins. He later married Stebbins' cousin, Linda Dows (c.1854-1903). In 1891 the couple arrived on Mount Desert Island and established their summer home, "Glengariff," on 513 acres in Seal Harbor.

After Cooksey built Sea Cliff Drive (later renamed Cooksey Drive) in 1895, he and Stebbins became the most significant developers of the village of Seal Harbor.

Cooksey was a founding member of the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations (HCTPR) in 1901. He helped the organization buy Penobscot, Sargent, Pemetic and South Bubble Mountains and the western slope of Cadillac Mountain.

Because of her declining health, Cooksey and his wife later moved to California. In 1900 they built a 30-room, 14,000-square-foot house on the Stanford University campus to accommodate their seven-member family and seven live-in staff. After Linda's death in New York City at the home of her mother, he continued to live in California with his children, Donald and Margaret.

In 1916, in Pasadena, he married Caroline Gardiner Tobey Bridge, a widow from Brookline, Massachusetts. In 1922, Cooksey died of arteriosclerosis in Boston. He and Linda are interred in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Westchester County, New York in a setting designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr.



### KURT DIEDERICH'S CLIMB



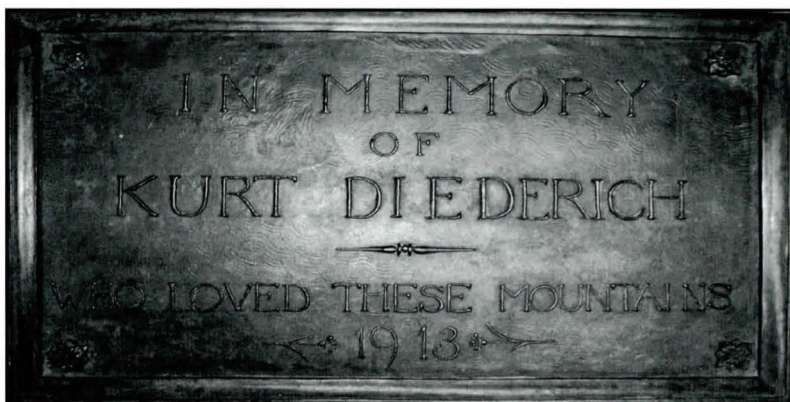
Kurt Siegesmund Diederich (c.1885-1913) was born in Hungary, emigrated to the United States, and later settled in Cecil County, Maryland. He attended the University of Maryland, Baltimore, where he earned his law degree. He was the son of Kurt Diederich of Germany and Elinor Hunt, daughter of William Morris Hunt of Boston, and a nephew of Enid Hunt Slater of Washington, D.C.

Kurt and his wife, Sybil Hale (c.1890-1911), were married in Providence, Rhode Island in 1904, when she was 15 years old. Sybil was the daughter of Arthur Hale, superintendent of transportation of the B & O Railroad, and the great-granddaughter of Edward Everett Hale, the noted American author and clergyman. They had two children, a daughter, Elsa, born in 1908 in Maryland, and a son, Arthur Hale, who died in early childhood. After Sybil died of typhoid fever in London in 1911, Kurt's Aunt Enid took care of Kurt and Elsa in Washington, D.C. and at "Bowling Green," her Bar Harbor cottage.

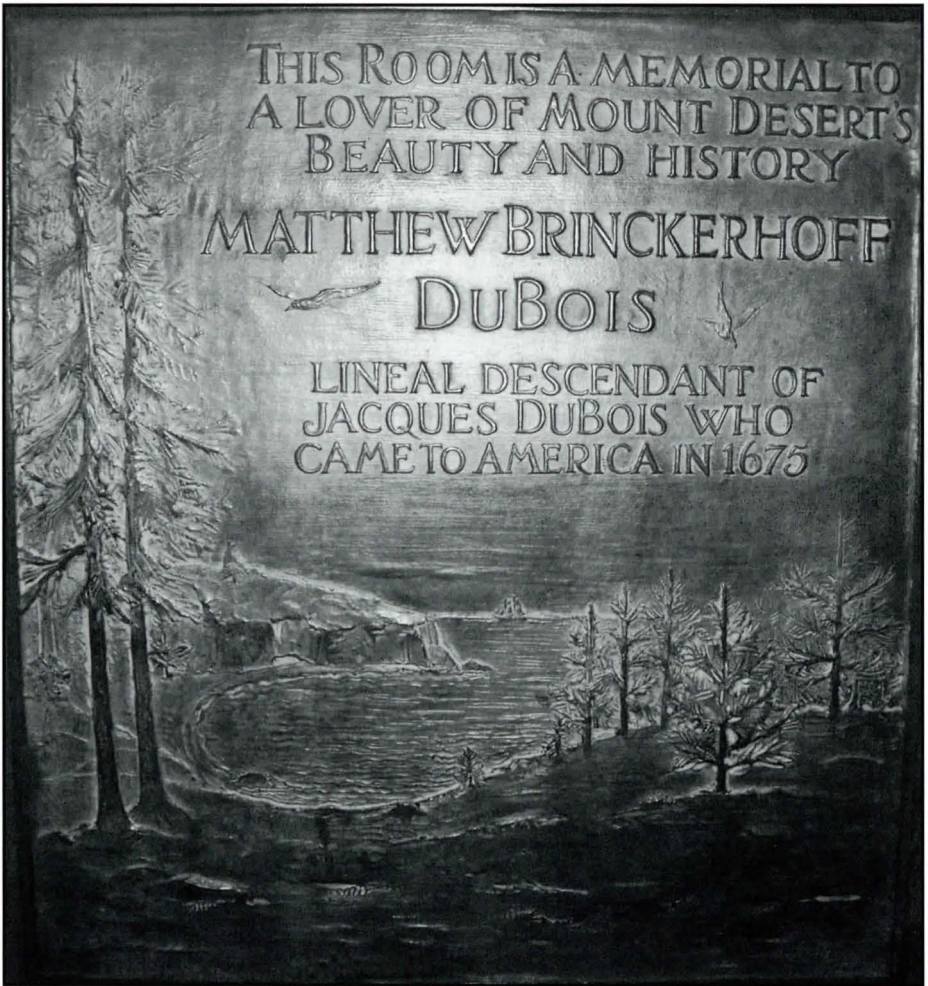
In 1913 Kurt died of heart failure after the administration of ether before a nose operation in a Washington, D.C., hospital.<sup>1</sup> Enid then provided the funds for a memorial path – "Kurt Diederich's Climb" – to be built in his honor. The carved granite step pictured here is the sixth step up the path, which is located near Sieur de Monts at the junction of the Jesup and Kane Paths at the north end of the Tarn.

Enid died in 1928 in Paris, France. Kurt, Sybil and Enid are buried in the Hunt-Slater lot in the Milton Cemetery, Milton, Massachusetts.

There is a second Diederich memorial, a bronze plaque, which the Park holds in the William Otis Sawtelle Collections and Research Center at Park headquarters. It has not been installed on Kurt Diederich's Climb because its intended location is not known. The plaque reads:



THE DUBOIS MEMORIAL



THIS ROOM IS A MEMORIAL TO  
A LOVER OF MOUNT DESERT'S  
BEAUTY AND HISTORY  
MATTHEW BRINCKERHOFF  
DUBOIS  
LINEAL DESCENDANT OF  
JACQUES DUBOIS WHO  
CAME TO AMERICA IN 1675

Matthew Brinckerhoff DuBois (c.1842-c.1920), born in New York City, was the son of Dr. Abram DuBois and Katherine Marie Brincker-

hoff. He graduated from Columbia College (1864), became an assistant resident physician at New York's St. Luke's Hospital (1868-1869), and was later a physician at New York Eye and Ear Infirmary (1891-1906).

Matthew contributed money to the Northeast Harbor Village Improvement Society (NEHVIS) each year between 1903 and 1918. His wife, nee Helen M. Rae, born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1845, contributed money to the NEHVIS until at least 1931. She died in 1943 at her Park Avenue apartment in New York. Matthew's sister Katherine was also a contributor to the NEHVIS.

Matthew is known to have stayed at "Sunnie Holme," the cottage owned by John and Emma Falt of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, as early as 1907. His daughter Ethel (c.1881-1958) bought "Sunnie Holme" in 1923.<sup>2</sup> The current owners of "Sunnie Holme" purchased it from the Ethel DuBois estate in 1959.

Ethel became the chairman of the NEHVIS Standing Committee for Roads, Paths and Trees in 1913 and was a member of that committee each year thereafter to 1931. At her death in 1958 in the same Park Avenue apartment where her mother had died, Ethel bequeathed \$5,000 to the NEHVIS to be used "in its work of improving, marking and extending paths, trails, and bridle paths at Northeast Harbor, and in its work of preparing and distributing correct path maps and guide books, and generally in the work of the Committee on paths and trails of said Society."<sup>3</sup> She also left \$5,000 to the Red Cross Chapter, \$3,000 to the Neighborhood House, \$3,000 to the Library, and \$10,000 to St. Mary's by The Sea Church, all Northeast Harbor institutions.

Ethel and her mother, Helen, were supporters of William Otis Sawtelle and his construction of the Islesford Historical Museum on Little Cranberry Island in 1926-27. Ethel donated \$2,500 to the project and may have set up an endowment. She, her mother, and other relatives visited the Museum often. They provided this plaque, which was installed in the Museum's French and Colonial Room about 1926. The plaque was subsequently removed from the Museum, probably when the building came under Park management and renovation in 1948. Today, the plaque sits on a shelf in the Park's William Otis Sawtelle Collections and Research Center at Park headquarters.



## THE EMERY PATH



John Josiah Emery (1837-1908) was born in Ohio of parents who had emigrated from England in the 1830s. He and his brother, Thomas, became wealthy from inheritance, real estate development and investments.

He married Minnesota-born Lela Alexander (1867-1953) in 1892, and in 1895 he built “The Turrets,” their cottage in Bar Harbor, on four waterfront acres off Eden Street. The granite mansion is now owned by the College of the Atlantic.

In 1896 Emery retired from his Cincinnati businesses and bought a residence in New York City, where he, his wife and five children had fourteen servants and a governess. He died of pneumonia at “The Turrets.” Funeral services were held in Cincinnati, where he was buried with his parents and brother in Spring Grove Cemetery.

His will stipulated that Lela could live in “The Turrets” until she remarried.<sup>4</sup> In 1912 she married Alfred Anson in New York City.

To honor her first husband, Lela funded the creation of a memorial path. The Emery Path, now known as the Dorr Mountain East Face Trail, starts behind the Sieur de Monts Spring.<sup>5</sup>



IN MEMORY OF  
1877 ALESSANDRO FABBRIO 1922  
LIEUTENANT U.S.N.R.P.

A RESIDENT AND LOVER OF MOUNT DESERT ISLAND  
WHO COMMANDED THE

UNITED STATES NAVAL RADIO STATION

UPON THIS SITE FROM ITS ESTABLISHMENT  
ON AUGUST 28, 1917 UNTIL DECEMBER 12, 1919.

AT THE END OF THE WORLD WAR HE WAS AWARDED THE NAVY CROSS  
HIS DIPLOMA STATED THAT UNDER HIS DIRECTION THE STATION BECAME  
THE MOST IMPORTANT AND THE MOST EFFICIENT STATION IN THE WORLD.

THIS TABLET IS DEDICATED BY HIS FRIENDS AND  
FELLOW TOWNSMEN IN THE HONOR OF  
HIS PATRIOTIC SPIRIT, HIGH CHARACTER  
AND ENDURING QUALITIES.  
1939

*The Fabbrri Memorial*



## THE FABBRI MEMORIAL

IN MEMORY OF  
1877 ALESSANDRO FABBRI 1922  
LIEUTENANT U.S.N.R.F.

A RESIDENT AND LOVER OF MOUNT DESERT ISLAND  
WHO COMMANDED THE  
UNITED STATES NAVAL RADIO STATION  
UPON THIS SITE FROM ITS ESTABLISHMENT  
ON AUGUST 28, 1917 UNTIL DECEMBER 12, 1919.  
AT THE END OF THE WORLD WAR HE WAS AWARDED THE  
NAVAL CROSS.  
HIS CITATION STATED THAT UNDER HIS DIRECTION  
THE STATION BECAME  
"THE MOST IMPORTANT AND THE MOST EFFICIENT  
STATION IN THE WORLD."

THIS TABLET IS ERECTED BY HIS FRIENDS AND  
FELLOW TOWNSMEN IN TESTIMONY TO  
HIS PATRIOTIC SERVICE, HIGH CHARACTER  
AND ENDEARING QUALITIES.

1939

Alessandro Fabbri (1877-1922), born in New York City, was a summer resident of Bar Harbor, where he stayed at his brother's cottage, "Buonriposo," off Eden Street. He was a hunter, yachtsman, explorer and inventor.

Fabbri is most remembered here for the Otter Cliffs Radio Station he established in 1917, and of which he was the first commander. This wireless radio station, which he volunteered to the United States Government during World War I, was the one field site in the government's communications system that could reliably contact forces in Europe and intercept enemy communications. On Armistice Day, November 11, 1920, the President of the United States presented Fabbri with the Naval Cross. The citation read: "For exceptionally meritorious service in a duty of great responsibility in the development of the radio receiving station, at Otter Cliffs, Maine, and the small sending station at Sea Wall. Under Lieutenant Fabbri's direction, the station was developed from a small amateur

experimental station, until at the end of the War, it was the most important and the most efficient station in the world.”<sup>6</sup> The radio station was moved across Frenchman Bay to the Schoodic Peninsula in 1935. The U.S. Navy operated it until 2003, when it decommissioned the base and turned it over to Acadia National Park.

Fabbri, a member of the Southside Sportsmen’s Club at Oakdale, Long Island, New York, died of pneumonia at his home in New York City following a duck hunting trip off Long Island. He was buried in Trinity Cemetery in Manhattan.

The memorial plaque was installed in 1939 on a site designed by landscape architect Robert W. Patterson and located just west of the Fabbri picnic area near Otter Point.

There is a second memorial to Fabbri (shown below) in the George Edwin Kirk American Legion Post No. 25 on Cottage Street, Bar Harbor.



ALESSANDRO FABBRI  
LIEUTENANT U.S.N.  
FOUNDER AND COMMANDER OF  
OTTER CLIFFS RADIO STATION 1917-1919

I LONG THIS THING BE SAID  
WHEN I AM WITH THE DEAD  
HE HAS BEEN TRUE A.F.

IN MEMORY OF HIS LOYAL SERVICE THIS ROOM IS GIVEN  
BY FRIENDS

## THE JESUIT MEMORIAL



### FIRST RECORDED LANDING OF WHITE PERSONS ON MT. DESERT ISLAND, MAINE

1613

FRENCH EXPEDITION, UNDER SIEUR DE LA SAUSSAYE, INCLUDING THREE JESUIT PRIESTS, FATHERS PIERRE BIARD, ENNAMOND MASSA, JACQUES QUENTIN AND JESUIT BROTHER GILBERT DU THET, LANDED ON WEST SIDE OF SOMES SOUND AT WHAT IS NOW KNOWN AS FERNALD'S POINT. THEY NAMED THEIR SETTLEMENT SAINT SAUVEUR.

SEVERAL MONTHS LATER, A BRITISH FORCE

ATTACKED THE COLONY, KILLED BROTHER  
DU THET AND DISPERSED THE COLONY.

BROTHER DU THET'S BODY IS BURIED  
SOMEWHERE ON THE SHORE OF WHAT IS  
NOW KNOWN AS THE JESUIT MEADOW.

This memorial, describing the first permanent white settlement on Mount Desert Island, was commissioned in 1952 by John Joseph "Cap" O'Brien (1882-1971), a Philadelphia-born industrialist, lawyer and politician from Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan. The *bas relief* was done by the Detroit-based, German-born artist Walter Midener and cast at the Modern Art Foundry in Queens, New York. O'Brien had it mounted on a rock cliff in the gardens at his estate, "Sea Bench," in Seal Harbor. Later, after choosing a new home, O'Brien had the monument set on a four-ton piece of granite and installed outside Saint Ignatius Church in Northeast Harbor, where it is today.

O'Brien, a widower, had married Roscoe B. Jackson's widow, Louise Webber Jackson (1883-1960), in 1934. Architect Duncan Candler had built "Sea Bench" in 1928 for Mr. Jackson, a founder, general manager and president of the Hudson Motor Car Company. Jackson, who became a member of the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations in 1926, died in 1929 in an automobile accident in Europe.

O'Brien, who had been appointed director of the Wayne County (Detroit) Works Progress Administration in 1935, was instrumental in setting up Crobb Box Company in Northeast Harbor in 1942 to make boxes for Ford Motor Company's defense-related production effort. In the 1950s, O'Brien served on the board of trustees of the Roscoe B. Jackson Memorial Laboratory, named after its financial backer. At the time of his death, O'Brien was a member of the Kebo Valley Club of Bar Harbor and the Harbor Club of Seal Harbor, and president of the latter from 1953 to 1958.

His wife, Louise, died at their cottage in Seal Harbor, and he died eleven years later at his Grosse Pointe, Michigan home. Both are interred in Woodlawn Cemetery, Detroit, Michigan.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> "MR. KURT DEITRICH [*sic*] DEAD: Succumbs Suddenly to Anesthetic While Being Prepared for Operation," *The Washington Post*, Decem-

ber 11, 1913, page 2. Retrieved from ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Washington Post* (1877-1992) database.

<sup>2</sup> Hancock County Registry of Deeds, book 583/page 166.

<sup>3</sup> Hancock County Registry of Probate, docket #19831.

<sup>4</sup> Hancock County Registry of Probate, docket #7614.

<sup>5</sup> Acadia National Park Trails Foreman Gary Stellpflug states his crew is preparing signs to reinstate the historic trail names during the 2009 season. The Emery Path is one of them.

<sup>6</sup> *Bar Harbor Times*, March 29, 1922.



*Don Lenahan lives in Bar Harbor with his wife, Marycarol. As he continues research on memorials in preparation for publication, he would welcome comments emailed to [dplenah@roadrunner.com](mailto:dplenah@roadrunner.com).*