



THE

CHRONICLE

QUARTERLY

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THE EDITOR'S EDGE

A BARN — IS A BARN — IS A BARN —

A recent article* I read on how present buildings are built 'for a specific life-span in terms of a specific building function' went on to say that 'present commercial construction today is viewed quite simply as a return-on-investment issue, and is intended to last as long as its mortgage financing.' Indeed, present commercial buildings, including offices, are designed so they can be reconfigured to accommodate a different tenant if needed, or a different use. And this practice continues even in the face of the new longer-lasting building materials being used.

This is even true of farm buildings. The present pole barns (barns constructed using poles like telephone poles for roof supports) are a far cry from the barns constructed by Weston's early farmers. They tried to construct their barns to last for many generations. Many have lasted even longer. However, in Weston, farming did not survive, even if many of the barns did. Those that were in the best condition, became 'reconfigured into homes' or, in the case of the Coley farm, into a farm or barn museum.

Agriculture, like all industry, is changing rapidly, and the barns used today, will not be suitable for tomorrow's farmers needs. But the few old barns which are left will have to stand tall to remind future generations what farming was like when this country was young. This is part of the commitment of the Weston Historical Society to the people of Weston.

*(Life Cycle Costing — by Martin Harris,
New England Farmer — September 1991)

Herb Day - Editor

CURRENT EVENTS

ANNUAL SENIORS PICNIC

This event was held on July 17, with over 80 seniors in attendance. We thank all who helped our chairperson, Mrs. Barbara Jonssen put this event together; and we thank all the seniors who were able to attend.

HURRICANE BOB

The Coley Homestead suffered considerable damage to some of our trees, especially the big American Elm tree just behind the house. No buildings were damaged. Some of this damage occurred two weeks before when we had a mini-tornado go thru.

NOVEMBER MEETING

Our Annual November meeting will be a fun nite with a Magic Lantern show, given by Mr. Terry Borton and his wife Debbie. They have put on their show all over Connecticut. We will have more information of this meeting and show in several weeks. Watch for the announcement in the paper. Mr. Borton is editor-in-chief of Field Publications in Middletown and his wife is the principal of the Valley View school in Portland.

CIDER PRESS SHED

Progress is slow and we hope to have the contractor chosen and the foundation dug and built by this fall. This will enable us to move the cider press on to the foundation where we will secure it for the winter. Sorry, no cider this fall, from this press.

SPRING AUCTION

The Trustees have agreed to support an auction of farm equipment and antiques next May. We will be soliciting antiques from Society members and others to be sold at the auction. These can be items given to the Society on consignment or items which are given to the Society outright. There will be more on this before the new year.

GREAT CAKE CONTEST

Several years ago we came upon the announcement about the Jarvis Academy reunion, which is reprinted herein. Last year we noticed that there was a recipe on the back, written in pencil. We were curious but figured that no further information would be forthcoming.

Then, last July, Mrs. Phyllis Palmieri gave us a small silver cup which her grandmother had won in a cake baking contest at the very same Jarvis Academy reunion cake baking contest. She had won first prize. The cup is silver and is about 4 inches high.

Phyllis writes 'This cup was won by my grandmother, Myrtle Chase Scofield (Mrs. Charles J. Scofield) for her cake in the contest held on Jarvis Day — 1914. She was the daughter of Dennis and Mary Ellen Chase and was born in Weston on October 21, 1873.

(continued on next page)

PICTURE QUIZ



CAN YOU NAME THIS?

If you can tell us what the item above is, send your answer and your name to:

THE EDITOR
THE CHRONICLE QUARTERLY
P.O. BOX 1092
WESTON, CT 06883

The item in the last picture quiz is officially a MEAT JUICE PRESS, PATENTED BY H.F. OSBORNE CO., NEWARK, N.J.

There is no date given for the patent. We can figure out how it works; but do not know why they would want to press the juice out of meat. We sort of remember reading something about this several years ago, but have forgotten the details. We have contacted a farm museum in VT., but have not received a good answer. We will continue to research this item.

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Dennis O. Chase was a deacon in the Norfield Congregational Church and a Civil War Veteran. He worked for the Jarvis School, and would drill the school boys in military and they would parade around the church grounds.

The program for Jarvis Day had Mrs. Charles Scofield giving the welcoming address and Miss Grace Scofield (my mother) giving a recitation.'

We cannot say with certainty that the recipe printed above was the winning one, but we would almost be willing to bet the country store that it was.

Thank you, Phyllis, for this cup and the story behind it.



FIFTY YEARS (OR SO) AGO

As the Senior Citizens of Weston gather for lunch every Wednesday at the Norfield Church Parish Hall, some will undoubtedly mention something that happened during the the good old days. The following poem describes those days quite well but fails to mention the benefits and the fun times. This poem was quoted in the Methow Valley News, Washington, Thursday, May 12, 1983 by Catherine Shaw.

The Good Old Days

When I hear some people praise what
they call the 'Good Old Days'
And they tell me what they miss, I
remember things like this;
Coal oil lamps, a wheat straw broom;
an outdoor, wooden powder room
Cast iron stoves, and wood for fuel;
walk a mile or more to school.

Pitch the hay and scrub the floors; fill
the lantern, do the chores
Carry water from the spring, swarms
of flies on everything.
Milk the cows and slop the hogs; chink
the cracks between the logs.
Mend the harness, shoe the mare;
Clean the barn, no time to spare.

Horsecars, gaslights, button shoes;
muddy streets and avenues
Wiskers, corsets, Derby hats; rubber
collars and cravats.
Up before the sun's first rays
Yes sir! Those were 'the good old
days'.

WESTON'S HISTORICAL NOTEBOOK

ANECDOTES OF WESTON

'Ruth Lockwood remembers the Weston of her youth.' We are pleased that Ruth gave us permission to reprint her reflections on a part of Weston as she was growing up. She gave this information, several years ago, to Jean Matson, who was collecting information for a book on Weston. This book was eventually written by Tom Farnam.

When I was growing up there were several dairy farms in Weston, Will Lockwood on Cannondale Road whose pasture ran down to Georgetown Road and Linsley Corsa whose property lay just across from Cannondale Road. Will Lockwood had a windmill on the hill behind his house. They each had flocks of chickens and sold the eggs. Mr. Corsa used to take his milk cans over to Cannondale Station to be sent down to Stew Leonard's father's dairy in Norwalk. Many people turned their eggs in toward their grocery bill. Most chickens roamed free or were confined to fenced yards. They were clever about hiding their nests. Often the eggs were either rotted or the chicks had hatched before they were found. When caught, the mother hens were confined in small coops with lath across the front but the chicks could forage outside. They were put with them at night and closed in. A daub of lard was put on the back of the chick's head to kill lice. George Waterbury had a large farm with dairy cattle off Newtown Turnpike and Lords Highway. He also had a market garden. My mother used to tell about his taking wagon loads of watermelons to sell in Westport. Myra Waterbury's brother Harold Burritt, according to Anna Corsa, had a farm on the north end of Kettle Creek but I remember him and his family farming on Godfrey Road West where the Leon Lachats later had their Lakeside Dairy. The Burritts moved to Redding. Their home on Lonetown Road is now owned by the Redding Historical Society, next to the school. The oldest son, Emerson, was for many years Town Clerk of Redding.

Mrs. Corsa told me that Horace Hurlbutt lived in that big house across from Norfield Congregational Church. He had a large acreage and raised prized winning cattle which he showed around at agricultural fairs. She said he also built the house and on the east side of the church for his son, Horace C. Hurlbutt Jr., who was killed in World War I. This is now the home of the senior minister. He gave the land for the elementary school complex on condition it be named for his son. Mrs. Hurlbutt Sr. was Mrs. Harold Burritt's aunt.

My grandparents were Charles and Mary Eliza Andrews Lockwood. She was the niece of Mrs. David Dimon Coley. They cut their own wood, had a well known string of "red" cattle, so I'm told, horses, oxen, turkeys, geese, chickens and hogs. Neighbors used to bring their sows to be bred and the boar picked up cholera. He and the sow and the whole litter of little pigs died. Mother said that was the only time she ever Grandfather Lockwood cry. He and two of his sons had sawmills so they sold railroad ties to the New York, New Haven and Hartford. They got out fence posts, wooden surveyor stakes, lath and rough and finished lumber to order as well as firewood. At one time, some of the family had sheep as we have a blanket that is homemade of wool. They must have raised flax as we have linen sheets and a pair of linen stockings. When Mother was first married, it was her job to round up all the baby turkeys anytime rain threatened as they would die if they got wet. In the spring she plucked the feathers from the geese breasts to make feather mattresses and pillows. We had rope beds and I sure hated those feather mattresses every winter. In the summer a cotton mattress was put on top.

At one time they cut out stone fence posts as we can see the drill marks in the ledge near the barn. Uncle Irv invented a hay press from which we have the patent papers. The bales were quite large, I believe. In the winter they sold hay in Norwalk. The men drank whiskey to keep from freezing to death on top of those loads in bitter weather. Sometimes I guess it was fortunate the horses knew the way home! On one trip, the horse my father was driving had the blind staggers and ran out of control until it dropped dead.

Georgetown Road was originally called Hillside Road and went past Eva LeGallene's property. Its route was altered to run below and around the cliff across from White Oak Lane. In the middle of the night during a bad storm, my father would answer a distress call. He would light his lantern and hitch it up his team and go down the road to drag a wagon or car up from the drop which goes off from the edge of the road. Calls were frequent during spring thaws when the whole of the present Georgetown Road trapped many an unlucky vehicle in its mire. I remember him driving his Model T Ford up the hill past Midtown Gas Station over ledge rocks at the top.

David Coley had a dairy farm on River Road. His barn was used for square dances. He drove the bus when the Hurlbutt School was built and Lin Corsa drove the high school bus to Bedford Junior High and Staples in Westport. He was a great coon hunter. He belonged to a club in Norwalk that several times held coon dog trails on the ridge where September Lane and November Trail are now.

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