

THE

# CHRONICLE

QUARTERLY

Volume 10

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Published By The  
Weston Historical Society

## THE EDITOR'S EDGE



### MRS. EDNA LUTZ

We take honor in dedicating this issue to Mrs. Edna Lutz. Edna was one of the earliest members of the Society.

She was on the board of Trustees for many years and served as Recording Secretary much of the time. After her husband Bill passed away, Edna moved to Boulder, Colorado to be near her daughter. But she does manage to get back to Weston now and then for a visit. We miss you Edna, and wish you the best of health.

Herb Day - Editor

## CURRENT EVENTS

### CHRISTMAS AT THE COLEY HOUSE

This great event takes place on December 7 & 8. Which, as we write this, will take place this coming weekend. We hope you were able to attend and see the beautiful decorations. The theme this year is Christmas Past. One of the big attractions was the old wooden toys from the Old Weston Toy company. These toys were assembled by 'Pete' Goff from parts made by Bert Merwin in the Toy Factory before 1930. Each is a Collectors item and are available for purchase as long as they last. The price is \$30.00 each, plus tax. The decorations this year were done by the Weston Women's Club and the Weston Women's Garden Club.

### ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in March, 1992 at the Norfield Church Parish Hall. Additional information on this meeting will be sent out next year.

### CIDER PRESS SHED

At long last, we can announce that the foundation for the shed is being built and should be finished this month. 'A picture is worth a thousand words', so we have included one for proof. This will enable us to move the press onto the foundation by January. The press has to be on the foundation before we can put up the building. See below.



### PUT A ROOF OVER THE CIDER PRESS!!

The Apple Press is getting a foundation. In 1992 let's put a roof over it! The Society is planning an auction Saturday, October 3, 1992, at the Coley House to raise the rest of the money needed for the cider shed. Volunteers are needed for publicity, ticket sales, donations, a food concession, and the Preview Party to be held the evening of October 2. Every member will be asked to either donate or consign a quality antique or newer item. Pickup will be arranged. Call Judy Darby, 222-1727, for more information.

### CHRONICLE EDITOR NEEDED

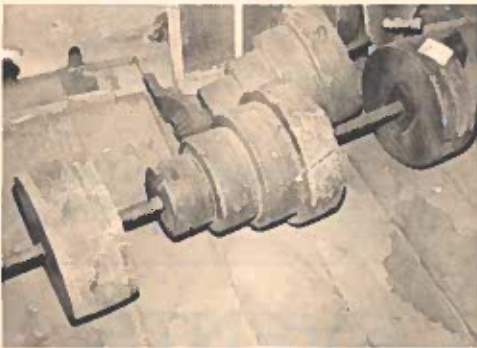
Last December I announced that I would be retiring as editor of the Chronicle, effective with this issue. No one has stepped forward to take the job, but we hope someone will before the next issue has to be written. If you or someone you know might be interested, please give us a call at 227-6130.

### ACQUISITIONS

We received several photos of the toll house on Newtown Tpke, including one from 1892, showing Henry Hamilton, the cobbler and toll collector and his family. In addition, we received an excellent painting of the cobbler shop by Bob Conway, who was Grace Robinson's husband. Grace lived in this house from about 1922 until she died in December 1985. These came to us from her niece, who lives in California.



# PICTURE QUIZ



## CAN YOU NAME THIS?

If you can, please send your name and address to:  
 THE EDITOR  
 THE CHRONICLE QUARTERLY  
 P.O. BOX 1092  
 WESTON, CT 06883

The item in the last issue is a horse-drawn, hand-held scraper to dig a foundation or to help smooth out a dirt road. This scraper was given to the Society by Ray Fitch, who told us that his father had made it and used it to dig a foundation.

Regarding the meat juice press in the June issue of the Chronicle, one of our Trustees told us that her mother used to give her meat juice for some nourishment because she could not drink cows milk. This explains why the press we have is so small; it only needed to supply a small amount of juice at any one time.



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# WESTON'S POPULATION PROFILE

We will never know who the first Indian was who lived in Weston; nor will we know who the first non-Indian was who moved to this area from Fairfield town. There was no Cpt. Bradford to write a diary from the beginning to record the events as they happened. So, we have to rely on other sources to tell us some of the people who lived here, such as Church records, military records, and the US census, which started in 1790. The early census records gave the numbers of people in the family, their sex, and relative ages. But the reasons for fluctuations in population in a given town were not part of the data collected. Some of the reasons for Weston's population variations are given below.

YEAR	1650	1750	1776	1790	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860		
POP.	24+ - a	300+	1000	2469	2680	2618	2767	2997	2561	1056b	1117		
	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
	1054	918c	772	840	831	703	670	1053d	1988	4039e	7417	8288	8760

- a. Indians
- b. Easton is split off and incorporated as a separate town—1845.
- c. Industry and farming declining—many young people move out.
- d. War industries bring in workers. Also influx of writers, actors.
- e. New residents who are commuters to new corporate offices in area.

**INDIANS**—In the early-to-mid 1600's there were probably only a few dozen Indians living in what is now Weston. And, as Dr. Farnham states in his book, these few probably spent much of their spring and summer periods along the coast fishing. When the leaders of Fairfield divided up the lands to the North into the long lots, people began to explore these lands that they now owned. Some of the decedents who were given acreage in Weston by their fathers decided to settle here. As Farnham states; the first settlers probably came about 1725, and by 1756 there were about 350 persons; in 1771, about 875; and in 1776, almost 1000.

As long as Weston remained a farming community, its population stayed pretty much even. It was too far from the centers of trade to attract many new settlers. This was true until the Civil War, when the industrial revolution began to overtake agriculture as a major employer in the Northeast. Agriculture in other states to the west was more efficeint in growing crops and getting them to market. Manufacturing moved to where the population was growing and where the energy supply was more uniform and transportation easier. The people of Weston could not be competitive and their industry began to decline, as well as the farming and the population. Sons and daughters moved away to where the opportunities were more favorable.

The big drop in population between 1840 and 1850 was due to the eastern portion of Weston splitting off and become the town of Easton in 1845. It is interesting to note that the land areas of Weston and Easton are about the same and the resulting populations were about the same, with Easton having the edge with some 300-350 more people.

World War II brought some real growth in population to Weston as new employees in the war-related industries along the Connecticut coast needed homes. After the war, the improvement in highways helped to bring more people to the Weston area.

***We Wish You***  
***The Best Of The Holiday Season***  
***And A Great New Year!***



# WESTON'S HISTORICAL NOTEBOOK

Last issue we ran an article by Ruth Lockwood telling about Weston during her youth. The two articles which follow are by two other long time residents who talked to Mrs. Matson several years ago. Both are interesting and we thought you would be interested in reading them.

The first is some recollections by Mrs. Ruth Fox and the second some comments by Gus Kramer about how things were along the north end of Georgetown Road.

## 1972, FROM MRS. RUTH FOX

The earliest church that I have any recollection of hearing about was Trinity Episcopal Church located on Wells Hill Road about halfway between the bridge and the old residence known as Mary Frank Rowells. There is nothing there now that I recognize except the old stone walls around the grounds and where a former fireplace was probably located at the NE corner, a NE boundary of the church. The church was burned down but I do not know the exact time except that it was probably before 1845. After the burning of the church, the Vestrymen who were from both the North Fairfield Parish and the Norfield Parish decided to build a new church, but the Norfield people became very tired of the very dilatory actions of the North Fairfield people. The Norfield people got together and built a new church on Lyons Plains Road and it was started before the North Fairfield people knew about it. There was a fund for the new church to be built by the two parishes and it was then divided between the two groups. The actions taken by these people divided the town authority, so the people from the North Fairfield Parish broke away and a new town called Easton was born.

(There were other circumstances which occurred which caused the breakup of Weston also).

The cemetery called Gilbertstown is located on the Black Rock Turnpike and it is divided into the old part and the new part. Many of the people from Weston and Easton were buried there long ago.

Samuel Staples left a fund for the education of students of the area and my father went to the Weston Academy (located on the property of Weston Road and Norfield Road and which subsequently burned down).

My grandfather said Lyons Plains Road was a "turnpike" at one time and a toll road with a tollhouse which was originally owned by one of the Banks family. There was a ford which one crossed when going to Georgetown. It was at 11 o'clock Road on Kellogg Hill at what was known as Captain Lyon's property.

## 1973, FROM GUS KRAMER

Kramer Lane is named for the Kramer Family. Two houses on Weston Road were owned by Gus Kramer's father. They were one across from Old Farm Road and the other just to the right at the head of Kramer Lane on the West side of Weston Road. They also bought the house on the SE corner of Kramer Lane, on Weston Road. It was used as a barn originally and cows were driven to shelter in the downstairs and the chickens lived in the upstairs.

Mr. Kramer said that the cows had a great life. In summer they lay in the muddy swamp between Kramer Lane and Old Farm Road. They bedded down to keep cool and to keep the mosquitoes off and in the Spring they wandered about the the shadow of the apple archard. Mr. Kramer planted the trees during the early 1900s and some of them are still bearing fruit.

Often, on Saturdays, many of the people in the area took the train to Norwalk to buy supplies such as sugar and flour.

The view from the top of Old Farm and even from many places along Weston Road was of a countryside barren of many trees. You could easily see the Sound.

But they had firewood. It took approximately four cords of wood to get through the winter, if, of course, you heated only one room.

## NEXT ISSUE

AROUND THE RENOVATED BARN MUSEUM  
DIAGRAM OF THE CIDER PRESS SHED  
WESTON'S HISTORICAL NOTEBOOK  
PICTURE QUIZ  
CURRENT EVENTS FOR 1992

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## FIFTY YEARS (OR SO) AGO

Town meeting, Nov. 14, 1787

Notice of the meeting to be put up on a birch tree near Henry Summers, on the post in the Society of North Fairfield and on the post of the Society in Norfield.

Voted that the Selectman allow old Mr. Booth, now supported by the town, one quart of rum per month.

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## THE TEN YEAR INDEX

The ten year index for the Chronicle is sent as a supplement to this issue of the Chronicle. This index is not in alphabetical order; rather it is listed under the various headings we use in each issue, such as The Weston Historical Notebook, Fifty years ago, etc. Mr. Henry Colby has put much work into a Chronicle 'people' index for the Society. It and the index in this issue are both very long, so we have decided not to include them both. We hope we can include Henry's index in an issue next year.

We hope that this index will be of some value to our readers. We do have back issues of the Chronicle which we can send to interested people for a price of \$1.00 each. Send your requests to the Editor.

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