



THE

CHRONICLE

QUARTERLY

Volume 12

No. 2

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Weston Historical Society

THE EDITOR'S EDGE

MY ERA

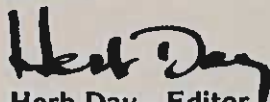
The CHRONICLE QUARTERLY was born of an idea I had almost 12 years ago to try to bring not only the Society's current events to the attention of our members, but to bring some parts of Weston's colorful past out of the files of the Society; from the memories of the native sons and daughters to the historical records of the town.

My search for historical information was greatly aided by the efforts of many who had gone before me as Trustees of this Society. To Bob and Lu Harper who set up the museum with many farm tools that have provided topics for discussion; to Scott Hill and others before him who conducted many oral interviews which were taped, and then transcribed by Ruth Lockwood into very interesting narratives; to several native sons and daughters—Ray Fitch, Anson Morton, Irv Patchen, Francis Bennett, Ruth Lockwood, Helen Budd Mason, Margaret Gifford, and others who provided information and articles on 'their Weston' for our use.

I thank all of you for your support and encouragement. When the going got rough, it helped make this editor keep going.

Now we will have a new editor for the Chronicle; Mrs. Kathy Failla. She has the expertise in writing to bring you a great newsletter. And she will be backed up by several people who have the knowledge of Weston from having been born and raised here.

Please join me in giving Kathy a big WELCOME!!!


Herb Day - Editor

CURRENT EVENTS

NEW EDITOR APPOINTED FOR THE CHRONICLE

Mrs. Kathleen Failla, of Samuelson Road, has agreed to take on the editorship of the CHRONICLE QUARTERLY, beginning with the next issue due out in September. Kathy is an accomplished writer, and is currently a free-lance writer for The New York Times.

We welcome Kathy to this position, and have advised her that we will be standing in the shadows if she is in need of any help. Several other members of the Society have agreed to assist her.

SUNDAY SOCIAL FOR NEW MEMBERS

A Sunday afternoon get-together for new members was held at the Coley Homestead on June 6. We hope you were able to attend. The purpose was to acquaint members with the Society and the Coley Homestead. Also, to enlist volunteers for several active committees. These committees are how things get done within the Society. Unfortunately, some of the committees are thin in members, and we can use some new people with fresh ideas, and a desire to actively participate. If you did not attend the meeting and wish to be an active volunteer, please call 226-1804, or write us at P.O. Box 1092, Weston, CT 06883.

SENIOR PICNIC SET FOR JULY 21

The annual Picnic for Weston Seniors has been set for July 21 at the Coley Homestead, starting at 11 a.m. All seniors who live in Weston, or are visiting in Weston are invited. More information will be sent out later.

MUSEUM TO BE OPEN DURING SUMMER

The BARN MUSEUM will be open on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons from 1 to 3:30, during July, August, and September. We still have some rooms to renovate, but the farm room and the tool exhibit is open, and other areas are 'under repair'.

CIDER PRESS SHED

With the help of Wayne Dudley and about ten Kiwanians, we have enclosed the shed except for the front. Now, we can begin to set up the press and the power supply. A few repairs need to be made to the press, but these will not take too long to fix.

OLD POST OFFICE AND GENERAL STORE

As we write this issue in May, Gary Samuelson has advised that he will begin to replace the siding on the building by the week of June 1. This means that we can get inside to install the electrical outlets needed for the lights. The windows have been boarded up while new frames were made for the window sash.

PICTURE QUIZ



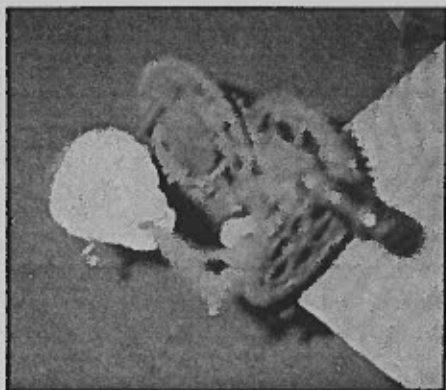
CAN YOU NAME THIS?

If you can name the item below, send your answer along with your name to:

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

The item in the last issue is a PEAR peeler. It was donated to the Society by Mrs. Lillian Phillips of Old Easton Tpke. who said that her late husband, Bob, wished us to have it. When we received it, everything looked in working order, so we bought a pear, put it on the peeler and voila!—we peeled the pear. The proof is in the (fuzzy) picture below.

Nobody sent in an answer; however, we figured many of you were too busy with spring chores to pick up the pen.



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FIFTY YEARS (OR SO) AGO

Feb. 27, 1903 from the Westporter-Herald

WESTON

Program for March 13th at Norfield Grange: Music, Quartette. 'How I would keep house if I were a woman,' Walter P. Rowland; reading 'How I would farm if I were a man,' Mrs. John Gorham. A prize story telling, by brothers and sisters. Stories to range anywhere from facts to fiction. Prize a loaf of cake, to be awarded by our worthy master. Refreshments consisting of home made candy, nuts, popcorn, and apples will be served.

Mrs. Oscar Budd and Mrs. James Coley visited their parents in Cannons one day this week.

Norman Bedient while cutting cord wood for E. W. Bradley, cut his foot. Dr. F. Gorham dressed the wound.

Ernest Beers, grandson of J. M. Beers, has accepted a position in Hartford, in the grocery business.

And in the next town of Wilton

The Southern New England Telephone Company, which wants to run its wires from the station to some private residences in Hurlbutt Street is meeting with much opposition from property owners along the line, who object to poles being placed in front of their houses.

THE PASSING SCENE

Weston residents have been paying taxes from the time the first one cleared the land. Certainly since Patrick Henry was alive. The OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC says 'If Patrick Henry thought that taxation without representation was bad, he should see how bad it is with representation.

And the following has been attributed to Jean Baptiste Colbert, circa 1665:

The art of taxation consists in so plucking the goose as to obtain the largest possible amount of feathers with the smallest possible amount of hissing.'

NEXT ISSUE

CURRENT EVENTS
FIFTY YEARS AGO
PICTURE QUIZ
GROWING UP ON A FARM
IN WESTON

HAY

Webster says that hay is grass, alfalfa, clover, etc. cut and dried for use as fodder. This is the literal definition. But, hay was the only 'food' the early Weston farmers had to feed their cattle. The scientific feeding of livestock as we know it today was not known or practiced in the days of farming in Weston. But the farmer did know that he had to put aside a good quantity of hay in the barn for his cows to live on during the winter. The first farmers in Weston had to let the cows range on what ever they could find in the fields and brush. As soon as some land could be cleared and tilled, grass and clover were seeded for the hay crop. Since these plants were perennials, the farmer did not have to seed them every year. In fact, a properly managed hay field could survive for many years, especially if it was manured.

The first hay crops were probably straight timothy grass. Later, clover was mixed with the grasses to provide a more nutritious feed. A present day extension agent has said 'High quality hay is early cut, green, leafy, soft, free of foreign material, and has a pleasant odor. And quality hay can be considered satisfactory when animals consuming the hay give the desired performance.'

The quality of the hay obtained by the farmer was dependent on when he harvested. The stage of maturity when hay is harvested is the single most important factor affecting its quality. When the grass and/or clover is in seed head, the forage begins to become more fibrous and contains less protein. The early flowering stage is best, because the grass and clover is close to its maximum growth and is higher in total digestibility. Getting the hay in at its optimum stage of maturity depended on the weather as much, or more, than on the eye of the farmer. He might decide that the hay field is ready for cutting, and then have a week of rainy weather preventing cutting. Or, he might cut the hay and have rain spoil the hay in the field before he can get it in the barn.

Growing the hay crop was the easiest part of providing this feed. The physical work came in the cutting, loading, and putting the hay into the barn.

A good field of hay can usually be harvested twice in Connecticut. The second cutting does not yield as much as the first. However, up until the 1940's, getting in the hay was done in a way that had been used for many years.



Cradle scythe



Sickle-bar mower

The first hay harvesting tool was the scythe. The one in the picture shows a cradle attachment which was used more for grain that was harvested for the seed. The cradle allowed the farmer to lay the cut grain down gently to prevent the seed from shattering on the ground. In 1831, Cyrus McCormick invented the reaper which enabled a farmer to harvest his hay much faster. The picture shows a farmer using a sickle-bar mower (the bar is on the other side of the mower). This newer version of McCormick's reaper greatly speeded up the getting in of the hay. The Society has a horse-drawn mower parked along side the old post office. This came from a farm in Weston.

After the hay was cut, it was raked into windrows which helped dry the hay and put in a row so the hay loader could cover it as it was picked up. The picture shows one of these 'dump' rakes. The hay was collected by the long teeth as the rake was pulled thru the grass. A foot or rope-operated lever would trip the teeth which would quickly raise up and then lower to rake the next ten feet of hay. With skill and a lot of luck, the row of hay would be 'fairly straight.' Our dump rake came from the estate of Anson Morton, and could have been used by his family.



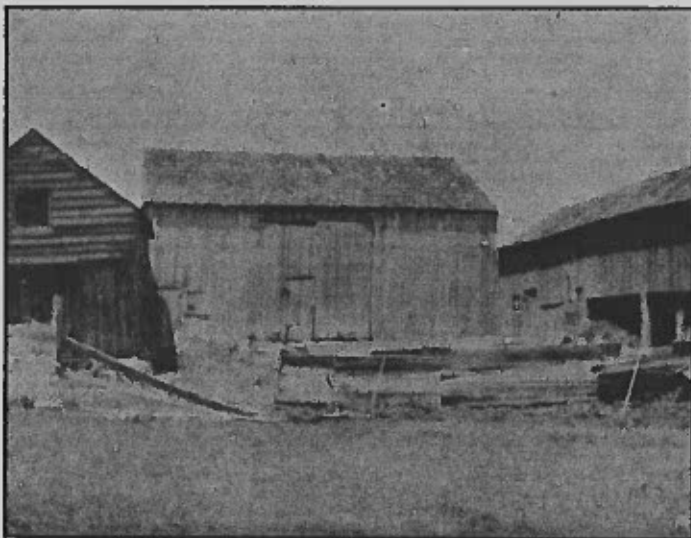
Hay rake showing rake teeth in the up position

When the hay was dry enough, it was loaded onto the hay wagon and hauled to the barn. The hay loader mentioned above was attached to the back of the hay wagon and picked up the hay and unloaded it on the top of the hay wagon. Many farmers did not have a loader, and used pitch forks to throw the hay up to a farm hand on the wagon who spread the hay around for the best load. The picture of a fully-loaded hay wagon was taken on a farm in Weston, about 1912.

When the wagon reached the barn it was unloaded into the hay loft using a hay fork which was attached with rope to a trolley overhead. The hay fork was dropped onto the wagon load of hay which had been pulled into the center of the barn. A large 'bunch' was picked up and pulled up to the top of the barn. Then the hay was pulled along the trolley rails until it was over the hay loft. A trip lever was released and the hay dropped into the loft. In some of the early barns, the hay was forked into the loft by the farmer and his help. The method described above explains the way it was done in the barn at the Coley Homestead. The power to pull the ropes in the various parts of this operation was supplied by horses pulling the rope. In some cases, the power was supplied by engine.



A full load of hay



Old barn on Kettle Creek. The hay barn is in the center. The hay wagon was pulled in thru the doors and the hay lifted to the right and left to the hay lofts.

Dairy cows will eat about two-three pounds of hay per 100 pounds of body weight every day. The same is true for oxen, horses and sheep. With maybe twenty animals on the farm in 1900, it would take 250-300 pounds of hay per day, or ten to fifteen tons of hay for a six-month period.

Just getting the hay in for the winter season took the Weston farmer a good part of his summer. Some years he did not get enough hay in the barn, and to keep some of his livestock healthy, he had to sell others, or, buy some hay from other farmers who might have some extra.

OSCAR BUDD AND HIS WESTON

In the last issue we started a series of articles on Oscar Budd, his background, and his life and service to Weston. These articles were written by Oscar's daughter, Mrs. Helen Budd Mason. The second of the articles appears below.

THE BUDDS ARRIVE FROM ENGLAND

Tracing a family's ancestry can be fascinating; it can lead to some interesting surprises. Oscar Budd's family history is one of those. He was born in Mamakating, Sullivan County, New York State, (in a pretty house way out in the country) to Caroline Crossman and Gilbert Budd. His grandfather, also Gilbert (married to Maria Devens) had a prosperous lumber business and son Gilbert worked with his father until he died in 1880 at the age of 48 of appendicitis, something that could have been taken care of today.

Oscar, the youngest of four children, and the only son, became "man of the family." His mother's uncle, John Crossman of Kettle Creek, Weston, invited his sister and her family to live with him and his wife, Nancy Adams. . . they had no children. So, Oscar, at the age of 11, started a new life in Crossman/Budd house (now Sanford's) and helped his uncle with the farm work. Living in Weston in those days when there was little visiting back and forth with far distant relatives, ended his relationship with the Budd's and other relatives in New York State—until much later. His grandfather died in the 1880's and left him 25 acres of land which was sold for about \$25.00 and that was that.

In Weston he attended Middle School (later Norfield) and it was he who walked up to the old Post Office once or twice a week for the mail. There was no R.F.D. then. He wasn't the least interested in his ancestry—he was far too busy for that, but one of his New York State cousins was and so was the Budd Family Association. In 1962 Oscar learned from articles in the NEW YORK TIMES and the HERALD TRIBUNE that there was a good chance that he had descended from English royalty; he was amazed and very amused. He knew only that there were many Budd families in the area where New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Long Island converge and he knew that Budd Lake had been named after his family.

The newspaper articles appeared at the time the Old House, built in 1648 by the first John Budd, became a National Historical Landmark (there's a memorial plate with a picture of this house at Weston's Historical Museum).

The Budd Family Association's book "Three Centuries of Budd's in America" tells of the first Budd family reunion in 1878; there have been several others since—always at Budd Lake. This association has done considerable research thru the years and, according to the newspaper report in 1962, the story started like this: "John Budd who migrated from England to America arrived at Boston Harbor in the ship HECTOR of London on June 26, 1637. He was in a group that made its way to New Haven, as recorded by John Winthrop's Journal I. John Budd's name appears in the records of New Haven in 1639 as 'one of the first planters of that place.' The group included John Davenport and Theophilus Eaton; they had organized and led a company to America under the sponsorship of Sir Richard Rich."

John Budd was married to Katherine, daughter of Sir Hacialiah Browne of royal lineage. They had three children, John, Jane and Joseph, all born in England. John, according to research was a great grandson of the Earl of Warwick, the "Kingmaker." The family moved from New Haven to Southold, L.I. where John built the now famous house which was later moved to Cutchogue and was given as a wedding gift to his grand-daughter, Anne Budd. He built himself a much grander home.

In 1660 John moved, with several other families, to Westchester, N.Y. and bought 4400 acres of land at Budd's Neck (or Apawamis) from Indians there. In 1663 he was Rye's deputy to the General Court of Connecticut. Rye, at that time, was considered part of Connecticut. He died in Rye in 1670.

As children we used to love to hear my father tell stories of things he remembered as a boy "out west" in Mamakating; it was fascinating to hear about skulking wild cats, the first train whistle that his sisters thought was the howling of wolves, and of the family's Summer Kitchen—outdoors!

The name Budd is common in England. On our first trip to Great Britain we found it interesting to check telephone directories for the name—pages of them! Especially common were they around London, Sussex, Essex, and it has been proved that Budds lived in Chester in the western part of this country. It is all interesting and the Old House (often called the Budd house) has windows exactly like those in the 300-year house in Surrey owned by a cousin of Oscar's wife.

Oscar Budd's mother was of English extraction, too. The first John Crossman (originally Crosman) came from Dartmouth, England. He settled in Fairfield and married Anne Allen. Oscar's uncle had extensive acreage in Weston; he owned all the land on both sides of Kettle Creek from Norfield Road on the west side and about one-quarter mile below on the east, south to Good Hill Road and including the old house now #48 on Kettle Creek. Parcels of land were sold off thru the years. I remember when the "Lyons Land" located to the right of the very old road (now an overgrown lane) and from Kettle Creek south, was sold and when land was sold near Beaver Brook—was sold and houses were built; this was land where my brother and I used to go searching for the perfect Christmas tree. Then in 1927 the #40 house was sold and Oscar built another home up the street at what is now #75. Later he sold that and built a smaller home toward the woods, now #97. In his later years he bought a small cottage in Florida where he and his wife lived until they died, just three months apart, after 64 years of marriage.

Oscar Budd's years in Weston from the time he was a young man and for almost 50 years, were spent serving his town in many official capacities—thus the Budd Room at the town's Museum.