

Weston Historical Society

The Chronicle Quarterly

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THE TREADWELL FAMILY REMEMBRANCES

Have you ever wondered as you drive along our beautiful streets if some of them are named for actual people from our past such as Kellogg Hill, Godfrey Road, Lyons Plain, or Christopher Hill Rd. These are all roads in town that are named after folks who lived, worked and made Weston what it is today.

One of these roads is Treadwell Lane. The Treadwells have a long history in Weston and were among those who settled this community and made their mark on our town. Back in 1845 a dispute in the Episcopal Society resulted in the establishment of the Emmanuel Church at Lyons Plain. The dispute had begun before 1845 when Easton split off from Weston and became its own community. The Episcopalians planned to construct a new church but the location of this church caused a terrible rift among the people.

There was agreement that there was a need for a new church, but some members of the congregation felt it should be in the Lyons Plain area. Other members staunchly held out for a new church in the North Fairfield area claiming that the church was an integral part of that community (according to Thomas



*Treadwell Wedding 1934
L.R.: T. Walter Treadwell, Mary Louise Valieant,
Grace Valieant (sister of bride), Frank Treadwell
(brother of groom).*

Farnham author of The Forging of a Connecticut Town). Hanford Nichols and Walter Treadwell, two of Weston's most prominent and prosperous members of the town took matters into their own hands and began construction of a new church before the outcome of long-winded debates. Mr. Nichols owned the property on which the Emmanuel Church now stands and by 1846 the church was completed and David P. Tomlinson had accepted the post of minister.

There were suits that followed in which the Weston group felt it was entitled to half the parish money and two-fifths of the building subscriptions to be paid to the

Lyons Plain group. After a hearing from impartial arbiters, the Emmanuel Church was recognized as a legitimate offspring of the older congregation and was given half the money it requested. Without the struggles of Mr. Nichols and Mr. Treadwell, the church would surely not have been established.

We recently had the pleasure of interviewing the great-grandson of Walter Treadwell. Michael does not remember his great-grandfather, but remembers hearing stories of his struggles building the church. Walter had lived in the white house next to the church and owned many acres in the area, up Davis Hill and the Eleven O'clock area of town. Walter's son, Michael's grandfather owned all of the property off of Steephill Rd. which is now Treadwell Lane.

Michael's father, T.(Thomas) Walter Treadwell lived at 9 Eleven O'Clock Road in a brick house that he had built himself. In 1934 he married Mary Louise Valieant and together they had six children, Tom, John,



Family home on Eleven O'Clock Road.



THE TREADWELL FAMILY REMEMBRANCE continued

Maryella, Val, Bill and Michael. T. Walter was a mason contractor and built many fireplaces and did brick laying most of his life.



Michael Treadwell

the Adams pond. Anywhere there was a frozen body of water, kids would take to the ice.

Michael remembers his Dad going to "Whistleville" (a portion of Norwalk) back in the early 1950's, and purchasing a horse, which he believes came from Mr. Coccia. His sister Mariella rode the horse for many years as did her brothers.



Michael and his parents.

Like most kids in town during that time Mike remembers that the 5 o'clock whistle used to blow from



L.R. Bill, Val, Mariella, John, Tom.

the Lyons Plain Fire House. When you heard the siren, you had 5 to 10 minutes to get home or you would be in big trouble.

Although Michael and his siblings no longer live in Weston his memories are of growing up in a slower, quieter time. Traffic was hardly a problem, sports activities were spur of the moment games with the neighborhood children, and instead of computers and TV we had fields to play in, trees to climb, frogs to catch, and bicycles to ride. Thank you Michael for remembering those "good old days."

Michael, as so many older Westonites, remembers Weston as being a very quiet town with a small town atmosphere. He remembers swimming in the river behind where Mary Gjuresko lived (across from Blueberry Hill Rd.) in a wonderful swimming hole. There were many spots along the Saugatuck River where kids would go to swim on hot summer days.

In the winter months, Michael would do some hunting where the Aspectuck Country Club now resides, and skating was done in local ponds, his favorite being what was called Donovan's pond, located on Kellogg Hill, previously known to kids as

Record of Ownership of Property
35 Kellogg Hill Road, Weston, Connecticut
1950

Jerome F. and Charlotte Donovan

Esther Root Adams

Caroline Rafa

Elmer Treadwell, for the estate of
Ann E. Treadwell

Moses D. Treadwell

Pickney Dimon
(Builder of the original home)

Elizabeth Lewis, Lothrop Lewis,
Anna Lewis Brewster and Caleb Brewster





A GEORGE WASHINGTON SPY

Living in Weston?

In the last year or so, the evidence of George Washington leading a spy ring during the days leading up to and including the Revolutionary War, has become a literary work, both in book form and on the internet. Many references have been made to the Culper Gang which was a spy network located in New York City, the heart of the British Forces.

A gentleman by the name of Caleb Brewster was a member of this spy ring and it is suspected that he at one time in the mid-1700's owned the land near the top of Kellogg Hill, most recently known as the Donovan property. Although Mr. Brewster did not build a house on the property, it is believed that he was the owner of the land.

In 1778 George Washington ordered Major Benjamin Tallmadge, a 24 year old soldier from Setauket, Long Island to organize a secret service, or spy ring. The ring was so secret that even Mr. Washington did not know the members who included Robert Townsend, Aaron Woodhull, Austin Roe, Anna Strong, and Caleb Brewster. The code name for the spies was Samuel Culper.

Robert Townsend was the central figure of the ring and was known as Samuel Culper Junior. He was a society reporter for a loyalist newspaper and owned a dry goods store in New York City. This gave him the perfect opportunity to

attend social functions among the British and glean information as well as having access to people in and out of the city who were in need of goods, and sometimes information.

These men were entrusted to get information from New York City to George Washington who was in New Jersey and at times in up-state New York. Needless to say they needed an elaborate scheme so they

would not be caught. The plan was executed by Robert Townsend who would gather information about the British soldiers in New York City. Austin Roe was a tavern owner in Setauket and would go to New York City to buy goods for his tavern from Mr.

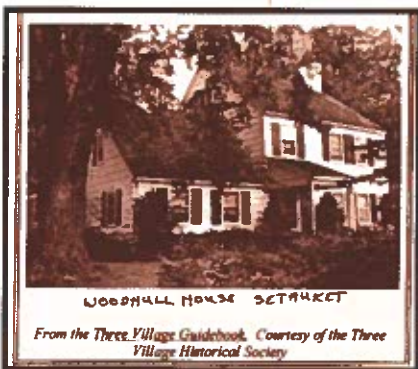
Townsend. At the store, Mr. Roe would put in a request from John Bolton, code name for Major Tallmadge. While Mr. Roe was getting some refreshment before his return trip, and when no one was looking, Townsend would sneak out the back door and up to his room nearby. He would read what Tallmadge had written and answer the letter. Roe would come back to Townsend's shop to pick up his supplies and hide the letter in his goods. A man of great courage, Mr. Roe would then ride as fast as he could the 110 miles to Setauket, New York where he would hand off the letter at his first stop.

Once there Austin Roe would drop the letter off in a field that he had

rented to tend his cattle. He would take care of his cattle while dropping the letter in a pre-arranged drop off box. Aaron Woodhull, code name Culper Senior, who lived next door to the field, would then pick up the letter, add his own information and then look across the bay to see where Anna Strong had placed her black petticoat on the clothesline. This petticoat was the signal that Caleb Brewster had arrived in his whaleboat to take the letter across the bay. The number of handkerchiefs on the clothesline would tell Woodhull exactly where Mr. Brewster was hiding and in which cove. Under the cover of darkness, the letter passed to Caleb Brewster who would row back across Devil's Belt to Fairfield, Connecticut. Benjamin Tallmadge would be waiting on the other side, on his horse, ready to take the letter. The letter would then travel approximately 15 miles to another dragoon who would pass the information all the way to Washington in New Windsor, New York. Many times the letters were written in invisible ink, called "Sympathetic Stain," in case anyone was caught, there would not be a visible letter.

"It has been reported that Caleb Brewster was perhaps the most bold and daring of the spies. He was the only one of the group that the British had definitely identified as a spy. When the

Revolutionary War broke out, he immediately enlisted in the local militia. After the Battle of Long Island he joined the Continental



A George Washington Spy living In Weston continued

army with the rank of a lieutenant of artillery. He returned to Setauket in August of 1777 as part of the attacking force from Connecticut that fought in the "Battle of Setauket." In November 1780 he was one of the officers under Major Benjamin Tallmadge who captured Fort St. George at Mastic. They returned to Connecticut with the entire complement of the fort captured." (taken from an article "History Close at Hand" by Beverly C. Tyler).

Tory shipping on Long Island Sound (known as the Devil's Belt.) His knowledge of the Sound and his boyhood association with Benjamin Tallmadge made him an ideal choice to be part of George Washington's Culper Spy Ring.

Mr. Brewster served his country well and went on to become a pensioner in 1790. He was Lt. and then Capt. Of the Revenue cutter for the district of New York from 1793 to 1816. He was Sheriff of "Suffolk County," from 1810 to

1814. He had been born in Setauket in 1747, married on April 18, 1784 to Anne, daughter of Jonathan Lewis of Fairfield, Conn., and died at Black Rock, Conn., on February 13, 1827.

Although his last will and testament stated that the only property he owned at the time of his death was located in New York State and was to be divided among his children and grandchildren, it is fun to think that perhaps before Mr. Pinkney Diamond built his house on Kellogg Hill, that Caleb Brewster might have stood on that hill and looked off to Long Island Sound in the distance, a spy and a hero.

Throughout the war Caleb commanded a fleet of whale boats operating from the Connecticut shore against British and



In George Washington's days, there were no cameras. One's image was either sculpted or painted. Some paintings of George Washington showed him standing behind a desk with one arm behind his back while others showed both legs and both arms. Prices charged by painters were not based on how many people were to be painted, but by how many limbs were to be painted. Arms and legs are "limbs," therefore painting them would cost the buyer more. Hence the expression, "Okay, but it'll cost you an arm and a leg."

Martha Washington's Rum Punch

From her private journals

3 oz. white rum	3 oz. dark rum
3 oz. orange Curacao	4 oz. simple syrup
4 ox. Lemon juice	4 oz. fresh orange juice
3 lemons, quartered	1 orange, quartered
1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg	3 cinnamon sticks, broken
6 cloves	12 oz. boiling water

In a container, mash the orange, lemons, cinnamon sticks, cloves and nutmeg. Add syrup, lemon and orange juice. Pour the boiling water over the mixture in a container. Let it cool for a few minutes then add the white rum, dark rum and orange Curacao. Strain well into a pitcher or punch bowl and serve over ice in goblets and decorate with wheels of lemon and orange. Dust with a little nutmeg and cinnamon. Serves 6 - 10.

TOWN CRIER

THE TOWN CRIER

Politics is alive and well according to the Westport Town Crier of 1951. Republicans again made a sweep in the Weston Election. "Melvin McLaughlin, whom Weston Democrats had relied upon to end the long reign of First Selectman Willard H. Fanton, not only failed to make the showing expected of him, but ran fourth in the balloting. As a result his team-mate, D.D. Jones, though defeated for second selectman by Republican Herbert Gifford, wound up on the Board of Selectmen."

"Fanton defeated McLaughlin by a wide margin, the vote being 517 to 311. Gifford drew a total of 491 while Jones came through ahead of McLaughlin and won third spot on the board by garnering 331.

"As expected, the entire Republican ticket was swept into office by comparative margins, no upsets being registered anywhere along the line. It was announced there were 846 votes cast which were divided as follows:

433 straight Republican, 241 straight Democratic, 156 split and 16 invalidated."

Also announced in the same issue of the Town Crier was news that Mrs. William V. Lawson of Cedar Hills, has returned from a motor trip to the West coast. Mrs. Lawson was accompanied by Mrs. Lou Crandell of Scarsboro, N.Y. They visited many interesting places, going by the middle route, and stopping at the Zion National Park, Salt Lake City, through Nevada to Los Angeles, and La Jolla, where they were the guests of the Lawson's son and daughter-in-law, the William V. Lawsons. On the return trip they visited relatives in Dallas, and Mrs. Lawson's sister in Chicago.

"Mr. and Mrs. Charles Broch, Norfield Road, spent the weekend in Burlington, VT., with their son-in-law and daughter, Mrs. And Mrs. Howard Edstrom."

"Frederick Moore, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Moore, Lyons Plain Rd., has returned to the University of Connecticut for his senior year."

"Secretary of State, Alice K. Leopold, of Kellogg Hill visited Oyster Bay, L.I., last week where she was the honored guest at a luncheon at the home of Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., after which she spoke at the meeting of the Republican Women's club. On Wednesday afternoon Mrs. Leopold addressed the National Convention of Insurance Men at the Hotel Taft, and in the evening was the guest speaker at the East Hartford League of Women Voters"

"Mr. and Mrs. William Vetromile and family have returned home after spending the summer at their summer home in Bridgewater Corners, VT."

"Mr. and Mrs. George Schelling of Kettle Creek road, and Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Dorr have returned from a three-week vacation at Cape Breton Island."

We think that in this day and age this would be called a "REALLY slow news day."



*HAPPY HOLIDAYS
TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY*



**“WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY’S COLEY HOMESTEAD DVD ON
CABLEVISION-77” GRANTS FROM CT CULTURE & TOURISM,
WESTPORT RESOURCES FUND PROJECT**

“Weston Historical Society’s Coley Homestead DVD on Cablevision-77”
Grants from CT Culture & Tourism, Westport Resources Fund Project

WESTON, CT. Thursdays in December, at 6 pm, Cablevision Public Access Channel #77 is airing the Weston Historical Society’s new video, “Welcome to the Coley Homestead”.

Even those who have had a full, docent-guided tour of the Coley house and barns will relish this delightful 30-minute voyage into Weston’s heritage and may choose to buy the DVD. Westonites will savor the lush photography, recognize many of the adults and children who guide the “tour”, and enjoy the excellent sound track by Erik Paul and Weston High School’s singers and musicians. Excerpts from “The Outlivers”, narrated by Christopher Plummer, also are featured.

A Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism Partnership Grant, matching a prior gift from Westport Resources, the financial planning and investment management firm, funded the work. Cablevision of Connecticut, Public Access Programming was the Weston Historical Society’s project partner. Volunteers trained by Cablevision managed production, while Birdsell Studios provided professional videography, photography and editing.

“Welcome to the Coley Homestead” introduces Cablevision viewers and visitors of all ages to the Weston Historical Society’s Coley farm property and collections at 104 Weston Road. It explores Weston’s origins as part of Roger Ludlowe’s original Fairfield settlement, its evolution from Norfield Parish, its separation from Fairfield and Easton and the importance today

MORE of the Society’s quest to build an archive to “Keep Weston History in Weston.”

Founded in 1961 and incorporated in 1962, the Weston Historical Society seeks to preserve, share and celebrate Weston’s 300+ year history. Guided by a fifteen-member Board of Trustees, the progress of the WHS for more than 40 years has been achieved through the hands-on work of an all-volunteer organization, augmented by revenues from member dues and annual giving plus occasional gifts of land, funds, documents

and artifacts.

The Weston Historical Society’s defining asset is the Coley Farm on nearly 4 acres overlooking Rte. 57, just south of Weston’s town center and public schools campus. Deeded by James and Cleora Burr Coley to the WHS in 1982, the property comprises a 19th century farmhouse, recently restored English barn, carriage barn, cider barn smokehouse and outhouse. For the past 24 years, the Coley property has been central to the organizational life and community identity of the WHS. Those seeking original holiday gift ideas are invited to visit the Weston Historical Society gift shop on Saturday mornings at the Coley Homestead gift shop (104 Weston Road, Weston, CT). Available DVDs include THE OUTLIVERS (\$20), narrated by Christopher Plummer; directed by Harvey Bellin (whose work won an Emmy Award) and WELCOME TO THE COLEY HOMESTEAD (\$20), a tour of the Coley house, barn & collections, with featured excerpts from THE OUTLIVERS and music by the Weston High School Music Dept. The pair, in a single case, sells for \$35. All proceeds benefit the Weston Historical Society, a 501 (c) 3 organization.

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SOME THINGS HAVEN'T CHANGED SO MUCH.

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