



THE

CHRONICLE

QUARTERLY

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Weston Historical Society

THE EDITOR'S EDGE

TWO DOWN — MANY TO GO

The Weston of 200 years ago was a town of people who cared — for their families, for their neighbors, for their town, and for the new, struggling nation.

100 years later, the same values were evident, and most of the same families were still living here, with the same concerns as their ancestors.

Now, 200 years after Weston became an official town, we have the same interests in our town as they did. True, most of us are not native Westonites, but we have put a few roots down and consider ourselves as Westonites, even if our accents don't sound like we are from New England.

But what about the Westonites of 100 years from now? Will there be a Weston? Will your descendants still live here? What type of work will they be doing? Will they be looking at the Giants or Jets on a TV?

We would like to have your ideas on what Weston will be like in the year 2087.

Send your ideas or comments to the editor. You can leave your name off if you desire. Maybe if we receive enough, we can place them in a time capsule to be opened in the year 2087, after the Fourth of July celebration, if people haven't forgotten.

Herb Day—Editor

WESTON'S HISTORICAL NOTEBOOK

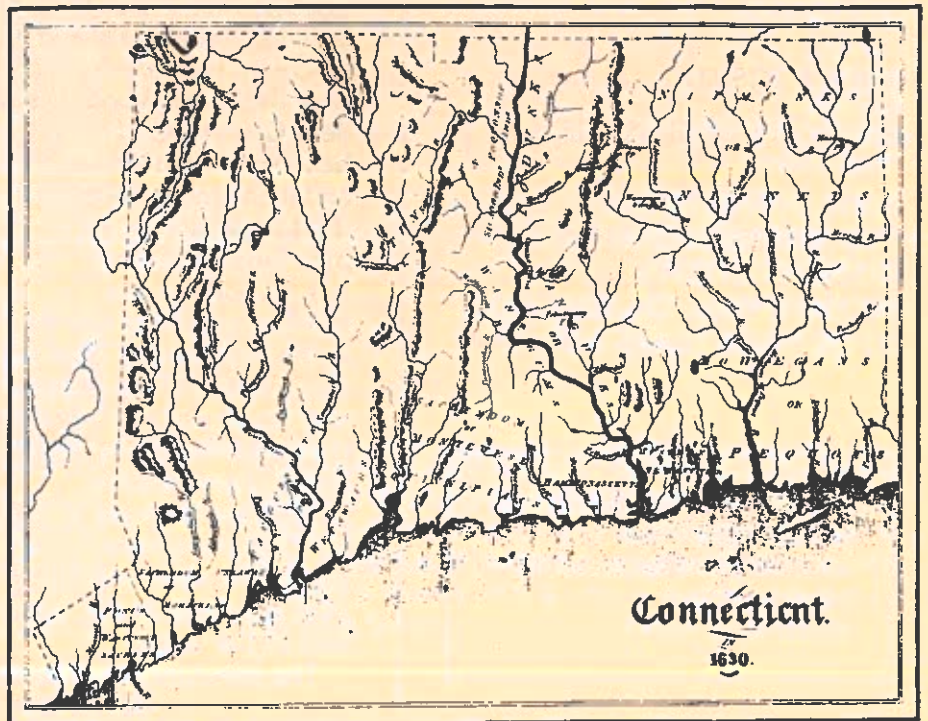
WESTON'S BEGINNINGS

After Fairfield was first settled in the 1630's, the founding fathers proceeded to buy additional lands from the Indian tribes within the Sachemdom of Mahashemo: the Paugussetts and the Siwanogs. They bought land encompassing what is now Weston, Easton, Westport, and part of Redding.

The land along the coast was settled early because of it's proximity to water travel; in the mouths of the rivers and in the sound along the coastal bays. The hinderlands were left to the few remaining Indians still living in the area and the occasional English hunter and trapper.

In 1664 the Duke of York was granted jurisdiction over the lands between The Delaware and The Connecticut Rivers. This meant that all undivided (to the residents) land would belong to the Duke. This prompted the town fathers of Fairfield to apportion these lands to the land-owning citizens of Fairfield, according to their wealth. This they started in 1671. Srviant Squire, Cornelius, Josiah Harvey, and John Banks were appointed to apportion the lands. The lots took the form of long lots similar to lots in England but much longer, and in many instances, narrower, some lots only being 50 ft. wide and several miles long. At the base of these lands was a one-half mile wide common (just North of the present Long Lots Rd. in Westport) and running perpendicular was a one mile common which

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PICTURE QUIZ

CAN YOU NAME THIS?



If you can name the item in the picture, send your answer and your name to:

The Editor
The Chronicle Quarterly
P.O. Box 1092
Weston, CT 06883

The item in the last issue is a whale oil lamp. It has thick, crystal glass on three sides, and a mirror on the back. A handle is on the right. Whale oil was used for centuries in lamps. It was replaced by kerosene after petroleum was discovered in 1859.

NEXT ISSUE

WESTON'S BEGINNINGS —
THE 1800's
POST OFFICE UPDATE
THE NORFIELD GRANGE
CURRENT EVENTS
BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
50 OR MORE YEARS AGO

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WESTON'S BEGINNINGS CONT.

extended roughly up through what is now The Saugatuck Reservoir and surrounding land to equal a one mile wide swath (see map). Even though Fairfield laid out these long lots on paper and thereby protected the land from returning to the King, it took them over 100 years (and several surveys) to finally get all the lots measured out correctly. The lower end had been done almost immediately, so those receiving the land knew about where their long lot was. During the ensuing 100 years, many of the lots were sold to others, were sold or given to sons and daughters, were swapped for other land to make parcels more easily farmed, or were combined with other lots when families intermarried or died.

Others who did not have a long lot bought some of the land and proceeded to clear land and build homes in this area. The first settlers probably came to what is now Weston about 1700-1710. They built small homes, using lumber they brought from Fairfield. As the Indian trails were widened to enable a wagon to pass thru, more lands were opened. Many settlers sought out favorable sites for sawmills and grist mills. Families followed families, until in 1756 there were about 350 people here.

In those days a journey to Fairfield consumed a whole day — on dry days when there was no snow on the ground. To participate in town activities, such as town meetings and church services became almost impossible and was impossible in winter. The people in Northfield were not able to present their case before the elders of Fairfield for monies for schools and roads. These "outliers" as they were called, were being governed without representation. In 1755 they petitioned the State General Assembly in Hartford for the "rite" to form a separate parish, which would include parts of the Greens Farms, Green Field Hill, and Wilton Parishes. This was granted and on June 23, 1757 the first meeting of The Norfield Parish Society was held.

The Society proceeded to lay plans to build a meeting house, but for reasons not explained in the Parish Meeting Notes, it was started but never finished. Either it was completed sufficiently to enable the residents to hold church services or they met elsewhere.

The Parish had responsibility for establishing the school districts, building the schools, and hiring the teachers. The three school districts were the Lyons Woods District, Norfield Center, and Kettle Creek. To help pay for building of the schools and the teachers salaries the Parish tried to get some of the tax money previously paid to the Greens Farms Society and the Greenfield Hill Society. A tax was also laid on to the residents of Norfield Parish. The minutes of the Norfield Church and Parish do not indicate whether they received any money from these other parishes.

With the increase in population, by 1769 there were five school districts: the three mentioned above plus a school in the upper parish and in the forge.

The Revolutionary War had its ef-
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Available from a Weston Store — 1835

Pen Knife
Cambria Muslin
Linen
Thread
Velvet Cord
Cotton Lace
Silk Shall
Cotton Stockings
Leather Gloves
Brown Sugar
Pipes
Wine
Curry Comb
Pepper
Ginger
Potatoes
Oats
Tallow
Crackers
Ivory Comb
Gingham
Antiqua Rum
Norfolk Thum Latch
Screws
Buttons
Hay Rake
Shot
Mutton
Wisk Broom
Spelling Book
Plates
Decanter
Cups and Saucer
Shoe Tacks
Powder
Snuff
Handkerchief

FIFTY YEARS (OR SO) AGO

The Deeds and Accomplishments of the PTA of Weston — Nov. 1932 to June 1933

On the second of November, in nineteen-thirty-two
Mrs. William Gillies, and many others too,
Had a fine and worthy inspiration
To form this here association.

The Weston parents and the teachers
Filled the hall — out to the bleachers.
The floor at first was Mrs. Shaws
Who explained at length the new by-laws.
Motions were made and quickly voted
On a number of points she carefully noted.
"Two bits" was assessed as the membership fee,
Although some of us wanted to join scot-free.

We had a short speech from Principal Wierck,
Who encouraged us none of our duties to shirk.
Then we quickly jammed thru the governing slate.
Like Tammany Hall, leaving nothing to fate.
The Presidents chair went to Mrs. G. Weddle;
For the work she's done since, she deserves a gol'
medal
But kindly explain the dark mystree
Why the job of Historian was given to me?

The Officers assumed their duties at once
Planning ahead for the following months
Their names are so hard to use in a rhyme
But they've all made good use of their PTA time
Finally the motion was made to adjourn
With cider and doughnuts, done to a turn.

June 18, 1935. The Graduation Exercises of The Hurlbutt School were held on Wednesday evening in the auditorium of the school. A most inspiring and educational program was presented by the pupils of the 7th and 8th grades. The program was a 'History of Education in Weston' and it depicted by poetry and pictures the history of the school system of Weston from the early district schools to the present time. There was a most interesting display of pictures of the interiors and exteriors of the different district schools of Weston of former days including the Den, Upper Parish, Norfield, Goodhill, Lyons Plains, and Forge Schools. Four of these schools are still standing: The Den School was torn down some time ago, and the Lyons Plains School burned about 10 years ago. The Forge School is now used as a Community Center by the people of Valley Forge. An addition has been added to the Old Norfield School and it is now the home of the Weston Fire Department. The firemen meet there every Tuesday evening and spend a sociable evening together. The Good Hill School was sold by

What's New In The Museum

The following items have been given to the Society during the time since the last Chronicle came out:

- A ladder-back chair with a rush seat, a bedspread and two linen table cloths. These were given by Mr. Jay Jackson.
- Several pieces of china and three old picture books on America from Mrs. Julie Jones.
- A Victorian dresser from Mr. & Mrs. Scott Hill. The ladder-back chair matches five others we have for the dining-room in the Coley House.
- We have microfilms of the Federal census (population) for each year available from 1790 thru 1910.

These will be loaned to the Weston Library and available to anyone interested in looking at these records. The Library has a viewing machine.

Trustees of The Weston Historical Society

Sylvia Bowles	226-4622
Lou Bregy	226-5773
Herb Day	227-6130
Marie Golden	227-1391
Linda Guidera	227-7607
Nancy Hoe	227-6462
Ruth Lockwood	227-2343
Linda Martin	226-6256
Gene O'Hare	227-5040
Marylou Perry	227-5579
Gary Samuelson	544-8156
Dan Sanders	226-0477
Peggy Sanford	227-0100
Joe Spetly	226-0925
Nadine Tichy	226-5759

public auction and has since been remodeled into an attractive dwelling. The Upper Parish School was purchased by Wood Cowan and has been remodeled into a dwelling. It is now occupied by Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Wierck. Mr. Wierck is now principal of the Hurlbutt School.

BEGINNINGS CONT.

fect on the Norfield Parish in several ways. Over 50 of its men were involved in one or more battles, some staying in the Army until the last battle at Yorktown. Also, a few felt more allegiance to the King, became Loyalists and moved to New York for protection under the British. The only battle that affected Weston area was the British Redcoats march from Compo Beach to Danbury. Apparently, several Weston citizens were able to divert the British Army from marching thru Weston Center by advising them that the two best roads to Danbury were along Newtown Tpke. and the Fairfield-Newtown Road to the East. Some of the British forces probably floundered thru Weston on the march (rout) back to Compo because a Hessian musket and several recognizable buttons from British regulars coats were found along Newtown Tpke. near Godfrey Road 150 years later.

By 1776 the Norfield Parish population had reached 1000. And

with the end of the war in 1783, additional families had settled here to become farmers.

The influx created additional need for more saw mills, grist mills, and special craftsmen such as blacksmiths. Many farmers found that they had a special knack for something and were soon doing their 'thing' for their neighbors, and then they started in business. Expanding their list of customers, usually by word of mouth. Even though they traded their services for products, they were still farmers to some degree and produced as much of their needs as they could on their farms. Some farmers found that their farms and homes were well located near a crossroad where enough traffic warranted the opening of a store to provide the staples needed by the residents, such as tobacco, salt, sugar, coffee, tea, and rum and brandy. (see the box showing the sales of items from one of the stores in Weston). To obtain some cash, the farmers would raise

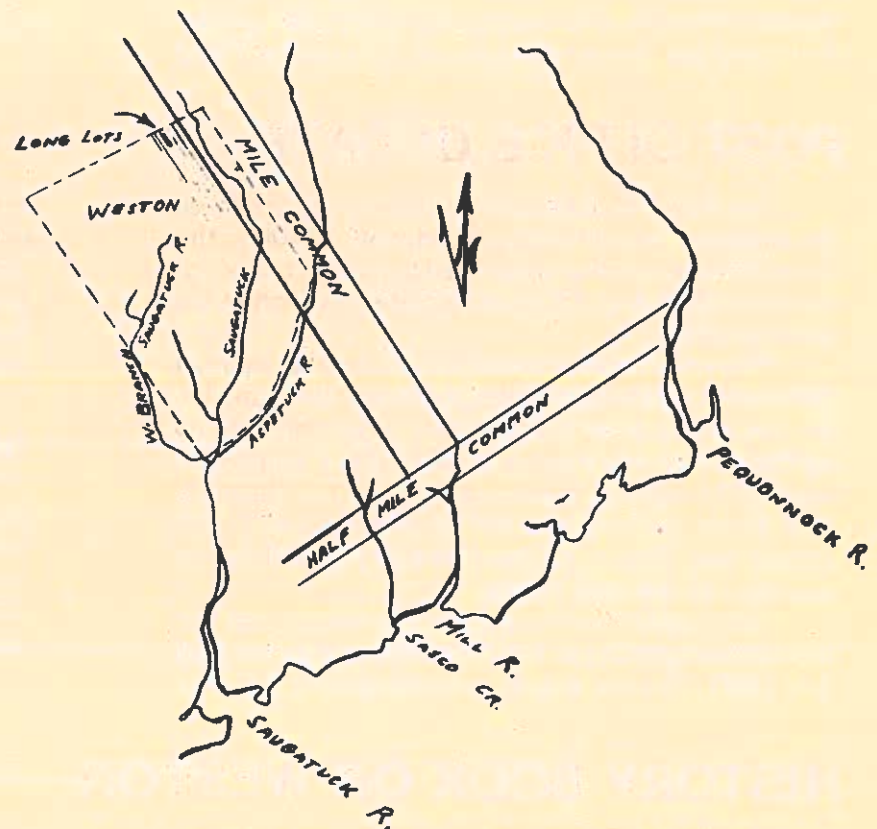
extra potatoes or grain and sell or barter in Fairfield. This was a long trip, which on a good traveling day could take 12-14 hours. This growth in population increased the need for schools, roads, and a desire for home rule. The outlivers in Norfield Parish and those in Northfairfield Parish (Easton) finally petitioned the State to form a new town. This was finally granted in 1787. The area was called Weston — the West part of Fairfield (actually the North and West part).

Not only was Weston a new town, but the Americans had a new country and a new constitution.

Weston's beginnings will continue in the next issue of The Chronicle.

Purchases made from a Store in Weston on May 28, 1825

H. Scribner	3 lbs. Hard Soap
S. Sherwood	2 qts. Rum
S. Squire	2 qts. Cider Brandy
H. Bussing	2 pts. Brandy
E. Thorp	1 gal. Rum
	2 qts. Brandy
	2 lbs. Loaf Sugar
	2 Nutmegs
T. Trowbridge	1 qt. Brandy
	1 lb. Load Sugar
E. Thorp	2 qts. Rum
C. Godfrey	2 qts. Rum
	½ lb. Tobacco
R. Wood	2 bushels Rye
	1 lb. Hard Soap
	2 qts. Molasses
W. Downs	½ pt. Butter
I. Downs	3 gills Rum
G. Finch	1 pt. Brandy
	1 English Reader
S. Adams	½ gill Rum
	1 gill Rum
T. Crossman	1 qt. Rum
W. McCentyre	6 lbs. 10p Cut Nails
	4 lbs. 4 p Cut Nails
G. Finch	1 qt. Brandy
	6 sheets Paper
T. Trowbridge	1 qt. Brandy



CURRENT EVENTS

Coley House Renovation

Members of the Young Womens Club have been removing wallpaper from three rooms in the Coley House. They will be repainting and wallpapering these rooms for their Weston Bicentennial project.

Museum Inventory

Several members of the Society are beginning a complete inventory and cataloging of all items in the museum.

Docents

In the last issue we explained what a docent is — a guide in a museum or historical place. We need docents for this spring and summer to help show people around the Coley Homestead and the Old Post Office. Training for docents will begin sometime in April. If you are interested in helping us call a trustee or write to the Society.

Meetings and Programs

A general meeting of your Society will be held in

April. The program and the date are not finalized, but we are hopeful that the date will be April 9.

A bus tour planned for spring has been delayed until fall.

The Coley Homestead will be open over Memorial Day weekend as will the Old Post Office.

Check the newspapers for further information.

Help

If you would like to help in the restoration of the Coley House or the Post Office, please call one of the Trustees listed in this issue. We need you.

Dues Due

1987 dues are due. We will be sending a reminder to all members within the next two weeks. This notice will be a convenient envelope in which you can designate what level of membership you want and insert your check. Additional membership envelopes will be available at the Library in case you have a friend who would like to join.

GARDEN NEWS

Pietra and David Knaus have agreed to be Chairmen of the Garden Committee. They are planning a Bicentennial Door Garden at the Coley House. Pietra asks all who have gardens to please keep this in mind when you are dividing your plants this spring. If you will put the labelled plants in containers and

drop them at the back door of the Coley House, she will pick them up from time to time.

The Knaus' have some wonderful ideas and will need help — please call them (222-7485) and volunteer to be a part of this exciting project.

POST OFFICE UPDATE

The Post Office Committee has announced that the Kiwanis Club of Weston has donated \$400 to the Post Office restoration to be used to rebuild the porch on the old building. This work will start as soon as the weather allows.

This much appreciated gift will enable the Post Office restoration committee to divert other funds to the renovation of the interior. A work session to clean up the interior will be announced soon. If you are interested in helping, please call Mrs. Linda Martin or Mrs. Marylou Perry who are co-chairwomen of this committee. Details of this cleanup day will be announced in the near future.

The Post Office Committee has announced that the official opening of the Post Office is set for **May 17, 1987**. Special events are planned for this day.

Watch for additional details for this bicentennial year even.

The Post Office Committee has sold several timbers from the old barns that were torn down. Some of these timbers from the Post Office will be used to build a porch as soon as the weather improves.

LLOYD SCRIBNER

Lloyd Scribner, who gave the Post Office to the town, passed away in Florida last month. He and his wife befriended Lucy Adams in her old age. Lucy Adams was the last postmaster (mistress) of the Old Post Office. Her father had owned the farm where the Scribner Park and the barns are.

HISTORY BOOK ON WESTON

'Weston, the Forging of a Connecticut Town' the only history book on Weston, is still available for purchase at the Weston Library for \$13.50, or thru the

mail from the Weston Historical Society for \$14.00. This book makes a great gift to help remember this bicentennial year.

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QUARTERLY

A PUBLICATION OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY — WESTON

THIS ISSUE

WESTON'S BEGINNINGS
NAME THAT PLACE
CURRENT EVENTS
DUES NOTICE
POST OFFICE UPDATE