

THE CHRONICLE QUARTERLY

Volume 9 No. 1 March 1990

Published By The
Weston Historical Society

THE EDITOR'S EDGE

???

Did you ever find yourself at a loss for words? And at other times, ideas seemed to be bursting from your mind? Well, this is one of those times — when we are at a loss for words. Sure, we could talk about the exciting programs we have planned for this year, or we could mention some special historical fact on Weston we have uncovered. But these are better covered in one detail in the main section of the CHRONICLE QUARTERLY. So, lacking any words of wisdom, we will just thank you for your support in the past, and hope we can enjoy your generous support in the future. Remember, we are always open to suggestions, and articles to be used in this newsletter.

Keep watching for spring. It is just around the corner.

Herb Day - Editor

CURRENT EVENTS

More information on all the events listed below will receive further mention in the local papers over the next several months.

TAG SALE

APRIL 21 10:00 AM UNTIL 4:00 PM

This tag sale will have wide selection of items, including some of our surplus artifacts from the barn museum. Come early and look around, have a cup of coffee, and be ready to buy your selection when the bell sounds. This event is being chaired by Linda Martin.

OLD PHOTO EXHIBIT

MAY 5 THRU MAY 13

This photograph exhibit will be of interest to all Weston residents, no matter how long you have lived here. We have several dozen old pictures of places, and people from all corners of our town. We hope you keep these dates open and spend time looking at Weston's past. If you have any old pictures of Weston, we would like to include them in our show. We will also have some photos of Weston as it look today, taken by a few of our local talented photographers. This event is being chaired by Herb Day.

SENIORS PICNIC

JULY 11

This will be the third annual Seniors picnic, sponsored by the Society, with some financial support from the local merchant's associaton. All seniors in Weston are invited. This will be held in July on a Wednesday. This event is being chaired by Barbara Van Suetendael.

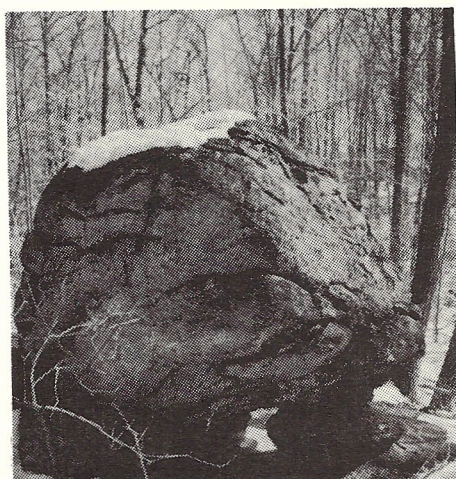
SCARE FAIR

The second annual SCARE FAIR will be held in October. This event is chaired by Pietra Knaus.

CHRISTMAS AT THE COLEY HOUSE

This December, the third annual 'Christmas at the Coley House' is expected to be the best ever. Watch for information on this great event.

PICTURE QUIZ



CAN YOU TELL US WHAT THIS IS?

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

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

The picture in the last issue is of the turbine and shaft used in the Godfrey mill, in what is known as DEVILS DEN. Scott Hill sent in the correct answer, stating "our Historical Society put up the money to recondition this out of the rubble and debris and make it approachable, with paths on both sides."

Although not much is known about this mill, it was one of the first in Weston, and probably used a water wheel when it was first built. It is shown as a saw mill on the 1867 map of Weston.

In the September issue of the Chronicle Quarterly, we stated that no one sent in the correct answer to the picture quiz. We were in error. Ray Fitch, a life long resident, sent a note stating that is the former Norfield District School House.

THE CHRONICLE QUARTERLY
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__ 50 YEARS (OR MORE) AGO __

The Weston Boarding School was started in 1835 as a business school by Mathew Bulkley. It was taken over by his son-in-law, Andrew Jarvis, in the late 1860's. The boarding school published a newsletter, called the WESTON BOARDING SCHOOL CADET. We have the first issue, dated March 30, 1870.

The following ads appeared on the back page of this issue. We think you will enjoy reading these ads. The ad placed by John Gregory advertised his goods sold at this store, which is now part of the Adams-Scribner Museum. Parts of the ads minced no words on some subjects.

PRISCILLA P. GOREHAM,
No. 44 1/2 W. State Street, Weston, Ct.,
PIE-MAKER TO THE PRESIDENT,
and Dealer in
Apple-pie, Mince-pie, Custard-pie,
Peach-pie, Lemon-pie, Cherry-pie, Pear-
pie, Chicken-pie, Veal-pie, Bean-pie,
and Mud-pie.
Also, in
Gingerbread, Gingersnaps, Doughnuts,
Lollipops, Crullers, Seed-cakes,
Sponge-cake, Lemon-cake,
Loaf-cake,
Fruit-cake, Wedding-cake,
Chocolate-cake, Coconut-cake,
Walnut-cake, and Plum-cake,
ALL AT LOWEST CASH PRICES.
SECOND QUALITY EXCHANGED
for
Splitting Wood, Running Errands, etc.
CALL EARLY AND STAY LATE.
* * N.B. No bills settled through Mr. Jarvis.
N.B. All chickens stolen must be paid for at
my price.
N.B. All persons bringing loads of hay,
and expecting cash, must be prepared to change a
Seventy-Dollar Bill.

JOHN H. GREGORY,
The Stewart of Weston,
Calls the attention of the public
to his
Large, Varied, and Extensive Stock
of
Groceries, West-India Goods, Drugs,
DRY GOODS,
CROCKERY, BOOTS AND SHOES,
CLOTHING, HATS,
CONFECTIONERY,
Hardware, Wooden Ware, Upholstery, Paper-Hang-
ings, Stationery, Jewelry, Fancy Goods,
Toys, Refreshments,
Mineral Water,
and
PEA-NUTS.
TOWN POST-OFFICE, AND HEADQUARTERS
OF
Loafers, Truants, and Lazy Scholars.

N.B.
Whenever pupils of the W. B. S.
are intending to visit this
Store in great
numbers,
they are requested
to send notice in advance,
that Mr. G.'s army of children may
be summoned to see that nothing is stolen.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

CALEB LEE,
NO. 3 SOUTH-MAIN STREET, WESTON, CT.,
Cobbler at large to the W. B. S.,
and maker of
Shoes, Boots, Jackboots, Slippers, Buskins,
Leggins, Greaves, Galligaskins, Moccasins,
Gaiters, Spatterdashes, and Sandals.
Also,
CARPENTER AND FABRICATOR
OF
Boxes, Doors, Traps, Sleds, Fences, Gates,
Desks, Shoepegs, and Houses.
Also,
GLAZIER AND REPAIRER
of
Sash, Windows, and Blinds.
Also,
CATERER AND FURNISHER
of
Walnuts, Chestnuts, Beechnuts, etc.
Also,
MA CHINIST AND REPAIRER
of
Skates, Sleighs, Tools, Keys, and Trunks.
Also,
GRINDER AND SHARPENER
of
Knives, Scissors, and Skates.
Also,
BLACKSMITH AND PREPARER
of
Forged Work and Utensils.
Also,
MERCHANT AND DEALER
in Leather, Nuts, and Junk.
Also,
STONE-MASON AND BUILDER
of
Walls, Wells, and Chimneys.
Also,
Butcher and Slayer
of
Flie, Fleas, Mosquitoes, and Bulls.
Also,
GUNSMITH AND REPTTER
of
Guns, Cannons, Swivels,
Howitzers, Culverins, Basilisks,
Mortars, Grenades, Petronels,
Petards, Muskets, Firelocks,
Fowling-pieces, Rifles,
Revolvers, Carbines,
Blunderbusses,
Pikes, Lances, Spears, Spontoons, Javelins, Daggers,
Dirks, Poniards, Sabres, Battle-axes,
Halberds, Tomahawks,
Bowie-knives, and
Cambric Needles.
Also,
UNDERTAKER AND SEXTON
TO THE
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.
Individuals and families promptly attended to.

Dear Weston Friend:

The Weston Historical Society is again in need of your favorite OLD and NEW recipes. We are preparing an outstanding cookbook of unusual content and value. The book will contain at least 200 favorite recipes.

Because we want the book to be truly representative, we would like you to give us ONE--or MORE--of your favorite OLD or NEW recipes to feature in the book. If you did not have a chance to participate before, we would appreciate it if you would now send us your favorites. The form below is to be used for submitting recipes.

If the recipe below continues on the reverse side, be certain to mark "OVER." Because all recipes will be separated into categories, write all additional recipes on separate sheets of paper or on photo copies of this sheet so that the Committee can put them into categories. Please mail or turn in to Mrs. Mary Alden, 197 Lyons Plain Rd., Weston, Ct. 06883. The book will have 10 different food categories -- Appetizers, Main Dishes, Casseroles, Cakes and Cookies, Jellies and Jams, Soups and Salads, Vegetables, Desserts, Bread and Rolls and Miscellaneous.

Thank you for your help with this exciting and delicious project of the Weston Historical Society.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Mary Alden

My Name _____
My Telephone # _____
Recipe Name _____

Measurement	Ingredients	Measurement	Ingredients
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Submitted by: _____

Please Print exact name to be used in cookbook

WESTON'S HISTORICAL NOTEBOOK

Your Society has many oral histories of native sons and daughters, and of others who have lived here for many years. One of these is about Miss Florence Banks. Florence Banks was born here, and — but let's let Florence tell it like it was.

— FLORENCE BANKS TALKS ABOUT THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS —

Florence Banks talking with Scott Hill at her home at 46 Norfield Road in Weston, Conn. on December 19, 1975.

I am proud to say that I am eighty years old. I was born in 1895 in the house where Dr. Bush lives now, across on the corner at 177 Weston Road. My father came from Fairfield. My mother and grandmother owned that house. They rented room to the Jarvis School for a dormitory. The doors upstairs had numbers; I guess they are still over in the attic. The same as the (Norfield) Church had numbers on the pews. Andrew Jarvis lived in the Brock house across from where the Catholic Church is now. His school was where the Vetromiles live at 47 Norfield Road. A whole string of buildings extended down Weston Road, but they were all gone before I can remember. They even had a parade ground down where there was a flat area. My sister Anna and brother Willis used to play in the old buildings. Anna (Corsa) is eight years older than I am, she's the oldest. I'm the baby, you might say. There's about three and a half years' difference between each of us.

I remember the state road came from Westport just to this corner here. From here on, they built it by sections north up Newtown Turnpike until they met the Redding line. My parents boarded the men who worked on the road. I was quite young then. All the rest of the road in town were dirt. This was the first one they paved.

There was a sawmill (Carver's) where Cobbs Mill is now. They cut the trees, hauled them up there and sawed them into lumber. The old post office on the Scribner property at the corner of Georgetown Road and Newtown Turnpike was still operating when I was a kid in the the early 1900's. It was the Adams property then. Lizzie Adams was the post mistress. They had a combination of a post office and store that sold tobacco and smokes and newspapers and things like that. Right now there's quite a bit of interest in saving it or moving it to preserve some of the history of Weston.

Norfield and Emmanuel Churches have been there as long as I can remember. The St. Francis of Assissi Church is very recent. In the early days there didn't seem to be any Catholics in Weston.

We owned all the way up to the church and all the way over the Hurlbutt School, that square in there. Some of it is going back to woods, but then it was all under cultivations. My father raised onions for a living and onion seed — the Southport Globe. He hauled them in barrels to Westport to be taken by boat to New York. We have an acre in onions. My brother Willis and a hired man helped my father farm. When they plowed the furrows and turned up stones, they saved them and put them in a corner out of the way to be used for stone walls when they had no farm work. The great big ones must have been moved with oxen or horses and a stone-boat. My father farmed during the spring and summer but worked in Westport as a carpenter during the winter for two dollars a day! My parents died in the 1940's.

Willis farmed, then in his late teens he went to Merrills Business College on Washington Street in South Norwalk. He boarded in Norwalk during the week. From there he taught school. After that he became a carpenter, then an architect and builder. He designed my house. He built Sue Hutchinson's house (18 Cartbridge Road) and several others. When he was twenty-four or five, he married Verna Gregory from Norwalk. Her father, Frank Gregory, was supervisor of schools in Norwalk. She was a teacher and taught where I did at one time. She was a good first grade teacher. Willis was on the committee when the Hurlbutt School was built. He was a vice-president of the Fairfield County Savings Banks and on the board of the Norwalk Savings Society with Francis Bennett.

Before I went to Normal School, I taught a year up in Valley Forge. I boarded with Charles and Nettie Perry for two dollars a week, room and board. School started at nine in the morning and didn't get out until four. It was a long day. In the wintertime Charlie Perry used to walk over and escort me home. It was about a mile away and he didn't think it was safe for me to walk home alone when it was nearly dark. I don't know whether he was worried about people or animals — it might have been both. The foundry in there wasn't used in my day, neither was the water wheel or the general store. There still were a number of families living inter such as the Halls, Sosborns and Perrys. It has all been flooded. When the water in the reservoir is low, you can see the foundations of some of the houses and the stone walls. Teaching over there a good experience.

From there I went to Danbury State College, then known as the Danbury Normal School, for two years. I boarded up there throughout the school year but came home every weekend. To get back to Danbury either my father or my sister would drive me in a horse and wagon the five miles to Cannondale Station to meet the train. When I graduated, I could teach all the elementary grades. I got the job at the Middle District School and taught there for three years before I went to Norwalk where I did most of my teaching. There were five schools in Weston: Norfield was the Middle District, Upper Parish on Godfrey Road, the Goodhill School on Goodhill Road, Lyons Plains and Valley Forge. There is a picture

of me and some of my pupils at Norfield that I gave the Weston Historical Society. The schools were used until the Hurlbutt School was built. After that the Norfield School was used by the fireman for their meetings. They had a place on one side for Weston's one fire truck.

I taught all grades. There were usually 15-18 students, sometimes only one or two to a grade. The older ones used to hear the little ones read for me at the same time, say, I had class in geography or science. The older ones helped out the younger children. They all had to buy their own textbooks so they kept them when they finished. We had Harper's Readers. There was a third reader and a fourth. They didn't go by grades exactly. It was just a step higher from the third to the fourth reader, then we went from the fourth to the fifth reader. Those who learned easily and were good readers could move faster than the others. I still have a slate I used when I was a little girl. We used a slate pencil to write on it and when we got through our lesson, we rubbed the slate off and were ready to apply another lesson.

Of course there were no school buses in those days. One girl was delicate and her mother brought her with a horse and wagon every day to school and came back and took her home. That was the only one. The others walked, some lived half to three quarters of an hour away. Some had bicycles. They brought their lunches in tin pails with the sandwiches wrapped in bread wrappings. We had an a hour at noon. The mother of one of the poorer families brought lunch to them. Often times it would consist of cold potato sandwiches. They never had any fruit or other goodies. They children used to play under the horses the horse sheds which are still standing on the church green. The boys climbed the rafters there and had a wonderful time. They boys always had to do a lot of fooling in school. The girls were more conscientious about their work. We never had homework. I did have some discipline problems.

We had a school board and we had school visitors — Irving Lockwood was one of them. Some used to fall asleep when they visited the school while hearing the lessons. They were supposed to be there to see the teachers were on their toes. Later we had a supervisor. Frank Knight was the first one.

Though I lived near, I had to stay during lunch hour to keep order. There was a pot belly stove in the middle of the floor. My father furnished the wood that he cut up in Devils Den. He drew it out with the horses and a pung sled. He dumped it outside on the ground so the children carried it in and piled it in the vestibule to dry out. We burned big logs in the stove, but in cold weather they didn't go through the night so we had to build a fire the next morning. I was my own janitor. I swept out and did everything. I was paid twenty-five dollars a month. It got up to forty before I left. I lived at home and didn't have to pay board, otherwise I never could have managed. Some of the teachers in the other school lived as far away as Norwalk so they had to board.

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1990 DUES ARE DUE IN APRIL

A letter will be sent out to all members as a reminder that dues are due in April. For those of you who are not now members, our membership year runs from April to March.

If you wish to join the Society, please send your check to Post Office Box 1092, Weston, CT 06883, and indicate the category.

WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1990-91 Membership

Please () increase () continue my membership for the April 1990-March 1991 year.

Student (\$5.00) Sustaining (\$100.00)

Indiv. Senior (\$10.00) Patron (\$250.00)

Indivd. (\$25.00) Benefactor (\$500.00)

Couple/Family (\$50.00) Business/Corp. (\$50.00)

() I would like to participate in upcoming events.

Member Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Does your Company Match your Gift? If so, please send in a form.

THE PLANK ROAD THAT ALMOST WAS

FROM THE 'RESOLVES AND PRIVATE LAWS OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT', FOR THE YEAR 1836 TO THE YEAR 1857. VOLUME IV, PRINTED BY THOMAS J. STAFFORD, NEW HAVEN, 1857.

TITLE XXII

PLANK ROAD COMPANIES

INCORPORATING THE DANBURY, REDDING, WESTON
AND WESTPORT PLANK ROAD COMPANY

PASSED 1851

Resolved by this Assembly, Sec. 1, That Alva Gray, Alanson Lyon, George Perry, Zalmon Sanford, Thomas L. Sanford, Henry H. Monroe, Milo Lee, John W. Edmonds, O.O. Sanford, Andrew L. Winton, and Ebenezer Wilson, together with such other persons as shall associate with them, be and they are hereby made and constituted a body politic and corporate, by the name of the Danbury, Redding, Weston, and Westport Plank Road Company, and by that name, may sue and be sued, implead and be impleaded in any court in this state, and may ordain and establish such by-laws, rules and regulations as shall be necessary for the government and management of said company, by contrary to the laws of this state of the United States. . . . And said company is hereby authorized and empowered to locate, construct, and finally complete and maintain a plank road from some suitable point in the town of Westport, through the towns of Weston, Redding, to and into the town of Danbury, in such route as shall be deemed most expedient. The track of which plank road shall be made of timber, plank or other hard material, so that the same form a hard and even surface. And for the purpose or constructing said plank road the said company is hereby authorized to lay out their road, not exceeding four rods wide through the whole length; and for the purpose of cutting and embankments, and for obtaining stone and gravel, may take as much more land as may be necessary for the proper construction and security of said road. PROVIDED, that all damages that may be occasioned to any person or corporation by the taking of any such land or materials aforesaid, shall be paid for by said company, in manner herein after provided.

Sections 2 through 5 deal with the corporate structure and the buying of the necessary real estate.

Sec. 6. When the lands or other property or estate of any feme-covert, infant, or person non compos mentis, shall be necessary; for the construction of said plank road, said lands may be taken, notice being given to the husband of such feme-covert, and the guardian of such infant, and the conservator of such person non compos mentis. And they may respectively release all such damages for any lands or estate taken and appropriated as aforesaid, as they might do if the same were holden in their own right respectively.

Sec. 7. Whenever it shall be necessary for the construction of their plank road to intersect or cross any stream of water or water-course, or any road or highway or turnpike road, it shall be lawful for said company to construct the road cross or on the same. But said company shall restore water-course, or

highway or road, this intersected, to its former state, or in sufficient manner not to impair its usefulness. And said company shall have power, and it shall be lawful for said company to construct ther road across or upon the Northfield turnpike road; provided the consent of said Northfield Turnpike Company shall, by a major vote of the directors of said turnpike company, have been obtained for the purpose previous thereto.

Sec. 8. Deals with getting permission to use any portion of a public road and

Sec. 9. States that when the whole or any consecutive four miles of the road is completed, they may apply to the commissioners to inspect the road, and if approved, will receive a certificate.

Sec. 10. Upon filing such certificate as aforesaid, said company may erect one or more toll gates upon their road, but not within three miles of each others, and may demand and receive toll, not exceeding two cents per mile for any vehicle drawn by two animals; one-half cent per mile for every additional animal; for every vehicle drawn by one animal, not exceeding one cent per mile; for every horse and rider or led horse, not exceeding one-half cent per mile; for mules and cattle, sheep and swine, not exceeding one mill per mile, each.

Sec. 11. Said company may at any time extend their plank road to any a point within the said town of Danbury.

Sec. 12. This resolution may at any time be altered, amended or repealed at the pleasure of the general assembly.

Since this plank road was never built, we can assume that the company never raised the necessary funds, or the charter was repealed by the general assembly. Based on the many reports of the lousy dirt roads in Weston over a 75 years period (or longer), a plank road might have been a good thing.

EVELYN KERIN RESIGNS FROM THE BOARD

Mrs. Evelyn Kerin, our Trustee who did our old house record searching and the genealogy reviews, has moved to Chicago. We will miss her excellent work and the time she spent on these two projects. If anybody would like to take over this work, call any of our trustees, or write to the Society.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

MORE ON JARVIS MILITARY ACADEMY
ONIONS, THE CASH CROP OF WESTON
PICTURE QUIZ
CURRENT EVENTS

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THE

CHRONICLE

QUARTERLY

A PUBLICATION OF THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED IN 1961

March 1990

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