

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN

JANUARY 1967, VOL. III, No. 2



GORE LEA

Weston Historical Society, Inc. Midwinter Meeting

Tuesday, February 7, 1967 — 8 P.M. — First Parish Hall

"The Vineyard and the Tories" is the title chosen by Jean Gorely for her talk to members of the Society at its February meeting. A charter member of the Society, Mrs. Gorely will report on research that she and her husband, Charles P. Gorely Jr., have done on their pre-revolutionary house. Called "Gore Lea," their home is located at 787 Boston Post Road, not far from the 213 acre home-site of the Honorable Francis Fulham, a direct ancestor of Mr. Gorely and a founder of Weston 250 years ago.

Research in the world of antiques is not a new adventure for Mrs. Gorely. An authority on early English ceramics, she and her husband founded the Wedgewood Club, an organization designed to awaken appreciation of man's cultural heritage through the study of early ceramics, stressing quality

and relationship rather than acquisition and commercial values. Since its establishment in 1933 with Mr. Gorely as president and Mrs. Gorely as secretary, the organization has flourished and lists among its members many distinguished artists, scientists, museum directors, antiquarians and educators.

A student of Emerson, a poet, a writer of books and articles, a consultant and an interpreter, Jean Gorely is a person of greatly diversified interests. Her extensive knowledge and interest in art subjects led to a long period of correspondence with Queen Mary. Once the Queen closed a letter with the words: "It is fun to have found a kindred spirit. Sincerely yours, Mary R." After the Queen's death, a member of the royal family wrote: "I think we have all felt that your correspondence and your knowledge have combined to bring about a very delightful 'entente' between our two countries and have contributed to the enjoyment and interest of Queen Mary".

The program on February 7th will be the third one that shows how much talent we have within our own organization — the first being the play "Around the Cracker Barrel" and the second, Brenton H. Dickson's lecture on the history of the old Middlesex Canal.

Report of Annual Meeting

At the Annual Meeting of the Weston Historical Society, Inc. held at the Weston Town House on November 15, 1966, a large and enthusiastic audience of "Canal Bugs" turned out to hear a lecture by fellow member Brenton H. Dickson on the original research done by him in connection with the Middlesex Canal of the early 19th century that ran from Boston to Lowell. A tape recording of this address has been presented to the History Department of the Weston High School.

Four directors were re-elected for another 3 years: Brenton H. Dickson, Grant M. Palmer, Jr., Harold G. Travis and Harold B. Willis, Jr. Other Directors are Mrs. Homer N. Sweet, J. Kenneth Bennett, John G. Brooks, Erlund Field and Henry W. Patterson.

At the subsequent Directors meeting the following officers were re-elected: Harold G. Travis, President; Harold B. Willis, Jr., Vice President; Charles P. Gorely, Jr., 2nd Vice President; Mrs. C. V. Cooke, Corresponding Secretary; John G. Brooks, Clerk, and Harry B. Jones, Treasurer. Leonard Dowse was chairman of the Nominating Committee.

A moment of silence was observed to remember members who have died during the past year, including Mrs. Henry W. Patterson, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Davenport, Mr. Marshall Dwinnell, Mr. Oscar A. Schlaikjer and Mr. Stephen Thrall.

Mr. Travis discussed briefly the work of the various committees during the past year. He also announced that a boulder, unidentified until it can be properly protected, has been uncovered in the town. It bears the initial "J. D.", believed to mean James Davenport since there are documents available indicating that in 1639 Governor Winthrop and the Rev. James Davenport came up the Charles River from Boston to that point.

Some Highlights On Industrial Enterprises

In Weston, Mass., from 1630

Industrial Enterprises that once Flourished in Weston.

Many of us who live in Weston may have a tendency to think that this was always primarily a residential town and that most all of its inhabitants went outside to earn their living or obtained their livelihood on farms, or taught, or operated groceries, dry goods stores, and taverns.

Col. Daniel S. Lamson in his book on the history of the town of Weston from 1630 to 1890 rightly commented that practically all early Colonial industries flourished at one time or another within the Weston boundaries — and in addition, almost every type of trade and store was operated here.

The following is a list which certainly could be called industrial enterprises in making or fashioning products to sell — not only in Weston but throughout New England and the nation as they developed.

Brewery or Malt Houses	Cider Mills
Clock Making	Organ Factories
Hatters	Yarn Spinners
Grist Mills	Cotton Machinery
Straw Braiders	Door Locks
Saw Mills	Expanding Bits
Machine Shops	Furniture
Potteries	Plows
Wheelwrights	Pencil Sharpeners
Shoe Making	Tailors
Tanneries	Men's Clothing
Cabinet Making	

Each of the above enterprises undoubtedly had interesting, unusual history made by the people who founded them, operated them, and then passed them on from one generation to another. It is the hope of the Industrial Research Department of the Weston Historical Society in the months and years to come to unearth new, interesting human information that may add to our appreciation of Weston History, such as the Abraham Hews Pottery establishment started in 1765 and said to be the first of its kind in New England.

Industrial and Other Related Topics

Naturally, taxation, values of currency, and other developments since early colonial days have had great changes and it is interesting to note how Col. Lamson points out that in 1708, the first tax rate, previous to the incorporation of the town, was defined as follows:

"The Province tax for the west precinct of Watertown by assessment made September 17, 1708 by Benjamin Gearfield Pasgrave Wellington and John Warren, assessors, was 101 pounds and 12 shillings, of which only the sum of 80 pounds, 15 shillings and 6 pence was collected."

It will also be noticed that on all very old tax rates or invoices, as they were called, a column is set apart and styled "Faculty". This denoted that any person in the town meeting having a "knack" at anything or a faculty of trade wherewith he earned his livelihood, was supposed to be taxed thereon, perhaps very much in the sense of our present licenses. However, Col. Lamson points out that under this head nobody confessed to having any "Faculty" and it is to be presumed that it was not insisted upon by the assessors. Perhaps one reason for not declaring your trade was that if it were to be taxed it was just as well to keep it quiet as to how you made your living.

Until as late as 1812 the various currencies of money of the different States had different values and a dollar in sterling money was worth 4 shillings and 6 pence officially, but in the New England States it was 6 shillings to a dollar; in New York, 8 shillings; and in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland, 7 shillings and 6 pence.

The above article, written by Merton E. Williams, is the first of a series to be published in the "Bulletin" concerning the history of industrial enterprises in Weston.

Welcome to New Members

It is a pleasure to welcome the following residents of Weston into the Society: Mr. and Mrs. Bryan E. Smith, 39 Byron Road; Mr. and Mrs. George Ashley, 25 Whitney Tavern Road; Mrs. Robert F. McLeod, 22 Pelham Road; Mr. and Mrs. Owen C. Howe, Jr., 80 Wellesley Street; Mrs. Everett Schwartz, 19 Jones Road.

The President, in his Annual Report, made an appeal to each of us to try and get a new member. If that were the case, the total would be over 1000, the largest in the State! Forms may be obtained from Mr. Philip F. Coburn, 119 Church Street, Telephone 899-2236.

The Society's treasury has already been increased by over \$350.00 as a result of voluntary contributions over and above the regular \$2.00 membership fees.

"Puritans' Progress" by Arthur Train

Few people realize that Arthur Train, the noted author, wrote a book that was published in 1931, a complimentary copy of which is in our Weston Library. At least the first third of this book contains a lot of Weston history. Arthur Train did much of his research here where his ancestors originally made rum, ran grist mills, held public offices as surveyors and collectors, and fought in the Revolution. One became the first minister of the Baptist Church.

In his search to understand the meaning of "Puritan" he has brought out many very interesting insights into the makeup of inventories and estates, business enterprises, currency and taxation.

Don't Forget the Back of the "Bulletin"!

Each issue of the "Bulletin" has Calendar Highlights on the back page as a reminder of coming events and activities within the Society. Because of the expense of mailing cards before each meeting this is the only means other than newspaper announcements that we have of notifying members of times, dates and places. Don't miss a good program simply because you failed to mark it down on your calendar ahead of time.



Annual Dues: \$2.00 per person

Gift Memberships are suggested

Life Memberships (\$200) are available

Voluntary contributions to the Society are also welcomed.

Checks should be made payable to Weston Historical Society, Inc., and sent to Mr. Harry B. Jones, 448 Concord Road, Weston 02193.

President

Mr. Harold G. Travis
899-4515

Information Chairman

Mrs. H. Eugene Jones
899-0177

Extra copies of the "Bulletin" are available for 15c. Please contact Mrs. H. Eugene Jones, Bulletin Editor.



WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

Calendar Highlights

(Please save the dates)

February 7, 1967
8:00 P.M.
First Parish Hall

Speaker: Jean Gorely, a charter member of the
Society (see page 1 for details)

April 11, 1967
Weston High School

3rd Annual Charter Anniversary Dinner
Speaker: Mr. Roger S. Webb, President of R.A.R.E.
(Relocaters of Antique Real Estate)

May

Tour of historic spots in Duxbury
(date to be announced)

Open House at the Jones House (Josiah Smith Tavern)
Every Wednesday from 2 to 4 P.M.