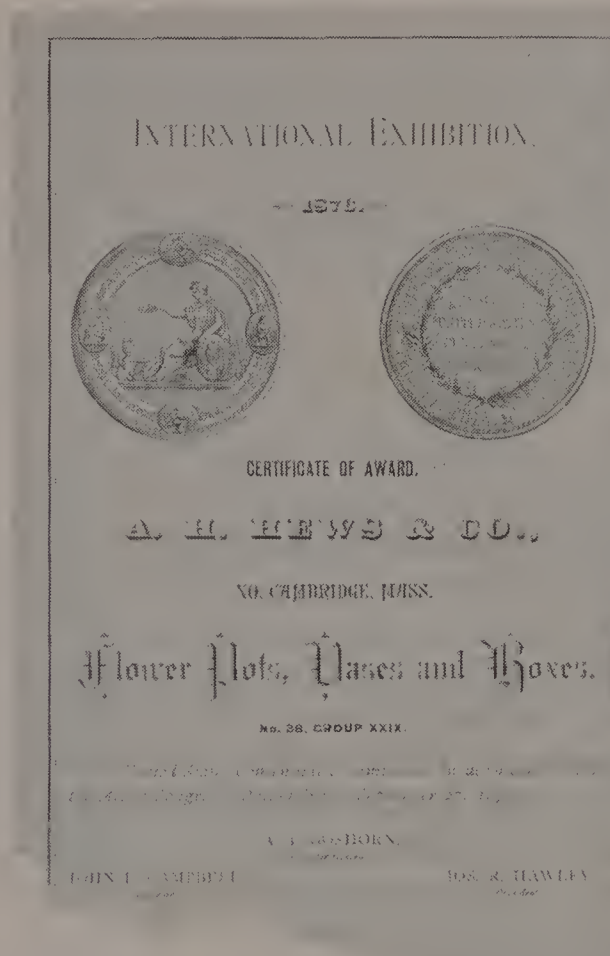
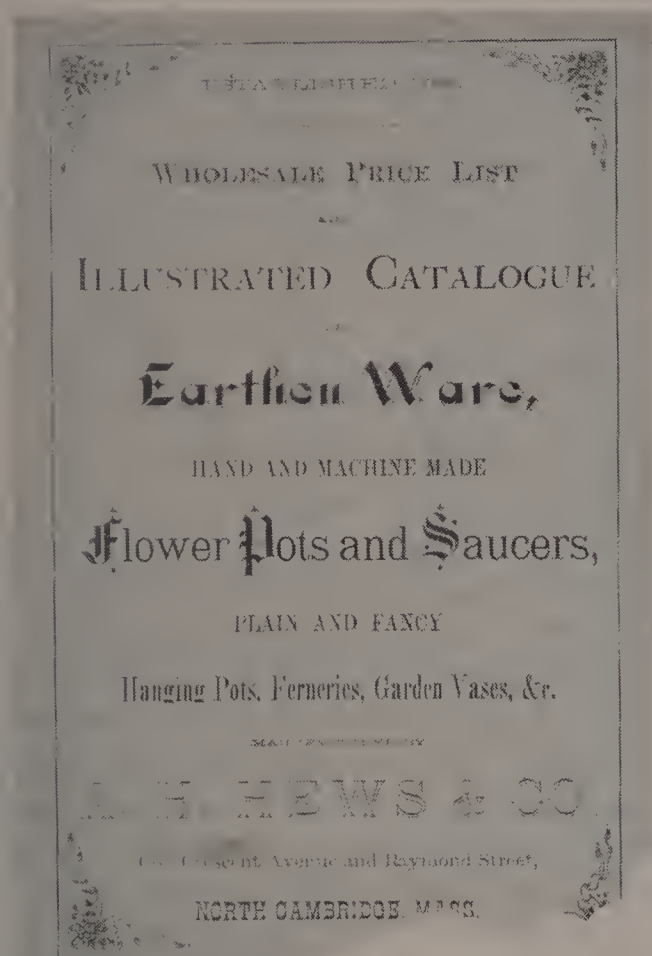


THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



October 1975, Vol. XII, No. 1



Featured frontispiece page (above right) of The A. H. Hews & Co. 1878 catalogue was the award for excellence it had received 2 years before from the United States Centennial Commission at the International Exposition held in Philadelphia. (Catalogue's front cover appears at left. Story on Page 4.)

ANNUAL MEETING NOVEMBER 11TH

The annual meeting of the Society will convene in the Ball Room of The Josiah Smith Tavern on Tuesday evening, November 11th, at 8 o'clock. The President's annual report, accompanied by those from special committees, will precede the report of the Nominating Committee, chaired by Samuel J. McDonald, and the election of new directors. The names of dedicated members with diversified background, experience, and age will be welcomed by the Nominating Committee, so do not hesitate to suggest your candidate by calling its chairman at 894-1423. We are a democratic organization with townwide membership and responsibility. The combined skills and talents of our vast membership represent a potential that should be mobilized for the Bicentennial and years ahead.

Following the business meeting, the new and popular *KNOX TRAIL SLIDE SHOW* will be presented in color and sound. It will cover the journey of Henry Knox from Ticonderoga to Cambridge through Framingham, Sudbury, Wayland, Weston, Waltham, and Watertown, and it will give us all some idea of what to expect next January 25th when the reenactment troupe, now in the process of selection, is expected to encamp overnight in our Town, "weather or no." A separate article describes tentative plans for accommodating our expected hardy visitors as our part in the memorable trek that will bring back events of two centuries ago.

After the showing, a social hour will follow when members, old and new, will get to know each other better. Light refreshments will be served by the hospitality committee.

“ONCE UPON A PUNG” SOCIETY TO PUBLISH SECOND EDITION

It has just been announced that author Brenton H. Dickson and publisher Harold G. Travis have assigned to the Weston Historical Society all copyrights and privileges to the popular book they brought out for the “I REMEMBER WHEN” Committee in 1963 when the Town commemorated the 250th anniversary of its incorporation. The gift includes profits made on the first edition of 2,000 copies, such sum being assigned to the Society’s Endowment Fund by vote of the Directors. It also includes 1,000 unbound copies. In addition, the donors have supplied an Errata page for insertion in a second edition of 250 copies that the Directors have ordered to have bound and ready for sale this fall, hopefully by the time of our annual meeting, surely by Christmas. For the benefit of those who already own copies of the first edition, the forthcoming ERRATA page is enclosed in this issue of the BULLETIN with our compliments. In making this gift, the donors have stipulated only that all profits are to be put into the permanent Endowment Fund of the Society whose income only is ever to be used. As soon as the second edition is sold, the Directors plan to have a third edition produced from the remaining unbound copies.

KNOX TRAIL REENACTMENT TROUPE DUE TO REACH WESTON NEXT JANUARY 25TH

The Knox Trail Historical Society, Inc. announces that the Massachusetts portion of the “Reenactment” will take place during next January under whatever varying weather conditions may be encountered. Beginning January 15th in the western town of Alford, the troupe is due to reach Cambridge on Tuesday the 27th, — cannon, 26 horses, and about 30 men. Applications for participation are being received at the Society’s headquarters in Boston. Fuller information as to requirements for qualification may be obtained by writing Susan E. Schruth, president, at P. O. Box 1364, Boston, Mass. 02104. Weston’s representative on the Advisory Board, is Harold G. Travis at 899-4515. Emphasis will be placed on excellent physical condition as attested by your doctor, experience in outdoor activities, interest and/or hobbies related to the trek’s activities, and a dedicated desire to be part of so significant a program.

The Knox Trail Historical Society, Inc., and the Massachusetts Bicentennial Commission are in need of equipment for the Reenactment. Loan of such should be for the life of the Massachusetts portion from January 9th through the 27th. Certain pieces may be needed for subsequent ceremonies March 1-4 and 17th in Boston. While we have not yet been specifically approached for feeding and housing overnight, we anticipate that the opportunity very likely will be presented to our members and other townspeople to offer hospitality to the brave Reenactors. As soon as notice is officially received of the Troupe’s official needs and desires for Sunday night, January 27th, our local Bicentennial Committee will make such information available to all.

Already the puppet show, HARD KNOX, has twice delighted Weston groups,—at Woodland School audience last May and at the local library during the summer,—a statewide banner contest among grammar school children is tentatively being planned, and the SLIDE SHOW at our November 11th annual meeting will set the stage for the Reenactment Troup’s overnight stopover on Sunday, January 25th.

IN MEMORIAM

Since our last issue, our hearts have been saddened by the deaths of fellow charter members Charles R. (“Mike”) Ball, Mrs. Mortimer T. (Ruth) Farley, James B. (“Jim”) Greason, Jr. and of Walter E. Robb, affable and dynamic husband of fellow member, Betty Robb. All four of them gave much of themselves to the town we all love, and their absences will be sorely missed for many years to come. These losses, added to those occasioned by removals to other parts of the country, impose upon new members and those of us who are left, the responsibility, yea the opportunity, to work just that much harder in the fields that they served, so that there’ll always be a Weston unexcelled in the cohesive spirit of its people.

AFTERMATH OF A MURDER

71 years ago,—March 31, 1904 to be exact, little “Ros” Bennett walked westward toward 196 South Avenue from her home on the knoll up the road. She planned to visit her close friend Amy Roberts, the fortyish housekeeper at the home of the Pages,—the recent widower, Mr. Page, his son and daughter. Still very much alive and young, “Ros” goes back far in memory. A life-long resident of South Avenue and a charter member of our Society, she is now Mrs. David M. Little. She recalls how Amy taught her the art of making cookies. Perhaps on that afternoon so many years ago she was hoping to have a batch of cookies on hand when she and her friends would get together on the morrow for April Fools Day pranks and fun. Surely she did not dream of the excitement and tragedy that were waiting for her, but as she approached the attractive white house with its green shutters, she wondered “Whose horse is tethered outside and why are all those men running around?”

With shocking suddenness she learned that Mabel Page had been found lying dead on her bedroom floor in front of the mirror. Why would such a grand girl commit suicide, as somebody whispered, when she was always so happy? Could she have been murdered? Nobody knew and nobody should touch a thing until the police arrived. It was at that point that “Ros Bennett” came up to the door, and as her family had the only phone in the neighborhood, she recalls that she was “rushed back with the report.” Weston’s first and recently appointed Police Chief Darius B. Vittum and his assistant, P. J. McAuliffe, were quickly on the scene. Alertly this same Pat McAuliffe, later beloved Police Chief and shortly one of the recipients of the reward, went into action. (Pat’s daughter Elizabeth, one of our charter members also, now resides on North Avenue in Weston.)

As we talked during the BARGAIN BONANZA in the Town Hall last May, Mrs. Little spoke affectionately of old “Pat”, calling him “the grand mogul of the town,—liveryman, fireman, chief of Police, dog catcher, measurer of lumber, and what else! What fun it was to watch his pair of horses being unhitched from the firetruck, slapped on the rumps, and sent back alone down Church Street to the old stable that still stands by the railroad station.” (See ONCE UPON A PUNG, Pages 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 27, 50, 52, and 79.)

Among the books in the library of the Society’s headquarters in the 1805 Fiske Law Office at 626 Boston Post Road are two large volumes that contain all the testimony of the long drawn-out trial that led finally to the conviction and execution of one Charles Tucker, an Auburndale lad of poor repute.

Mrs. Little treasures many notes left by her father, Samuel C. Bennett, longtime distinguished Dean of the Boston University School of Law and constantly one of the guiding beacons and capable public servants of our Town. One entry reads: “Mabel Page was murdered March 31, 1904 — age 41 years 3 mo.s, 17 days. She was born in Boston.” Another is the rough draft he wrote for the petition to offer a reward of \$500 “for the detection of one who has committed a felony.”

Publicity was nationwide and Weston’s name was on Page One of papers from coast to coast day after day. Such notoriety so distressed and annoyed Amy Roberts that, we learned from Mrs. Little, she had her name changed to *EMMA MOTT*, moved quietly to Cambridge, and worked for many years thereafter as housekeeper in the home of Dr. Swan where Mrs. Little and her brother, Samuel C. Bennett Jr., frequently visited her to keep up the old ties. If Charlie Tucker was in fact the murderer of Mabel Page, why is he not equally accountable for the death in name of Amy Roberts and for the subsequent masquerade of Emma Mott?

Harold G. Travis

THE HEWS POTTERY: A PROGRESS REPORT

“Seek and ye shall find”, instructs the Bible. It also advises us to “ask” and to “knock.” Since my article in last October’s BULLETIN on the Hews Account Book, “seeking” and “asking” has produced some results I wish to share briefly with you.

The most distant communication came from a non-resident member in New Hampshire who remembered as a child growing up in Weston, that a large garden urn on a pedestal, given in the 19th century by Mr. Hews to her grandmother, Mrs. Knox, stood for many years filled with pansies in front of their house at 334 Boston Post Road, known until recently as “The Teachers’ Lodge.” It was terra cotta in color and resembled the Weston watering trough in shape. If any member knows the whereabouts of this Victorian urn, possibly now painted white or black, please let me hear from you.

Products of the 19th century phase of Hews Pottery, especially after the move to Cambridge, are without doubt easier to find than earlier wares, but these should be regarded as equally important to the total history. The Society owns several examples of the mass-produced flower pots, but even these are of great significance because the flat collared and completely stackable pot, as we know it today, was introduced by Hews in 1890. Several members have reported examples of the earlier un-collared types. I have appointments to examine jardinières, hanging baskets, and other odd pieces suspected of being Cambridge-period Hews.

The A. H. Hews Company went out of business in the 1960’s. Fortunately the Hews firm issued catalogues of their popular North Cambridge wares during their most productive years. These catalogues are, of course, exceedingly rare but your indefatigable Editor, Mr. Travis, has obtained as a gift to the Society from Mr. Dunbar Lockwood Jr., son of the last owner, Xerox copies of four of these catalogues of the 1870 and 1880 decades. These will be of immense value in the identification of utilitarian and art pottery products of the Cambridge phase. The illustration herein shows the frontispiece to the 1878 catalogue just after our nation’s Centennial Celebration. Concerning the earlier wares produced in Weston, I’ve found that the date of 1765 for the beginning of the pottery by Abraham Hews, Sr. is even more unreliable than I thought last year when I first questioned it. The account book entry dated April 19, 1765 quoted on Page 43 of *Centenary Firms of the United States* as proof of date of establishment, turns out to be identical to the entry made on April 19, 1774 on the inside cover of the Hews Account Book as I quoted last fall. The pottery was obviously active in 1774, but how much before that date it came into being still has to be proved.

It was interesting also to discover that a Mr. William Brandon who attended the Winterthur Ceramic Conference in 1972 at which I spoke, had done a private “dig” on the former Abraham Hews, Jr. Boston Post Road property. Important to Hews research was the finding of kiln “furniture”, including a saggar which is a fired clay box used for protecting delicate pieces of pottery from direct heat in the kiln. Although not found in or even near any kiln site on the property, it is reasonable to suppose that this had a Hews origin. Mr. Brandon has offered to give some of the sherds to the Society for furtherance of our record project, and we are grateful.

Their acquisition is significant because in past years many Hews sherds have been dug up by recent landowners and amateur archaeologists, but instead of being recorded, they were discarded or retained for personal reasons, and usually removed from this area. The result is a confused scattering of valuable clues. Hews Pottery history is a vital part of Weston History and as such, should be recognized as larger than individual interests.

Seeking and *asking* has produced results this past year, so I shall try *knocking* as well in the future. If you have not already written or phoned me about the sherds or whole pieces in *your* possession that need to be recorded, please do so and I shall contact you promptly.

Barbara Gorely Teller
115 Brooks Street
Wellesley, Mass. 02181
Phone 235-8532

GARDEN VASE AND PEDESTAL.
 No. 38.

No. 39.
 There being a great variety of vases in the market, we can offer but two particular advantages of this over any other kind of Garden Vase. Plants thrive better in Earthen than any other material. It makes a very superior vase for Parlor use during the Winter, being much lighter to handle than iron or stone. Size, Vase 23-inches high, 16-inches diameter. Pedestal, 21-inches high, 14-inches diameter.
 Electrotypes for Nos. 38 and 39 united, \$1.60, post paid.

A. H. Hews & Co , North Cambridge, Mass.
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Window Boxes and Domestic Wares

SPITTOON.
 No. 20. Parlor Spittoon. Finished variety of colors.

No. 22. Cuspadore. Finished in Vermillion, Green and Maroon.

NEW PATTERN WINDOW BOX.
 Very Attractive.

CUSPADORE.

CROCUS POTS.
 Finished in imitation of Rough Stone, Scotch and White Granite.

LOG HANGING POT.

WINDOW BOX, 15 INCHES LONG.

Electrotypes of Nos. 20, 22, 23 at 60 cents each, post paid.

Electrotypes of Nos. 21, 24, 25—65 cent, post paid.

Two of the two dozen illustrated pages from the Hews' 1878 catalogue.

ANOTHER ACQUISITION

More times than not, visitors to our headquarters, the 1805 Isaac Fiske Law Office at 626 Boston Post Road, have been heard to exclaim “Tiny, but what a gem!” From this time on, such praise will be magnified because of the corner cupboard that our fellow member, Howard M. Forbes, has made and installed at our request, in the southeast corner of the meeting room downstairs, looking out over the oldfashioned bulb garden to the natural swale that abuts Linwood Avenue all the way to the By-pass “where the race of men go by.” Made of old pine, it looks, in the words of a recent visitor, “as though it had always been there.”

We urge you to see it for yourself, for we would welcome donation or loan of appropriate old china pieces such as teapots, plates, platters, cups and saucers, etc. to adorn its shelves. Just phone either Mrs. Travis 899-4515 or Mrs. Lucas 899-2133 and see what can be worked out to add further charm and grace to our cozy little home. We suggest that all the while each member begin to suggest more ways of utilizing this historic building of limited, selective capacity in order to further the work of the Society. It’s a quiet place, full of charm inside and outside, rich in history, abundant in the potential wealth on its bookshelves, peaceful in its setting with a prospect “out back” which, though in the heart of things, is miles away from the roar and tear of 20th century living. For small study and/or discussion groups and exhibits, or for uninterrupted research and writing, it is truly an unsuspected boon. Suggestions to the above ladies will receive sympathetic and appreciative response.

NEW MEMBERS

We take pleasure in welcoming into our membership Mr. and Mrs. Herbert S. Combs of 76 Westland Avenue, Mr. and Mrs. Paul B. Herrick of 190 Summer Street, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph T. Lawson of 31 Montvale Road, Mr. and Mrs. Lee E. Munson, 85 Newton Street, and the Francis B. Shepherds of Yonkers, New York.

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AN EDITOR'S APPEAL

For a dozen years the BULLETIN faithfully has ground out story after story that was dug out of Weston's hitherto untapped mine of history. We have been able from time to time to get spectacular help from a few members who have voluntarily submitted, or prolifically responded to our requests for, articles on specific subjects that have added to our general knowledge of Weston's unlimited lore. We have been disappointed, nevertheless, with compositely the relatively *small percentage* of our vast and talented membership that has been passive and has submitted nothing. We realize that all of us do not have the gift of writing, but each of us nevertheless has talents that would add to the cause. Here then, is a thought for you who think you "can't write!" —How about setting that pragmatic, practical mind of yours onto compiling an index of the many subjects that have been covered in BULLETIN issues of these past dozen years?

It's a far and challenging cry from the creative literary world of writing and word expression to one that's closer to computers, but both are vital. All of us, and future historians, would welcome a comprehensive index. Who'll tackle it? Phone the Editor, 899-4515.

BARGAIN BONANZA: AN ALL-ROUND SUCCESS!

The magnificent profit of \$2,400 that resulted from last May 9th and 10th's *BARGAIN BONANZA* in the Town Hall was only a part of the great benefits that accrued from contributions in articles and services by literally hundreds of our members, their families, and friends. Important and vital as money is, it alone would be insignificant if not accompanied by that contagious and inspiring spirit of togetherness and cooperation that characterized the tremendous undertaking which was chairmanned and directed by our fellow charter member, Mrs. Donald D. Douglass. She in turn wants us to express sincere appreciation to her dozens of aides and their assistants who worked so enthusiastically and energetically, and we hereby propose a toast of "Well Done!" to you all. At its next meeting the Board of Directors will decide on the useful purposes to which the large sum raised will be allocated. Some will undoubtedly go into the permanent Endowment Fund which has almost \$4,000 to go to reach our immediate objective, while other amounts no doubt can be productively delegated to current Bicentennial or other projects of merit. Phone your suggestions to any officer or director.



Annual Dues: \$5.00 per person, \$8 per family

Life Memberships \$200

Gift Memberships are suggested

Contributions to the Society are always welcome.

Checks should be made payable to Weston Historical Society, Inc.
and mailed to P. O. Box 343, Weston, Mass. 02193

President: Mr. Edward W. Marshall 893-7388

Editor of the "Bulletin": Mr. Harold G. Travis 899-4515

Extra copies are available for 25¢ each. Please contact Mrs. Frederick D. Bonner 893-4346.