

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



March 1983

Vol. XIX, No. 3



One of Weston's oldest houses is the Whitney Tavern, 171 North Avenue, built in 1707. William Whitney, who operated a tavern here from 1770-1786, once kept the well-known "Punch Bowl" tavern in Brookline. Although Weston had taverns at least to the 1840's, by then the temperance movement had dealt them a severe blow. When railroads replaced stage coaches, Weston taverns were gone forever. Francis H. Hastings — from whose 1894 album this picture was taken — wrote that the Whitney Tavern "has been a commonplace tenement house for seventy-five years or more." Mr. Hastings was in a position to know from first-hand experience, having been born in the neighborhood in 1836, and raised there. North Avenue has been known as the Great North Road, the Lancaster Road, and North County Road. As recently as 1961 a history of Weston — by Emma Ripley — asserted that North Avenue had no stage coaches. In researching their book on Weston during the Revolution, however, Brent Dickson and Homer Lucas discovered in Badger and Porter's *Stage Register* for 1840 that forty coaches per week passed through Weston on the Post Road and forty-two on North Avenue!

WESTON'S BEGINNING THE FOUNDING OF A NEW ENGLAND TOWN

The present day town of Weston, Massachusetts was once a part of Watertown. In 1630 Watertown had a total of 25,000 acres compared to its present acreage of 2,700. The loss of 22,300 acres is accounted for by the fact that the present day towns of Concord, Weston, Waltham, Lincoln, Belmont, and a small section of Cambridge through the years gradually broke away from Watertown.

Although Weston became a separate precinct on March 6, 1698, there is mention earlier of the land of Weston being a distinct part of Watertown. For instance, on October 14, 1638 the land of Weston was termed "the Farm Lands" on the first recorded allotments of land. [In 1662 the first lots were surveyed and laid out. Ed.] Furthermore, "the earliest mention in the records, of a boundary between the Farms and the rest of Watertown, is on March 13, 1683, when it was voted at town meeting

that, ‘those who dwell on the west side of Stony Brook be freed from school taxes that they may be the better able to teach among themselves.’ Thus, we see that gradually the Farm Lands were becoming independent from Watertown. [Weston is not known to have had an Indian settlement. See the October, 1973 *Bulletin* regarding the earth mounds on the Charles River shore adjacent to the Norumbega Tower. In 1640 after the plague, there were but 15-18,000 Indians in all of New England. It is not clear who may have been the first white settler in Weston, the “Remote Meddows of Watertown.” In 1651 one Solomon Johnson — a likely candidate — agreed to herd the dry cattle of Watertown on land which is now in Weston near the Wayland line. The first grain mill was built in 1679. Ed.]

Up to 1697, though, people from the Farm Lands would trudge faithfully to the center of Watertown to church on rough carts or wagons pulled by oxen or horses. The exact measurements from the outer limits of the Farmers’ Precinct to the center of Watertown were as follows:

| To Watertown Center | Distance | Good Weather | Rain or Sleet | Snow |
|-------------------------|----------|--------------|---------------|---------|
| From Bogle Street | 8 miles | 2 hours | 4 hours | 8 hours |
| From Nonesuch Pond | 7.5 | 1.75 | 3.5 | 7.5 |
| From Wayland Line | 5.5 | 1.75 | 2.5 | 5.5 |
| From Merriam St/Rte 117 | 5.0 | 1.10 | 2.2 | 5.0 |
| From Ripley Lane | 6.3 | 1.50 | 3.0 | 6.3 |

Thanks to Mrs. Joseph Cressy of Weston and her aunt, Mrs. Roger Ela, both descendants of the early Fiskes, we owe this schedule of time required by a horse and rider (wife riding pillion) to make the trip:

| | |
|---------------|------------------|
| Good weather | 4 miles per hour |
| Rain or sleet | 2 miles per hour |
| Snow | 1 mile per hour |

This computation — found in the records of the First Parish compiled by Erlund Field — includes time for fording Stony Brook, climbing up Ball’s Hill, rest time for the horse, and other minor required stops. In interpreting these calculations however, we have to consider that to be a faithful member of the church one had to attend both the morning and afternoon services. Thus, the journey to church was a major excursion and an even greater excursion when you consider their trying to get home before nightfall the same day in the dead of winter.

Therefore, in 1697 a petition was sent to the General Court by residents to build a new meeting house for “settling the public worship of God among themselves. In as much as the Happy Union of The Church of Christ of Watertown in one Assembly, for which we have so much laboured, does seem altogether hopeless, so that after mature consideration seem the necessity of advising them to become two distinct churches, We do, On their behalf, humbly and unanimously Address this Great and General Assembly, that by the Authority thereof, there be made such a division of the Town of Watertown as to render each of the two churches capable of enjoying the Ordinances of the Gospel, without which such temptation as they appear otherwise is unavoidably enjoyed unto,” and this was signed by nineteen residents, none of whom lived in the Farmers’ Precinct (Weston).

After the approval of the petition by the General Court, a meeting house was built on Bear’s Hill — presently in Waltham. The only problem was that the trip to the Bear Hill church cut off only two miles. The result of this approval was that “on March 16, 1698, the Farmers were freed by Watertown from church rates, because they have built a Meeting House for themselves.” [The Precinct continued as a part of Watertown in civil matters for fifteen years. Ed.]

Another meeting house for the residents of the Farmers’ District of Watertown was built on a 36 foot square of Nathaniel Coolidge’s land. “This church was never completed, but services were held in it in 1700.” Mr. Joseph Mors was accepted and preached till 1706 when “Justice Sewall (Memoirs), under the date of March 6, 1706, speaks of a council held at the house of Mr. Willard, and they advise that after a month

Mr. Joseph Mors should cease to preach at Watertown Farms. . . . In this year difficulties arose respecting Mr. Mors' settlement in the ministry, but there is no record of what the difficulties were." Interestingly enough, Mr. Joseph Mors was never ordained in Weston. [Justice Sewall also reports in his diary that the arguments over the question of Weston's separation from Watertown became so heated that he had to pray hard in order to keep the contending parties from coming to blows. Ed.] Thus, the precinct chose two ministers, Mr. Nathaniel Gookin and Mr. Thomas Tufts, both of whom rejected the precinct's offer. As a result, the Farmers' Precinct went to the Court of Sessions in 1706 and the Court at Concord in 1707, "For not having a settled minister." Finally, Reverend William Williams, a Harvard graduate, accepted the position and was ordained in 1709. After this point, the Farmers' District became organized electing two deacons, Captain Josiah Jones and John Parkhurst in 1710.

With a developed Meeting House called the "First Parish", it is not surprising to see a petition to the Great and General Court in asking for the incorporation of the precinct as a town and another petition filed to the town of Watertown. The committee, composed of Francis Fulham, Josiah Jones, and Daniel Estabrooke, who presented the petition to the court, was successful, resulting in the incorporation of Weston and also in settling Weston's relationship with Watertown. [The present boundaries were established in 1746 when the northern portion was united with parts of Concord and Lexington as the Second Precinct of Weston, which in 1754 became the Town of Lincoln, leaving a southern portion of 16.8 square miles, the present area of the Town. Ed.]

Having discussed the founding of the Town, we will now move on to examine what kinds of people settled in Weston. In order to accomplish this, I have randomly selected a number of people who lived in Weston between the years of 1640 and 1745 to gain a broad picture of the man living on the outskirts of the Precinct of Watertown compared with the man living in the newly-developed town of Weston.

The first person I wish to mention is Abraham Browne, who was born March 6, 1639-40. Apparently, Abraham Browne did not wish to settle in the Watertown Farms area, but wanted instead to make his home near his sister, Lydia in Groton. Abraham Browne had purchased land in Groton when his fiancée, Mary Dix, became adamantly opposed to living in Groton. The result was that Abraham's mother gave him full power to settle on her land in the Farmers' District in Watertown. With this change in plans, he was married to Mary Dix on February 5, 1662-3. Shortly after this, the couple had two children, Lydia in 1663 and Abraham in 1665. In analyzing the inventory of Abraham Browne (1667), one can see that the family was by no means wealthy. For instance, Abraham Browne's inventory listed various kitchen utensils such as one frying pan, one pewter cup, one quart pot, one brass kettle, one pewter pot, and two earthen pots. Unlike today, when Paul Revere's pewter tankards are treasured, pewter cups and other objects in the 1600's were considered to be ordinary. If you had your cups and other objects made out of silver, you would have been considered rich.

Furthermore, the presence of one cow, two yearlings, two oxen, eight swine, a heifer, one horse, and one weaned calf shows that the family was a typical farming family. Abraham died at a fairly early age, 28 years. Unlike his father, Abraham, and his nephew Abraham, Abraham was not an active member of the community who served the town for years.

The next family I wish to present is the Herrington family, which like the majority of other early Weston families, traces roots through Watertown back to England. The son of Robert Herrington, whose house still exists today, was Joseph. Robert Herrington deeded the property to his son in 1685. On this piece of land was built the existing early colonial house at 751 Boston Post Road. Joseph served the Town as a surveyor of the highways and as a tything man. Forty-seven of the original fifty deeded acres that can be found in the Probate Records of 1690 in Joseph Herrington's will have been preserved and currently make up Woodleigh Farm.

Both Abraham Browne and Joseph Herrington were farmers as were most of Weston's people, however, now we are going to look at the builder and original owner of the Whitney Tavern. Born in Watertown in 1683, William Whitney was married to Martha Pierce in 1706 and had five children. The land that the tavern was built on was

sold to Whitney by Samuel and Mary Whitney of Watertown. As far as serving the town of Watertown and the town of Weston, he is found to have been chosen a fence viewer for the town of Watertown in March of 1707-1708. Thus, neither he nor members of his family were attached to Watertown in public affairs. Both of his parents, Nathaniel, who died at 90 years in 1742, and Sarah Hagar, who died at 88 years in 1746, died in Weston after having lived in Watertown. William's parents, Nathaniel and Sarah, baptized their seventh child, Grace, in Weston on December 3, 1710. The significance of this date is that Rev. William Williams was ordained on November 9, 1709. This shows that after Weston had a respected minister, William Williams, who had graduated from Harvard University and whose father was the minister at Hatfield, the First Precinct must have become rather attractive to Watertown families who were beginning to feel crowded in Watertown.

Lisa Ann Jacobs



The history of Memorial Day celebrations in Weston will be traced in the May *Bulletin*. Is this the earliest photograph of a Weston Memorial Day? Probably not. The clock in this photograph says ten o'clock, and Memorial Day was celebrated at two o'clock in 1890. We know that this is the dedication of the "flag staff in the public square" in 1890 — photographed at a different angle from the picture on the cover of the January 1982 *Bulletin*. The month and day are unknown, but the heavy clothing suggests cool weather — spring or fall. Among the group of five men (right foreground) facing the flagpole, the white-haired man in a military uniform may be Colonel Daniel Lamson, who completed his history of Weston in 1890. The identity of the twenty-piece band (left) is now known — yet. Historical detectives never give up. The Weston Cornet Band is a possibility, but appears to have become defunct by 1886. The Sudbury Brass Band played in Weston on Columbus Day in 1892 and at the Weston Grange Fair in 1894. The Crescent Band of Waltham played for Weston's Memorial Day parades in 1889 and 1893. The sharp-eyed observer will note a humorous incongruity: the men at the right are removing their hats, thus the moment must be solemn, perhaps a prayer. Yet, on the left, two members of the band are watching the photographer, and the young boy with them is talking to the band members as he turns his back to the ceremonies at the flagpole!



Weston's 250th Anniversary as a Town was celebrated over the Memorial Day Weekend in 1963. Setting the stage for the celebration was a facelifting in the Town Center, photographed here just prior to the work of the Beautification Committee. The founding of the Weston Historical Society in the fall of 1963 was due, in large part, to the local pride generated during the celebration.

WESTON NEWS, 1894

October 19 . . . A source of great annoyance to grown people at all entertainments in the Town Hall is the conduct of children. As grown people pay full admission, they desire to listen to whatever takes place on the stage, without being continuously troubled by children whispering and joking. The young people make themselves offensive also by boisterous applause of everything, paying no heed as to whether it is meritorious or not. Will no Weston parents think of this, and see that their children behave themselves properly?

September 7 . . . We believe that as a rule people in Weston do — and very properly — object to the playing of sports and games within the corporate limits of the town on Sunday. It is with surprise that they learned of Sumner Paine and Edward A. Wilkie were arrested for playing "golf" on the Lord's Day. If there is any virtue in birth, education and wealth it should lead the possessor to be an exemplary citizen. There is not the excuse that these parties were ignorant of the law. They acted deliberately and sought of themselves to break down the barriers that New England custom has raised between the probity and morality of a typical New England township and the immorality of France, the most licentious of nations and the one with the least respect for the sanctity of the Sabbath. The fine, we believe, was fittingly applied.

November 2 . . . Sumner Paine and E. A. Wilkie, who were arrested a few weeks ago for playing golf in Weston on Sunday, have tried to play the game in Newton on the Lord's Day, and have received word from City Marshall Richardson: that their playing on that day must be stopped.

Waltham Daily Free Press

MEMBERS OF WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

If any of your friends and neighbors are not on this list, why not ask them to join?

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Abbott
 Mr. & Mrs. Hazen Ackles
 Mr. & Mrs. R. W. Albrecht
 Mrs. Paul Allen
 Mr. & Mrs. Harold Allen
 Mr. & Mrs. George Amadon
 Mr. & Mrs. Fred Amon
 Mrs. Howard Anderson
 Mr. & Mrs. Jay Anderson
 Mr. & Mrs. Ivor C. Armistead
 Mrs. Joseph Ashbrook
 Mr. & Mrs. George Ashley
 Mr. & Mrs. Henri Atkins
 Dr. & Mrs. Gerald Austen
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 Mr. & Mrs. R. W. Bachelder
 Mr. & Mrs. Hamilton Bailey
 Mrs. Charles Ball
 Dr. & Mrs. Carl Bartels
 Mr. Philip Bassett
 Mr. & Mrs. George Bates
 Mrs. Theodore Bayles
 Dr. & Mrs. Glenn Behringer
 Mr. & Mrs. David Bell
 Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Bennett
 Mrs. Arthur Bent
 Mrs. Clinton Biddle
 Mr. & Mrs. David Blaney
 Mrs. Frederick Bonner
 Mrs. John Boyd
 Miss Lucy Boyd
 Dr. & Mrs. H. E. Braconier
 Mr. & Mrs. David Bradley
 Mr. Edward Briggs
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 Mrs. Richard Casey
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Cassidy
 Mrs. Thomas Chadwick
 Mr. George Chamberlain
 Mrs. Jeannette Cheek
 Mr. & Mrs. John Chisholm
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 Miss Anna C. Coburn
 Mr. & Mrs. Philip Coburn
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 Mr. & Mrs. Abram Collier
 Mrs. Harold Colpitts
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 Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Coombs
 Mr. & Mrs. Julio Correa
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Corwin
 Dr. & Mrs. Holland Cotter
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 Mr. & Mrs. F. A. Crafts, Jr.
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 Mrs. John Cronin, Jr.
 Mr. Bengley Crouch
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 Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Crowley
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 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Cutter
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 Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Danforth
 Mrs. Barbara Darling
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 Mr. & Mrs. Dudley Dumaine
 Mr. & Mrs. F. C. Dumaine
 Dr. & Mrs. Edwin Dyer
 Dr. & Mrs. Ralph Earle, Jr.
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 Mr. & Mrs. Dean Edmonds, Jr.
 Dr. & Mrs. Stanley Eldred
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Ellis
 Dr. William Elliston
 Mrs. Reginald Elwell
 Dr. & Mrs. David Farrell
 Mrs. Harry Fay
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Fenn
 Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Ferguson
 Mr. James Ferrelli
 Mr. & Mrs. E. Olsen Field
 Mr. & Mrs. Erlund Field
 Mr. & Mrs. T. B. Fitzpatrick
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Flynn
 Mr. & Mrs. Howard Forbes
 Mr. & Mrs. Leslie Ford
 Mr. & Mrs. John Forte
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 Mrs. Stanley French
 Mr. & Mrs. Allan Fulkerson
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 Mr. William A. Gallup, Jr.
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 Mrs. James Georgeady
 Mr. & Mrs. K. Germeshausen
 Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Gerstein
 Mrs. Allyn Gilbert
 Mr. & Mrs. Vernon Goddard
 Mr. & Mrs. John Graham
 Mr. & Mrs. Halcott Grant
 Mrs. Gilbert Graves
 Mrs. James Greason
 Miss Helen Green
 Miss Helen B. Green

Mrs. M. Thomas Green
 Mr. & Mrs. Fritz Gross
 Mrs. Leopold Gruener
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward Hall
 Mrs. Ruth Hallett
 Mr. & Mrs. John Hamilton
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hannah
 Mrs. Miles Hanson, Jr.
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Hardie
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Harding
 Mr. & Mrs. David Harmon
 Mr. & Mrs. Victor Harnish
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 Mr. & Mrs. William Hatch
 Mrs. Lyman Hayes
 Mr. Bruce Heintz
 Mr. & Mrs. R. L. Helgeson
 Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Henderson
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Herrick
 Mrs. Dexter Hill
 Mrs. Marion Hines
 Dr. & Mrs. Ralph Hinckley
 Mr. & Mrs. John Hodges
 Revs. Harry & Judith Hoehler
 Mr. & Mrs. Richmond Holden
 Mr. & Mrs. Brainerd Holmes
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hoskins
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Howard
 Mr. Sumner Howard
 Mrs. Owen C. Howe, Jr.
 Mrs. Ralph Hower
 Mrs. Llewellyn Howland
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward Hubbard
 Mr. Albert Hunt
 Mrs. E. K. Hunter
 Mr. & Mrs. John Hutcheson
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Jackson
 Mr. & Mrs. James Jensen
 Mr. & Mrs. Harold Jobes
 Dr. & Mrs. Carl Johnson
 Mr. & Mrs. Everett Johnson
 Mr. & Mrs. Burdette Johnson
 Mr. & Mrs. E. O. Jolley, Jr.
 Mr. & Mrs. Harry B. Jones
 Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Jones
 Mr. & Mrs. Aubrey Jones
 Mr. & Mrs. Elmer Jones
 Mr. & Mrs. William Katz
 Mr. & Mrs. David Kellogg, Jr.
 Mr. John Kempster
 Mr. & Mrs. Julius Kendall
 Mr. & Mrs. Donald Kennedy
 Miss Eloise Kenney
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas P. King
 Miss Jenny Kroll
 Mr. & Mrs. John Kuipers
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward Kuypers
 Mrs. John Larkin
 Dr. Vera Laska
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Lawson
 Mrs. Ernest Leathem
 Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Lehrer
 Mr. Frederick Lepine
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Lerner
 Mrs. Frank Lewis
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Little
 Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Lovejoy
 Mr. & Mrs. George Lovejoy
 Mr. & Mrs. Norman Lowell
 Mr. & Mrs. Homer Lucas
 Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Mondahl

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| Mrs. Heinz Magendantz | Mr. & Mrs. William Gardner Perrin | Mrs. John Stewart |
| Mr. & Mrs. William Manice | Mr. & Mrs. H. C. Perrine | Mr. & Mrs. J. E. Studley II |
| Mr. & Mrs. Harry Mansfield | Mr. & Mrs. Camillo Petri | Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sturgis |
| Mrs. Jean Markell | Miss Majorie Pierce | Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Sullivan |
| Mr. & Mrs. Edward Marshall | Mr. & Mrs. George Pink | Dr. & Mrs. Roger Sweet |
| Mrs. L. B. McConaghy | Dr. & Mrs. John Porter | Mr. & Mrs. Frederic Talbot |
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| Mr. & Mrs. Lovett Morse | Mrs. Melvin Rines | Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Tuttle |
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| Mr. & Mrs. Lee Munson | Mr. & Mrs. Edward Rossiter | Mr. & Mrs. E. P. Ver Planck |
| Mrs. Ruth Murkland | Mrs. Dorothy Roy | Mr. Warren Vittum |
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| Mrs. Harold Nichols | Mrs. Geoffrey Sawyer | Miss Catherine Warren |
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| Mr. & Mrs. Robert Norton | Mrs. Everett Schwartz | Mr. & Mrs. Reginald Wells |
| Mrs. Amy Nychis | Mrs. Everett Schwartz, Jr. | Mr. & Mrs. English Wetmore |
| Mrs. Cornelius O'Callahan | Mrs. John Scott | Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Wheeler |
| Dr. Helen O'Leary | Mr. & Mrs. Wilbur Seiler | Mr. & Mrs. Henry Wheeler |
| Mrs. P. B. O'Toole | Mr. Gordon Silver | Dr. & Mrs. Robert Wheelock |
| Mr. & Mrs. Hector Osmond | Miss Joan Simpson | Mr. Webb White |
| Mrs. Frank Owel | Mr. & Mrs. Robert Slattery | Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Whittemore |
| Mrs. John B. Paine | Miss Olive Sloan | Mrs. Henry Wile |
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| Mrs. Kirkbride Patterson | Mr. & Mrs. Whitman Smith | Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Wiseman |
| Mr. J. Edward Pawlick | Mrs. Albert Speare | Mrs. Otto Wolff |
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| Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Payson | Mr. & Mrs. Howard Staggs III | Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Wypler, Jr. |
| Mrs. Gilbert Peakes | Mr. & Mrs. A. A. Stambaugh | Mr. & Mrs. Floyd Yearout |

Out-of-Town Members

| | |
|---|---|
| Mrs. Roy Baker of St. Albans, VT | Mr. & Mrs. John Lord of Peterboro, NH |
| Mr. John Bartlett of Concord | Mrs. Thomas McFarlin of Wareham |
| Mr. & Mrs. John Bishop of Annisquam | Mr. & Mrs. Robert McLeod of Sun City, AZ |
| Mrs. Richard Blunt of St. Petersburg, FL | Mr. & Mrs. Horace Nichols of Boston |
| Mrs. Elizabeth Campbell of Wolfboro, NH | Mrs. Arthur Nichols of Duxbury |
| Mr. & Mrs. D. S. Cheever, Jr. of Lincoln | Mrs. Andrew Oliver of Boston |
| Mr. & Mrs. Charles Childs of Stowe | Mr. Richard Peirce of Wellesley |
| Mr. Edward Clark of Ballwin, MO | Mr. Eric Reissner of Solana Beach, CA |
| Mr. Thomas Clarke of Waquoit | Miss Mabel Richardson of Wellesley |
| Mr. & Mrs. William Coburn of Moraga, CA | Mrs. Clement Richardson of Marlboro |
| Mrs. Edward Coburn of Lincoln | Ms. Nellie Rogers of Vinalhaven |
| Mrs. Stephen Colpitts of St. Petersburg, FL | Mr. Kenneth Roy of Newton |
| Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Dousseau of Palm Beach, FL | Ms. Thelma Sanderson of Wollaston |
| Mrs. George Foote of Contoocook, NH | Mr. Edwin Sears of Boston |
| Mrs. Arthur Havlin of Osterville | Mr. Donald Smith of W. Hartford, CT |
| Mr. & Mrs. Vincent Hazard of Cambridge | Mr. & Mrs. Abbot Smith of Boston |
| Mrs. Snow Holloway of Amherst, NH | Miss Charlotte Stevens of Manomet |
| Mr. & Mrs. Richard Hosterman of West Bethel, ME | Mr. & Mrs. Charles Stimpson of Bradford, VT |
| Mrs. Lawrence Hunt of Newtonville | Mr. & Mrs. Peter Stone of Wayland |
| Miss Elizabeth Kenney of Templeton | Miss Cornelia Storrow of Stonington, CT |
| Mr. Frederick Kenney of Templeton | Miss Janet Sumner of New York, NY |
| Mr. & Mrs. Horace Kenney, Jr. of Waltham | Mrs. Barbara Teller of Wellesley |
| Mr. Edward Kingsbury of Wellesley | Mrs. Edward Thayer of Wellesley |
| Mr. John Lamson of E. Hartford, CT | Mr. & Mrs. Charles Thomas of Wellesley |
| Mr. Jeffrey Lawson of Westboro | Mr. & Mrs. Philip Trumbull of Wellesley |
| Mr. & Mrs. Henry Lehne of Williamsburg, VA | Mr. Gilbert Upham of Barre |
| Mr. & Mrs. Richard Lombard of Lake Wales, FL | Mrs. Richard Zens of Marion |

Welcome to our new members!

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Coburn of Church Street; Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Fitzpatrick of Wellesley Street; Mrs. Marion Hines of Wellesley Street; Mr. and Mrs. Richmond Holden of Wellesley Street; Mr. Edward Kingsbury of Wellesley; Mrs. Ernest Leathem of Tamarack Road; Mr. and Mrs. William Gardner Perrin of Ash Street; Mr. and Mrs. Peter Stone of Wayland; Mr. and Mrs. Philip Trumbull of Wellesley; National Trust Historic Preservation of Washington, D.C.; New York Public Library; State Historical Society of Madison, Wisconsin.

THREE BELLS ATTACHED

“How many Weston drivers are aware that the statute law of the Commonwealth requires them to carry at least three bells attached to the horses’ harness or to the shafts when riding in or using a sleigh or pung? There are quite a number who seem ignorant of the fact.” . . . Item from “Weston News” in *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune*, Feb. 23, 1907.



Parker's "Weston Hardware" and "Carver's Lunchette" on the south side of Weston Center prior to the work of the Beautification Committee for the 250th Anniversary Celebration in 1963. This photograph was taken in 1961.

ANNUAL CHARTER ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Friday, May 20, 1983

SHERRY 6:45

DINNER 7:30

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

“Benjamin Franklin as a Hoaxer” is the topic of our witty speaker, Max Hall. Mr. Hall, former newspaperman and Nieman Fellow at Harvard, for many years was responsible for the social studies publications of the Harvard University Press.

EDMUND SEARS: A POSTSCRIPT

The life of Edmund Hamilton Sears, composer of "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear" and minister of the First Parish in Weston from 1865-1876, was described in the January, 1983 issue of the *Bulletin*. An article in our next issue will indicate that in August, 1865, Sears was one of the participants in Weston's celebration upon the return of Weston men from the Civil War. It was fitting that Reverend Sears should have been in the pulpit to honor the soldiers because slavery was a subject upon which Sears had been outspoken for many years.

Two decades prior to the Weston celebration — when a war against Mexico was being waged by President Polk, in part to further Southern slave interests — Sears had opposed the Mexican War in a satire, "The Fireside Colloquies":

Child:

Father! I've seen the volunteers,
Dressed out in red and blue;
And I should like to hear you tell,
What they intend to do!

Father:

These are the country's soldiers, child;
And they intend to go
To fight their country's battles,
Away in Mexico!

Child:

The country's battles? What are they?
And what is fighting for?
I thought that folks were shot and killed
Whene'er they went to war!

Father:

Just so, my boy, - these volunteers,
For glory and renown
Will shoot and kill the Mexicans
And knock their cities down!

Child:

What have they done, — those Mexicans, —
I should be glad to know?
I think I never heard before
Of serving people so.

Father:

Done! They're a weak and paltry race,
And all the papers say, —
They owe our nation certain sums
Which they will never pay.

Child:

Well; Sammy Jones is owing me
A sixpence for a knife, —
I'll go some night and burn him out,
And take the fellow's life!

Father:

What! Take his life! What do you mean? —
Hold in your wicked tongue!
You would be tried for murder, boy,
And on the gallows hung!

Child:

Then why not hang the volunteers?
Is it more wicked then
To shoot and kill a single boy,
Than kill a thousand men?

Father:

The volunteers obey the law,
They only fight, you know,
Because the President himself
Has ordered them to go.

Child:

And does he make men shoot and kill?
Then let some pious folk,
A gallows build at Washington, —
And hang up Mr. Polk!

Father:

Boy! Boy! you're talking rather wild,
You'd better go up-stairs,
And go to bed, — it's getting late, —
And don't forget your prayers.

“The cause of the enslaved blacks especially brought out Sears’ moral thunder” noted Thomas D. Wintle in a recent sermon on Reverend Sears:

“Five years before the Civil War, he preached a widely-reprinted sermon entitled ‘Revolution and Reform’ in which he attacked slavery not only for what it does to the slave, but for what it does to the slave owner — with the ‘unscrupulous, insatiable and cruel . . . love of rule’ that comes with possessing such power. ‘Reform is the work of men when there is virtue enough in a people to yield to that change,’ he wrote, but if they are unwilling to reform then the right will still succeed. ‘Revolution,’ he wrote, ‘is God’s remedy, when a people are past remedy and need punishments . . . I know that if we cannot meet this crisis, if we only succeed in staving it off a little longer, it will fall upon (our children) with swiftly accumulating woe!’ Before long crisis did come, with a civil war of fearful destructiveness. Here Sears advocated a quick and forceful end to the slavery that reform had been unable to abolish. In his ‘Song for the Coming Crisis’ he did not mince words:

Oh Church of Christ, to prayer, to prayer! lean on
thy sacred shrine,
And there while lowly bowing down, receive the
strength divine:
Then rise and let thy faithful word
be healing for our woes,
And let the Spirit’s flaming sword
be lightning on thy foes! ”

In December, 1859, a memorial “Martyr Service” — attended by Emerson, Thoreau, and the Alcotts — was held in Concord to coincide with the day of John Brown’s execution. During the service Reverend Sears, who delivered a prayer, penned the following lines in his Bible:

“Not any spot six feet by two
Will hold a man like thee;
John Brown will tramp the shaking earth
From Blue Ridge to the sea,
Till the strong angel come at last
And opes each dungeon door,
And God’s Great Charter holds and waves
O’er all his humble poor.”

Franklin B. Sanborn of Concord — an acquaintance and helper of John Brown, and describer of Sears’ composition of this poem — was to be Weston’s Memorial Day speaker in 1913!

Donald G. Kennedy

FROM THE EDITOR

Lisa Jacobs of Colchester Road is a junior at Weston High School. The publication of excerpts from her *Founding of a New England Town: A Case Study, Weston’s Beginning* marks the first publication of a student’s paper in the *Bulletin*. Lisa’s complete paper — fortified with appendices, photographs, twenty-three footnotes, and two pages of bibliographic citations — won first prize in its category and fourth place among over 700 entries in a statewide historical contest at Framingham State College. In the course of her research, Lisa — a student of Lee Marsh — made use of written sources, and also consulted Dorothy Ellis, Steve Riley, Alice Fraser, Erlund Field, the Town Engineer, and several owners of the homes she photographed. Lisa, who also plays the trombone, was chosen for the All-State Orchestra as a violist. She actively participates on school teams in field hockey, track (220 yard sprint and discus), and swimming. As a diver, she placed second in the Western Massachusetts Conference Meet. “Red” Travis would be proud that we could publish the paper of a young scholar-athlete. We hope that there will be more student papers!

In the last *Bulletin* we identified seven Weston residents who have been members of U.S. Olympic teams. As we requested, readers have called two more names to our attention. Stephen Brooks of Maple Road attended the 1968 games in Mexico City as an oarsman on the U.S. eight-man crew. Dorothy Brewer — now of Brownsville, Vermont, but for many years a resident of Hill Top Road — was a member of the U.S. downhill ski team for the 1936 Olympics in Garmisch - Partenkirchen, Germany. On a practice run in Austria, Dorothy went over a precipice, breaking her back — but not her will. Forty-seven years later, Dorothy continues to ski!

Thank you to Randy Paynter and Ken McGah who have helped to clean and fix the Society’s rooms as volunteer service projects for the Boy Scouts. The five photographs of Louisa Case’s May Party, which appeared in the May, 1983 *Bulletin*, were given to the Society by Dick Dewey. In the lower left photograph on page six, a standing woman is not properly identified. She is Mrs. Grant Palmer, the mother of “Pat” Palmer. Speaking of identifications, the photograph of a very old man and child in a sleigh on the cover of the 1981 *Town Report* is labeled “Charles Merriam”. Charles Merriam died in 1915 at the age of forty-three. The old man in the photograph is probably Charles’ father, Herbert Merriam, who died in 1926 at the age of eighty-four. Several persons — including Helen Merriam Buttrick of Concord — have been unable to be certain of the location in the photograph. Do you have any ideas? Stories about the Merriams, the hoof and mouth disease among their herd in 1915, and the spectacular fire at their barn in 1926, appeared in the October, 1980 and January, 1981 issues of the *Bulletin*.

Jonathan Fairbanks, Curator of American and Decorative Arts, at the Museum of Fine Arts, spoke to an enthusiastic audience at our annual meeting on November 9. Fairbanks described the details of assembling the 1976 exhibit “New England Begins” — from graduate students on motorcycles who rode to every museum and site in the region taking photographs and measurements of artifacts, to the compiling of the enormous catalogue. The artifacts demonstrated that New England was neither drab

nor unsophisticated. Settlers often saw themselves as “improvers” working in accordance with a Divine Plan. By 1650, New England had more water-powered sawmills than England — where the sawyers guild was demolishing the mills of competitors. By 1700, Boston had 19 booksellers, 2 printers, 6 portrait painters, and 40 gold and silver-smiths. 75-80% of the populace was literate. “My line is too short, the well too deep, my bucket too small, to get more than a sip”)of understanding of God’s Plan) preached one Colonial minister. Jonathan Fairbanks more than satisfied his audience — as did the refreshments.

The 100th anniversary of the Friendly Society is approaching. If you have a picture, a program, or an anecdote, contact the Editor or Jay Martin, President of the Friendly Society.

The past four months have been busy ones for the Society. Sinclair Hitchings of the Boston Public Library gave an illustrated talk on “Prints for the People” which was witty and well-received. On January 20, fellow-member Howard Gambrill, Jr., showed slides and narrated “The Autobiography of the Golden Ball Tavern” for an enthusiastic audience which packed the Ballroom of the Josiah Smith Tavern. John Cushing, librarian of the Massachusetts Historical Society, on March 24, presented an informative series of slides in his talk on “Broad­sides” — with posters from Montgomery Flagg’s Uncle Sam pointing “I Want You” to Seventeenth Century handbills. Over 100 members and prospective members braved the downpour on April 10 to enjoy the company and to sing “Happy Birthday” to the Society at the Smith Tavern Barn on our 20th anniversary! At the party President Steve Riley thanked all who have contributed over the years, particularly complimenting the Charter Members. “I want to join; it’s such a friendly group!” commented one guest — a tribute to the thoughtful planning of Rosie Elwell and her hard-working committee.



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SCHEDULE OF DUES

Annual: \$5 per person; \$8 per family including children under 21

Life: \$250 per person

Gift memberships are suggested

(Currently the age span of our life members is from 5 to “over 80!”)

Contributions and Bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcomed.

All checks should be mailed to: Weston Historical Society, Inc., Box 343, Weston, MA 02193

Additional copies of THE BULLETIN may be obtained by phoning Mrs. Raymond Paynter, Jr., 899-3533, or Donald G. Kennedy, Editor, 893-1319; also by calling at the Josiah Smith Tavern any Wednesday afternoon during “Open House”. If you have a spare copy of BULLETINS, vintage 1963-70, our Curator, Mrs. J. E. Fraser, 894-2872 would be glad to have them.