

# THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



Fall, 1994

Volume XXV, No. 2

## THE 250th ANNIVERSARY OF ABIGAIL ADAMS' BIRTHDAY



*Abigail Smith Adams and John Adams, two years after their marriage  
pastel by Benjamin Blyth, 1766*

This year we are celebrating the 250th anniversary of Abigail Smith Adams' birthday. She was born in Weymouth on November 11, 1744. She was an outspoken, witty and logical person. With her husband John Adams she left us the most copious and most informative correspondence of her times, offering us a mosaic of all facets of life before, during and after the American Revolution. It is only appropriate that the Weston Historical Society commemorated this outstanding First Lady, wife of the second and mother of the sixth president, with an evening of vignettes from her life. (See next story).

## ABIGAIL ADAMS AMONG US

On May 5th, 1994, the Weston Historical Society gathered to a festive dinner, as is the custom by now, at the Student Union lounge of Regis College. Instead of a speaker, we were treated to a one woman play, a reading and recitation of the letters exchanged during the Revolutionary War between John Adams and his wife, Abigail.

The author of the text, written as a play, but presented to us only in excerpts, is Janine Perry; her play is called "The Distance Between Us." She gave the readings of John Adams' letters and also provided the connecting text spanning the chronological distances between their missives.

Abigail Adams was represented by Vicki Summers, an actress who during the day teaches deaf children. She was dressed in period costume and did an excellent job of portraying Abigail, which is not an easy task. Abigail Adams could be romantic or businesslike, submissive or imperial, and all the time she was sparkling with new ideas of all sorts. Miss Summers did a splendid job.

We heard of Abigail's longing for her "Dear Friend." She reported on the comings and goings at home in Weymouth and Braintree, while John Adams was in Philadelphia at the two Continental Congresses. Included was, of course, the most famous citation from Abigail's letter to her husband just before the Declaration of Independence: "Remember the Ladies!" Abigail wanted Congress to give women some rights. But John Adams, forever the conservative, replied that her words made him laugh! While he personally admired and respected his wife's opinions, he would not budge to give all women rights. Abigail then complained to her dear friend Mercy Otis Warren, that perhaps women should follow Lysistrata's ways and deny uxorial rights to men!

Since I am an aficionada of Abigail Adams, I missed several passages that should have been included, for instance the note from John to Abigail at the time of their courting when he demanded kisses from her:

Miss Adorable: By the same token that the bearer hereof sat up with you last night, I hereby order you to give him as many kisses and as many hours of your company after 9 o'clock as he shall please to demand and charge them to my account ... I presume I have good right to draw upon you for the kisses as I have given two or three million at least, when one has been received, and of consequence the account between us is immensely in favor of yours, John Adams. (*The Adams Papers. Adams Family Correspondence*, 4 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965, I., p. 2).

This would have placed John in a softer light, as he was a rather sentimental person when it came to his feelings for his wife. But you can squeeze only so much into a one hour presentation.

All in all it was a delightful evening; the food, the service and the visit from Abigail made the well attended dinner a great success.

*Vera Laska*

## ON TEACHING HISTORY

“Kids know so little about the past.”

“They all have opinions and attitudes, but no knowledge!”

“How do you compete with MTV?”

“How do you teach history these days?”

When people find out that I teach high school history, they often ask questions that express concern about the state of education in general and history in particular. We are all too aware that we are entering a new age where what seemed to be the old certainties of the Cold War, the traditional family, and American economic dominance, no longer apply. We all have opinions. We all want the best for our children.

Since the publication of “A Nation at Risk” in 1983 with its sobering prediction that the country might soon be swallowed by a “rising tide of mediocrity,” education has become a permanent fixture on the national agenda. We have all heard horror stories. More and more is being jammed into the curriculum, but is something valuable being lost in the process?

Particularly troubling is the fate of history. The Bradley Commission reports that currently 15 percent of our students do not take any American history in high school, and at least 50 percent do not study either World History or Western Civilization. This is disturbing to a generation raised on reading Aldous Huxley, George Orwell and Ray Bradbury and their visions of dictatorships controlling or eliminating knowledge of the past. Are we in danger of bringing up a generation without historical memory?

History and social studies teaching at Weston reflects these national concerns. While Weston has incorporated many changes in its curriculum over the years, a recent favorable review of the kindergarten through high school program concluded that more change is needed. The curriculum was criticized as being too centered on the United States and to a lesser degree on Western civilization. We were encouraged to be more daring in developing varied and imaginative approaches to teaching. The world we live in is global. It looks much different than a few years ago, much less a generation ago. The world’s population centers are not in the West. The expanding role of China, India and Brazil emphasizes our need to understand these countries and their cultures. Headlines in our newspapers cannot be understood without knowledge of Africa and the Balkans. We need to understand Islam and its shared heritage of the Judeo-Christian tradition if we are to come to terms with events in the Middle East, or even to come to terms with ourselves. Our own population’s changing diversity and our continuing history as an immigrant nation reminds us that we cannot isolate ourselves. The world is in our backyard. We are a multiethnic, multicultural society.

In dealing with curriculum changes, there are no simple answers. In many ways one confronts paradoxes. We need to teach more about the world and more about the United States, especially its recent history. We must not neglect local history. We need to emphasize multicultural education as well as understand the dominant culture. We need to study a few historical episodes in depth and we need the broad survey. We need to emphasize the role of minorities and understand the contributions of mainstream figures. We need to build skills and also build a common body of references and allusions to the past. We need more time for the courses we do have and we need to give students more choices and electives. We need academic rigor and we need to provide for individual

differences. The list could continue. Now all these goals are not necessarily contradictory, but they do point to real problems. Priorities need to be set. A failure to set priorities has led to textbooks so crammed with topics that they deal with none of them adequately.

What does this mean in practice? The Weston history department has to set priorities as it continues to evolve its curriculum. In the first place we are committed to the premise that students have different learning styles. Howard Gardner's *Frames of the Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* finds that human cognition involves more than just verbal/linguistic abilities that are typically the focus of schools. Opportunities need to be provided to allow all of the seven intelligences that Gardner identifies to come into play. The World History course is currently using the Islam unit from the Teachers Curriculum Institute which is based on Gardner's work. Teachers strive to utilize a variety of methods in all their courses to respond to the variety of learning styles of our students.

This also means that we need to become more interdisciplinary in our approach. When we discuss the influence of Spencer and Social Darwinism on the Gilded Age, there is an obvious opportunity to collaborate with the Science department. What better way to experience the emotional impact of slavery and the effects of Reconstruction, than to read Toni Morrison's *Beloved*? Taking an historical approach seriously also means using contemporaneous literature as well and blurring the distinctions between the two. This helps illuminate the connections between subjects.

In every course difficult choices must be made, or else more will become less. This is especially true in courses where the subject is as vast as world history. History involves analyzing change across time. This is most adequately grasped by selecting episodes as specifically as possible. "Postholes" need to be "dug." We want to remember that according to Homer and Herodotus, history began as stories around the campfire. It is human gossip. We want to make history human. It is much better to study industrialization by reading sections of Robert Owens *Memoirs*, than by talking about the Industrial Revolution in the abstract.

This means that such traditional skills as writing and research are not neglected, but emphasized as one of the best ways to learn to think precisely and critically. Fifteen years ago, we accepted the responsibility of being the department that teaches expository writing. For example, all United States history students spend a quarter learning how to use a variety of resources and writing a research paper. The process involves doing notecards, outlines, introductions and rough drafts before the finished copy. A sampling of recent topics include: Freedom of Religion and the Church of Later Day Saints, Medicine in America-Doctors Rise to the Pedestal, The Cholera and Influenza Epidemic, The Real Life of Cowboys in America, and Segregation and the Policies of Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois and Marcus Garvey. Another project on the Coal Strike of 1902 was outstanding in its use of newspaper articles to follow the course of the strike and role of the president. Another student started with our school library's complete set of *Time* and followed up by using *The New York Times* to chart America's Reaction to the Rise of Hitler. This requires tremendous commitment but as TheodoreSizer says: "Even in hotshot high schools, the quality of students' writing makes it clear that something is wrong. Kids need to write and rewrite and rewrite. That takes time."

Giving students the opportunity to make choices and select topics is also important. The research paper is just one example of where this happens. Another thing which helps

students understand the nature of history is the oral history report based on interviews. Students have spoken to such figures as Archibald Cox, Charles Colson and Warren Rudman and interviewed Spanish Civil War participants (in Spain), Woodstock attendees, Black Panther members, Civil Rights workers and Vietnam veterans.

A curriculum for the 21st century is still based on the traditional importance of providing the bedrock skills and knowledge vital for all citizens in a democracy. Yet today we need to do this from a global perspective. Students need to understand the diversity of peoples and cultures and their shared humanity. They need to study how peoples differ across time and space, yet share common background and aspirations. Diversity and sharing are the key themes that animate the curriculum.

We tend to forget with all the talk about the lessons of Vietnam dominating our current foreign policy debates and the centrality of that war in many adults' experiences, that Vietnam seems as distant to most students as World War I does to us. A Weston first grader's personal history begins in 1988 and a high school senior's in 1976.

History also develops habits of mind that help us put the present into context and develop an all important sense of perspective. Over a hundred years ago, the National Education Association appointed a committee to examine the entire high school experience as the country underwent a sea of change and prepared itself for the 20th century. In 1892, the subcommittee of History, Civil Government, and Political Economy criticized the traditional curriculum and traditional teaching methods and recommended that all students, whether or not they were college bound, should take four years of history on the secondary level. It declared that history taught by the newer methods would "broaden and cultivate the mind; that they counteract a narrow and provincial spirit; that they prepare the pupil in an eminent degree for enlightenment and the intellectual enjoyment in after years; and that they assist him to exercise a salutary effect upon the affairs of his country."

Sound familiar?

*Joseph A. Verovsek*

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## ISSAC FISKE LAW OFFICE



*The Fiske Law Office in Weston, June 1994*

Along the stretch of the old Boston Post Road between the Weston and Wayland centers, within little more than a mile of each other, stand three small and quite similar historical buildings. They were all built in the early part of the nineteenth century and each has clapboard siding painted white, black shutters, a hipped roof, and a central chimney which divides each building into two tiny rooms (The Weston building has an addition from around 1920). These were the law offices of three prominent lawyers. Issac Fiske (1778-1861), Alpheus Bigelow Jr. (1784-1863), and Edward Mellon (1802-1875) who practiced their profession in this area in the early 1800s.

It was not uncommon at that time for lawyers to build themselves a separate little building close to their home but far enough away from the daily hubbub of household activities. There are, in fact, a number of these small structures to be seen all over New England. Almost thirty years ago our former president and founding member of the Weston Historical Society, Harold G. "Red" Travis, undertook an extensive research project on these small buildings and wrote about them in the May 1967 edition of the *Bulletin* (Vol. III, No. 4, pp. 1-2). At that time he discovered that there were at least twelve others still standing in New England and all of them, including those on the Post Road, were built between 1754 and 1826.

What we now call the Isaac Fiske Law Office was originally built about 1805 for Artemus Ward, Jr., son of the famous Revolutionary War general who served on

Washington's staff. Fiske became a partner of Ward's in 1806, and when, a few years later, Ward decided to move his practice to Concord, he turned the law office over to Fiske. Isaac Fiske quickly distinguished himself not only in the community, but in the state as well, becoming known as "the leading lawyer of Middlesex County." He served for 24 years as Town Clerk, six years as Selectman, and six years as representative to the General Court.

The Fiske Law Office remained in the hands of his descendents for many years and was at one point made into a single dwelling. At one time it was used as a playhouse for young children in town and resounded with games and activities as well as birthday parties. The rear ell, which was an old shed attached to Isaac Fiske's Barn, diagonally across the street from the office, was added around 1920. The building was eventually sold to the town in 1928 by Fiske heirs.

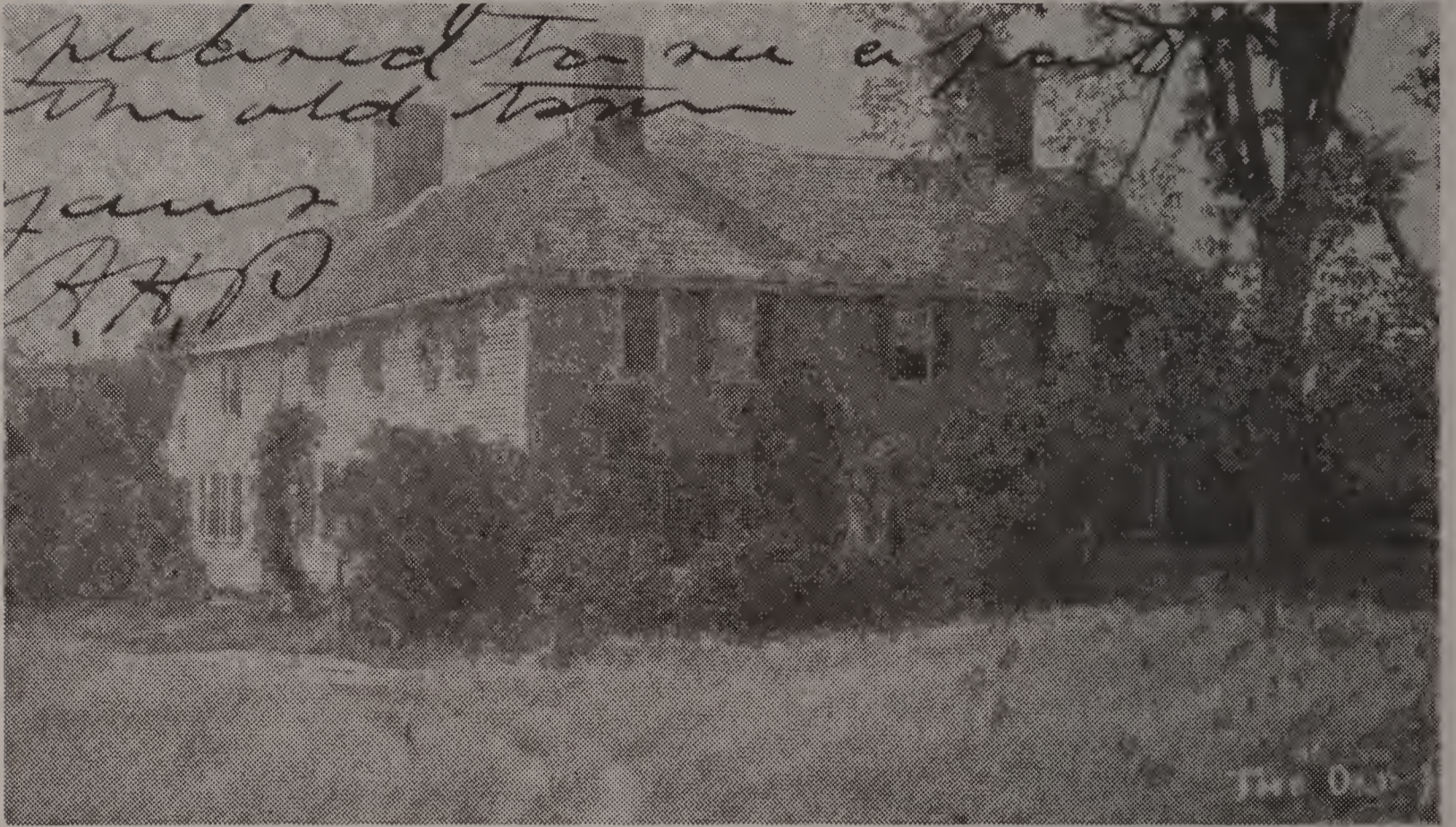
In 1967 the newly formed Weston Historical Society sought and was granted by the town the use of the law office for its headquarters. The building was in very bad repair and the Society immediately launched a massive restoration project. Professionals worked on the reconstruction of deteriorated underpinnings while members volunteered their time to paper and paint each room. One member, Mrs. Harold Travis, hooked a detailed stair carpeting which depicts many local historical sites and it remains to this day one of the building's most charming features. The rooms were furnished with antiques donated by members, including a few original pieces of furniture belonging to Isaac Fiske: a stand-up desk, his law books and his portrait.

The building served for many years as headquarters for the Weston Historical Society until the organization was able to move into larger quarters at the Josiah Smith Tavern. Since then the Society has continued to keep the law office open to the public on Memorial Day and on other special occasions. Severe winter storms over the past few years, however, have done considerable damage to the building, resulting in the law office being closed down. The Society is once again launching a new restoration project to repair damages. The furnishings have been put into temporary storage while the work is being done. As soon as professional repairs have been made, it is hoped that members will once again pitch in to help restore this precious treasure.

*Mary Maynard*

# HISTORY OF THE BURLEIGH MANSION

Newmarket, New Hampshire and Weston, Massachusetts\*



*The Burleigh Mansion in Newmarket, New Hampshire*



*The Burleigh Mansion in Weston, Massachusetts at 100 Orchard Avenue*

\* Since numerical superscripts have to be used to designate generations of the Burley/Burleigh family, regular footnotes are exceptionally designated with letters of the alphabet. This is a revised and abridged edition of a longer manuscript, which contains further photographs and maps as well as the inventory of Lt. John Burleigh's estate. This longer original is filed at the Weston Public Library, Weston history collection, as well as at the Weston Historical Society Museum.

The Burleigh Mansion has an unusual history that begins in Newmarket, New Hampshire and ends in Weston, Massachusetts. A large white house, it was built in Newmarket by Lieutenant John Burleigh in the mid-eighteenth century. It remained in the family for four more generations, nearly two-hundred years.

Newmarket was originally part of Exeter<sup>a</sup>, the name given to the settlement made in 1638 by Reverend John Wheelwright and his followers. Wheelwright had come from England to Boston in 1636; he was soon chosen to be pastor of the church at Mount Wollaston (Braintree). His religious opinions, however, differed from those of the intolerant Boston church. After much debate among the elders of the church, he was charged with sedition for a sermon he preached in January, 1637. In November the Court found Wheelwright guilty, pronouncing a sentence of disfranchisement and banishment. He was allowed fourteen days to leave the Massachusetts Bay Colony<sup>b</sup> (Winthrop, *Journal*, vol. i, pp. 195-241).

In April 1638, Rev. Wheelwright and a few others purchased a large tract of land from Wehanownowit, an Indian sagamore (chief). The Indians retained rights to “hunt & fish & fowl” within the limits of the land which reached from the Merrimac River to the Piscataqua River. The following year the settlers wrote a “combination” [pact] in which they formally established themselves as inhabitants of Exeter, desiring to combine in their common interest of establishing a civil government. (Bell, pp. 3-9; Fitts, pp. 12-13)

The land on which the Burleigh Mansion was built was part of an original land grant to Moses Gilman in 1674. Moses Gilman was born in England in 1630. He was a resident of Exeter in 1648 and in 1652 he and his father were accepted as inhabitants<sup>c</sup> of the town. Active in town affairs, Gilman served several times as a selectman of Exeter. He died around 1700.

It is not clear how this tract of land made its way in the Burleigh Family, who first acquired land in Exeter in 1698-99<sup>d</sup>. Giles<sup>1</sup> Burley emigrated from England and settled in Ipswich, Massachusetts. Two of his sons, James<sup>2</sup> and Andrew<sup>2</sup> acquired land at Bayside in present day Newmarket on the east side of the country road leading from Exeter north to Durham which eventually came into the possession of James<sup>3</sup> and John<sup>3</sup> Burley, their respective sons. The property on which the house was built lay west of this road and is first mentioned in 1748 when Joseph<sup>3</sup> Burley (James<sup>3</sup>'s brother) conveyed 22 acres and 100 square rods to his son Joseph<sup>4</sup>. It is described as “being part of the Grant of Land Com'only Call'd Moses Gilmans Grant.” The following year, the northeast 12 acres of this land were bought by John<sup>4</sup> Burley (son of John<sup>3</sup>). There is no mention of buildings in either deed. (37:138; 52:96-98).\*

John<sup>4</sup> Burley was a blacksmith by trade but rose to a position of prominence in the community and after 1760 his name is spelled Burleigh. In fact, he was referred to thereafter as Lieutenant Burleigh. He was twice a selectman of Newmarket and several times representative to the New Hampshire legislature. He was among 164 signers of the Association Test, July 12, 1776 — a resolution recommended by the Continental Congress:

\* References to the Registry of Deeds are indicated in parentheses (Volume: page); unless otherwise noted, they are from the Rockingham Country Registry of Deeds in Exeter or Concord, New Hampshire. The same form applies to Probate records.

We, the subscribers, do hereby solemnly engage, and promise that we will, to the utmost in our Power, at the Risque of our Lives and Fortunes, and Arms, oppose the Hostile Proceedings of the British Fleets and Armies, against the United American Colonies. (Fitts, p. 110, 243)

Lt. John Burleigh married three times, fathering thirteen children in all. He married his first wife, Sarah Hall, in 1740. She died in 1757<sup>e</sup>, and John married Elizabeth Chesley, 17 years his junior, six months later. Both of their children died in infancy. After Elizabeth's death, it was again just six months before John married Mehitable Sheafe. Mehitable, fourteen years younger than John, was the daughter of Sampson and Sarah (Walton) Sheafe of Newcastle (formerly Great Island). Mehitable and John had six children:

Mehitable<sup>s</sup>, b. 1763, d. unm.<sup>d</sup>, March 23, 1847

Mary<sup>s</sup>, b. 1765, d. 1781 or 1791

Elizabeth<sup>s</sup>, b. 1767, m. 1784 Daniel Hill, d. 1845

Henry<sup>s</sup>, b. 1768, m. Elizabeth Rogers

Margaret<sup>s</sup>, b. 1770, m. George Frost, d. 1846

Marcia<sup>s</sup>, b. 1772, m. 1794 Ezra Smith, d. Maine 1859 (Fitts, pp. 455-6).

Lt. Burleigh is generally recognized for building the Mansion house, which was located between Pine Hill and Great Hill on the Country Road (Exeter Street). The exact date is not known but it was probably built during the 1750s. It has been reported that parts of the house date from the late seventeenth century, yet that is unlikely since there were no buildings on the property when it was purchased by Burleigh in 1749. The possibility remains, however, that Burleigh had an older structure moved to the site to which he then added.

Nellie Palmer George gives the following description of the house:

The rooms were finely wainscotted. Fifty imported Dutch tile adorned the fireplace of the best room (the north parlor). The wallpaper was brought from overseas. Under the capacious cellar were two wine cellars. These were entered by a trap door and stairs leading down sixteen feet below. Here were stored the rum and wine bought of Shadrach Walton, wine merchant of Great Island [Mehitable's grandfather] ...

George also tells the story of the haunted room:

It was a very serious and disturbing thing to Mehitable and her family to find that the house was haunted. This state of things could not long be endured. The ghostly presence of the departed second wife disturbed the harmony of the home. The Rev. John Moody was called, and he with solemn ceremony and prayer, laid the ghost, assigning it to the northeast chamber. The shutters were closed and the room sealed. It is said that the seal was not broken for more than a hundred years. Modern psychology would associate Mehitable and her haunted house with her great-grandfather, George Walton, of Great Island, and the stone throwing demon that Mather tells us about in his Magnalia.<sup>f</sup>

Her description of the room is equally valid today as then:

In this house the northeast chamber ... was indeed unusual in construction and finish. The floor, walls, door, ceiling and inside window-shutters were all of one kind of wood, guiltless of varnish or paint and dark with age. When the inside

window-blinds were drawn and the door shut the room was like a large, square box with the cover on, so not a ray of light could enter, a dismal place for even a “ghost” to be “laid,” and strangely in contrast with the light and cheerfulness of the other rooms. (George, pp 21-22,53).

Lt. John Burleigh<sup>4</sup> was an enterprising man and purchased for himself and his workmen West India rum and molasses by the hogshead.<sup>g</sup> (Fitts, p.110) “Dried fish from the Squamscott and salted alewives<sup>h</sup> from the Lamprey were sent to the West Indies. The return cargo brough whale oil, molasses and rum.” (George, p.27) There is still an iron ring on the ceiling of the front hall by which the hogsheads were lowered through the trapdoor below into the cellar. Lt. Burleigh’s blacksmith shop was later used as a carriage house. The road used to go to the east around Pine Hill with the schoolhouse standing near the top of the hill. Presently, as Highway 108, it passes over Pine Hill (Burleigh, Charles, M.D., 1894, p. 9; Fitts, p. 110; George, p. 27).

Lt. John Burleigh<sup>4</sup> died on November 18, 1776. The inventory of his estate included: “The Mansion House, Barn and other Buildings (including the barn oposite [sic] & Fields & Pasture the W. side the [sic] Road adjoining [said] Mansion House, say 150 Acres.” There was no will; the estate was administered in 1791 by his widow, Mehitable, who died in 1802. In a division of the estate made in 1803, the Widow’s Dower or “thirde” was divided into nine parts among the surviving children. The eldest daughter, Mehitable<sup>5</sup> Burleigh, received 15 acres of land containing “the Mansion House other Buidlings and the Barn on the oposite side of the Country Road; also another piece of five acres (Probate I: 4311).

Major Daniel Hill and Elizabeth<sup>5</sup> Burleigh Hill resided on the Burleigh homestead with Mehitable<sup>5</sup>. Among their eleven children were:

Elizabeth<sup>6</sup> (or Betsey) (b. 1789)

Mary<sup>6</sup> (b. 1792)

Nathaniel R.<sup>6</sup> (b. 1796)

Sarah Ann<sup>6</sup> (b. 1806) (Fitts, pp. 548-9)

Mehitable<sup>5</sup> Burleigh had an excellent education. She lived in the Mansion unmarried until her death a month before her 84th birthday in 1847. Upon her decease, the House and other property were divided in the following manner:

- the west end of the house to the niece, Sarah Ann<sup>6</sup> Hill
- the room where Elizabeth<sup>5</sup> had lived to her sister, Marcia Burleigh<sup>5</sup> Smith
- the north half of the old part of the House to Marcia<sup>5</sup> Smith and her heirs
- the south half of the old house and one half of her lands in Newmarket not willed to others to her niece, Elizabeth (Betsey)<sup>6</sup> Hill
- one half of all her lands in Newmarket not willed to others to her nephew, Nathaniel R.<sup>6</sup> Hill.

Mehitable’s nephews Nathaniel R.<sup>6</sup> Hill and William P.<sup>6</sup> Frost were named executors of her estate (Burleigh, 1880, pp. 18-9; Probate #15301).

In a deed dated soon after Mehitable Burleigh’s death, the executors, Hill and Frost, conveyed to Elizabeth<sup>6</sup> Hill all the land and buildings belonging to the estate. There were two tracts of land: one of 35 acres including the House and 15 acres of wood lot. Elizabeth bought the farm for the sum of \$1,565 “at a public vendue held at the house of the late Mehitable Burleigh in Newmarket, 27 September AD 1847 at noon.” Elizabeth Hill sold

one-half of this property to her brother Nathaniel R.<sup>6</sup> Hill for the sum of \$782.50. She sold the other half interest to him in 1849 for \$1,000, reserving about one acre which they continued to hold in common. Like her Aunt Mehitable<sup>5</sup>, Elizabeth<sup>6</sup> was a spinster woman and she lived with Nathaniel<sup>6</sup> and his family in the old house which was located on that one acre (330:60; 329:293; 340:412).

Elizabeth<sup>6</sup> Hill died at the homestead on July 1, 1867. Her eleven heirs, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews, inherited her share of the piece of land which included the Mansion House. In 1867, these interestes were conveyed to her brother, Nathaniel R.<sup>6</sup> Hill, who then possessed the whole of the late Mehitable Burleigh's Farm (420:327).

In his will of 1861, Nathaniel<sup>6</sup> devised all his personal estate and his real estate to his wife Esther and appointed her sole executrix. His wish was that upon her death, each of their four children would inherit equal shares of the estate. Nathaniel R.<sup>6</sup> Hill died in 1878, and his widow, Esther Ely Hill, in 1889, but the real estate had apparently already been conveyed to their children: Esther E.<sup>7</sup>, Nathaniel E.<sup>7</sup>, Charles E.<sup>7</sup> and Mary E.<sup>7</sup> Hill. The eldest daughter, Esther<sup>7</sup> Hill Tebbetts, received title to the property by deeds from her sister (1887) and brothers (1891) (Probate #2650½ N.S., 164:257; Probate #6103 N.S.; 181:247; 500:450; 519:386).

Esther<sup>7</sup> and her husband, Oliver Tebbetts, had one son, Frank Oliver<sup>8</sup> Tebbetts, who administered and inherited his mother's estate upon her death in 1900. (Probate #10521 N.S.; 212:207) Frank O.<sup>8</sup> Tebbetts was a railroad conductor and the last member of the Burleigh family to reside in the house. As a boy, Alfred Brisson used to make deliveries from his father's store to the Tebbetts' place. He remembers Mr. Tebbetts: not all that tall, he was quite a sight with his long white goatee and black boots that laced up sixteen inches.

A huge barn stood behind the house, and one end was raised off the ground on stilts with enough room to drive under it with a carriage. The house was not kept up all that well. There were purple lilacs overgrown all around the house. Some big old elm trees stood on the south side and a white fence of interesting construction around the north and east sides which was much like a stair banister with a double railing. Frank Tebbetts sold the farm — about 50 acres — to Israel Sack in 1919. (Letter by Marge Brooke; of Newfields, N.H. to Polly Marshall of Weston, September 9, 1974; Brisson interview; 733:110).

In 1921, Mr. Edward C. Wheeler, an antique dealer from Boston, went to look at the parlor. As the story goes, he decided to buy the entire house from Israel Sack and move it to Weston, Massachusetts. Wheeler's wife, Anne Swan (Hubbard), was the daughter of Charles Wells Hubbard and grand-daughter of Charles Townsend Hubbard. The latter had made his fortune as president of Ludlow Mills, a Massachusetts jute manufacturing company. He had a large estate in the southeast corner of Weston which his son inherited upon his death in 1887. From this, Charles Wells Hubbard conveyed an 8 acre parcel belonging to the estate to his daughter Anne in January 1922. An intent to build was expressed in the deed (Middlesex, 4488:349).

The men hired by the Wheelers to dismantle and rebuild the house spent six months labeling every piece before the moving began. The following is excerpted from a letter written by Anne Hubbard Wheeler to her sister Mary Hubbard French sometime in the 1960s:

Moved everything, except plaster and shingles (17 truck loads) — Beams — Clapboards — chimney bricks, Hearth tiles — Dutch tiles from two rooms — Panelling — even the original wallpaper ... which was put on in white parlor in 1765 — when that part of the house was built —

The wing was built in 1690, and we think originally was a salt box type. The house was built and lived in for many generations by the Burley family who were ship owners. It took a year and a half to complete the house —

At that time we put a veranda on the east opening out of the parlor —

The additions of maids quarters, laundry and garage were added in 1934 when we decided to make it our year round home.

The Wheelers called their imported home ‘Glen Acres.’

In 1937, Mr. and Mrs. Biddle bought the property on Orchard Avenue in Weston. Clinton Poston Biddle (Chick), a professor of finance at Harvard Business School, died the following year. Barbara (Freeman) Biddle brought up their children:

Barbara B. Gallagher, b. Aug. 23, 1928, of Jericho, Vermont

David Kirk Biddle, b. Dec. 16, 1931, of South Dartmouth, Massachusetts

Nancy B. Bates, b. April 11, 1933, of Weston, Massachusetts

Bruce Biddle, b. Feb. 24, 1936, of Concord, Massachusetts

Susan F. Dzyacky, b. Nov. 5, 1938, of Warwick, Rhode Island

Mrs. Biddle has lived in the house for nearly 60 years. By furnishing the house with period antiques, she has retained its eighteenth century character. At the age of 92 she continues to host family gatherings at 100 Orchard Avenue. (Middlesex: 6135:44)

## NOTES

<sup>a</sup>Newmarket became a separate parish in 1727 comprising present day Newmarket and Newfields. It was incorporated as a separate township in 1737. Newfields became a separate town in 1849.

<sup>b</sup>In 1644, John Wheelwright wrote a letter of apology to Governor John Winthrop; subsequently the Court released his banishment. In his later years, Rev. Wheelwright was highly regarded in both New and Old England. He died in 1680 in his eighties, the last of the great seventeenth century American clergymen.

<sup>c</sup>Freeman: a man of 21 years who was a permanent resident (usually landowner) of a town and a member of its church. He possessed the rights to vote and to hold elective office.

<sup>d</sup>Great Britain did not adopt the Gregorian calendar (New Style) until 1752. Before that time March 25th marked the commencement of the legal year. Between January 1 and March 25 double dates were recorded. The first referred to the Old Style (Julian) civil and ecclesiastical year. The second figure represents the historical year which began January 1, as we know it. (Encyclopedia Britanica, “Calendar”)

<sup>e</sup>Sarah’s tombstone, marked “wife Lt. John Burleigh,” stands in the cemetery at the site of the old meeting house south of the Newmarket-Newfields town line on the west side of the highway.

<sup>f</sup>Rev. Cotton Mather’s Magnalia Christi Americana, 1702.

<sup>g</sup>hogshead: a large cask containing 100-140 gallons.

<sup>h</sup>alewife: fish of the herring family which lives most of its adult life in the sea, but returns to fresh water in the spring to spawn.

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Cynthia B. Bates

*Weston resident Cynthia Breed Bates is working toward her Master's degree in Library and Information Science at Simmons College. She is a library assistant at the Schlesinger Library of Radcliffe College.*

## IN THE NEWS

**ANNUAL MEETING.** The annual meeting of members for the election of Directors and other business will take place on Tuesday, November 15th, 1994 at 8 p.m. in the Barn of the Josiah Smith Tavern. The speaker of the evening will be Jack Beatty, one of America's finest biographers. He will bring James Michael Curley and the rough-and-tumble world of Boston politics to life. The Rascal King, Beatty's biography of J.M. Curley, was nominated for a National Book Award in 1992. It is a vivid and lively evocation of the man and his times, and Beatty is a vivid and lively speaker, whose range of interests, as editor of the Atlantic Monthly and political columnist for the Boston Globe makes him the perfect post-election commentator. The event is free and open to the public. Come and bring your friends or favored enemies!

**PUBLIC RELATIONS.** In an effort to rekindle interests in our Society, this spring copies of the Bulletin were mailed town wide. They were also given to Pat Reimer, Weston's Welcome Wagon coordinator. Thanks to the Board of Directors for the many hours spent labeling and stuffing envelopes.

Window displays of Weston's history were prepared by George Amadon and Doug Henderson and shown at the Cambridge Trust and Dragon Books premises. Other businesses in town offered window space for future displays.

**SLIDE SHOW PREPARATIONS.** Earlier this year the Board of Directors were pleased to meet Ted Kingsbury (retired) of Wellesley, who has offered to work on preparing a narrated slide presentation on behalf of our Society. Ted has already produced slide presentations on behalf of several historical societies from Marlboro to Brookline. Ted met with the Directors and showed us his slide presentation work for the Dover Historical Society. Although Ted does not charge for his time, he does, of course, seek reimbursement for film and other small miscellaneous out-of-pocket expenses. The Board voted to accept Ted's offer to work on a slide presentation for our Society. Douglas Henderson and George Amadon from our Museum Committee have already begun working with Ted on this project. It is a time consuming effort and could very well take over a year to produce. Thanks to Doug and George for all their fine work.

**FISKE LAW OFFICE.** As many of you may already know, the Issac Fiske Law Office (owned by the Town of Weston and leased by the Society for \$1.00/year) is in need of significant structural and cosmetic repairs. Emergency repairs were made to the roof last year but further damage to the building occurred this past winter. This spring Jim Maynard arranged for contractors to inspect the office and prepare a written estimate for the needed repairs. Once a satisfactory estimate is prepared, we will be requesting funds from the Town to cover the repairs.

In the meantime, on May 21, 1994, all items were temporarily moved out of the Fiske Law Office in an effort to prevent further deterioration of the items and to protect the items from accidental damage during any construction. Boxes of books, miscellaneous papers and small artifacts were moved to the Josiah Smith Tavern and the furniture was moved to Victor and Marjorie Harnish's basement. Jim and Mary Maynard took the beautiful 15 piece stair carpeting, hand made by Betty Travis, to be professionally cleaned and restored.

**HISTORICAL COMMISSION SURVEY.** The Weston Historical Commission, Alfred L. Aydelott, Chairman, with matching funds from the Massachusetts Historical

Commission, conducted an eight month survey of Weston's historical and architectural resources, carried out by Pamela W. Fox, a preservation consultant and Weston resident, from October 1993 to June, 1994. This involved looking at all buildings in Weston which are at least 50 years old, choosing about 90 representative buildings for more detailed research, preparing inventory forms for eight neighborhoods, and writing a 50 page history of Weston's architectural resources. The eight areas studied were North Avenue, Kendal Green, Church Street/Coburn Area, Lower Conant Road, Case Estates, Maple Road/Wellesley Street, Love Lane, and Glen Road. The library of the Weston Historical Society was a valuable source for research material, as was the Weston Public Library, the vault at Town Hall, SPNEA library, Massachusetts State Library, Massachusetts Archives, and other area institutions. WHC would like to thank the Weston Historical Society, particularly George Amadon, Doug Henderson and Dr. Vera Laska of the Museum Committee for their assistance in making library materials available.

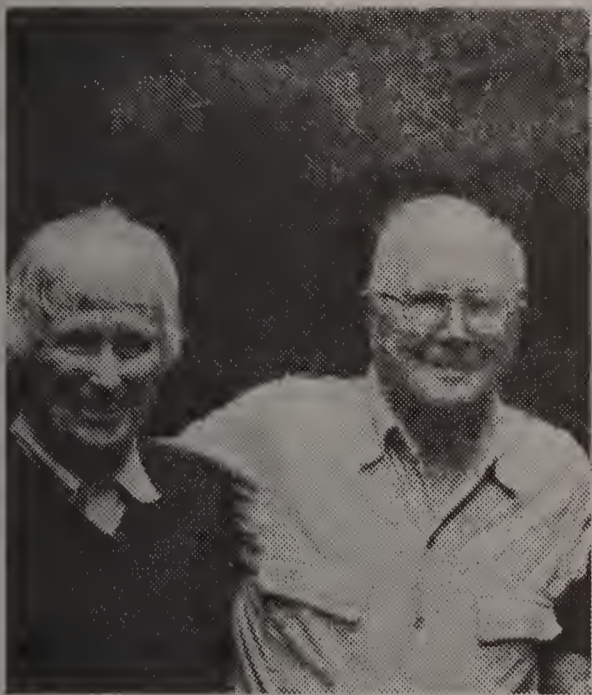
As a volunteer project coinciding with the survey, local resident Marisa Morra surveyed the interiors of most of the town's colonial period houses. For the most part, the 1993-94 survey concentrated on buildings and areas not studied in the 1970s and 1980s when the Boston Post Road was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is hoped that additional areas will be placed on the National Register as part of the next phase of WHC work. Materials produced as part of this survey are available in the office of the Planning Board, Weston Town Hall, during regular business hours. This notice was prepared by Pamela W. Fox.

**ACCESS TO HISTORY, AD HOC COMMITTEE.** The Weston Historical Society, The Weston Historical Commission, The Golden Ball Tavern, The Weston Public Library, and the First Parish Church have joined forces to form an ad hoc "Access to History" committee for purposes of eventually providing access to Weston's history via an intense inventory of local archival material. The project is in very preliminary stages of organization and planning. The general goals of the project today are as follows: to design and implement a workable model of archival storage in a computer indexing database accessible by current technology to Weston and other communities; to preserve and protect original documents and provide hardcopy for research; to develop a new system of archival storage to coincide with the greatly expanded new public library facility; to establish continuation funding for access to historical document in the near future; to be a model of cooperation among the many historical interest groups in Weston; to be a prototype, easily replicable by other communities.

Board member Mary Maynard sits on the committee on behalf of the First Parish Church. Board member Samuel Payson sits on the committee on behalf of the Weston Historical Commission. Board members Sabra Jones and Douglas Henderson and Assistant Treasurer Alice Douglas presently sit on the committee on behalf of the Weston Historical Society.

**GET A TAX DEDUCTION!** Our still gestating Museum is in need of many things, but on the front burner right now is the need for a rug or two, hooked, braided, imitation Persian or other (we will not refuse a true Persian), the size from 3 x 6 feet and up, in usable condition. If you can help us, call Vera Laska, chairman of the Museum Committee, at 237-1447. Remember: it is tax deductible!

We are missing the March, 1968 (Vol. IV, No. 3) issue of our Bulletin. If you have one, please let us copy it. Call the above Laska number. Sorry, this is not tax deductible.



*Polly and Eddie Marshall*

## REMEMBERING:

### Edward Walker Marshall, 1905-1992

A long life, productively and happily lived, has made all of us who knew and cherished Edward W. Marshall indebted to his memory. Our town has been enriched by his constructive participation in local affairs. As the second president of the Weston Historical Society, of which he was a charter member, he ably served from November 1971 to October 1976. He was also a director of the Golden Ball Tavern.

Further afield, Eddie was an honorary trustee of Old Sturbridge Village, a fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society and a longtime member and former governor of the Massachusetts Society of Colonial Wars. A summer resident of York Harbor, Maine, he was a member of the Old York Historical Society. In 1952 he was chairman of York's 300th Anniversary celebration.

Mr. Marshall, born in Portland, Maine, was a graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy, Harvard University (1926) and the Harvard Business School (1928). For two years during World War II he was a leading economist in the War Production Board in Washington, D.C. From 1948 to 1968 he ran the Marshall House, the prestigious hotel on Stage Neck and Fort Point, Maine, which had been established by his grandfather, and also the Emerson House, the hotel adjacent to the Marshall House. During these same twenty years he commuted to Boston, where he was a securities analyst for Goldman Sachs.

A world traveler, Eddie rarely missed a meeting of the Harvard Travellers Club. Until age 82 he went skiing in Europe each winter. He was also long an active member of the Skating Club of Boston. Other activities included membership in the Navy League, the Newcomer Society of North America, the York Harbor Reading Room and the Volunteer Veteran's Fire Association of York Harbor.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Polly; two daughters, Anne Tarbell of Cape Elizabeth, Maine, and Jean Rae of Southport, Connecticut; a sister, Elizabeth Marshall Evans of Tequesta, Florida; and five grandchildren.

Eddie Marshall remained active and alert until the day before his death. He died as he had lived: a worthy family member and friend, a kind and gallant man. His steadfast and caring presence will continue to occupy an especially warm niche in the heart of everyone who knew him in Weston and in York Harbor.

*Alice Riley*

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Membership dues: Individual \$10, family \$15, life \$250. Contributions and bequests to the Endowment and Memorial Fund are welcome. Make checks payable to the Weston Historical Society, Inc. and mail them to the Weston Historical Society, Box 343, Weston, Massachusetts 02193. Contributions are tax deductible. Additional copies of the BULLETIN may be obtained at \$2 each by mailing payment to the Society. Statements and/or opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editor, the Editorial Board or the Weston Historical Society.