



THE *FREE-HOLDER*

SPRING 1998 THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOUNDED 1960

♦ A TIFFANY
CHRONOLOGY
PART II

♦ REV WAR
OUTRAGES

♦ PHOTO
MEMORIES OF
MASSAPEQUA

♦ WHO WAS
GEORGE
PERKINS?



THE HISTORY MAGAZINE OF THE TOWN OF OYSTER BAY

Editorial

With this issue of *The Freeholder* we come to the end of our second volume. It's hard to believe that we have already put out eight issues of the magazine. This would be a fitting time to thank those (too numerous to mention here) who have assisted and encouraged us in

this endeavor. Thanks also to new contributors, who continue to come forward with articles (three in this issue alone!).

We have not even made a dent in covering the 350 years of Oyster Bay's history, so there's plenty more material for *The Freeholder* to cover in the years to come!

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THE POST RIDER



To the Editor:

Congratulations on a very interesting *Freeholder*. They are all excellent, this one especially! I did note in Sam Berliner's article a slight error which might be a typographical one. I hesitate to mention it for I do not want to be critical

nor do I want to find fault. However as an editor myself, I believe we all strive for perfection and prefer to know the truth.

Brenda Frazier, a very beautiful and well known lady who was very prominent, especially in the '40s and '50s, who married Shipwreck Kelly, a football great, was not born until the early '20s and would not have known Kelly until at least

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Purpose: The Oyster Bay Historical Society was founded in 1960 with the express purpose of preserving the history of the Town of Oyster Bay. The Society maintains a museum and research library in the Town-owned c.1720 Earle-Wightman House, 20 Summit Street, Oyster Bay.

Call (516) 922-5032 for more information.

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ABOUT OUR FRONT COVER

This view looking west, shows the shops located at the corner of South Street and Audrey Avenue at the turn of the century. E.A. Hegeman operated a general store and Hiram Pearsall was a Jeweler/Watchmaker. See page 15 for a related story.

*From the Collection of the
Oyster Bay Historical Society.*

'39 or '40 . The article, "Yesterday in Oyster Bay," mentions Frazier and Kelly living in the brick mansion in the '20s, whereas the '40s would be more appropriate. I believe that Brenda Frazier died in either the late '70s or in the '80s and do not know whether she had any children. She and Shipwreck Kelly were eventually divorced and he remarried and

continued on p. 19

ARTISTRY IN GLASS; THE UNDISPUTED MASTER, OUR OYSTER BAY NEIGHBOR, PART II

By Judith A. Spinzia

We now offer our readers the conclusion of Mrs. Spinzia's article on Louis Comfort Tiffany. In addition to this article, we are greatly indebted to the Spinzias for an exhaustive bibliography on Tiffany and his art which is available for researchers at the Historical Society's headquarters. All photographs in this article are courtesy of Raymond Spinzia.

LOUIS COMFORT TIFFANY: A SELECTED CHRONOLOGY
Relevant To the Man, His Work, and His Oyster Bay, Long Island Home, Part II.

1890 Tiffany Glass & Decorating Company was formed from The Tiffany Glass Company and Louis C. Tiffany & Associated Artists.

Tiffany built a summer home, *The Briars*, at Oyster Bay, Long Island. The home was later owned by Tiffany's daughter Mary Woodbridge Tiffany and her husband, Dr. Graham Lusk.

1892 The earliest of several multi-paneled windows called *Four Seasons* was exhibited in Paris. It is now in the collection of The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art, Winter Park, Florida. The later, and more impressionistic, version of the *Four Seasons* was created for the home of Walter Jennings, *Burrwood*, in Lloyd Harbor. Those four windows also survive and are in a private collection.

1893 Tiffany built a glasshouse in Corona, Queens. Although the first building

burned, the second building still stands today at the corner of 44th Ave. & 97th Pl. It was managed by Arthur Nash of Stourbridge, England. Dr. Parker McIlhenny, a chemist, also worked full-time with Tiffany.

The sanctuary lamp hanging in the nave of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Troy, New York, was part of the Columbian Exposition display which Tiffany brought to Chicago. Several windows, including *Feeding the Flamingos* now in The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art collection, Winter Park, Florida, and the 1893 *Minne-ha-ha* window now in the Public Library, Duluth, Minnesota, were included. The extraordinary Byzantine Chapel was also displayed.

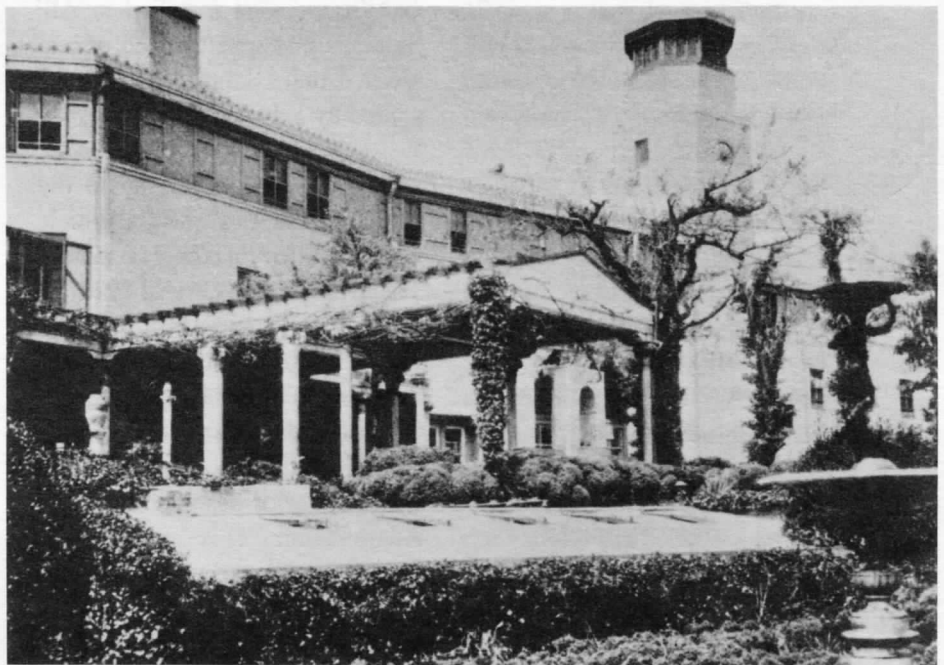
Tiffany's glass manufacturing was divided into Stourbridge Glass Co. and Allied Arts Co.

1894 Application was made to the United States Patent Office to patent the trademark "Favrile."

1895 The 9-paneled impressionistic apse window, *St. Mark*, in St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Islip, Long Island, was designed and installed. It replaced the 1878 St. Mark window. The Redmond Memorial window, *St. John*, was installed in the same church.

1897 During this peak design year, 200-300 tons of glass in 5,000 colors were stored in the Corona facility and, therefore, available for design.

The first list of window commissions was published.



Laurelton Hall, Tiffany's second mansion in Laurel Hollow; designed by Tiffany in an eclectic style using elements of North African and Art Nouveau styles, it was completed in 1904. It was destroyed by arson in 1957.

1898 The Johnson Memorial window, *Choir of Angels*, over the south transept of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Islip, Long Island, was installed.

1899 The Hyde Memorial window, *Recording Angel* and the Peters Memorial window, *Floral Design*- a magnificent lily and pansy Resurrection window- were installed at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Islip, Long Island. The latter was badly damaged in the fire of December 1989. It was restored by Jack Cushen.

The Chittenden Memorial window, *Education*, was installed in the Chittenden Library at Yale.

1900 Thin, neat leading and the increased use of copper coming replaced the heavy leading of the 1880s.

The Tiffany Glass & Decorating Company was renamed Tiffany Studios.

1902 Louis was named design director of Tiffany and Co. after the death of his father.

The Cryder Memorial window, *Sir Galahad*, in St. Andrew's Dune Church, Southampton, Long Island, was installed.

The glasshouse at Corona was renamed Tiffany Furnaces.

1903 The Northrop Memorial window, *The Vision of St. John*, in the Bowne Street (Reformed) Church, Flushing, NY, was installed; designed by

Agnes Northrop in memory of her father.

1904 The floor-to-ceiling opalescent glass screen by Louis C. Tiffany and Associated Artists for the White House was ordered destroyed by then President Theodore Roosevelt, Tiffany's Long Island neighbor.

Louis' second wife, Louise, died. *Laurelton Hall* was completed in Laurel Hollow, Oyster Bay, Long Island, overlooking Oyster Bay. Louis and his children moved into the mansion.

1906 The Frederic Betts Memorial window, *Landscape*, in St. Andrew's Dune Church, Southampton, Long Island, was installed.

1907 The Farnham Memorial window, *Angel with Landscape*, was installed in All Saints' Episcopal Church, Great Neck, Long Island; designed and signed by Edward P. Sperry.

1909 Tiffany designed the stained-glass fire curtain which was installed in the National Theatre, Mexico City in 1911.

The Tree of Life landscape was installed in the Sage Memorial Chapel of the First Presbyterian Church, Far Rockaway, NY, in a Gothic interior designed by Ralph Adams Cram. It is one of his largest landscape commissions.

1910 *A Partial List of Windows* was published; updated but incomplete.

1914 *The Bathers* window was created without flesh painting and installed in *Laurelton Hall*.

The Artwork of Louis C. Tiffany was privately published by Doubleday, Page, and Company, Garden City, Long Island. Tiffany dictated it to Charles de Kay. Few copies were printed and fewer survive.

1915 Nicoll Memorial window, *Blessed Are the Pure in Heart*, was installed in St. Andrew's Dune Church, Southampton, Long Island.

The Dream Garden mosaic mural was installed in the lobby of the Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia, PA. This was a joint venture with Maxfield Parrish, whose painting was used to make the cartoon for the mosaic.

1916 Remains of the Byzantine Chapel, damaged by water and mold after being sealed up by Ralph Adams Cram in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City, were retrieved by Tiffany and reinstalled at *Laurelton Hall* on Long Island. Surviving portions are in the collection of The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art, Winter Park, Florida.

Tiffany's last personal involvement in the design of ecclesiastical windows is thought to be in reference to those placed in a Brooklyn church, since destroyed by fire.



The Bathers; created in 1914, this window represented the pinnacle of Tiffany's quest to eliminate all painting from his stained-glass windows. Referred to as "Saturday Night" by the Tiffany children, it included no external painting. It was installed in Laurelton Hall among others of his favorite windows and was lost as firemen tried to extinguish the fire that destroyed the mansion in 1957. Only one other example of this advanced technique is known to have survived.

The battle with the Town of Oyster Bay, the residents of Oyster Bay, and his immediate neighbor over Tiffany's claim to riparian rights finally ended. His further claim to five underwater acres and the building of a seawall and breakwater resulted in a court reversal of the rights previously awarded. In June 1916 Tiffany blew-up the breakwater and flooded the beach, terminating the village's plans to recreate the public beach and picnic grounds, which had been on the site before *Laurelton Hall* was built, and add 35 public bathhouses to the beach directly below *Laurelton Hall*, adjacent to the present beach at the foot of Laurelton Beach Road.

1917 Aldrich Memorial window, *Jesus' Presentation in the Temple*, was installed with mosaic inscription work in Christ

Episcopal Church, Sag Harbor, Long Island.

1918 Last major contract for decorating was undertaken at the Presidential Palace, Havana, Cuba.

Tiffany formed the Louis C. Tiffany Foundation through which he established a school for young artists on the grounds of his *Laurelton Hall* home. The Madison Ave. offices of Tiffany Studios were sold to provide for this.

1920 The Corona glassworks became Louis C. Tiffany Furnaces, Inc. with Arthur Nash's son, A. Douglas Nash, in charge. Tiffany and the senior Nash retired from active supervision. Principally, Favrite art glass was produced during these last years.

The art school at *Laurelton Hall*, under Tiffany's personal supervision, began operation.

1924 Tiffany Furnaces closed. Commissions completed after this date used excess glass which remained.

1925 Landscape window was commissioned by Mr. Towle, a later studio fabrication; now in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (gift of the de Forest estate).

1928 Tiffany withdrew financial support of the Louis C. Tiffany Furnaces Inc. completely. It failed shortly thereafter.

1932 Tiffany Studios, then under the direction of Joseph Briggs, filed for bankruptcy.

1933 Louis Comfort Tiffany died on January 17th, one month before his 85th birthday at his 72nd Street home in New York City. Sarah Hanley (d. 1958), who had come, as a nurse, to care for him during a kidney ailment some twenty years before, remained as his companion to the end of his life. She became a credible artist under his tutelage. Sarah always dressed in yellow, Louis' favorite color, and lived in a house which Tiffany had had built for her on the Tiffany property.

1930s The Westminster Memorial Studios, formed by former employees including Agnes Northrop, completed many of Tiffany Studios' remaining

continued on p. 24

CRUEL MASTERS

By Rita Cleary

I attended a lecture by a British historian, John Keegan, who had traveled the lower Hudson Valley and visited Revolutionary War sites. He could not believe, he said, the amount of "burning" that had gone on in the war. He found the accounts offensive, incredible. In fact, the British and their Hessian and loyalist allies burned much that they conquered: houses, barns, and crops. Keegan's example was Kingston, New York, where the British Army left everything in ashes. Here on Long Island, they requisitioned property, horses, livestock, foodstuffs etc. They tore the siding from barns, the shingles from churches, and devoured Long Island's vast supply of virgin timber to heat their barracks and repair their ships. The result of this destruction was the alienation of the local population whose homes Britain had come to "protect," and whose help Britain should have been trying to enlist.

Even the loyalist population of New York City and Long Island, whose faith in the mother country never wavered, suffered from far more than arson. The British expected the colonials to pay the cost of war and looked to the loyal population to supply their every want, from 6,396 feet of boards stripped from the Jericho Presbyterian Church on November 21, 1777, to 40 gallons of rum which Banastre Tarleton's British Legion, stationed in Jericho, consumed in 4 days. John Reynolds' *Behind the British Lines on Long Island* reports that Tarleton stole not only horses for his cavalry but sheets, a blanket and a petticoat.

We can only wonder what efforts of war required a petticoat! The necessities of life (shoes, shirts, cutlery and utensils) disappeared, as well as wagons, guns, and food. Such military requisitions mostly went unrecompensed. In the end, the British regulated the traffic on the roads, the cutting of hay and firewood, the threshing of grain, and the weight and price of a loaf of bread. A proclamation in January 1779, in *Rivington's Loyalist Gazette*, the pro-British bi-weekly published at the time, reads "a loaf of bread shall weigh 2 lbs and sell for 14 coppers."

British-hired Hessian mercenaries were even worse. They raped, robbed, imprisoned, and extorted. From Henry Onderdonk's *Revolutionary Incidents of Queens County* (1846), we learn how Hessians impressed teams of horses right off the plows, while farmers were in the act of cultivating their fields. Samuel Cocks lost a stallion, Daniel Underhill a black mare, John Weekes a bay horse, and Nathaniel Coles a trotting horse from out of his own stable. Hessians cut the ears off sheep pastured on the Hempstead Plains so that it was impossible to identify owners. (Earmarks were the eighteenth century equivalent of brands.) Local inhabitants hid their livestock and buried their valuables. But mercenary soldiers, who derived a portion of their remuneration from looting, tortured owners to extort knowledge of the hiding places.

More responsible members of the British military deplored the depredations. Lieutenant Colonel John Graves Simcoe in his

Military Journal expresses an "abhorrence of plunder which distinguishes the truly brave from the cowardly ruffian." Simcoe, who insisted on good conduct by his Queen's Rangers, protested their vilification after he was wounded at Gloucester Point when they fell under the command of Banastre Tarleton and took the blame for many of the excesses of Tarleton's Legion.

By far the worst suffering occurred in British prisons. In the city of New York, the Sugar House, so named because it was an old warehouse, and Bridewell Prison were continually overcrowded and lice-infested. American prisoners received two-thirds of the army-navy ration, usually rotting leftovers from the military stores. They supplied their own clothing and blankets in unheated, fetid cells.

But it was conditions in the prison hulks that rivaled the horrors of this century's Nazi concentration camps. The *Falmouth*, the *Jersey*, the *Scorpion* and the ironically-named *Good Hope* were scuttled British warships, dismasted and left to rot in the mud flats of Wallabout Bay. The worst was the former 64-gun *Jersey* Thomas Dring, a former prisoner aboard the *Jersey*, described conditions in *Recollections of the Jersey Prison Ship* (H.H. Brown, 1829). The only fresh water came from rain caught in rat-infested scuppers or dirty, rusty containers. The prisoners drew water for cooking, the same water that served as sewer, from out of the bay. They cooked their rations in a huge communal copper cauldron. Dring never ate

anything cooked in the cauldron and claimed that was why he was able to survive.

At night, the prisoners were confined below, the hatches covered with iron gratings which were nailed down. The stench was suffocating; the darkness frightening. Ventilation consisted of two tiers of holes, 20 inches square and 10 feet apart, the former gun ports.

There was no escape from this floating hell. No prisoner survived more than 3 months. A total of 11,000 died, killed by scurvy, smallpox, typhus, starvation, filth, or exposure. Some went mad first. Their bones lie today in a crypt in a small cemetery near the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Dring was lucky. He was exchanged after only a few weeks.

William Cunningham, New York's Provost Marshall during the British occupation, returned to Britain after the war. He was convicted of forgery in 1791 and hung. On his deathbed, he confessed to selling the provisions which were allotted for the prisoners of the hulks and pocketing the proceeds.

The British High Command ignored the reports of British cruelty. General Sir William Howe, after capturing Philadelphia and receiving news of his knighthood, did little more fighting. He stayed put in Philadelphia, partying and dallying with his mistress Betsy Lloyd Loring, before he retired in luxury to Britain. Though he could have annihilated

Washington's army starving in Valley Forge only 20 miles away, Loyalists complained of his inertia, witnessed the excesses, and saw their numbers diminish. Their protests increased after the embarrassing British defeat at Saratoga in 1777. But the military hierarchy treated them as inferiors, "ungrateful people," and would not listen to their counsel. The British questioned whether British subjects who had removed themselves so far from the homeland should be entitled to the same liberties as those who

(*Rivington's Gazette*, October 19, 1780)

In the end, the loyalists who were left were stubborn souls. They suffered the arson, the denunciation, and the plunder, and lost their homes and livelihood. Unwelcome in England, many languished on the barren shores of Nova Scotia. Finally, several years after the war ended, England awarded them land in Upper Canada. John Graves Simcoe, the same who had commanded the Queen's Rangers in Oyster Bay, became



Contemporary artist John Trumbull's view of life in the hell that was the Jersey.

stayed in England. When Joseph Galloway, a loyalist refugee from Philadelphia who had guided Howe's troops into the city in October 1777, was interrogated in London several years later, he was asked, "In what manner were the inhabitants treated?" His answer: "Many of them, far too many, were plundered."

their governor. Simcoe, Ontario is named for him.

In his lecture, Keegan mentioned none of this. Was he ignorant or is the subject of British military depredations too offensive for an Englishman? Perhaps there is much about the American Revolution that an Englishman would as soon forget.

MRS. GOODHUE'S PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM

By Lillian Rumfield Bryson

The faded sepia snapshots were taken between 1898 and 1910 by Maria Amanda Goodhue (1863-1958), who lived in Massapequa with her husband Charles Edward (1853-1929), and their children Denise, Prentice, Phyllis and Fisher. According to the records of Grace Episcopal Church in Massapequa, Mr. Goodhue was a member for over thirty years. He was a vestryman and the Senior warden 1928-29 (a large plaque in his memory hangs in Old Grace Church on Merrick Road, across from modern day Grace Church). Mrs. Goodhue is also remembered as a faithful, much respected and loved, parishioner.

Most of the pictures were taken during the summer seasons, but show that the Goodhues also had a home at 157 East 34th Street, in New York City. The photographs tell of good times at Edgelake, their Massapequa home; present day Lake Court off Ocean Avenue, across from

Massapequa Lake. It was a large, turn of the century, two story house, with a long wrap-around porch and a second story veranda to catch the breezes off the lake. There were dormer windows in the attic roof, perhaps for servant rooms, two chimneys suggesting a fireplace on cool evenings, and a strong iron cook stove in the kitchen.

The album pictures family and friends at Edgelake, and at Massapequa Hotel; a well known summer resort of fine style and reputation, then located on South Ocean Avenue. They are seen enjoying the bathing beach near the hotel, boating on Great South Bay, and celebrating Fourth of July at Jones Beach, where they were fully clothed from shoes and stockings to hats. Only a barrier reef at that time, the two small boats that ferried out the inlet from



Seaford to the beach were called the Carrie B and the Milton C. The family visited nearby farms, watched Mr. Edward H. Floyd-Jones' herd along South Country Road (Merrick Road), went sailing and rowing on Massapequa Lake, and fishing from the dock near the flag pole across from their home on Ocean Avenue. There were rides in carriages pulled by a horse named Roxy, and times spent playing with Major and Pussy, their dog and cat. They went horseback riding, played golf and tennis, and went strolling down the middle of Merrick Road.

Idyllic views across Massapequa Lake to Massapequa Manor show a sailboat on the lake and Mary's Island, named after the daughter of New York Governor DeWitt Clinton, almost bereft of trees. At Heckinger's Farm, along Merrick Road, cows graze in a pasture of tall grass. Overgrown back roads are pictured along with manicured





lawns and roadways. Ladies, gentlemen, and children dressed in fine attire, were posed for the camera and caught resting in porch hammocks. The Massapequa Hotel stage is seen waiting at the bathing beach.

In 1898, Mrs. Goodhue photographed Massapequa's brick Victorian railroad station; reputed to have been built to enhance the first view of good folks coming to the Massapequa Hotel by rail. Hicksville Road was a tree lined dirt road devoid of traffic in 1903. Present day Clark Boulevard in Massapequa Park, once referred to as "Lovers Lane," is titled "North of Massapequa Station, August 1906." Brush-land stretches almost barren "Looking north toward the station," and shots of the hotel grounds show "The Fourth Artillery N.Y. Volunteers after marching from Camp Black" (vicinity of Uniondale). There is an endearing picture of Denise and Phyllis with garlands

in their hair, as they stand beside bicycles with baskets full of flowers.

Mrs. Goodhue documented in picture Massapequa's first mansion, historic Tryon Hall. Built in 1770 just east of present day Park Boulevard on the north side of

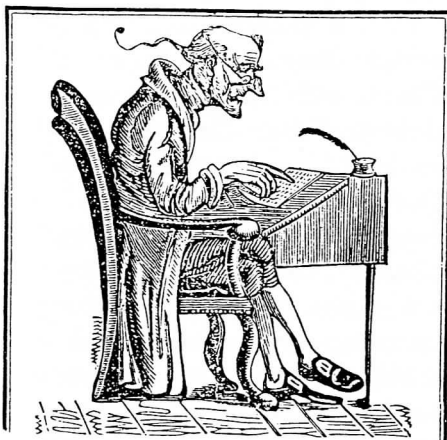
Merrick Road; at the time of her picture it was over 100 years old. She photographed Grace Church with clap board siding and dark painted trim, as it stood shortly after the turn of the century.

The album was found in Edgelake after her death, and rescued by a contractor who was there to demolish the house. It was given to a neighbor and then left in the safe keeping of another neighbor. Eventually it came to the Historical Society of the

Massapequas.

Maria Amanda Goodhue is buried alongside Old Grace Church with her husband and their son Fisher; the stones are marked "Died in Massapequa." One hundred years after she began to record Massapequa in pictures, I see her in my memory, a formative part of my growing up, a dear dowager lady dressed mostly in black. I was in awe of her from what seemed a distance, and respected her for her position and her years. I remember her cow tethered in a clearing across from my Massapequa Avenue grammar school in the late 1930s. Now, after writing of her snapshot recollections, the distance seems less, for I have grown closer to Maria Amanda Goodhue as a companion in preserving the history of a place she loved. And I love.

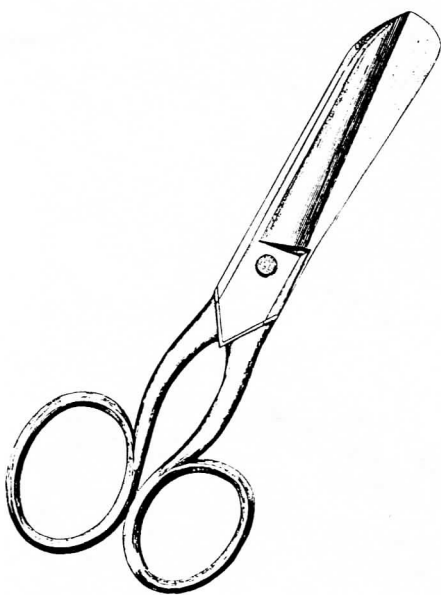




ASK UNCLE PELEG

Dear Uncle Peleg:

I found a pair of rusty scissors or small shears that looked unusual and perhaps rather old. One blade tapers to a sharp point, the other is quite broad for its whole length and ends in a blunted, slightly diagonal end. The loop on the broad blade is somewhat larger than that on the pointed one but they do not form a particularly comfortable grip.



When I scraped some of the loose rust away, markings were to be seen above the pivot on both sides. Both were two deckers. One read Fagan/Pathfinder; the other FORGED STEEL/FOREIGN. The appearance and wording of the markings and the fact that the pivot is a screw, not a rivet, does not support the idea of substantial age but I cannot find anyone who can identify Fagan/Pathfinder. Can you help?

Joe Gorsky

This is the Dickens of a question. Did you find the scissors in an old curiosity shop? Fagan, indeed! Scissors rather like those you describe are found in Smith's Key, a Sheffield catalog of 1816, so the pattern is at least 182 years old. In the Key they are shown both with screw and rivet pivots. I have seen much more modern examples of the pattern. I don't know who, when or where Fagan was. Can any reader help?

Dear Uncle Peleg,

In a book about the population expansion in the 18th century it was said about a farmer that he "procured a bag of seed and raised timothy." Since timothy had no capital letter I have to assume it was a plant. Can you set me straight?

Wilma Deering

If your question wasn't interesting I'd send you straight - to a bookstore to buy a good dictionary. Timothy was a European grass which, when introduced here, became a very important hay crop. There is a story that a farmer Timothy

Hanson was responsible for its spread. If so, it took his first name. At a time when new settlers trending west were depending on the browse of tree leaves plus a little grain to feed their horses and cattle, timothy, raised on a low damp clearing, was a godsend.

Dear Uncle Peleg,

What is an esponton?

Bernadette Weltsek

The form of the word you have seen is probably Spanish. In English it was commonly rendered spontoon. It was a military weapon like a halberd carried by officers in 18th century forces. Though it was a badge of authority and some later examples seem to have been only for show, there are records of its effective use alongside the bayoneted musket in various 18th century engagements. The fighting part was ordinarily a spear-like point below which a more or less ornamental shape was developed.





CURRENTS OF THE BAY



This section focuses on the doings of local historical societies, museums, and communities in the Town of Oyster Bay and its neighbors. Upcoming special events, exhibits, lectures, and tours are featured, so send your submissions to the Editor if you would like to see your events covered by The Freeholder.

MARITIME HISTORIAN TO ADDRESS OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The annual organizational meeting of the Oyster Bay Historical Society will take place in the Community Center, Church Street, Oyster Bay, at 8 P.M. on Friday, June 19th. The public is cordially invited to this open meeting and special lecture, which will feature maritime historian and author, Joan Druett. Her tenth and most recent book, *Hen Frigates: Wives of Merchant Captains Under Sail*, was released by Simon & Schuster earlier this month.

In her book, Mrs. Druett expertly weaves together the colorful first-person accounts of the adventurous women who accompanied their husbands on the high seas. Much is revealed through journals and letters, along with extensive research on the author's part, to produce a lively literary portrait of a seafaring wife's existence during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Born and raised in New Zealand, Joan Druett was trained as a teacher and began writing

full-time in 1984 after winning a PEN award for her first book, *Exotic Intruders*. A 1986 Fulbright Award subsidized the researching and writing of her next two books, *Petticoat Whalers* and *She Was A Sister Sailor*, which won the 1992 John Lynn Award for Best Book of American Maritime History.

Mrs. Druett has also served as consultant/curator for several seafaring exhibitions in the United States. She and her husband, Ron, continue to reside in Wellington, New Zealand, and he, a maritime artist, contributed all the original illustrations for *Hen Frigates*. Chapter headings in this fascinating volume include: The Honeymooners,

Children at Sea, Ship Kitchens, and Medical Matters.

Traditionally, a "hen frigate" was any ship with the captain's wife on board. Mrs. Druett was inspired to investigate these women after making an unusual discovery on a South Pacific island - the long-forgotten gravestone of a 24-year-old whaling captain's wife who had died in January 1850.

Wanting to know more about the unfortunate woman, Druett discovered that no maritime history had ever chronicled the experience of sailing wives at sea. Her quest took her to research sources throughout the world, and in particular, the



Joan Druett, author of HEN FRIGATES
Photo by Ron Druett

museums, libraries and historical societies of New England, as well as New York and Virginia.

Copies of Mrs. Druett's book will be available for purchase (and signing) and she will answer questions at the conclusion of her lecture. For additional information, contact Tom Kuehhas, Director of the Oyster Bay Historical Society, at 922-5032.

ST. DOM'S STUDENTS ASSIST SOCIETY WITH ARCHIVAL COLLECTION

By Christina Gentile

Since October, a group of students from the National Honor Society at St. Dominic High School have been transcribing historical documents in order for them to be posted on the website of the Oyster Bay Historical Society. Under the direction of Dr. M.J. Hanophy, moderator of the National Honor Society, and Mr. Kuehhas, Director of the Historical Society, we have fully transcribed approximately twenty documents to date, which varied from standard deeds to one widow's cure for cancer. One of these was a deed which was approximately 1,500 words long and described in great detail the land and buildings that were sold.

We have discovered that the writing instrument and paper used affected the neatness of the writing. Earlier documents generally contained smaller script and the writers tended to run words together. This occurred because the quill pens used had to be constantly re-dipped in ink, and writers were trying to save time. An innovation that made

writing faster was a hole in the tip, which acted as a reservoir for ink and allowed more flowing letters to be produced. In 1830, the steel tip was introduced and replaced quills. Another factor in the condition of the document was the paper used. Most of the documents are in good condition because the paper used was stronger than it is now, and some splits along the folds and fading are the only exceptions. Another observation made was that land surveyors did not have the same quality of writing as recorders.

The style of writing in most of these documents was unique to each individual scribe. Virtually no punctuation was used, but certain shorthand symbols are used for words or phrases that are repeated often, such as "executors and administrators" or "aforesaid." Similarities in letters often led to confusion; for example, an "s" often appeared to be an "f." Another aspect of transcription is that in many deeds or wills, there are many redundancies in order to prevent confusion, and unfamiliar legal terms are common.

To see the completed transcriptions, visit the Historical Society's website at <http://members.aol.com/OBHistory>.

NEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY EXHIBIT AT O.B.-E.N. LIBRARY

Director Tom Kuehhas announces that the Oyster Bay Historical Society has installed a new exhibit at the Oyster Bay-East Norwich Public Library. The exhibit

complements the recent unveiling of the mural of local historical vignettes executed by Old Westbury artist Honey W. Kurlander. Featured in the exhibit are mounted photographic images from the Society's collection, trustee John Hammond's personal collection, and the recently-acquired Summers Postcard Collection, as well as other related memorabilia.

Spend some time perusing the exhibit next time you're at the Library!

AMITYVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society is looking forward to the 29th edition of Amityville's Annual Heritage Fair, scheduled for Saturday, June 6th. A new item available in the gift shop is Van R. Field's 79-page book, *Wrecks and Rescues on Long Island*. The main gallery area includes a new exhibit entitled "Mementos of Amityville's Merchants." The Historical Society's museum is located in the former Franklin National Bank building in the center of town.

They are open Tuesday, Friday and Sunday, 2 to 4 P.M. For more information, call (516) 598-1486.

FARMINGDALE-BETHPAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The annual Founders' Day Dinner took place on April 22nd at Annabelle's Restaurant in Farmingdale. The Society was formed on April 12, 1964 and the guest speaker for this year's event was Dr. John A. Gable,

Executive Director of the Theodore Roosevelt Association. Dr. Gable is a former trustee of the Oyster Bay Historical Society and a member of the vestry at historic Christ Church (Episcopal) in that village. The members of the Bethpage Friends Meeting marked their 300th anniversary on Sunday, March 29th. The venerable Meeting House was filled to capacity on a warm early spring afternoon. The Society's annual Strawberry Festival will take place on Sunday, June 7th, on the grounds of the Walt Whitman birthplace in the Town of Huntington. Activities will include tours of the house and the new Interpretive Center, plus election of officers.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE MASSAPEQUAS

Josh Soren presented a slide lecture covering High Hill, and portions of Jones Beach, on April 20th at the Old Grace Church. He is president of the Seaford Historical Society and the Wantagh Preservation Society. His talk covered the history of the former seaside community at the eastern part of Jones Beach State Park. In addition, board member and historian, Arlene Goodenough, delivered an informative lecture the next night, April 21st, at the Plainedge Library. Her topic was the "Mansions of Massapequa, and the farm district of North Massapequa."

Help Wanted: As part of Massapequa's historic complex, the De Lancey Floyd-Jones Library on Merrick Road at Cedar Shore Drive has been

Visit the Oyster Bay Historical Society's website!

<http://members.aol.com/OBHistory>

blessed to have had Arlene Goodenough as their lady in charge. However, she will be leaving the community in early July, and the Historical Society is interviewing people to take her place. The 1896 library is open on Saturday and Wednesday from 10:00 to 1:00; a great source of Long Island history. Library experience not required, books are not loaned out. A sense of history and a few hours a week, in return for a modest salary and charming place surrounded by the past ... with hope for the future. For further information, please call Lillian and Gene Bryson, 516-798-8047, or write to them at 53 Third Avenue, Massapequa Park, L.I., NY 11762.

BAYVILLE VILLAGE MUSEUM

The current exhibit through June is "The World of Marbles," which features the vast collection of Mr. Les Marbles (yes, that's his real name), who also owns a sign shop on Pine Hollow Road in Oyster Bay.

In addition to the marble show, the classic school room, country store and oystering exhibits are available, plus vintage clothing and children's toys. The museum is located on School Street at the Village Hall complex, off of Bayville Avenue. Hours are 1 to 3 P.M., Sunday and Tuesday. For more information, contact the Director, Gladys Mack, at 628-8975.

CENTRAL PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The March meeting featured Robert Shapiro, public relations expert for WLUX Radio, 540 on the AM dial. In April, Jack Gifford, a lifelong resident of Bethpage, shared a wealth of Central Park/Bethpage history with an enthusiastic crowd. A word of explanation: the Society

OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Categories of Membership

Individual	\$ 20	Business	\$ 50
Family	\$ 30	Business Sponsor	\$ 100
Contributing	\$ 50	Business Friend	\$ 300
Sponsor	\$ 100	Business Patron	\$ 500+
Sustaining	\$ 250	Benefactor	\$ 1000+
Patron	\$ 500		

Member Benefits: Quarterly Magazine, Members' Party, Invitations to Exhibition Previews and Special Events, 10% Discount on Publications and Workshops. Call 922-5032 for more information on joining the Society.

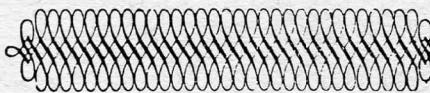
OUR WARMEST WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS

Ms Kathryn Abbe
Mr. & Mrs. M. Farraq Ahmed
Ms. Monica T. Albala
Ms. Lucy O. Amistadi
Ms. Elizabeth Bond
Ms. Greta S. Brady
Mr. Philip V. Brady
Mr. & Mrs. Philip B. Burchman
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Burney
Ms. Nancy Coleman
Mr. Jay S. Davis
Mr. Stephen O. Dean
Mrs. Carolyn J. Diglio
Ms. Louisa P. Evans
Ms. Evelyn Fitzsimmons
Mr. Howard B. Ford
Mr. Stephen Gilroy
The Gluck Family
Mr. Jason Goldstein
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Greenburg

Mr. Dale Lorraine Hall
Mr. John H. Hayward
Ms. Jennifer Hoben-Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Barclay G. Jones
Mr. & Mrs. Coe Kerr
Ms. Tatine Kimmich
Ms. Anne Kochendorfer
Mr. & Mrs. Warren Kraft
Mr. Nicholas LaBella
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Leon
The Liebers Family
Mr. & Mrs. James Litke
Mr. Edward Magnani
Mr. John J. McCarthy
Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Morgan
Mr. David Morrison
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Nardone
Mr. Mike Newton
Ms. Kelly O'Hara
Mrs. Gloria R. O'Rourke

Mr. Thomas Regan
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Rimmel
Mr. Richard Revenson
Mr. David Roberts
Mr. James Rubins
Mr. Gregor Scheu
Mr. Dave Scialabba
Mr. Andrew Segerman
Mr. John W. Simonitsch
Mrs. Adele Smithers
Messrs Donald & George Stitt/Hemmert
The Book Mark
Mr. Conde R. Thorne
Mr. & Mrs. Jason Townsend
Mr. Marc M. Tract
VAL Pre-School
Mr. George W. Wilson
Ms. Evelyn B. Wines
Dr. & Mrs. Edward Woodman
Mr. Floyd J. Youngs

is officially known as the "Central Park Historical Society" because that was the original name of the community. In late May, the Society welcomed back Bob Cammann with his fascinating slides of Long Island. Bob conducted a visual trip from Queens to Montauk Point along the Sunrise Highway. On June 24th, he will take the Society on a picture tour of the North Shore along Route 25A as far east as it goes, and then continue on to Orient Point.



Many thanks to Harry L. Dickran of Levon Graphics Corp., 210 Route 109, East Farmingdale, for printing *The Freeholder* for the Society. His generosity allows the magazine to reach a much wider audience than was heretofore possible. Please patronize our sponsors!

The Oyster Bay Historical Society would like to extend its heart-felt thanks to Jerritt Gluck, whose family owns the historic Moore Building and the Wright House on West Main Street, for the donation of the services of craftsman John Myslak in completing the installation of the second floor railing and newel post in the Society's headquarters, the Earle-Wightman House.

MEMORIAL

Howard Imhof, founding member, longtime Board member, and avid supporter of the Oyster Bay Historical Society, passed away March 7, at age 80.

A native of Oyster Bay, Dr. Imhof, who served as Superintendent of the Oyster Bay-East Norwich School District for nineteen years, was instrumental in the formation of the Historical Society. He chaired the first meeting of the Society at the Oyster Bay Public Library in 1960 and was active for three decades thereafter.

In recognition of his long years of service to the Oyster Bay Historical Society, Dr. Imhof was named an Honorary Trustee at the Society's Thirty-Fifth Anniversary Dinner in 1995.

He will be greatly missed.

YESTERDAY IN OYSTER BAY

Contributed by John E. Hammond, Trustee

The total population of the entire Township of Oyster Bay in 1860 was 8047, and the total value of all real estate in the entire Township was \$3,368,695!! The population did not include the 1,884 horses, 1,776 working oxen, 2,194 cows, 5,527 sheep, and 4,253 swine; there was much more livestock than people!



A century ago, part of the land we now know as Planting Fields Arboretum was the farm and orchards of Sidney McCoun. In 1897 McCoun harvested over 7,000 baskets of peaches from his orchard.



The Jericho Cider Mill has been in operation for well over a century; in October 1897, owner John J. Hicks was advertising in the *East Norwich Enterprise* to buy "Sound, mixed apples" for 20 cents a bushel. The price of apples was rising steadily because the H.J. Heinz Company in Hicksville was also buying up apples for making cider vinegar.

Lobster egg hatching used to be big business at the Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery. Hatchery men went out each morning to get eggs from the lobsters caught by lobstermen who worked the Sound. Kept at the hatchery, they usually hatched in about forty eight hours, then the new lobsters were released into the waters of the Sound. In 1895, they released more than 3,000,000 hatchlings!

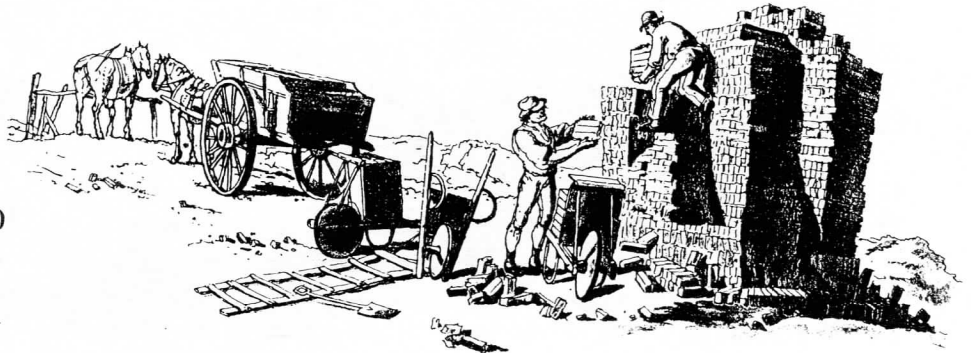
The arrival of the automobile caused numerous problems for the horsemen of the village of Oyster Bay; many horses had great difficulty adjusting to the new contraptions. Arthur D. Weekes had a particularly ornery horse who plunged through the plate glass window of E.A. Hegeman's store on the corner of South Street and Audrey Avenue in 1903 when he was startled by an auto and two years later he overturned a wagon and dashed around the sidewalk of S.Y. Bayles' store (now Nobman's corner).

Ed. note: See the Summer 1996 issue of The Freeholder for another example of the initial incompatibility of the two modes of transportation!

The automobile also posed some problems for the less mechanically or less scientifically minded. In late January 1934, the car of a resident of the Battery froze up from the extreme cold; the owner knew that ice could be thawed with heat and using this knowledge he commenced building a fire under the radiator of his coupe to thaw the ice. When the local firemen arrived the coupe was totally consumed by flames.

The following appeared in the May 31, 1884 edition of the *East Norwich Enterprise*: "Where did the man get his rum in Oyster Bay, who, on his way to Glen Cove one night early in this week, tapping several of the telegraph poles expecting to obtain sufficient syrup to maple sugarize the lower end of Cottage Row."

East Norwich once had its own brick factory; bricks from the factory were used to build the Walter Franklin house in 1795, which stood on the present grounds of the Chelsea Center. The house was destroyed by fire on January 7, 1924.





THE GATHERING PLACE



"The Gathering Place" is the department of the magazine housing contributions of an historical slant but short length that might otherwise be lost among the longer pieces. To our members who are not ready to attempt long or deeply researched articles, this is the place for your notions and comments, however brief.

The Dutch Next Door

By Lee Myles

Not a few of the unusual expressions to be found in English were lifted from the Dutch language, some of them before both peoples decided to settle on these shores, some during the early period of settlement. A good deal of what is loosely called slang entered our language this way and many bits of curious and colorful expression are still with us.

Consider the eight words and phrases that follow.

The expression, wiseacre meaning a smart aleck, has almost gone out of our spoken language although it is still to be

found in dictionaries. It came into our language from the middle Dutch, wijsseggher, meaning a soothsayer. The first English use, the form wise-aker, was found by the researchers of the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1595.

Spook, meaning a ghost, was handed to us directly in the Dutch-English territories in New York and New Jersey, as was snoop, to pry into affairs that are not one's business. Both words provide an amusing quality missing in most synonyms for ghost or pry and have remained useful since adoption.

Nit wit, a name for a stupid person, is still used in spite of the large number of synonyms

available to designate those of us who are none too bright. It is said to have come to English in the 16th century when Dutch emigrants new to England, were asked a question in English that they could not understand and responded "Niet weet" or "Don't know." Equated with stupidity by the English, the phrase became a noun applied to those less than brilliant of whatever background and so continues.

In a funk has been with us perhaps three hundred years and before that is thought by at least some investigators to have belonged to the Flemish, near cousins of the Dutch. Flemings came to New Netherlands among the Dutch settlers here. Funk has

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Here are some questions about objects and events that might have been noted by a long - ago visitor to Oyster Bay:

1. Crude cobalt was used in the 19th century home to kill what household pest?
2. What was a "keeler"?
3. Tray-making was one of the tasks of the white cooper. Can you describe the "tray" he made?
4. If a pot of lard grew "frowzy" it was retired from the kitchen but not thrown away. It next appeared in the wagon shed. How was it used?
5. A bog-hook was used for what purpose on the farm?
6. A "lap-stone" was used for what purpose and by whom?
7. What was it that "the shoemaker threw at his wife"?
8. In the 19th century and before "lint" had a medical connection. What was it?
9. What is a "castor" likely to have been found on an old fashioned dining room table?
10. A piece of rennet was to be found in a stoneware crock in what department of the 19th century farm? What was it and what was its use?
11. What was a paint mill?
12. A book with the name Nathaniel Bowditch on the title page might have been found on many bookshelves in Long Island seaports a hundred and more years ago. What was the subject matter?
13. What would have been the occupation of a Long Islander who kept a "compass and chain" in his house?
14. Why would an Oyster Bayite have had bell-glasses in his potting shed a hundred and fifty years, more or less, ago?
15. What are a "tidy" and a "cozy"?

come to mean both fear and a miasma of smoke or stench. The first English use of funk recorded by Eric Partridge is in the slang of Oxford University near the beginning of the 18th century.

Geek, a Dutch word meaning fool. Shakespeare was already using it at the end of the 16th century but more impressive is its survival and its employment into the 20th century when it takes the form "geek," in freak show parlance in American carnivals. Used to identify the fraudulent "wildman" reclaimed from the gutters of Skid Row and exhibited in a cage tearing live chickens apart with his teeth, its real meaning is still implicit.

In a trice, from the Dutch "trijs," windlass, the expression came to mean instantly or a single pull. It has been with us more than five hundred years and is still heard occasionally.

Poppycock. Should you disagree with the tendency in this feature to put on display the many interesting contributions that the American culture owes to the early Dutch settlers, not to mention the contributions to English culture that were made by the ancestors of the American Dutch, you might be constrained to mutter "poppycock." Don't. Although we understand poppycock to mean merely nonsense, it was originally a Dutch word and a rather coarse one. The ancestor form was "pappekak." It meant "soft dung."

Colorful - but not really the sort of vocabulary for polite conversation!

The Three Hundred Year Old Hawxhurst House

By Richard "Hawxhurst" Hawkes

They crossed the Atlantic in 1630 and came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony with the Winthrop Fleet. Many were fleeing religious persecution, others looked forward to a more prosperous life. They found however, that the persecution continued, so they moved first to Rhode Island and then in 1665 Christopher Hawxhurst, Richard Townsend and Joseph Carpenter moved again. This time to Oyster Bay on Long Island.

Christopher Hawxhurst bought and settled on 70 acres of land at Matinecock. It is significant that his son William, with his first cousin Joseph Weeks Jr., bought

land originally purchased from the local Native Americans (the Matinecocks) by the famous Captain John Underhill.

How comparatively tranquil this area must have been. How quiet and still wild when they built the first two homes in the area. The year was 1697. Now at three hundred years old, the "Hawxhurst House" still stands, a sturdy and unique Dutch style home of two stories at the west end of Locust Valley on Oyster Bay Road.

The house passed from William to his brother Samson, then to his son, Samson Jr., and when he died his son William purchased the house, which was being sold at auction to pay off Samson Jr.'s debts. Samson Hawxhurst Jr. was a miller on the Chagechageon Brook, adjacent to the property, and in 1742 and 1743 he was elected



The "Hawxhurst House" on Oyster Bay Road, Locust Valley.

"Commissioner of Roads" in the Buckram area.

The home passed from the family in the mid-nineteenth century and has had several different owners and residents since. Today it continues to function both as a home and as a historically significant piece of vanishing American history. Sources: *Hawxhurst History* by Robert Miller; Application for Landmark Designation, May 7, 1987 by Julia Clark; *Oyster Bay Town Records*.

Richard "Hawxhurst" Hawkes, a seventh great grandson of Samson Hawxhurst Sr., resides in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

An Old-Fashioned Game

By Elliot Sayward

I was recently asked, "What amusements comparable to the game Monopoly did Long Island children of an earlier day have when nightfall or bad weather kept them in the house?"

One answer to the question is suggested by Louisa May Alcott in her story "An Old Fashioned Thanksgiving." Written about a Thanksgiving in the 1820s, it mentions a game brought by the colonists from England and played by early American children almost everywhere. Alcott wrote of Thanksgiving time children playing "... games of Morris with barley corns, on a little board they had made themselves." Also called Nine Men's Morris, Merels, Mill, or Fig Mill, the game was played throughout Europe and came here in the cultural baggage of people from many lands beside England.

The lay-out for Morris was easy to make. For outdoor play the mill's design could simply be scratched in the dirt or chalked on any flat surface. Indoors, lines were drawn on a piece of board.

Play is simple but not easy. Victory goes to the skillful. Two players begin with nine men each. Stones, corn, or bits of wood may represent the men but each player's pieces must be distinguishable from the other's. The object is to reduce the opponent's pieces to two, thus winning the game. The pieces are first placed alternately on intersections of the board's lines. The game is something like Tic Tac Toe, which is believed related although its play is quicker and simpler. In Morris the achievement of three pieces in a row—called a Mill—allows a player to remove one of his opponent's pieces. After all the pieces are on the board a move consists of moving a piece along a line to an adjacent open intersection. Rules can be found in many of the Hoyle-type game encyclopedias; the game is still played but no longer ranks in the top ten.

Morris is very old; a Morris lay-out is carved on the steps of the Acropolis. We can assume that, if 17th century Oyster Bay children were allowed to play anything as worldly as board games, Morris was probably a favorite. Perhaps in a later issue we can look at some other childhood amusements of long ago.

An Interesting Account

By Seldon MacAndrew

I have read the series called the Dutch Next Door with great pleasure since it started, partly because at least one of my ancestors was a Hudson Valley Dutchman.

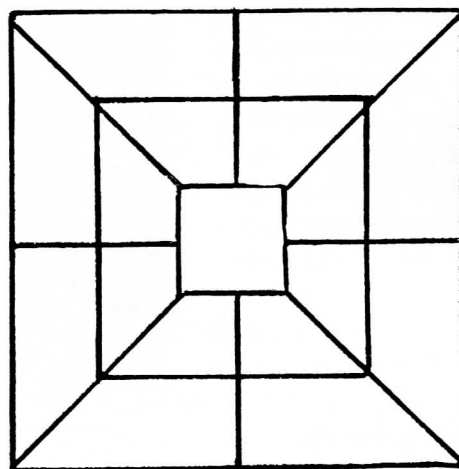
I thought readers might be interested in a sidelight which shows that the Dutch settlers in America brought with them cultural traits which they learned at home which did not always rub off on the other settlers in the new country.

When I was growing up, one of the things that was frequently said about the Hollanders was that they were unusually neat and clean in their households.

Recently I was reading a fascinating book composed of oral accounts of life in Washington County, New York collected around the middle of the 19th Century by Dr. Asa Fitch (*Their Own Voices*, 1983).

The memories of a man named Alexander Livingston of the time before the Revolutionary War included this passage:

I recollect going one day to O'Bails. He was a Dutchman



and the house was all scrubbed neat and nice and everything was in its place- even a linter [lean-to]-attached to the house was just as clean as a new pin. O'Bail sold to Miller, a Scotchman...and when I went there [again] the cow was in the house and all was dirt, filth and disorder. I well remember of thinking what a difference there was as to neatness between the Dutch and the Scotch.

The Post Rider

continued from p. 2

had a son John who is an excellent sailor and works with a sailmaker in New England and occasionally visits here.
Sincerely, Trixie Taylor

To the Editor:

Yvette Rannou (I'd swear I knew her) wrote of my describing the pond behind North Shore Acres as on Baxendale property (whereas she felt it was on "Kajenski" property). Not so! I wrote "There was an old stock pond to the east...." The pond, in 1966-68, was on the adjoining property until then owned by Harry Birchell, who lived at 56 Valentine Avenue behind what is now 42 Knott Drive. It ran from Baxendale's eastern boundary to the Nassau County sump west of the tracks and south of the Sea Cliff Avenue station. Harry had run a cesspool cleaning company from his home and kept his trucks on the piece of land that is now 39-41-43-45 Knott. When he and Frank Baxendale sold their land

to the original developer of the so-called "Pond Estates," what is now Knott Drive, Harry's extended driveway was the only way in from Valentine, in fact the only way at all until Gabrus Road was cut through from Meadow Lane in North Shore Acres (and thereby hangs another tale - a legal brannigan). The Baxendale/Birchell property line ran north-northwest from the northern boundary of 22 Meadow Lane between what are now 40 and 42 Knott through the eastern end of 41 Knott and north to Valentine. The house now at 42 Knott was possibly the last built on Knott; the lot was still vacant and owned by Harry Birchell as of April 1969.

The late Paul Reinhardt, then the popular owner of Wall's Wharf Restaurant in Bayville, had an original brochure about North Shore Acres, showing the stock pond with cows grazing on what was probably Baxendale's field to the west. He or George Dade, both neighbors in the Acres, told me that the pond was man-made, having been formed by an earthen dam put up for the purpose around the turn of the century or so and that it had been much deeper (the dam higher) then.

Incidentally, Paul's daughter, Josephine, worked for me at Pall Corporation and their name was spelled differently from that of the adjacent old Bayville restaurant, Rhinehart's (now the site of The Crescent and the Pine Island Grill). Now, on to new turf and even more coincidences! The article on Tiffany was timely; my older daughter is the Church Administrator at St.

John's in Cold Spring Harbor and I was just there for the funeral of her mother-in-law and was pointing out the windows to the family. I assume it was my daughter to whom Franklin McElwaine referred on page 20 in his article on Noah Seaman.

Then there is Gus Stahl's article on the Burma-Shave signs! I happen to have a collection of them, all different from those he quotes. They are from an un-copyrighted set printed on cardstock in HO scale by Selley Finishing Touches, from Bowser Manufacturing Company ca. 1988-91(?) and are grouped by dates. [The following are just a couple of examples:]

APPROACHED
A CROSSING
WITHOUT LOOKING
WHO WILL EAT
HIS WIDOW'S COOKING?

HE TRIED TO CROSS
AS FAST TRAIN NEARED
DEATH DIDN'T
DRAFT HIM
HE VOLUNTEERED

Also, I got a tremendous charge out of the leather postcard jingle about the OB bivalve (TR) and offer one from my flagging memory about a later Roosevelt's campaign:

"Roosevelt is a gentleman,
Wilkie is a **BUM!**
Roosevelt plays piano,
but Wilkie beat the drum!"

Regards,
Sam Berliner, III

GEORGE PERKINS, ORDINARY SEAMAN, 1879-1901

By Mary Jane Lippert

In the old section of the Locust Valley Cemetery (visible from Ryefield Road) there is a tall, symbolically broken marble column on a square marble base inscribed:

GEORGE PERKINS
ORDINARY SEAMAN, U.S.
NAVY
BORN MARCH 31, 1879
DIED AUGUST 20, 1901

U.S.S. ALBANY
ERECTED BY HIS
SHIPMATES

None of the old-timers in town seemed to know where George Perkins came from or why he was buried in the local cemetery. "Perkins" was not a familiar name in Locust Valley. Who was he? Was he really buried there, or is this a monument to his memory? Did he die heroically? Why else would his shipmates erect such an impressive monument?

Starting with the little information inscribed on his stone, we at the Locust Valley Historical Society started our fascinating tour of the National Archives. on September 5, 1996, we wrote to the National Personnel Records Center¹ in St. Louis, Missouri, for "Standard Form 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records." The request forms were returned within a week.

We filled them in and mailed them back to the same address in St. Louis on Sept. 20, 1996. We asked for any information they might have and stated, "This man was buried in the Locust Valley Cemetery and his shipmates

erected an impressive monument to his memory. The Locust Valley Historical Society would like to know his background and circumstances of his death."

On 10/2/96, John L. Carver, Chief, Military Operations Branch, returned the forms we had submitted, writing that "We have been unable to identify the record needed to answer your inquiry" and advising us to fill out form "NATF 80 for Military Records before WWI," which was enclosed. It was to be mailed to the General Reference Branch (NNRG-P) in Washington, DC.² This was done immediately.

Unfortunately, in response to Form NATF 80 we were told that "The records in the custody of the "Archives I Reference Branch do not include medical and personnel files for Navy enlisted personnel discharged after 1885." It was suggested that we write to St. Louis--which we had already done. Dead end!!

After a couple of months, we decided that maybe we could find out about the ship on which George Perkins served, the USS *Albany*. With the help of Mrs. Joan Fell and Sal Marino at the Locust Valley Library, we pulled out every book pertaining to the Navy in the Reference Library. There is a ship called the *Albany* listed in *Jane's Fighting Ships, 1992-1993*³ but that couldn't be the *Albany* we wanted--it was a submarine. Mrs. Fell then referred to the Congressional Quarterly's *Washington Information Directory, 1993-1994*⁴ and picked out the address of the Naval Historical Foundation⁵ in Washington, DC.

A letter to the attention of Admiral James L. Holloway was mailed off on January 12, 1997, explaining where we had written so far and hoping that the USS *Albany's* log could offer some information. My questions included: What kind of a ship was the USS *Albany*, where was she in August 1901, and in what activity was she engaged?

Finally!!! Some information! On January 21, 1997, Executive Director Captain Kenneth L. Coskey responded: "The answers to [these] questions are in the enclosed copy of the history of the USS *Albany* from 16 March 1898 to 11 February 1930. [This information] was obtained from the *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, Volume 1A&B published by the Naval History Division of the office of the Chief of Naval Operations in 1959 and reprinted with corrections in 1970.

The Albany, a protected cruiser, was the former Almirante Abreu purchased from Brazil 16 March 1898 while still on the ways. She was launched 14 January 1899 by Armstrong, Mitchell and Co., Ltd., Newcastle-on-Tyne, England; sponsored by Mrs. J.C. Colwell, wife of Captain Colwell; and commissioned 29 May 1900, Captain J.E. Craig in command. Albany arrived at Cavite, Philippine Island, 22 November 1900 and joined the Asiatic Squadron. She cruised in Philippine waters until 3 July 1901 when she departed via the Suez Canal to join the squadron in the Mediterranean. After cruising in the Mediterranean

and western European waters (22 September-5 November 1902), she returned to Boston.

According to the date on his monument, George Perkins died August 20th, so the preceding information indicates that he died before the fleet reached the Mediterranean.

Captain Coskey suggested that further information contained in the ship's log might be obtained from the Textual Reference Branch in Washington, DC.⁶

On February 14, 1997, a query was sent off to the Textual Reference Branch, again explaining what we now knew about the ship, and asking the questions: "Is George Perkins mentioned in the August entries of the log of the *Albany*? How did he die? Why would his shipmates erect a monument?"

On February 27, 1997, Rebecca A. Livingston of the Textual Reference Branch wrote: "This is in reply to your letter requesting information about the U. S. Navy service of George Perkins.

"We examined the logbook of USS *Albany* for the period of August 18-23, 1901, but we did not locate a reference to his name.

"We enclose a copy of [page 260 from] the 'conduct book' for USS *Albany* which indicates that he was washed overboard on August 26, 1901, and that his body was recovered and buried on August 30, 1901. It was not unusual for shipmates to purchase memorials for their dead comrades who died in foreign places when their ship returned to the United States."

This page from the "conduct

book" contained more information than we had ever hoped to learn about George Perkins. It is our reward for all of the letter writing of the past few months.

George Perkins enlisted March 20, 1900 as "Landsman" at New York to serve for four years. He had no previous naval service. He was born March 3, 1879, at Sea Cliff, N.Y. He was a U.S. citizen. His eyes were blue, his hair light brown, and he had a florid complexion. He was 5'8" tall. His next of kin was an aunt, Alice Williams of Glen Cove, Long Island, N.Y. He was received on board the *Albany* on June 15th, 1900, from the USS *Buffalo*; rating when received, Landsman.

This page contained his conduct record aboard the USS *Albany*. The scale of marks was 5, Excellent; 4, very good; 3, good; 2, fair; 1 indifferent; 0, bad. The seamen were rated every 3 months for Proficiency in rating, Seamanship, Ordinance, Signaling, Sobriety, Obedience, Recommended for Hon. discharge, offenses, punishments. On June 30, 1900, Sept. 30, 1900 and Dec. 30, 1900, his marks were quite good with no offenses or punishments listed. But on March 30, 1901, his marks dropped down to 2,1,3,2,5 (for sobriety), 2, and he would not be recommended for an honorary discharge. There were 3 different offenses and penalties:

1. "Deliberately neglecting to call the relief of the 2nd qtr. watch, 12 hours extra duty."
2. "While Messenger on watch remaining forward, 16 hours extra duty."

3. "Dirty at A.M. qtrs., 6 hours extra duty."

His marks were good again on June 30, 1901: 5, 3, 4, 4, 5, 5, with no offenses or punishments. He was promoted to Ordinary Seaman on July 1, 1901. However, sometime thereafter, he was sentenced to 3 days of "sol. con." (solitary confinement?) for "throwing dirt in scuppers." August 26, 1901, the last entry in his record:

Lat 10 -51' -11"

Long 56 -17' -47" E

Body recovered and buried at Aden, Arabia, Aug. 30, 1901.

FINAL AVERAGE 3.5 3.8 2.5
3.8 ____ 2 54.2
Health, excellent; State of
Account: Amount due, \$ 42.42;
Aug. 26, 1901, Washed
overboard while dumping ashes.
Lat. 10 -52'-11" N Long. 56
-17'-47" E

He was only 22 years old.

It was a pleasure to do this research. Every agency contacted responded promptly, and if they were unable to help, they recommended another agency that might. We thank them sincerely.

SOURCES

- 1 National Personnel Records Center
(Military Personnel Records)
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63132-4100
- 2 General Reference Branch
(NNRG-P)
National Archives and Records Administration

continued on p. 22

Blocklyn's Books



Book Reviews by Philip Blocklyn

We thank local bookstore owner Phil Blocklyn for offering his services to review published works that may be of some interest to our readers.

Colonel Roosevelt: Theodore Roosevelt Goes To War, 1897-1898. By H. Paul Jeffers. John Wiley & Sons, 1996. 301 pp. Illustrated. Bibliography and index. \$27.95.

Early in August 1896, Theodore Roosevelt is floating in a rowboat on Oyster Bay Harbor and contemplating "a future as an unpopular politician destined to become a melancholy spectacle of an idle father waiting books that did not sell." The melancholy image is misleading, however, since TR is at that very moment lobbying Maria Longworth Storer for a job in a possible McKinley administration:

After a moment of thought as the rowboat drifted and Roosevelt gazed at her hopefully, Storer replied that she was sure 'something could be arranged.'

So, according to H. Paul Jeffers, Mr. Roosevelt goes to

Washington and then to war. Jeffers' treatment of Roosevelt at times veers toward caricature as he presents an Assistant Secretary of the Navy apparently overwhelmed by raging political hormones. More often, though, he captures the colorful and even comic side of his subject. As Roosevelt and another Rough Rider take a swim in Santiago Harbor, followed closely by sharks, TR assures his nervous companion: "They won't bite. I've been studying them, and I never heard of one bothering a swimmer. It's all poppycock."

Caspar Whitney's map of Santiago, reproduced from *Harper's Weekly*, is inadequate to the needs of this book.

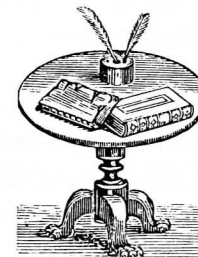
Fair Tide: Sailing Toward Long Island's Future. By Roger D. Stone. Waterline Books, 1996. 187 pp. Bibliography and index. \$22.95.

At the start of this century, Long Island's biggest environmental hazard was runoff from the forty or so duck farms then in operation. Today, as Roger Stone makes clear in this quick study of civic greed and folly, we should be so lucky.

During the summer of 1995 Stone and his wife circumnavigated Long Island in a 15-foot sloop and discovered how quickly the region has blundered its way "from rural enclave to unmitigated suburban mediocrity." Who is responsible? The usual villains -- greedy developers and pliant town boards, of course, but also a somnolent public slow to protect its own interests. Stone quotes from a 1960s Town of

Brookhaven survey indicating that 82% of town residents favored accelerated development of shopping centers in their communities.

But at heart *Fair Tide* is an optimistic book. Stone insists that "the Island's comparative advantage economically... is its environmental quality." It's an advantage to be jealously nurtured through regional planning, community involvement, and a faith that all government agencies are not automatically incompetent.



George Perkins...
continued from p. 21

7th & Pennsylvania Avenue
NW
Washington DC 20408

3 Sharpe, Captain Richard, OBE RN. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1992-1993*. Virginia, Jane's Information Group, Inc., 1992

4 *Congressional Quarterly*
Washington Information
Directory, 1992-1993.

5 Naval Historical Foundation
Washington Navy Yard SE
Washington, DC 20374-0571

6 Textual Reference Branch
National Archives
700 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20408

AUNT EEEK



Olde Things: Advice on the Care & Feeding of Antiques

Dear Aunt EEEK,

I recently inherited a chest of old carpentry tools containing such tools as metal Stanley planes, chisels, saws and the like. The tools are rusty and dirty so I began wire wheeling and spraying them with clear Krylon paint. I have been stripping the old finish from the wooden parts and spraying them too. The problem is that I really don't like the way they are turning out. I have seen old tools that are clean but they seem to "glow" instead of shine. How can I treat my treasures to get that cleaned, glowing look?

Edgar Franklin

Dear Edgar,

The "glow" that you speak of, (as well as the line of beautiful form) is, to the serious collector, (as well as to the observant novice), the real visual attraction to these treasures. Preserving the integrity of the original finish, and its patina, through the cleaning process, is a topic of serious debate, with treatment ranging from a complete

restoration to a careful conservation of the remaining finish.

Your mention of metal Stanley planes gives us a place to start making recommendations. The remaining tools should be identified by an expert to determine your course of specific action. You may attend a workshop sponsored by the Oyster Bay Historical Society (to be announced soon) and receive an identification of your treasures and the specific course of action for treating each piece. In the meanwhile, stay away from the wire wheel and lacquer.

Back to your Stanley planes. Wash the pieces with a moderately wet solution of mild non-ionic soap (like Murphy's Oil Soap) and dry them off with a chamois or soft cloth. Take the planes apart and clean off any rust with 400 or 600 grade wet or dry abrasive paper. Use the paper, (water-wet) on the metal components, gently drawing them across the paper (laid on a flat surface), until the rust is removed. This will result in a nice polished finish which "glows." If there are brass components, polish them with a good brass cleaner/polisher. If the finish is good on the wooden handle (tote), leave it alone or, if not, sand it with the 400 paper until smooth. Finish with two coats of good caruba furniture wax and we think you will be pleased with the results.

Remember, less is more. Try to do as little as you can to achieve the desired result and find the time to attend our workshop before you proceed. See you soon Edgar!

Answers to Test Your Knowledge, p. 16

1. Flies- Cobalt is found in combination with arsenic, a deadly poison, and was a danger to more than flies.

2. A shallow tub of staves used for household purposes.

3. A vessel scooped from a solid piece of wood used by masons, butchers and other workers.

4. To grease cart and wagon axles.

5. To clean out field drains.

6. The shoemaker beat his leather on a smooth stone held in his lap to compact or flex it.

7. His last, the foot shaped wooden form over which he built a shoe.

8. Linen cloth was scraped to make "lint," a material for bandaging or "dressing" wounds.

9. Broadly speaking, a vessel from which to dispense a condiment on one's food.

10. The rennet, in this sense was a portion of the stomach of a calf used to curdle milk for cheese-making. Found in the dairy.

11. A small machine for grinding pigment when making up paint.

12. Navigation at sea.

13. He "ran lines," that is, surveyed plots of ground.

14. These were large, bell-shaped glasses used to protect plants from the weather.

15. Tidy- a scrapbag, a sewing bag. Also an antimacassar.

Cozy- a padded cover to keep tea, other beverage, or food hot.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

JUNE

Fri., June 19, 8 p.m.

Annual Meeting/Lecture

All are welcome to attend the Society's annual meeting, which will take place in the Oyster Bay Community Center on Church Street. This year's speaker is Joan Druett, who will speak about her experiences in researching her latest book, *Hen Frigates: Wives of Merchant Captains Under Sail*. Come hear this delightful author's lecture on a fascinating subject! Copies of Ms. Druett's book will be available and refreshments will be served after a question and answer period.

Don't miss this chance to mingle with your fellow Society members!

JULY

Sun., July 25 1-4 p.m.

Artifact Identification Workshop

Come to the Earle-Wightman House with your prized possessions for a workshop on identifying artifacts conducted by Society Curator and Nassau County Museums Chief Conservator Richard F. Kappeler.

Tues., July 28, 6-8 p.m.

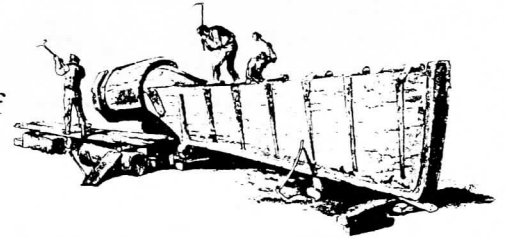
Neighborhood Night

Bring the family and a picnic dinner to the Society's beautiful gardens for a special after-hours open house. Tours of the museum, hands-on activities, and period children's games are all on tap. Join us!

AUGUST

Exhibit

Visit the Earle-Wightman House for a special exhibit on shipbuilding. See ship models, examples of the tools that built the ships, and artifacts related to them. With Oyster Bay's shipbuilding and maritime heritage so visible in the news today, why not come back in time to see how it all started and how it was done long ago!



Artistry in Glass

continued from p. 5

commissions. These include the MacKenzie Memorial window in the Bowne Street (Reformed) Church, Flushing, NY.

1946 The contents of *Laurelton Hall* were sold at auction by the Tiffany Foundation to provide for art scholarships. Art scholarship support is still available

through this foundation although no art school exists today.

1957 *Laurelton Hall*, Tiffany's home in Laurel Hollow, Long Island, burned. Many windows, including *The Bathers*, were still in the mansion and were destroyed.

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THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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