THE FREEHOLDER

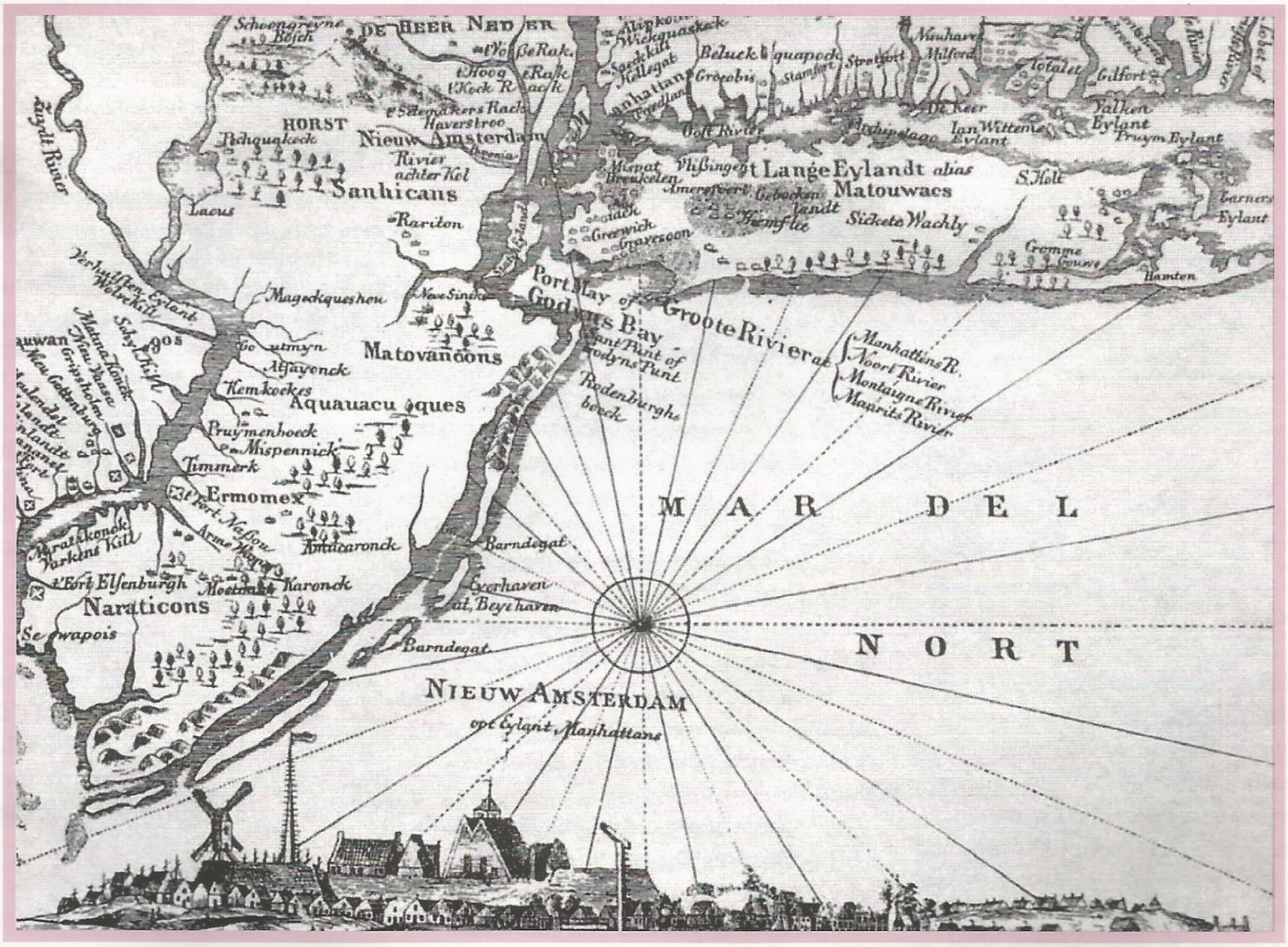
SPRING 2003 THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOUNDED 1960

☞ **THRILLING DISCOVERY OF OB'S FIRST SETTLEMENT**

☞ **WEAVING THE TALE OF AN EARLY OB CRAFTSMAN, PART II**

☞ **MEMORIES OF A MASSAPEQUA LANDMARK**

☞ **350 YEARS OF OYSTER BAY HISTORY IN ART**



THE HISTORY MAGAZINE OF THE TOWN OF OYSTER BAY

Editorial

As editor of this magazine, I live for issues like this one! Local historian (and Society trustee) John Hammond went back to the original sources, both Dutch and English in order to examine the circumstances surrounding the first settlement(s) at Oyster Bay. What he found is nothing short of a groundbreaking discovery which will necessitate the rewriting of every book on Long Island history!

As the Town of Oyster Bay celebrates the 350th anniversary of its founding this year, we here at the Oyster Bay Historical Society are proud to publish this important piece on Oyster Bay's early history (and which may cast some doubt on when this anniversary should have been celebrated!)

What better way to wrap up our seventh year of publication?

THE FREEHOLDER
of the
Oyster Bay Historical Society
Vol. 7 No. 4 Spring 2003

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The Freeholder of the Oyster Bay Historical Society is published quarterly with the generous assistance of private individuals. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Oyster Bay Historical Society, but of the individual authors.

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

The Dutch map on the cover, known as Van Der Donck's map, dates from 1656, shortly after the English settlement of Oyster Bay in 1653, the reason the Town is celebrating its 350th anniversary this year. But is this the year we should really be celebrating this anniversary? Turn to page 3 for John Hammond's fascinating article on Oyster Bay's early settlements

THE POST RIDER

The Post Rider recently received a most moving letter from a local teacher, Mr. Richard Siegelman, who has taught in the local school district for 37 years and who is retiring at the end of this school year. He actually taught Stacie Hammond, the author of the article on Miss Julia L. Thurston in the last issue of The Freeholder. Unfortunately, since this issue was so jam-picked with riches, we did not have the space to run the letter in its entirety. However we did want to feature excerpts from his letter about this wonderful Oyster Bay educator who devoted her life to the youth of her home town:

I...learned that [the article] was about Julia L. Thurston, who taught here for 54(!) years...Obviously I have not been her equal in "quantity" of teaching, and, having read the article, I don't think I am her equal in "quality" of teaching - judging by all the wonderful things her students and other community members said about her.

It is abundantly clear how deservedly her portrait hangs in our High School, and why an annual award for excellence is still given in her name.

I can only hope that I have demonstrated a few of her admirable qualities...and that if my portrait [were] ever put up on a school wall it would depict me wearing one of the 200 educational "teaching t-shirts" I have used to enhance my students' learning.

I learned a lot from this article, and would like to give thanks to its researcher and author, Stacie Hammond (formerly my student for 3 years, in the school district's G.I.F.T.E.D. program) for having become, through this article, "my teacher."

Richard Siegelman
Vernon School

THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF OYSTER BAY

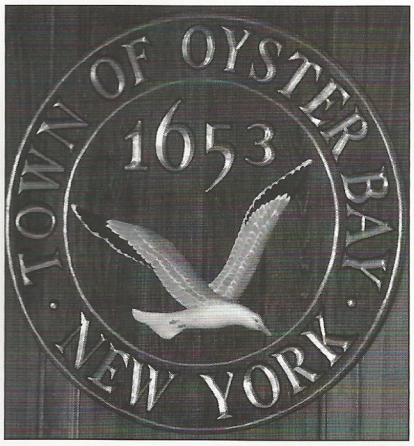
by John E. Hammond

Aside from the words "Town of Oyster Bay," the significant devices on the town seal are a stylized seagull and the date 1653. The seagull was created by Oyster Bay artist Alfred J. Walker who graduated from Oyster Bay High School and Pratt Institute and then went on to become an artist with the Walt Disney Studios. The date 1653 comes from the first purchase by Samuel Mayo, William Leverich and Peter Wright, but this was not the first European settlement at Oyster Bay. Mayo, Leverich and Wright purchased the land from the Matinecock sachem Mohannes.

The original settlers of the area were the Matinecock Indians, so called from the Indian word Matinecock which meant "at the hilly ground." Historians and other researchers differ in opinion as to when these first settlers arrived on Long Island but it is safe to say that they were here more than a thousand years ago.

The Matinecocks occupied lands on Long Island as far west as Flushing and as far east as Setauket, running south to the center of the island. They were part of the Algonquin language and cultural group but had no written language. When the first Europeans arrived in the early 1600s the total population of the 13 chieftaincies on Long Island was estimated at about 6,500.

The arrival of the first Europeans had a great impact on the Indians; many were decimated by diseases which the Indians had no resistance to. Writing in 1670, Daniel Denton believed that this was due to Divine Intervention when he wrote that:



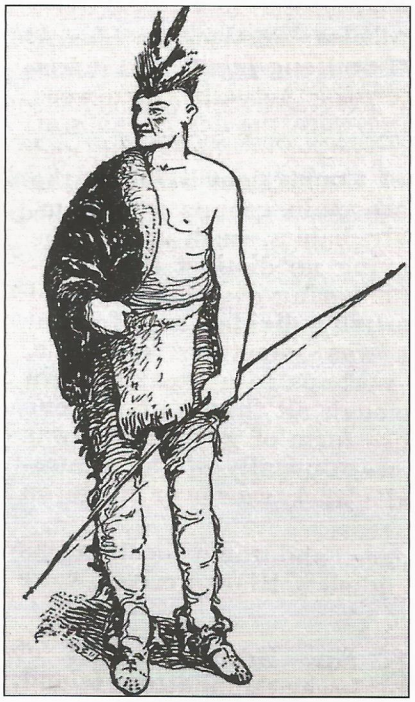
> It hath been generally observed that where the English come to settle a Divine Hand makes way for them, by removing or cutting off the Indians either by Wars one with the other, or by some raging mortal disease.

When Denton wrote these words there were only two remaining Indian villages on Long Island.

Denton also tells us that the Indians subsisted by hunting and fishing while the Indian women tended the fields of corn. They lived in small moveable tents which they moved two or three times each year. Their leaders were called sachems and were shown great respect by the other members of the community. Denton tells us that the sachems sought the opinions of the other members of the community while sitting in council before rendering their decision on any subject; the sachem's decision was always final.

Among the various Indian communities, paying tribute by the weaker groups to the more powerful ones was a common custom. The mainland groups were generally the more powerful and the Matinecocks often tried to resist paying tribute to them but were usually unsuccessful. When the Dutch and the English settlers arrived and began buying up the Indian lands the Indians believed in many cases that this was just another form of tribute; many did not believe that they were actually selling off all their rights to the land.

By the year 1685, the last piece of Indian land was bought by the European settlers. Historian John H. Morice wrote that by 1709, "there were no Indians on the Island except small remnants of a few scattered communities." With the loss of their land the remaining Matinecocks moved to join with the Poospatucks, Shinnecocks and Montauks who by the late 1600s had negotiated for some of their own lands which later became reservations. Those that chose to stay on their ancestral land settled within small hamlets near the sites of their earlier villages and sought work on the new English plantations. In



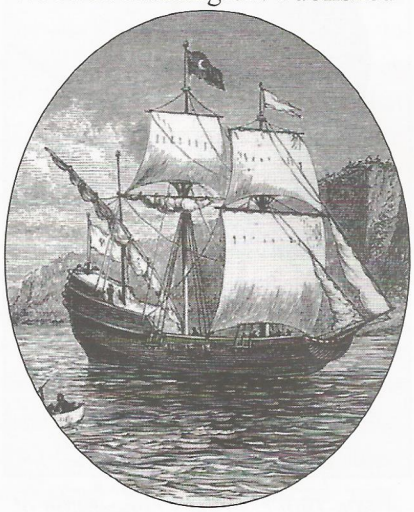
A late 19th c. artist's conception of the appearance of a typical Long Island Indian.

1732, Judge William Smith wrote that those Indians still living usually bound themselves in service to the white settlers. By that date the last remnants of any Matinecock villages disappeared from western Long Island.

In 1791, future United States Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison visited General William Floyd at Mastic. Jefferson and Madison tried to locate Indians in order to record for posterity the Indians' native language but they could only find a couple of old women who still remembered any of their people's language. Their research resulted in the recording of 162 words of the native language.

Much of what we know of the first settlers comes from *A Brief Description of New York, Formerly Called New Netherland*, written by Daniel Denton of Hempstead. It was published in London in 1670, but was greatly embellished as its intent was to interest English traders and settlers to come to the new colony.

The first history of Long Island was a 66 page pamphlet written in 1824 by Congressman Silas Wood of Huntington. Published by Alden J. Spooner of Brooklyn, it was entitled *A Sketch of the First Settlement of the Several Towns on Long Island*. Wood researched all the existing records in the various villages on Long Island. From those records he established the dates of the first settlement of each of the English towns on Long Island. In his listing he showed Oyster Bay as having been first settled in 1653, based on the First Purchase Deed.



Henry Hudson's ship, the "Half Moon."

There were many English settlements on Long Island, both at the English end (present day Suffolk County) and within the Dutch territory (presently Nassau, Brooklyn and Queens Counties). The Dutch allowed the English to make settlements within their territory provided the English settlers swore an oath to the Dutch Directors and paid their tithes; one tenth of all their crops were taken by the Dutch as taxes. The settlement at Oyster Bay was by a group of traders from Plymouth who neither swore any oath to the Dutch nor had any political connection with the Hartford or New Haven colonies. The Oyster Bay settlement was under no government and was therefore the center of a long dispute between the Dutch at New Amsterdam and the English in New England. But the dispute began centuries earlier.

In 1497 the Venetian mariner Giovanni Caboto sailed from Bristol, England, aboard the ship *Mathew* with a commission from the English King Henry VII. Many history books identify Giovanni Caboto as the English explorer John Cabot. Cabot made a second voyage in 1498 and sailed as far north as Greenland and south to the Chesapeake Bay. The English thereafter claimed all the territory between 35 and 48 degrees North Latitude.

In 1609 the Englishman Henry Hudson, sailing for the Dutch, entered New York Harbor and sailed up the North River, now known as the Hudson River, as far north as Albany. Adrian Block and Hendrick Christiansen followed with another exploration two years later. In 1614 Block's ship, the *Tiger*, burned in New York Harbor while loaded for a return trip to Holland. Block built a new ship named the *Onrust* or in English the *Restless*, a vessel of sixteen tons burden and about 44 feet in length. With the *Onrust* Block explored the East River and into Long Island Sound. It was probably during this voyage in 1614 that Oyster Bay received its name. In June 1639, David Pietersz DeVries wrote in his diary that he "came to anchor in Oyster Bay...There are fine oysters here, whence our nation has given it the name Oyster Bay." If Block didn't give the name to Oyster Bay then it was done in the expedition of 1621, when some Hollanders sailed along the east coast between Delaware and Cape Cod trading with the Indians. After their journey they published a map of the area which gave Dutch names to many of the rivers, bays and land areas.

The Dutch had no particular desire to establish any colonies as they were more interested in setting up trading posts such as they did at Fort Amsterdam (now Manhattan) and Fort Orange (now Albany). The Dutch were aware of the English claims to all the territory between the 40th and 48th parallels but they believed

that since the English had not actually established settlements throughout the territory it was fair game for them to claim part of the territory. The English also were involved in trading and established the Virginia and Plymouth Companies in 1607. The establishment of the English and Dutch trading companies set up a territorial dispute and commercial competition that would last until Pieter Stuyvesant left New Amsterdam in August 1664. Oyster Bay played a major role in that territorial dispute.

The Virginia Company established an early English settlement at Jamestown followed by the Dutch establishing trading forts in Delaware, New Amsterdam and Fort Orange. English trappers began trapping in Maine and the Maritimes for the Plymouth Company, which was followed by the Plymouth Company's settlement at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620. A few years later Winthrop came to the Boston area with his large fleet of settlers. Each group was trying to establish their rights to the territories along the eastern seaboard.

In 1632, the Dutch Director at Fort Amsterdam sent out a settlement expedition into Long Island Sound. This resulted in a settlement at Red Mountain, the present New Haven, Connecticut, and at Oyster Bay in 1632. Writing of the 1632 Dutch settlement at Oyster Bay, Pieter Stuyvesant said, "This was the first settlement on Long Island by any nation." The settlement by the Dutch at Oyster Bay in 1632 did not last but the Dutch did leave their "Arms" there, marking it as their claimed territory. The Dutch Arms consisted of a plaque containing a representation of the company director in Holland and was usually mounted on a tree to identify the area as belonging to or claimed by the Dutch West India Company.

A period engraving of Dutch explorer David Pietersz DeVries.

In January 1639, David DeVries, along with Dutch West India Company Secretary Cornelis van Tienhoven, negotiated a deed of purchase from the Indians on Long Island. The deed identified the purchased lands as

> from Rechouwacky (Rockaway) to Sicketeuwacky (Massapequa) and from Sicketeuwacky in width to Martin Gerritsen's bay (West Harbor) and thence in length westwardly along the East river to the kil of the Flats.

Later that same year 1639, Matthew Sunderland of Lynn, Massachusetts, bought from James Farret, agent for the Earl of Sterling, two necks of land called Horse's Neck and Hog Island. Horse's Neck is the present Lloyd's Neck and Hog Island is the present Centre Island. Sterling had been granted all of Long Island under the patent issued to the Plymouth Company in 1621 and confirmed by them to Sterling in 1635.

In 1640 a group from Lynn, Massachusetts, organized an expedition to settle at Long Island on the land bought by Matthew Sunderland the prior year. The group from Lynn devised a document called "The Disposal of the Vessel" in March 1640. The terms of the document stated that they would turn over to Daniel Howe their shares in the vessel that had brought them to Lynn from England. In exchange Howe was to transport them to Long Island where they would establish a settlement. Howe was also to make several more trips over the ensuing two years to bring additional settlers.

The group from Lynn arrived on the shores of Oyster Bay Harbor or Martin Gerritsen's Bay as the Dutch called it, in April 1640, and immediately began building shelters. The Indian Penhawit, who had sold the land to the

Dutch in 1639, went in to Fort Amsterdam and notified the Director William Kieft that some group had settled on the land that he had sold them and that they had torn down the Arms of the High Mightiness used to mark their territory. Kieft sent Secretary van Tienhoven along with 25 armed soldiers to investigate the matter. Van Tienhoven and the soldiers arrived at the Oyster Bay settlement on May 15,1640, and found eight men, two women and one child there. One house was already completed and another was under construction. Van Tienhoven arrested six of the men and brought them back to Fort Amsterdam where they were given a hearing.

Aside from the illegal settlement the major concern of the Dutch appears to have been the question of who had torn down the Arms of the High Mightiness. In his Journal Governor John Winthrop wrote of the event and stated that it was an Indian that had torn down the arms and replaced them with a fool's head. In their hearing before the Dutch Council in Fort Amsterdam the six men claimed that it was not they who had torn down the arms of the High Mightiness but someone else; one of them claimed it was the Scotsman who was then at Red Mountain, referring to James Farret.

On Saturday, May 19,1640, the six men were released under the condition that they agree to leave the Dutch territory and never to return. The men signed the agreement and then went to New Haven where they met with James Farret. Farret then gave them the rights to settle at the east end of Long Island between Peconic and Montauk Point. Matthew Sunderland, who had been the original purchaser of the land for the 1640 settlement, was a witness to the conveyance of the new land between "Peaconeck and the easternmost point of Long Island." The group then sailed to the east end and began what has come to be known as Southampton. Thereafter Sunderland appears to have dropped his claim to the title for Hog Island.

While the original group from Lynn were making arrangements with James Farret to settle at Southampton, a second group of settlers from Lynn came to settle at Oyster Bay. This second group was headed by Captain Edward Tomlins and his brother Timothy and was also quickly dispatched by the Dutch. Farret went in to Fort Amsterdam to try to meet with Kieft and clear up the matter but he was arrested. Farret was released by Kieft upon agreeing to make public apology. James Farret wrote a lengthy letter of apology to the Dutch and had it also endorsed by Governor John Winthrop. Farret claimed he had no knowledge of the second group of settlers.

Although David DeVries and Cornelis van Tienhoven had purchased from the Indians in 1639 all the land that comprises the present Nassau County, a group of English settlers from New England purchased land at Hempstead in 1643. So now we have a group of English settlers buying land from the Indians which is within the Dutch claimed territory and which the Dutch had previously bought from the Indians four years earlier. Nevertheless, the Dutch Director William Kieft gave a patent to the group for the land on November 16, 1644. Kieft was a rather poor administrator, which led to many territorial problems for the company directors in Holland.

In 1646 Director Kieft was recalled by the Directors in Holland and was replaced by Pieter Stuyvesant. Kieft sailed for Holland but never arrived as his ship was lost at sea. Stuyvesant had previously served as the Director of the Dutch West India Company's successful operations in Curacao and it was felt that he would be better able to handle the problems at New Netherlands than the timid and inept Director William Kieft.

The Dutch had difficulty in populating the territory they claimed in New Netherlands and freely accepted English settlers within their territory. In the decade of the 1640s several English villages were settled within the Dutch territory including Flushing, Hempstead, Newtown and Jamaica plus the settlements at the east end, which were also claimed by the Dutch. There were also some squatter type settlements by small groups of individuals who had neither purchased the land nor obtained any permission from the Dutch. One such group included Nicholas Simkins, William Smith and John Titus who settled at the Oyster Bay Town Spot sometime in the 1640s. The exact date of their coming is not recorded but they were living there when the first purchasers arrived in 1653.

Because of these rogue settlements and what the Dutch con-

sidered encroachments on their territory, Pieter Stuyvesant became constantly involved in efforts to control the territory of the company. The concern of the Dutch West India Company was not so much with the settlements as it was with smuggling and the evasion of the Dutch duties on goods entering and leaving the company territory by these groups. The question of the boundary between the English and the Dutch became a hot issue as more and more English settlers arrived. The Dutch were greatly outnumbered even in their own territory. Long before Stuyvesant arrived William Kieft had all but given up the Dutch claims to the land at the east end of Long Island.

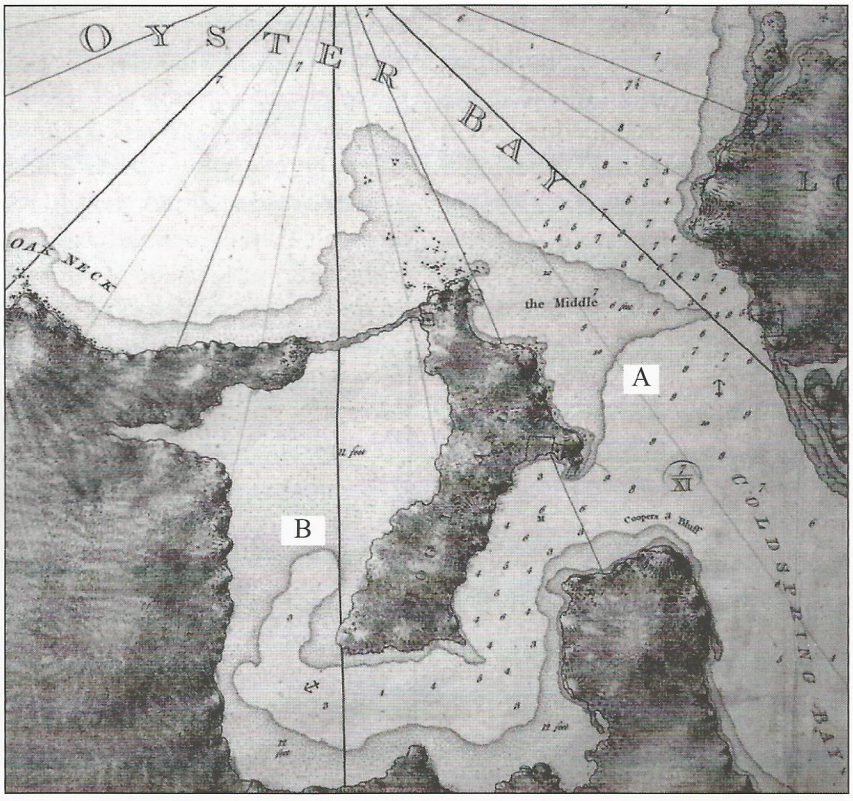
In an effort to firmly establish the eastern boundary of their territory, three members of the Council at New Netherlands, Govert Lockermans, Cornelis van Ruyven, and Jacobus Backer, purchased Hog Island (now Centre Island) from the Indians in 1650. A few months later Stuyvesant dispatched two of his English speaking deputies, Thomas Willet and George Baxter, to meet at Hartford with representatives of the New England colonies to settle the boundary dispute. The dispute focused on the boundary between the territory claimed and settled by the Dutch, and that claimed and settled by the English. At the core of the dispute was the control of the waters at Oyster Bay, which had been used for smuggling and evading the Dutch entry and exit duties.

After five days of negotiation agreement was finally reached on September 15,1650. The result of their efforts was the Treaty of Hartford, which stated,

> That upon Long Island, a line run from the westernmost part of Oysterbay, and so in a straight line to the sea, shall be the bounds between the English and Dutch there, the easterly part to belong to the English, and the westernmost part to the Dutch.

Although Stuyvesant felt that he was betrayed by Willet and Baxter he believed that his boundary problems were now history and that he could thereafter devote his efforts to other matters. What Stuyvesant didn't realize was that while he had the authority from the company Directors in Holland to negotiate treaties, the English colonial representatives had no such authority; any actions they agreed to needed ratification in England. To complicate matters England was now a republic and under the control of Oliver Cromwell who was busy with much more important matters, including a war between England and Holland. The Dutch however did not recognize Cromwell's government, which further complicated things for Stuyvesant.

Stuyvesant also believed he had been dealing with the representatives of all the colonies of New England when in fact only the Hartford and New Haven colonies were involved; Massachusetts, Plymouth and Rhode Island did not participate in the



Much of the confusion over the boundary lines between the Dutch and English territories stemmed from the fact that, to the English, the area encompassed by "Oyster Bay" meant the harbor (including the area marked "B" above) as well as that marked "A." To the Dutch, Oyster Bay was strictly that of "A," while "B" was known as Martin Gerritsen's Bay.

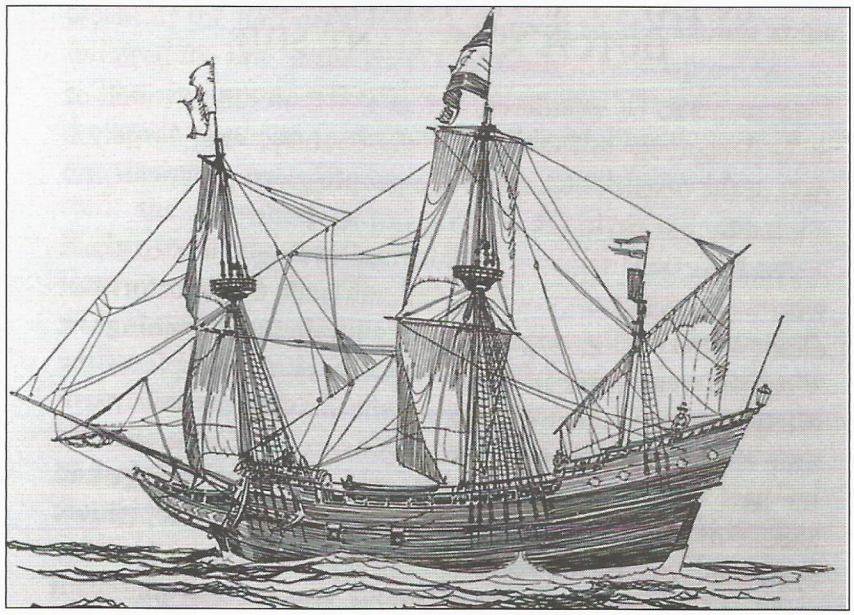
conference. Rather than resolve some boundary problems for Pieter Stuyvesant, the 1650 Treaty of Hartford intensified the boundary dispute that would consume Stuyvesant and the Directors in Holland for more than a decade.

The 1620 settlement at Plymouth, Massachusetts, was organized in the same manner as the Dutch settlement at New Amsterdam, as a commercial trading venture. The Plymouth venture was organized by the Plymouth Company in 1607. After an unsuccessful first venture, it was renewed in 1620 with a charter from King James I to the New England Council at Plymouth, England. The charter included all the territory between the 40th and 48th parallels, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The commercial venture at Plymouth was in direct competition with the commercial venture of the Dutch West India Company with its operations in New Amsterdam and at Fort Orange (Albany), both of which lay in the middle of the King James charter territory.

In 1627 the Dutch Director Pieter Minuit exchanged letters with Governor Bradford at Plymouth and then sent a representative, Isaac de Rasiere, to Plymouth to negotiate an agreement on trading terms and territories. Governor William Bradford of the Plymouth Colony agreed to the conference but warned Pieter Minuit by letter dated August 14,1627, that his representative had better be cautious in his travels to Plymouth lest his ship be seized, particularly if it was caught trading in the territory. In the conference Bradford affirmed that they should have friendly relations but the trading competition continued. Dutch traders from New Amsterdam continued to sail to Narragansett Bay and Buzzard's Bay to trade with the Indians there. Governor Bradford of the Plymouth Colony tried to persuade the Indians not to trade with the Dutch. When Pieter Minuit was recalled to Holland in 1632, his ship was seized and he was arrested at Plymouth, England, and charged with illegal trading in the King's overseas dominions. He was later released and allowed to continue on to Holland.

In the mid 1630s, the Plymouth Colony began expanding by establishing settlements to the south along the shores of Cape Cod; these settlements included Sandwich and Barnstable. One of the prominent traders at Sandwich was Samuel Mayo, whose ships regularly traversed Long Island Sound and into New Amsterdam. In 1653 Mayo joined with Peter Wright and Reverend William Leverich to expand their trading territory by establishing a settlement at Oyster Bay. Oyster Bay presented many attractions to the traders; it had a deep sheltered harbor and it was controlled neither by the Dutch nor the English. It was a perfect spot for trading and evading the duties of both the English and the Dutch.

Samuel Mayo owned a vessel named the *Desire*, which had been built at Marblehead in 1636. The *Desire* was the third vessel to be built in the Massachusetts colony and at 120 tons was large by the standards of the day. In her early days the *Desire* had been used in trading in the West Indies bringing cargoes of salt, cotton and tobacco. She was also recorded as having brought the first slaves from the West Indies to the Massachusetts colony. The captain of the *Desire* was John Dickinson, a very experienced trader and mariner. In the spring of 1653 the *Desire* sailed out of Barnstable, Massachusetts, bringing Mayo, Leverich and



A 17th century Dutch merchant vessel

Wright to Oyster Bay.

Immediately upon arrival they met with the Indian sachem Mohannes. The chief negotiator was Samuel Mayo, but Reverend William Leverich handled the dialogue with the Indians. Rev. Leverich was originally a preacher in the pure Anglican tradition, having been educated at Emmanuel College in Cambridge, England. After coming in 1633 aboard the ship *James*, he took a pastorate in New Hampshire but soon became disenchanted with the Church of England and joined the non-conformist Puritan movement. He later went to Boston, then Duxbury, and finally to Sandwich on Cape Cod, in the Plymouth Colony. The people of the Plymouth Colony were becoming indifferent to organized ministries at this time and Rev. Leverich found himself a preacher without a pulpit. He turned to preaching to the Indians and became proficient in the Indian languages.

Mayo, Leverich and Wright purchased a large tract of land from the Indians. The land was

> Scituate upon Oyster Bay & is bounded by oyster River to ye east side, & Papaguatunk river on ye west side....with all ye Islands lying to ye Sea ward excepting one Island commonly called Hog Island and bounded Southward by a point of trees called Canteaiug.

Hog Island was excepted because it had been bought by the Dutch in 1650. The eastern boundary of the Oyster River was the stream that flowed into the southernmost end of Cold Spring Harbor; the westernmost boundary was the Papaguatunk River, presently known as the Shu Swamp or the Kaintuck, which flows into Beaver Dam.

The purchase deed was signed by Assiapum or Mohannes on behalf of the Matinecock Indians and was witnessed by William Washburn, Anthony Wright and Robert Williams, who had earlier settled in Hempstead. Williams had purchased land at Jericho in 1648. On the back of the deed the original purchasers added the names of Thomas Armitage, Daniel Whitehead, John Washburn, William Washburn, Anthony Wright, Robert Williams, and Richard Holbrook as being joint purchasers with them. Some of the group of purchasers led by Rev. William Leverich then traveled over to Huntington and made a similar purchase of land there in April 1653.

Captain John Dickinson then sailed the *Desire* back to Sandwich to bring the chattels and personal goods of the settlers. During this period of original settlement some of the first purchasers stayed at Hempstead with families that had settled there earlier, while others set about constructing houses at the Town Spot, the site of the present hamlet of Oyster Bay. Captain Dickinson made several such voyages, bringing both the goods of the settlers and some additional settlers. During one such voyage in the fall of 1653, the *Desire* was forcibly captured by Thomas Baxter while in Hempstead Harbor. Baxter then took the *Desire* to Fairfield, Connecticut. Samuel Mayo, the owner of the *Desire*, complained to the court at New Haven and the court ordered the arrest of Thomas Baxter.

Baxter was arrested on the streets of Fairfield after putting up a considerable fight. At his trial at New Haven Baxter claimed that he was acting legitimately under a letter of marque issued at Rhode Island which allowed him to prey on any ship trading with the Dutch. Baxter claimed that Captain John Dickinson was reported to have been running the blockade through Hellgate to trade at New Amsterdam, and was therefore fair game under his letter of marque.

The court at New Haven did not agree with Baxter and found him guilty of illegally taking the *Desire*. The court ordered Baxter to return the ship along with a fine of £150 to be paid to Samuel Mayo, owner of the *Desire*, but if Baxter returned the sails, the two guns and the ropes along with the ship, he would be credited £18 on his fine. In addition the court fined him £70 for disturbing the peace and put him under a bond of £200 to prevent him from causing any further disturbances.

After concluding the purchase at Oyster Bay, Samuel Mayo returned to Sandwich and resumed his trading endeavors until his death in 1670. Reverend William Leverich went over to Huntington where he built the first mill there. He engaged himself in missionary work with the Indians of Long Island before removing to Newtown, where he died in 1677. Of the three original first purchasers only Peter Wright remained; many descendants of Peter Wright still live in the village.

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ASK UNCLE PELEG

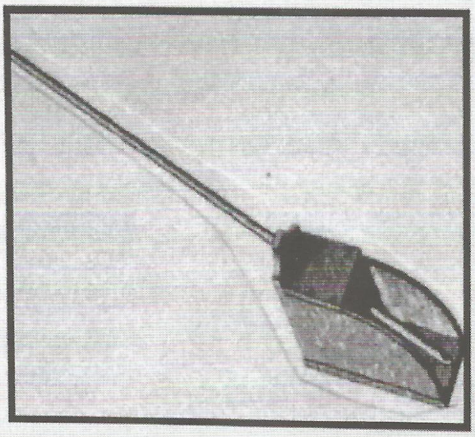
Dear Uncle Peleg:

The Freeholder showed up in my History class in school. I have never seen it before. I was glad to look at it. I am very interested in History; I hope to teach it some day.

On your page you wrote about a tool from the Erie canal. You found a picture of it to identify. I was interested. But frustrated! You didn't show the picture. I didn't know what you were talking about. I didn't see the picture from before. Sorry you had to get my only complaint.

Stoney Harrison

Touche. Of course you are right, Stoney. I'm sorry you had to wait so long for satisfaction. If you had included your address or the name of your school I'd have sent you a picture. But if you are not the only frustrated reader you have done the others a favor. As you can see I'm reprinting the canal builder's bailer picture here.



Dear Uncle Peleg:

Why do well wishers visiting actors at the eve of a theatrical performance say, "Break a leg" when they mean to be supportive? Why did anyone start that?

Paula Burns

From a long way back any expression of good wishes in such circumstances has been supposed to be bad luck.

Dear Uncle Peleg:

What does gaff mean in the phrase, "blow the gaff?"

Conn Taillor

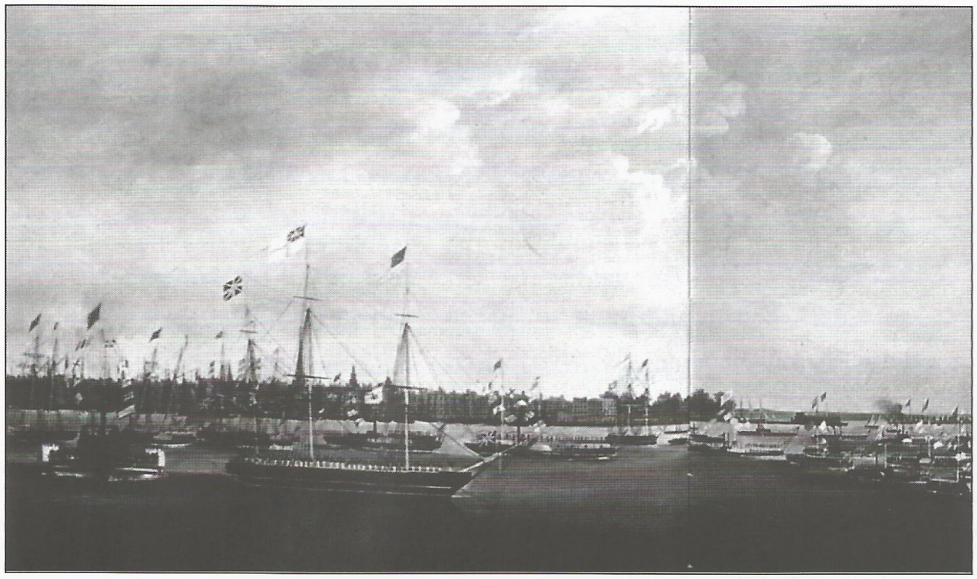
In criminal slang gaff meant the method, plan, baited hook etc. by which a dupe was to be cheated or robbed. To blow the gaff was to unintentionally expose knowledge of the gaff to the intended victim or the authorities.

Dear Uncle Peleg:

In the expression, "Put up your dukes," I know dukes mean fists.

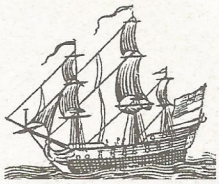
But why?

Gene Barber



Ships of all sizes crowd the harbor, with flags gaily waving, as the Erie Canal is opened to great fanfare in New York Harbor in 1825.

No solid answer appears to be available but here's an unsupported story. It has been said that an English prize fighter, unspecified, when asked to comment on an upcoming match would hold up his fists and waggling one would say, "This is the Duke of Derry." Then, waggling the other, "And this is the Duke of Down and that's where that %@&# is going... down!"*



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 in ***The Freeholder.***

FALL EXHIBIT & EVENTS TO FOCUS ON 350 YEARS OF OYSTER BAY HISTORY IN ART

In keeping with the Town-wide anniversary celebration, the Oyster Bay Historical Society's annual Fall exhibition will present 350 years of Oyster Bay history in art.

The Historical Society is working with local artists to interpret events of historical significance during the past 350 years in Oyster Bay for inclusion in the exhibition and related catalogue. The Society is especially pleased to be working with Cove Neck artist Mort Kunstler as a member of the Historical Society's exhibition committee. Some of the events and personalities associated with them include the original 1653 sale of the "Town Spot" by the local Matinecocks to the first settlers, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders, and a pen and ink sketch of Revolutionary War spy Robert Townsend, as well as changing landscapes, village scenes, and harbor views through the years. The exhibition will include period artwork as well as art created specifically for the Society's benefit. Much of the latter artwork will be auctioned as one means of raising the funds necessary for the erection of a new library and collections storage facility.

The Historical Society also announced the appointment of Trustee Maureen Monck, Ph.D., as the Society's Associate Director for Educational Programs.

Committee member Mort Kunstler presented the Society's Director Tom Kuehhas and Associate Director for Educational Programs Dr. Maureen Monck with a signed limited edition print of TR as the first donation to the Society's Fall exhibition.

Thomas Kuehhas, Director of the Oyster Bay Historical Society, stated, "Dr. Monck has been of immense help in coordinating the Society's last four Fall exhibitions. She has been a tremendous asset to the Historical Society."

The Society extends an invitation to all to take part in this exciting and groundbreaking project. Please contact Director Thomas Kuehhas at 922-5032 to find out how you can get involved!

KARL KOCH TO SPEAK AT SOCIETY'S ANNUAL MEETING

Karl W. Koch, Oyster Bay resident, builder and author of *Men of Steel: The Story of the Family That Built the World Trade Center*, will be the featured speaker at the Oyster Bay Historical Society's annual meeting. The meeting will be held at the Doubleday-Babcock Senior Center on Friday evening, June 13, at 8 p.m.

Karl W. Koch III is perhaps the most recognized name in the steel construction industry. His career spans over forty years during which he has been actively engaged in heavy steel construction, bridge building, and bridge repair work. Even after forty years, Koch is still known in the industry as smart, accomplished and reliable.

Karl Koch's steel consulting services emanated from his earlier position as owner, officer, and director of Karl Koch Erecting Company, a family business begun by his grandfather and father in 1922. Koch Erecting of Carteret, New Jersey, completed

major high profile contracts including the World Trade Center, Giant Football Stadium, Robert Moses Bridge, and the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington, D.C., the Hotel Pierre, Julliard School of Music in New York and the rebuilding of Yankee Stadium.

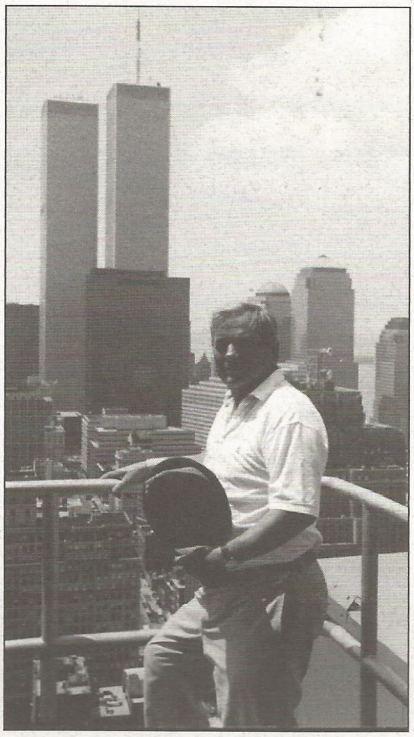
Hear the inside story on how the Twin Towers were built. All are welcome to attend and refreshments will be served following the lecture. Copies of *Men of Steel* will be on hand for purchase to benefit the Historical Society. Come join us!

SOCIETY DIRECTOR TO SPEAK TO NASSAU COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

As part of the Town's 350th Anniversary celebration Historical Society Director and Nassau County Historical Society Trustee Tom Kuehhas will present "Hands on History: The Life of a Continental Soldier" on Sunday, June 8 at 2 p.m. at the Oyster Bay Community Center on Church Street.

An interactive, hands-on view of the private soldier's life during the Revolutionary War. Learn about the weapons, uniform and equipment of the Continental soldier and how the war was fought.

The lecture is free and attendees will enjoy refreshments as well as an opportunity to tour the Earle-Wightman House and Raynham Hall Museums at half-price!



"In August 2001, I was working on an expansion of the AT&T Building when my partner Andy Zosuls insisted I pose in front of the World Trade Center. It was the first time I was photographed with the Twin Towers In 30 years. Two weeks later the first hijacked plane flew over this building and hit the north tower."

Karl W. Koch III

RAYNHAM HALL

Raynham Hall Museum, 20 West Main Street, Oyster Bay, will host part of a community wide celebration of American freedom on Friday, July 4th. The house and grounds will open from noon until 5:00 p.m. Visitors can join our recruiting sergeant, tour the camp, watch military drills and open-hearth cooking demonstrations, and experience firsthand the life of a Revolutionary soldier.

After touring the museum, stay and enjoy free refreshments in the Victorian Garden.

There are still openings available to take part in Raynham Hall Museum's 22nd annual Children's Summer Workshops. Children ages 5 - 7 years old (entering grades 1, 2 and 3) are eligible for registration. The workshops run Monday - Friday 9:30 am to 12:00 pm. There are two 2-week sessions: Session One: July 14 - 25; Session Two: July 28 -August 8.

Space is limited, so for further information or to register please call the museum at 516-922-6808.

PASSPORT TO HISTORIC OYSTER BAY

Local historic and cultural sites have joined forces to present the "Passport to Historic Oyster Bay" program this summer. Passport weekends, scheduled for July 4-6, August 1-3 and September 6-7, will include: July 4th festivities in town and at Sagamore Hill, Friends of the Arts music concerts, the Oyster Bay Chamber of Commerce's

OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Categories of Membership

Individual	$ 25	Business	$ 50
Family	$ 35	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 (516)922-5032 for more information on joining the Society.

Visit the Oyster Bay Historical Society's NEW website! www.oysterbayhistory.org

Art Walk, a barbeque, bonfire and fire works viewing at The Waterfront Center and regularly scheduled activities at other sites. A jitney will be available to transport tourists arriving by boat, railroad or car to all of the attractions. Please call 922-6464 for more information.

NEIGHBORHOOD NIGHTS IN OYSTER BAY

The Oyster Bay Chamber of Commerce is proud to present the 2003 Neighborhood Nights series, which will take place on six consecutive Tuesdays* in July and August. *(Please note that the Waterfront Center will hold its night on a Thursday). The Neighborhood Nights are FREE events for the entire family to enjoy at some of the most enchanting places in town.

All events will run from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Visitors are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets, a picnic supper and their family and friends. Take this opportunity to sit back and enjoy the historic and natural jewels of your community. The evenings will include crafts, games and activities for the children, and entertainment.

Enjoy your community while visiting the places of interest in your "own backyard." For more information, please call individual sponsor sites at: Sagamore Hill National Historic Site - 922-4447; The Waterfront Center - 624-2221; Raynham Hall Museum - 922-6808; Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary - 922-3200; Coe Hall at Planting Fields Arboretum - 922-9210, and The Oyster Bay Historical Society at the Earle-Wightman House - 922-5032. In the event of rain, the events will be canceled.

FARMINGDALE-BETHPAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

We urge all Freeholder readers to come and view the Society's military exhibit "They Answered the Call" in the gallery of the Farmingdale Public Library. The items on display reflect the service of Farmingdale-Bethpage men and women to the country since the Civil War. Created by Jo Ann Karp, exhibits coordinator, and her committee, the show will remain in place until early July.

HUNTINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A wonderful group of dignitaries,board members and friends turned out for the opening of the new centennial exhibition "Our Founding Mothers -- The Birth of the [Historical] Society." Featured in the exhibit are many of the objects that were part of a celebration 100 years ago marking the 250th anniversary of Huntington. The exhibit was created by Judy Estes, director of curatorial services.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE MASSAPEQUAS

To help the Town of Oyster Bay celebrate its 350th anniversary, a slide presentation depicting "Old Massapequa" was hosted by the public library at Bar Harbour. Trustee Lillian Bryson put stories to pictures of the days when manor houses stretched along Merrick Road, Clark Boulevard was just a rural street, and there was only one school and two fire trucks! It was truly a stroll down "Memory Lane."

CENTRAL PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Back in April, aviation historian Bob Schmidt gave his slide presentation "Balloons to Bombers." The aircraft industry supported the Bethpage community in a variety of ways over the years. The names include Grumman, Curtiss, Sperry, Sikorsky and Fairchild. The audience were also reminded of the various small airports that dotted the Hempstead Plains, as well as the harbors such as Manhasset Bay, Port Washington, and Hempstead Harbor where "float planes" were often housed and tested.

AMITYVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A new exhibit by guest curator William Lozowski, in place through June, presents Amityville's wonderful waterways from the lakes and ponds to the canals and the Great South Bay. They have all been captured in

Many thanks to Harry L. Dickran of Levon Graphics Corp., 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 Society now has available a "1900 View of Oyster Bay," which shows every building in existence at that time and includes a list of businesses and prominent residences. Eminently suitable for framing, this print is a great bargain at $20 plus shipping. Contact the Society at (516) 922-5032 to order yours today!

Also available are an 1833 map of Oyster Bay ($5) and a map of Gold Coast estates c. 1920 ($7.50). Shipping is additional.

beautiful photography. The exhibit on the theme of Amityville's four hospitals (past and present) will also be on display through June. It was highly unusual for a small community such as theirs to have so many hospital facilities.

SEA CLIFF VILLAGE MUSEUM

"Carpenterville .... The Village Before Sea Cliff" opened at the village museum on March 29. Memorabilia, artifacts and photos from the Carpenter family collection are on view, as well as their extensive family tree. The genealogy is tied in with a display entitled, "Sleuthing your Family Tree" which will be helpful to those interested in doing just that. The museum is located at 95 10th Avenue, behind the village hall, and is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 2 - 5 p.m. The exhibition will be on view through the end of July. For further information call 516- 671-0090.

CABOOSE #12 HOME IN OYSTER BAY

On May 13th and 14th, Ex-Long Island Rail Road Caboose #12 made the final leg of its journey home to Oyster Bay.

This caboose, built for the LIRR in the 1920s, was retired in the 1960s and sold to the Branford Electric Railway in East Haven, Connecticut, where it was used as a bunkhouse. A few years ago, Branford, now the Shore Line Trolley Museum, found that it no longer needed the caboose and accepted our request to purchase the car. A fund raising campaign was begun by Friends of Locomotive #35 Inc. member K. C. Madden, and within a couple of years the funds were in place to purchase the caboose and relocate it by truck to Long Island.

On June 26, 2002, the caboose was loaded onto a flatbed truck and moved via highway and Cross Sound Ferry to Syosset, New York, where it was to be stored within the grounds of the Town of Oyster Bay facility until such time as the Oyster Bay museum site was ready to receive it. It should be noted that were it not for the expertise of Mr. Bill Wall of the Shore Line Trolley Museum, this move might never have happened as he orchestrated the entire move and resolved all issues that cropped up along the way.

With cleanup begun at the site, the resources were assembled through the Town of Oyster Bay Highway Department and the Friends of Locomotive #35 to execute the move to Oyster Bay. Volunteers from Locomotive #35 assembled on May 13th to load the caboose on a trailer provided by the Town and very early on May 14th the move was made.

The caboose now resides at the museum site adjacent to the LIRR yard in Oyster Bay. It will undergo a complete restoration commencing immediately and can be viewed either from the street or by appointment. The Friends may be reached at www.lirr35.org or by e-mail at LIRR35@aol.com. They may also be contacted at:

Friends of Locomotive #35 Inc.
PO Box 335
Oyster Bay, New York 11771

Caboose #12 is only the second piece to be moved to the site for inclusion in the collection, the first being the currently dismantled Locomotive #35. Other pieces will come once the site is prepared and trackage laid out. With two historic pieces now on the premises, the Railroad Museum at Oyster Bay is already taking shape.

Caboose 12 moves through downtown Oyster Bay.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Many of us come away from our days in school with the impression that the meat of History is dates and events and the names of people who took a leading part in those events. Maybe that's so. Maybe it isn't. There can be no question, however, that we come away from our courses in History with a lot of names, dates and events in our cerebral storehouses. OK. Our test this time is to see how many of those events we can still associate with the date on which they occurred. We supply you with lists of events and dates arranged randomly. It is up to you to measure your knowledge of them by fitting the event to its date. To make it a bit harder we include some extra dates with no connection to the events list. Some of the dates are expressed as day, month and year. Some only by month and year and some only by year.

The Events

1. President Lincoln is assassinated.
2. A shot is heard round the world.
3. Henry Hudson sails up his river.
4. Franklin Roosevelt is elected to his first term as President of the United States
5. Englishmen make the first purchase of lands that will become Oyster Bay.
6. Captain Kidd is hung (or hanged) for piracy.
7. Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown.
8. The Black Friday of the 20th Century occurs.
9. Fort Sumter surrenders to Confederate troops.
10. Pieter Stuyvesant surrenders the Dutch colony to the British.
11. The Erie Canal is completed.
12. David deVries finds a Long Island bay with "many fine oysters."
13. President McKinley is shot by Czolgosz.
14. Steve Brodie is reported to have jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge.
15. Pieter Minuit buys the Island of Manhattan.

Date Bank

A. July 23, 1886
B. Sept. 5, 1901
C. Aug. 18, 1774
D. April 14/15, 1865
E. April 19, 1775
F. 1609
G. 1664
H. June 4, 1639
I. 1825
J. March 30, 1904
K. 1701
L. April 1, 1653
M. Oct. 19, 1781
N. Nov. 1, 1930
O. April 12/14, 1861
P. Nov. 1932
Q. 1626
R. Nov. 1934
S. Oct. 1929
T. March 6, 1775

Answers will be found on p. 23.

"The Gathering Place" is the department of the magazine housing contributions of an historical slant but of 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:
Dutch Dainties

by Lee Myles

The early American settlers, particularly those from Great Britain, were influenced in many ways by the people of the Netherlands. These influences occurred both before the the colonists left England and after they had settled near the Dutch colonists in New Netherland. Often it is difficult to distinguish whether a particular influence came to us before or after settlement here. That does not represent a disadvantage in selecting material for The Dutch Next Door. Our purpose is simply to show that the non-Dutch European immigrants to these shores derived many benefits from their or their forebears' contacts with the culture of the Netherlanders. This time we are going to consider a few food words that seem to have come into our language from the people whose interest in food (and drink) we recognized collectively by calling them such names as John Cheese or Pikkelherring.

We begin with:

Mush: A word widely distributed over the American colonies by fairly early times. It is the name for a porridge of grain, most frequently made of Indian corn but also of other grains like oats, ground into meal and boiled in milk or water. The Dutch word moes which denotes fruit or vegetables stewed until rendered a soft, moist, formless mass is somewhat similarly pronounced. The Dutch made further use of moes to describe materials that had been squashed, mashed or otherwise brought to a condition of pulpiness. While a theory has been offered that mush is derived from the English word mash it seems much more likely that the Dutch word is the parent. Mash does not refer to edible materials brought to pulpiness by cooking as both moes and mush do. Mush , apparently first made of maize or Indian corn, seems to be a completely American viand. The word viand is not ill chosen. It implies a choice dish and mush was certainly so regarded by early Americans.

Cranberry: The modern Dutch name for cranberry is veenbes but it seems likely that, in the past when the Lowlanders were heavily influencing their British neighbors, they used the old Low German form kraanbere meaning crane-berry. Crane in this context refers to the bird of the long bill, neck and legs whose habitat was and who sought his food in, wetlands. Veenbes is literally fen berry, perhaps better rendered for American ears as bog berry. Modern Dutch for crane is kraan. When you ask at the Thanksgiving table, "Please pass the cranberry", remember the Dutch had a hand in its naming.and probably used it for sauce as well.

Goose: Roasted as holiday fare, the goose is one of the most delectable of birds. For years a variety called the Pilgrim goose was a staple in New England and perhaps farther afield. We are told by Paul Ives in his *Domestic Ducks and Geese* that Pilgrim Geese were brought to this country by---whom? That's right, by the Pilgrims, And where did both the Pilgrims and the geese come from? Holland, of course. Reflect. If it hadn't been for the American turkey and the introduction of a larger breed of geese, the Pilgrim goose from Holland would still be the Queen of our Holiday table.

Ketchup: This savory relish seems to have been introduced to the West from the Malay archipelago by--who else?-- the Dutch. The Malays are said to have learned the art of ketchup making from the Chinese. That puts Mr. Heinz the fourth in line. The Dutch enjoyed the exotic condiment under the name of ketjap. The *Editorial Office Dictionary* says the Oriental gentlemen called it ke-tsiap and doused it on their fish. We suspect that pomegranates or some such thing were used in place of the more familiar to us, love apple. Oh, all right, tomato. Whatever the recipe, we might never have dripped the red, gooey stuff down our shirtfronts while enjoying a ball game hamburger except for those busy bodies from the Low Countries.

Cobbler: Edward Hewett and W.T. Axton collaborated on a book called *The Convivial Dickens* and in so doing provided us with another instance of Dutch influence in the realm of American food and drink. They

explained that a Hudson River Valley Dutch dialect word for a heap of rocks was pronounced cobbler. This notion takes no notice of how the laddies and the ladies in the wooden shoes may have spelt the word. Some time in the early 19th century a York State bartender invented a refreshing drink of sweetened wine served with two wheat straws for sharing by a couple in a holiday mood. The drink was poured over a small pile of broken ice in a widemouthed glass. The inventor, who may have been of Dutch descent, saw the resemblance between the little pile of ice and a heap of rocks and drew the word cobbler out of his vocabulary for a name. Perhaps he had done time on the rock pile at Dannemora; it matters not. The drink was a great success. Presently this little bit of Dutch influence went to England with returning visitors like Dickens. The Cobbler was also a great success across the Pond. Perhaps it was even enjoyed there by Dutch visitors from Holland across the North Sea, thus completing the circle.

Reflections of
Massapequa Manor

by Lillian Rumfield Bryson

I have lived in the Massapequas for all of my years, my great grand parents settled here, and my grand children are the 6th generation on the block where I still live. When I was a kid, our only school building, housing kindergarten to 8th grade, was the original part of what we now call Fairfield. It was "Massapequa School."

Along Merrick Road on the school bus, we would near Ocean Avenue and pass the big white house. It was a wonderful house ... and I thought that surely Santa Claus lived there, beyond the great lawn and tree lined circular driveway. There was a white post fence along the road with stately entrance and exit ways. Tall pines stood before the manor house where four white Romanesque columns topped a stairway to the portico, and reached for the sky.

The mansion was built in 1837. Santa never lived there, but Judge David Jones did. It was called Massapequa Manor, and the dammed up creek on the property became in turn Floyd-Jones Pond and then Massapequa Lake. The judge, a descendant of Major Thomas Jones, Massapequa's first non Native American settler, eventually sold the house to his cousin William Floyd-Jones. When William's daughter became Mrs. William Robison, the house was theirs. During the latter part of their life there, the lake was turned over to the Brooklyn Water Works. During the time of World War I, the house was sold, out of the family, to Richard Caroon.

In 1943, there still being only one school in Massapequa, I went to Amityville High School. I think it was soon thereafter that the big white house was empty. It stood that way for years, and in 1952, before the wreckers' ball could attack, it burned to the ground on a snowy November morning.

A few summers ago, I received a phone call from a home owner on Cambridge Drive, north of Merrick Road, east of Massapequa Lake. They were having a pool put in, and the backhoe unearthed remains of Massapequa Manor. In this grave-like excavation, a great foundation stone and charred skeletal wood gave evidence of the historic manor house. Lawn, topsoil, ashes, debris...where "once there was a grandeur..."

Today, community living marks the site where one of the finest mansions on Long Island graced the area. In a development of handsome homes, new generations of Massapequans are watching the sunset over Massapequa Lake ... as the judge did one hundred and sixty six years ago. And, when I drive along Merrick Road, I think with gratitude of those days, and the wonderful big white house where Santa Claus lived.

Massapequa Manor

The Early Settlement of Oyster Bay

continued from p. 9

Peter Wright and the other settlers who were endorsed as joint purchasers set about the task of building their village. They first laid out the highways from the Mill River at the west to the Cove Hill at the east, plus the street from the harbor to the south of the Town Spot which we now call South Street. They next laid out home lots of six acres to each settler plus an interest in the common grazing lands; more than twenty home lots were initially laid out. Settlers who arrived later were given home lots of five acres.

The very first houses were probably very crude structures, similar to those described by the Dutch Secretary van Tienhoven in 1650. Square pits about six feet deep dug as wide and broad as the owner deemed suitable for his needs. The walls of the pits were cased with timbers and lined with tree bark to prevent cave-ins. The floor was planked and a roof was made of rough logs covered with bark and sod. These rough shelters served the settlers while they went about building more substantial houses.

Pieter Stuyvesant

Peter Stuyvesant was furious about the settlement at Oyster Bay but was powerless to do much about it as the Dutch were at war with the English in Europe and no additional military resources were available to him. The Oyster Bay settlement was within what Stuyvesant believed to be Dutch territory. The terms of the 1650 Treaty of Hartford stated that the Dutch-English boundary was the westernmost point of Oyster Bay; this meant one thing to the Dutch and something different to the English. To the Dutch, Oyster Bay was the body of water between Centre Island and Lloyd's Neck, but to the English, Oyster Bay wound around through Oyster Bay Harbor into Mill Neck Creek and up to the Shu Swamp. To the Dutch the area we call West Harbor was Martin Gerritsen's Bay.

In May 1654, peace was finally concluded between the Dutch and the English in Europe and Stuyvesant was emboldened to send soldiers out to Oyster Bay to get the settlers to remove but nothing came of it. In October 1654, Stuyvesant wrote to Governor Eaton and the Council at Connecticut complaining about the encroachments of the English at Martin Gerritsen's Bay. His plea fell on deaf ears however, as the Connecticut colony had nothing to do with the Oyster Bay purchasers who were from the Plymouth colony. In November of that year the Directors in Holland wrote to Stuyvesant, telling him that they were continuing their efforts with the Republic at England to gain compliance of the Treaty of 1650; in the meantime Stuyvesant must protect the lands within the jurisdiction of the company.

Stuyvesant then left New Amsterdam for an extended trip to the West Indies; during his absence his duties as Director were handled by Secretary Cornelis van Tienhoven, with Nicholas deSille taking over the duties of Secretary. Van Tienhoven delayed taking any action regarding the settlement at Oyster Bay due to bad weather. In April 1655, van Tienhoven sent a lone messenger out to "proceed to Mattinnekonck Bay, also called Martin Gerritsen's Bay, where some Englishmen have settled, because the same is west of Oyster Bay and to direct there Mr. Levent and all whom it may concern, to remove."

In the meantime the Directors in Holland wrote a letter to Stuyvesant in April 1655, telling him to build a fort at Oyster Bay to protect the jurisdiction of the company there. Stuyvesant was still in the West Indies at the time and van Tienhoven took no action on the request to build the fort. When Stuyvesant returned from the West Indies he found a Dutch man-o-war, the "DeWaugh," at New Amsterdam. The man-o-war had brought a letter from the Directors in Holland chastising Stuyvesant for not

sending over the detailed text of the 1650 Treaty of Hartford. The letter also demanded again that Stuyvesant begin erecting the fort at Oyster Bay to protect their interests and to help put an end to the smuggling taking place at Oyster Bay. The Directors in Holland even went so far as to include lists and inventories of materials needed to build the fort.

In March 1656, the Directors in Holland showed their displeasure with the way van Tienhoven handled the affairs of the company during Stuyvesant's trip to the West Indies by removing him from office and prohibiting him from any further employment or office within the company's jurisdiction. They also removed van Tienhoven's brother, Adrian van Tienhoven, who had been the Inspector of Imported goods and merchandise.

Later that year Stuyvesant personally made several visits to Oyster Bay with the intent of determining a place to build the fort but also to meet with the settlers there; he was continually criticized by the Directors in Holland for not having begun construction of the fort. He obviously made some unfulfilled promises or commitments to the settlers at Oyster Bay, as they wrote to him in January 1657, saying "Since your last being at Oyster Bay, we have received neither line nor letter from you, we doubt not but you still bear in mind the propositions then made."

Poor Peter Stuyvesant was caught between a rock and a hard place; he did not have the necessary military power to throw out the settlers at Oyster Bay while receiving constant criticism from the Directors in Holland telling him what he must do. All the while the smuggling continued and the settlement kept growing while Stuyvesant considered what to do.

Peter Stuyvesant and the Directors in Holland continued to exchange letters, each criticizing the other, but in the end the fort at Oyster Bay never did get built and Stuyvesant never did get the settlers to move. In 1660 King Charles II was restored to the throne in England. Believing that all the English villages on the western end of Long Island were now theirs, the General Court at Hartford ordered on October 23, 1662, that all English towns on Long Island send representatives to the General Assembly at Hartford. This was the first time that the settlement at Oyster Bay came under the protection of any government other than themselves. Peter Stuyvesant protested vehemently, referring to their actions as the "Unrighteous, stubborn, impudent and pertinacious proceeding of the English at Hartford." He continued to protest and after a year the Court at Hartford agreed to assert no authority over the English towns on Long Island, as long as the Dutch would do the same.

With the relinquishing of control by Hartford, Captain John Scott tried to take control of the English towns and to proclaim himself President of the English on Long Island. Scott claimed he had the authority of King Charles II. Scott gave new names to the English Towns: Flushing became Newark, Middleburgh became Hastings, Jamaica became Crawford and Oyster Bay became

James, Duke of York

Folestone. Scott even negotiated an agreement with Peter Stuyvesant which would fully empower Captain John Scott to act as President until King Charles should establish a government for the English towns. The entire matter was resolved on March 22, 1664, when King Charles gave the entire territory to his brother James, Duke of York, and Oyster Bay then became part of the North Riding of Yorkshire. In August 1664, Peter Stuyvesant was forced to relinquish all control over New Amsterdam.

Fort Amsterdam then became Fort James, as New Amsterdam was renamed New York. The Duke's Laws to govern the new Colony were issued in 1665, and in 1667 the settlement at Oyster Bay received its charter from the new colony and thereby formally began the political entity we know today as the Township of Oyster Bay.

A WEAVER IN OYSTER BAY, Part II

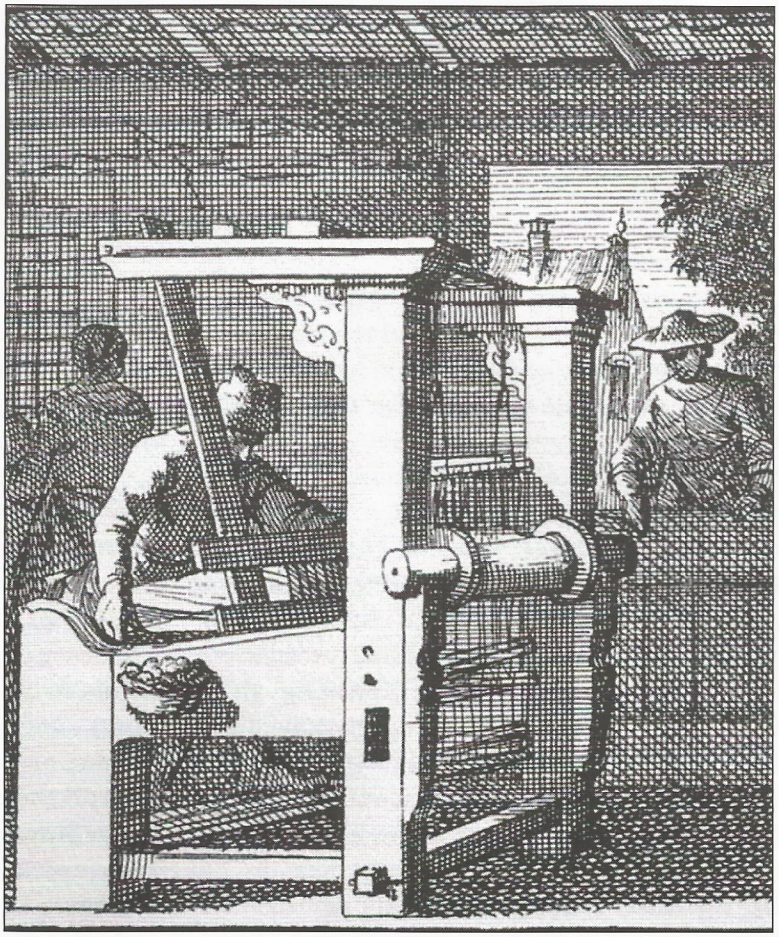
by Elliot M. Sayward

CONTINUED FROM THE WINTER 2003 EDITION OF THE FREEHOLDER

We can assume that the biggest part of Sam's market was located in Oyster Bay where the householders had an ongoing need for linen cloth made of flax. This went into sheets and other bedding, table cloths, toweling,and a variety of clothing. They also needed fabric of wool for blankets, other clothing and a variety of woolen goods, in the old phrase, too numerous to mention. There were also goods made from linsey-woolsey, a textile of mixed filaments, the warp being a different yarn than the weft.

By the 18th century weavers were making scores of fabric varieties many of these made at far distant places from Oyster Bay. At least some of these were within the abilities of American weavers and their equipment. It is to be doubted that Weaver McCoun tried to duplicate many of these in the ordinary way of business. Some required more complicated looms than he would have owned. Others required filaments of an exotic nature hardly to be found in local markets. And some were the creation of the fabric dressers who sheared the nap of the weaver's product and treated the surfaces with glazes and other dressings that altered the appearance of the final product.

Because old records often use the names of fabrics of the times some of which may have been within the skill and knowledge of Sam McCoun we offer you a random selection of these without definition but simply to tune your ear to words that might have been heard in our area in the early 18th century. Some of these remain in our vocabulary today: Dowlas, Lawn, Calico, Duck, Muslin, Fustian, Canvas. Calamanco, Tabby, Cambric, Flannel, Dimity, Shalloon, Drugget, Serge, Camblett, Satten, Denim, Sarsenet and lots, lots more.



This engraving of a weaver was done by Dutch artist Jan Luyken and was included in his "Mirror of Human Trades," first published in 1694, roughly the time McCoun was working in Oyster Bay.

For several hundred years up to the 18th Century the loom was one of the most complicated and highly technical pieces of machinery belonging to mankind. In that century specialized machinery of all sorts and especially for the cloth maker began to appear in ever growing numbers and the loom was vastly improved and began to move out of the residence and the shop and into the factory. Even so, the sort of loom that Sam McCoun used may still be found in the possession of those who weave for pleasure producing the thumping that introduced our tale and as well, beautiful and high quality cloth.

By the next century most of the independent weavers had disappeared. A few are recorded in the hinterlands in the period before the beginning of the 20th Century but Sam McCoun's trade was virtually over.

We are, however, considering what his trade had been while Sam himself lasted. Except for his skill as a weaver and his knowledge of the various textiles within his range of manufacture, the single most important asset he

possessed was his loom. It was high tech machinery given the much simpler equipment used by weavers only a few hundred years earlier. Its main function was to hold the foundation of a piece of weaving, the warp, in a manner that allowed its user to weave, that is to interlace the thread of the weft under and over successive threads of the warp across the piece being made. The aboriginal weaver had tied each end of his warp to a stick and then either laid it on the ground or tied one stick to an overhanging tree branch. Then, working at the bottom of his short warp the weaver carefully threaded the first thread under and over the succeeding warp threads from one side to the other. The other side reached, he or she started back but this time the weaver went under the threads he had gone over before and over the others. The process was repeated again and again. Each trip of the weft through the weaving required that every other warp yarn be raised individually in succession while the weft thread was poked below it.

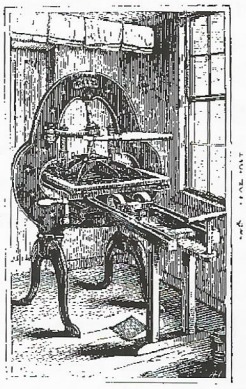
That was too slow for Sam McCoun. His loom consisted of a heavy rectangular wooden framework. Across the back of the frame was hung the revolving warp beam on which were wound the yarns of the warp. After the full length of the yarns had been wound, their loose ends were drawn through the frame and across the polished horizontal breast beam on the other end behind which the weaver sat. Below the breast beam was the revolving cloth beam to which the warp, having passed over the breast beam, was attached. The cloth beam could be turned to wind up the cloth as it grew in length under the weaver's hands but it had a catch to keep it from backing up. All the weaver had to do was to release the catch that kept the warp beam from turning. Then he wound the cloth beam until the weaving space had been cleared of finished cloth, set the warp beam catch again and returned to his seat and his work.

But aren't we skipping something? How did his loom help him pick up those alternate warp yarns so he could pass his shuttle over and under, back and forth? Someone during the long development of weaving had invented the heddle. That was really high-tech. In its simplest form such as McCoun would have used, the loom had two heddles. Each was constructed of two straight parallel sticks between which ran a row of cords called leashes equal in number to half the number of warp yarns in the work piece. In the middle of each leash was an "eye", a loop, through which passed a single warp yarn. One heddle provided for yarns 1,3,5, 7 and so forth, the other managed the even numbers as 2, 4, 6, 8. Each heddle was supported by a cord passed through a pulley suspended from the upper frame work. The cord leaving the pulley descended and was fastened to the top of the companion heddle. Another cord ran from the bottom of each heddle to pedals beneath the weaver's feet. When one heddle was pulled up by the action of a pedal and a pulley, the other was depressed. This resulted, of course, in half the warped threads being lifted up by the leash eyes through which they ran and the other half being depressed. The space created between them was called the "shed." Through the shed the shuttle with a reel of weft thread in its cavity could be "thrown." Then the weaver had only to depress the other pedal and create a new shed using the other half of the warp threads, throw his shuttle anew and thus it went, back and forth, back and forth, as inch after inch of fabric grew and was rolled up.

But the reader might be asking how each new thread was seated tightly and evenly against the one before it? That was the function of another piece of high tech, the beater with its sley. The beater is hung pivoting from the top of the loom frame and its heavy base contains the sley, a rectangular wooden form filled with very fine and close set teeth called dents. The dents are made of strong material like cane. When the loom is filled with a new warp, each yarn having passed through its heddle leach, is then passed in order between two dents in the sley, or as it is often called, the reed, because that material is frequently used for dents. The beater can be swung against each new weft thread and the contact of the dents will force it firmly against its predecessor with the thump, thump noise that first called your attention to Sam McCoun's house.

Perhaps this is the time to leave his house and leave him to his work. Seasons change and each new one demands new supplies of varied kinds of cloth. Sam must not fall behind in supplying his townsmen's needs!

Blocklyn's Books



Book Reviews by Philip Blocklyn

The Future Of The Past. Alexander Stille. Farrar,Straus & Giroux, 2002. 339 pp. $25.

What's the future of the past? It doesn't look good, according to Alexander Stille, who claims that we are in danger of losing our historical memory, perhaps our entire collective culture, if it comes to that. Yes, it sounds dreary enough, but Mr Stille writes with such warmth that we read along cheerily as the Visigoths gather on the horizon. Never mind that the Visigoths turn out to be us.

It is certain that the past is under attack around the globe. On the Giza plateau, New Age devotees apply for permission to probe under the Sphinx in hopes of discovering the Atlantis Great Hall Of Records. Egyptian archaeologist Zahi Hawass asks: "What do you think the reaction of the American government would be if we put in a request to excavate underneath the Stature Of Liberty on the theory that the ancient Egyptians discovered America?" In Xi'an, China, most traditional architecture has been replaced with "reinforced concrete boxes covered with industrial white tile." This is what Mao must have been thinking when he said: "Destroy first, and construction will look after itself." In Aidone, Sicily, the concerted efforts of tombaroli (tomb robbers), scholars, collectors, international dealers, and mafiosi are systematically stripping archeological sites of their treasures.

So, is there any place on earth not subject to these assaults on the past? Probably not, though there are spots where resistance appears not entirely futile. On Kitawa, an island off New Guinea, a strictly oral society has managed to pass down its cultural traditions for hundreds of years. Of course, it takes just a single generation to snap these traditional links to the past, and of course this is exactly what is happening. Ipaiya, the island's last oral poet, refused before he died to pass on his poetic formulas to his son or any other islander, claiming there was no one left worthy of them. It is possible that the final repository of Kitawan culture will rest in the work of an Italian anthropologist, called by Kitawans "The Man Who Remembers." Meanwhile, in Alexandria, the Egyptian government is involved in a multinational effort to re-establish the Alexandrian Library, with all the problems attending thereto, not the least of which is the corrupt and autocratic Egyptian government itself. We should note in passing that the Library Project received $21 million from Saddam Hussein, whose check cleared just before the start of the 1991 Gulf War.

Why in the world are we having such trouble protecting the past from our own depredations? For one thing, there seems to be too much past to keep up with. The National Archives And Records Agency, created in the 1930s (naturally), now has 4 billion pieces of paper, 18.4 million photographs (about half of them aerial), 338,029 films and videos, 2,648,918 maps and charts, 3 million architectural and engineering plans, and-- well, you can spot the trend developing. As Stille observes, "There is not likely to be a modem Sophocles in the databases of the Department Of Agriculture." There is, on the other hand, every likelihood that we will no longer be able to separate valuable material from the dross of history.

Stille also sees electronic media as a present danger. If printing represents the technology that helped create a modem sense of history, it is television, and now the Internet, that will lead to a world not of citizens but of consumers. It seems that from the advent of television-watching, all other human activities have suffered declines, with the exceptions of shopping and eating out.

But we should probably be tired by now of blaming technology for every social ill. Maybe the problem we have preserving the past lies not in our media but in ourselves. The past may have so bleak a future for the very fact that we allow it no place in our present- tense, hyper-driven lives. Have we simply left behind us what we haven't already destroyed?

Consider, then, the nautilus shell, regarded by the Kitawans of New Guinea as **a** symbol of perfection:

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AUNT EEEK

Olde Things:Advice on the Care & Feeding of Antiques

Dear Aunt Eeek:

I want to learn how to refinish antiques. I am a retired salesman and I just need more to do and some additional income. I always liked antiques and now I have the time to do what I want. I have never actually done any work with my hands, so I need to get exposure. Can you tell me how to get started? I really need to start from the beginning but I am not sure where that is.

Louis from Bayville

Dear Louis,

We have gotten many such letters over the years and have not really addressed them in the column mostly because it is a very difficult question to answer in a serious and meaningful manner. There are any number of antique restoration firms and individuals, but very few who really do a service to their customers as well as the pieces that they work.

Start at the library and read about antiques. If you can find someone who does this work try to work alongside of them. You may also volunteer at a local museum. There are schools teaching these arts. Be prepared for a long learning experience. Mostly, please don't be seduced into any restoration attempts on serious antiquity until and unless you get some direction. I believe that you like antiques and I hope that you respect them enough to do your learning before you do your refinishing. Good Luck!

Dear Aunt Eeek,

I have an old water pump in my basement that I was told used to supply water to the house from a well around 1910. Attached to this pump is an old engine that powered the well pump. This affair is very heavy and in the way of our plans to build a laundry room. The pump which is marked "Gould" is rusty, but this engine seems greasy but sound. We turned the wheel and it moves and makes a hissing sound. The motor says "Aermotor" and has a date of 1909. Does anyone want these things or should we break it up and dispose of it?

Pat from Oyster Bay

Dear Pat,

When we received this letter we called Pat and found a home for this rare and wonderful piece. These devices are rare and very collectible. They are seldom found in their original installations as they are bulky and usually wind up at the curb. This engine is an 8 cycle "make and break" gasoline power source. They were used for every manner of work around the home, farm and factory prior to the introduction of electric power. Many collector groups are formed around this early technology and a wonderful magazine is published monthly.

Answers to Test Your Knowledge, *p.15*

1. D
2. E
3. F
4. P
5. L
6. K
7. M
8. S
9. O
10. G
11. I
12. H
13. B
14. A
15. Q

Blocklyn's Books

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The spiral is a kind of metaphor for Kitawan culture as a whole: it moves forward and out from its point of origin yet always circles back and around it, as Kitawans circle back around their tradition. Theirs is not a static society that simply repeats itself but one that changes gradually, yet always within the framework of tradition.

Yesterday's Humor

The little tale you are about to read has been collected by a number of folklorists in widely separated places. At least one of the versions introduces the speaker as an Irish immigrant. That suggests it may have originated in the early 19th century during or after the great Irish immigration. That would certainly qualify it as Yesterday's Humor. Do you think it is still funny?

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

JUNE
Sunday, June 8, 2 p.m.
Lecture
As part of the Town's 350th Anniversary celebration Director Tom Kuehhas will present "Hands on History: The Life of a Continental Soldier" at the Oyster Bay Community Center on Church Street. Learn about the weapons, uniform and equipment of the Continental soldier and how the war was fought through an interactive, hands-on view of the private soldier's life during the Revolutionary War. Admission is free and refreshments will be served following Mr. Kuehhas' talk.

Friday, June 13, 8 p.m.
Annual Meeting/Lecture
Karl W. Koch III, Oyster Bay resident, builder and author of *Men of Steel: The Story of the Family That Built the World Trade Center*, will be our featured speaker at the Society's annual meeting which will be held at the Doubleday-Babcock Senior Center, East Main St., Oyster Bay. Hear the inside story on how the Twin Towers were built.
All are welcome to attend. Admission is free and refreshments will be served following Mr. Koch's talk.

JULY
Friday, July 4
Independence Day Celebration
"Passport to Historic Oyster Bay" program kicks off this weekend. The Passport weekend of July 4-6 will include: July 4th festivities in town and at Sagamore Hill, a Friends of the Arts music concert, the bonfire and fire works viewing at The Waterfront Center, a Revolutionart War Encampment at Raynham Hall, and regularly scheduled activities at other sites.

AUGUST
Tuesday, August 19, 6-8 p.m.
Neighborhood Night
Bring the family and a picnic dinner and join your neighbors in the Society's beautiful gardens for a sing-along program led by trustee Steve Walker. Steve will sing selections from his soon to be released *Oyster Songster*, a collection of songs that he compiled (along with original material of his own!) which have to do with oysters or Oyster Bay.
Tours of the museum, hands-on activities, and period children's games are all on tap. Join us!

Yesterday's Humor
continued from p. 23

The first bird I ever shot in America
Was a porcupine.
I treed him up a haystack;
Shot him with a barn shovel.
The first time I hit him, I missed him.
The second time I hit him in the same place.
Oh my! How the feathers flew.

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Attend the Society's Annual Meeting on June 13!
Details inside!