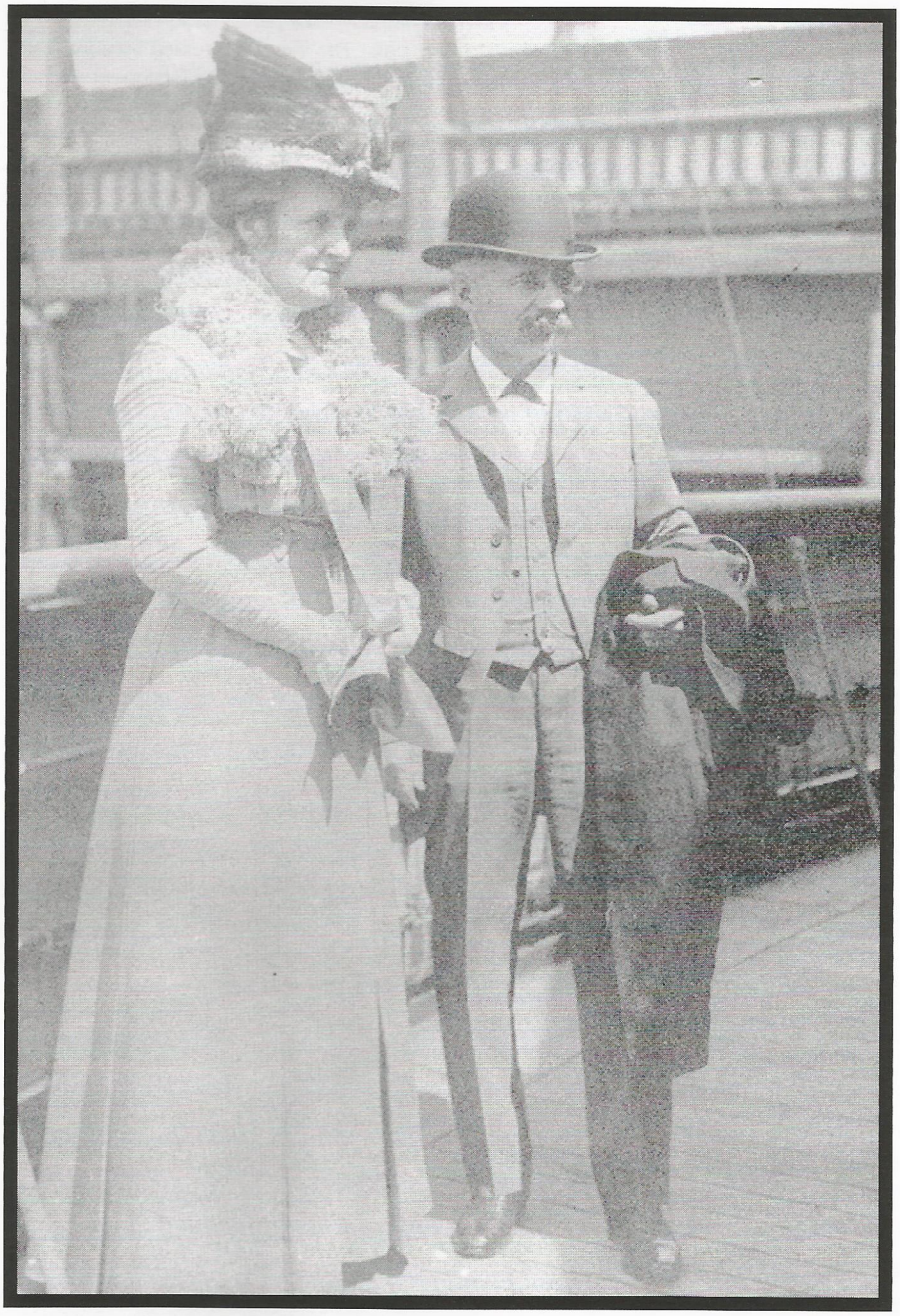
THE FREEHOLDER

SPRING 2008 THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOUNDED 1960



THE HISTORY MAGAZINE OF THE TOWN OF OYSTER BAY

Editorial

This issue marks the end of our twelfth year of publishing *The Freeholder.* Many of our members have told me how much they look forward to receiving the magazine and that they read it from cover to cover. This is encouraging, especially now, when we are all bombarded with print.

However, if *The Freeholder* is to continue publication, we need more of our members to take an active role. No article is too long or short for our consideration. Perhaps you have in mind a short, three paragraph article on an event or person of local historical importance. That would be perfect fodder for "The Gathering Place." Have a longer treatment in mind, say two or three pages? We are sorely in need of folks willing to tackle feature length articles. Need a topic or encouragement? Call the Editor and he'll be sure to find a fit for you!

THE FREEHOLDER
of the
Oyster Bay Historical Society
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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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Mary Williamson Averell Harriman (1851-1932) shown here with her husband, E. H. Harriman (1848-1909), was a passionate philanthropist. See related story on p. 8.
Photo from the Harriman Family Collection.

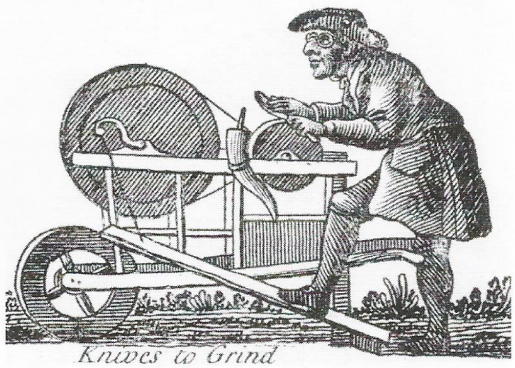
THE POST RIDER

To the Editor:

I loved the last issue [Winter 2008] so much that I read it all in one sitting! ***The Freeholder*** always has such interesting articles, not at all dry, like some other history publications can be. I happened to have this issue sitting on my coffee table when a friend came over for tea. She picked it up and proceeded to thumb through it, totally ignoring me! When I rather pointedly told her that she could get her own copy and look at it at her leisure, she said that she hadn't seen it before and asked how she could get on the mailing list. I replied that I received it as a member of the Historical Society. She responded by stating that she was not a "joiner," but if she could get a subscription she would do that. Do you sell subscriptions to the magazine?

Sincerely,
Ellinor Kasuga

Well, Ellinor, I have fielded such queries before. ***The Freeholder*** *was conceived as a benefit of membership in the Oyster Bay Historical Society. We do realize that other organizations have separated out their publications and offered them on a subscription basis, without requiring membership in their organization. However we feel that keeping* ***The Freeholder*** *as a membership benefit is the way to go, as we want our members to feel like they are getting something in return for supporting the Oyster Bay Historical Society.*



GOVERNORS ISLAND: LIFEBLOOD OF AMERICAN LIBERTY
PART II

by Joep de Koning

It was a general rule in the Dutch Republic that whenever or wherever in the world the interests of state and church, or of commercial and ecclesiastical power, came into conflict, it was the secular authority that ultimately prevailed—and this certainly held true for both the West India and East India Companies. Hence, in all matters of religious intolerance, Stuyvesant was overruled by his superiors, who in 1655 granted the Sephardic merchants residency on the basis of "reason and equity,"[12] thereby continuing a tradition of cultural pluralism in the colony. This, and the fundamental, natural right to toleration as written in the 1579 founding document, was affirmed by treaty for New Netherlanders exclusively when English rule was imposed on them in 1664, and later reintroduced as legal-political code in the First Amendment to the American Constitution.

Yet, intermittently for more than three centuries, cultural and legal intolerance, and overt prejudice towards minorities, would continue to occur in New York. Roman Catholicism, for example, was outlawed from 1691 to 1783. From the arrival of the first Jews in New York to the inauguration of Abe Beame in 1974—320 years later—as the city's first Jewish mayor, lie some profoundly important lessons for humanity. Placing that crucial event of 1655 into its broader global context, and including it in America's collective memory, will lead to a better understanding of its historical significance and help sort the facts from the myths surrounding this issue.

The Republic's founding document was to prove a potent enticement for those seeking sanctuary from religious intolerance during the turbulent years of the Reformation. Two years later, in 1581, when the port of Lisbon was closed to Dutch merchants, the States General of the Dutch Republic issued the first permit (sauvegard) for Portuguese- Jewish merchants to trade freely by way of Dutch ports, giving them the same privileges as Dutch merchants. Not only poor migrants, but also large-scale merchants trading in sugar, Brazil wood, ginger, cotton, diamonds and pearls, they took advantage of the freedom to practice their Jewish faith again in their newly adopted country.

The spiritual founder of the West India Company, Willem Usselincx, himself a migrant from Antwerp, declared in 1645 that "it is because of foreigners that the country will be peopled, because its might is derived mostly from those who come from abroad and settle, marry and multiply here. If one were to remove the foreigners, their children and grandchildren, from the large cities of Holland, the remaining residents would be fewer in number than those departed."[13] The attitude reflected in his statement provided the basis for the cultural toleration that encouraged ethnic diversity in the Dutch Republic. It also served as a magnet for foreign capital seeking new investment opportunities, thereby stimulating international trade and nourishing the Republic's Golden Age.

In 1624, this enlightened tradition of cultural pluralism and commerce accompanied the first settlers to Governors Island, then called Noten Eylant (Nut Island). Their settlement was established on the basis of secular concerns. Yet, as noted previously, they were under specific instructions not to discriminate against anyone for one's religious belief and were to grant everyone the liberty of one's conscience. Nevertheless, they were also instructed to try attracting natives and non-believers to God's word but then only "through attitude and by example." May not, then, Governors Island safely be designated as the point of origin in what was to become the United States of America, if not in the entire Western Hemisphere, of the tradition of cultural tolerance?

Cultural diversity as a legal imperative, rather than as something contingent on the shifting views, prejudices or self-interest of an individual on the basis of fleeting authority obtained by appointment to office, was thus planted on the North American continent in 1624. Upon the provisional transfer to England of New Netherland on August 27, 1664, Petrus Stuyvesant and his council ensured that, under the provisions of Article VIII of the Articles of Transfer they negotiated, New Netherlanders under future English jurisdiction "shall keep and enjoy the liberty of their consciences in religion."[14]

Yet, ten years before the impo-

Prince William of Orange
by Michiel Jansz van Miereveld (1620)

sition of English authority, Stuyvesant, the seventh and last West India Company director for New Netherland, had attempted to prevent the sizable contingent of Sephardic refuges from settling in the province on the pretext of religion. What accounts for his and his council's apparent change of heart in 1664? Did Stuyvesant's earlier attempt to impose his personal views on a pluralist community have its basis in commercial self-interest? Or was it an effort to strengthen his authority, and that of the Reformed Church Council of which he was a member, over a culturally diverse population at the expense of the Dutch motto of "Concordia," or both? (The latter word, meaning "Harmony in Difference" or "Unity" is still incorporated in the municipal seal of the borough of Brooklyn.)

After all, at a time when Jews were banned from Portugal, Spain, France and England, the toleration of both Sephardim and Ashkenazim in Amsterdam was already legendary. The right to openly practice their faith in the Dutch Republic proved a compelling inducement to immigration: the first Sephardic community, Beth Jacob, was founded at The Hague in 1602. But freedom to practice their religion was not the sole consideration determining their relocation to various mercantile towns of the Dutch Republic.

Why was it that the well respected, commercially successful Amsterdam community of Portuguese Israelites enjoyed such an excellent relationship with Holland's Lord- Lieutenants Maurice and Frederick Henry, half brothers and noblemen of the House of Orange-Nassau? They were the sons of William I of Nassau, Prince of Orange and founding father of the Dutch Republic. In 1642, Frederick Henry and his son William, the future Prince Willem II, made an official visit to Amsterdam's Sephardic synagogue, Talmud Torah. Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel presented them with a 2000 florin gift on behalf of the congregation and gave a speech in which he said; "We no longer consider Spain and Portugal our fatherland but Holland; we no longer honor the Spanish or Portuguese king but the states of Holland and you as our authorities, whose blessed arms protect and sword defend us... knowing that our prosperity depends on you."[15]

Such protection must truly have been special, given the Jewish immigrants' relatively short incubation as a new community in a strange land where they would continue to speak the language of the Republic's Iberian archenemy for over 200 years. Later, in 1655, the same Ben Israel, not only a rabbi but a printer, in a pamphlet titled *Humble Address* would begin his discussion of the admission of Jews to England at the "invitation" of Oliver Cromwell in London with the words "How Profitable the Nation of the Iewes are." In it, Ben Israel writes that the Jews received "great Charity and Benevolency" in Amsterdam, where there were no less than 400 families who "enjoy a good part of the West and East-Indian Compagnies" in "no lesse then three hundred houses of their own."[16] Only in 1664 did the English Crown, in the person of Charles II, extend the Jewish community in England a formal

promise of protection, followed in 1673, after a period of persecution, by a guarantee of freedom of worship.[17]

Also in 1642, the new and less important Ashkenazic community in Amsterdam bought land for its own cemetery. But more significantly, across the ocean, Johan Maurits of Nassau, the Governor-General of Dutch Brazil, opened the first, Sephardic, synagogue in the Western Hemisphere in Pernambuco at Recife. A year earlier, Chacham Isaac Aboab da Fonseca, a member of the Amsterdam rabbinate, had sailed for Dutch Brazil to become the first rabbi in the Americas at Recife.[18]

Brazil had been a destination of Dutch merchantmen since the 1580s and Dutch merchants already controlled over 50 percent of the Brazilian sugar trade by the end of the Twelve-Year Truce between the Republic and Spain (1609-1621). At the time, sugar was a more important commodity than even pepper. The high value of sugar and the enormous profits that could be made can best be indicated by the fact that, in 1618, the wholesale value of four shiploads of sugar was equal to that of 200 ships carrying salt. Given the higher profit margins on sugar, just one shipload of sugar was more profitable than fifty of salt![19]

The migration of Portuguese Jewish merchants to the Republic from 1580 onwards meant that sugar, traded mainly by them, became the focus of the West India Company's activities when it was founded in 1621. The refining of sugar in Spain and Portugal had been forbidden since 1581 so that the low-cost, high-value-added activity of refining would stimulate internal economic growth in Brazil. In 1620, construction of Amsterdam's first public synagogue had begun and, in 1622, the Portuguese Israelites explained their importance to the Republic by pointing out that during the armistice between 1609 and 1621 they had built about 10 to 15 ships yearly and were able, at the expense of the Portuguese caravels that had previously dominated the transport of the commodity, to attract between a half and two-thirds of the lucrative sugar trade.[20]

Their business caused the number of sugar refineries in Amsterdam to increase from three to 25 in 25 years. Portuguese Jewish merchants thus contributed to the emergence of the Dutch Golden Age, as the trade in high-value-added colonial products, controlled primarily by Israelite merchants and, in Asia, by the East India Company, was a substantial reason for the republic's prosperity. The West India Company's "groot desseyn" (grand design) was, by taking Brazil, to seize the source of its enemy's wealth. Its first attempt, in 1624, to attack Bahia with 26 ships and 3,300 men failed, but its assault in 1630 on Recife and Olinda in Pernambuco, with 67 ships and over 7,000 men, succeeded, forming the bridgehead for control of more than half of Brazil. The return of Dutch Brazil to the Portuguese in 1654 was the reason that some of the Brazilian "Portuguese Israelite" merchants sought residency in New Netherland.[21]

Stuyvesant was highly regarded because of his administrative and military capabilities. Before being appointed Director-General in New Netherland, he had served in Dutch Brazil and had been promoted from Commissary of Stores to Governor of Curacao [a Caribbean island which still has a splendid synagogue from 1732, a copy of the Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam and the oldest functioning Jewish house of worship in the New World [22]].

As the son of an orthodox Reformed minister, he had studied at the Calvinist University of Franeker. A lettered man and a dogmatic member of New Amsterdam's Reformed Church Council, he must have been familiar with *The History of the Jews* and *The Brazilian Money Sack*, two well-known pamphlets of the period dealing with the supposed perfidy of the Jews.

The History of the Jews, written by Abraham Costerus, a fundamentalist Calvinist preacher from Antwerp, and published in Amsterdam in 1609, warned Amsterdam's merchants of the deceit of the Jews desiring a public synagogue from which they could spew their corrupting influence upon Christians. *The Brazilian Money Sack*, purportedly printed in Recife in 1647, was an anonymous pamphlet describing alleged complicity between representatives of the West India Company and the Portuguese Israelite merchants.

In spite of the magnetism that the Jewish nation exercised on many biblically oriented Dutchmen, some Calvinist zealots viewed the Jewish nation as blasphemous and a threat to the "true

religion," and, perhaps more worrisomely for them, as an exclusionary force in competition with Christian trade. These two themes were used by both Stuyvesant and the doctrinally rigid New Amsterdam dominie Johannes Megapolensis in their attempt to deny the Jews sailing from Brazil residency in New Netherland.

As the "established" or "official" religion, the Dutch Reformed Church played a great role in the affairs of the state and was influential in political matters. Its fanatical wing even favored a theocracy. However, the Dutch Reformed Church was not a state church, and when the Sephardim exercised their right to petition the government for redress of their grievances (now enshrined in the First Amendment), civil power prevailed and dominie Megapolensis and Stuyvesant were forced to retreat. In all attempts at religious partiality or intolerance, Stuyvesant was overruled by his superiors. After all, prior to his arrival in 1647, toleration had already been established as the basis for religious and ethnic pluralism and as an implicit cultural and legal tradition in New Netherland since 1624. It also served as the West India Company's policy in the management of its possessions in the Western Hemisphere, which specifically provided that "Catholics or Jews must be left free without interference or investigation in their consciences or homes."[23]

Ironically, at the same time that Stuyvesant sought to exclude the Dutch-Brazilian Jewish refugees from permanent residency in New Amsterdam and Menasseh ben Israel visited Cromwell in London to plead for the admission of Jews to England, a member of the Portuguese Israelites in Amsterdam was excommunicated and banned from the people of Israel as a heretic by the parnassim (Jewish religious leaders). The ban, the Cheirem, was pronounced against the Amsterdam-born philosopher Baruch de Spinoza who had questioned the Torah as divine revelation. This ban had never before been decreed on the basis of heretical ideas and is still seen as an example of rabbinic intolerance.

Dutch religious tolerance is boasted of in this 17th century painting depicting a meeting of the "Rhetoricians' Guild" of Haarlem.

Was toleration on Spinoza's mind as being implicit to liberty in the Dutch Republic when he wrote:

> Ours has befallen a rare fortune to live in a republic where everyone is allowed complete freedom of conscience and God worship and where one doesn't consider anything more precious and loving than liberty.[24]

In his *Tractatus-Theologico-Politicus* he stated that:

> the city of Amsterdam leads the fruit of this freedom in its own great prosperity and in the admiration of all other people. For in this most flourishing state and most splendid city, men of every nation and religion live together in the greatest harmony...his religion and sect is considered of no importance...In fact, the true aim of government is liberty.

In New Netherland, in matters of religion, Petrus Stuyvesant had sought to bolster the position of the Dutch Reformed Church by trying to reduce religious competition from non-Christian, non-Reformed denominations such as Jews, Lutherans, Catholics and Quakers. By consolidating his power and that of his church over the young pluralist society he hoped to forestall the possible

destabilizing effects of ever increasing diversity on political harmony or, eventually, political survival. However, he was strongly rebuked by his superiors for his issuance of harsh ordinances between 1658 and 1662, aimed particularly at preventing the influx of Quakers who, then were seen as ungovernable "machinations of Satan" and considered subversive, anarchistic agitators and a threat to the public order due to their non-conformist and vociferously proselytizing ways. Referred to by Stuyvesant as "this new unheard of, abominable heresy"[25], Quakers challenged the concept of order itself.

Notes:

12. *New York Colonial Manuscripts*, Dr. Charles Gehring, trans., (1977), 12:18.

13. "Memorie van Usselinx, 's-Gravenhage 27 maart 1645 aan de Staten-Generaal der Vereenigde Nederlanden," Nationaal Archief, arch. Staten-Generaal, inv. Nr. 5774, printed in C. Lichtenberg, *Willem Usselinx* (Utrecht 1914), bijlage IV, no. 1, p.cx-cxx, ald. cxvi. "'t Is door vreemde, dat 't landt volckrijckt wordt, daer syne macht meest in bestaet, die van buyten kommen, hier nederslaen, trouwen ende vermenichfuldigen. Want als men in de groote steden van Hollandt de vreemde met haer kinderen end kintskinderen afsonderde, soo soude de reste een minsten hoop maecken." Joep de Koning, trans., (2004).

14. See Article VIII of the original Dutch-language version of the "Provisional Articles of Transfer," August 27, 1664, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Den Haag: "The Netherlanders here shall keep and enjoy the freedom of conscience in religion" ("The Duytsen alhier sullen behouden / ende genieten vryheydt van conscientie in godsdienst.").

15. Roelof Joosten, "Menasse Ben Israels Welkomst", (Amsterdam 1642), 5, 6 Nationaal Archief, Den Haag.

16. Ben Israel, "Humble Address", (Amsterdam 1655), Fol. 1: 8, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag.

17. Jewish Theological Seminary's *Encyclopedia Judaica*; "The community received from the Crown a formal promise of protection, and in 1673, after another petty persecution, a guarantee of freedom of worship, which was confirmed in similar circumstances in 1685."

18. Mozes Heiman Gans, *Memorboek, Bosch en Keunig*, (Baarn, 1977), 99.

19. Oddette Vlessing, "The Portuguese-Jewish Merchant Community in seventeenth-century Amsterdam, in C. Leger and L. Noordegraaf, comps., *Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurship in Early Modern Times: Merchants and Industrialists within the Orbit of the Dutch Staple Market* (Amsterdam, 1996), 238.

20. Vlessing, 231.

21. Wim Klooster, *The Dutch in the Americas 1600-1800* (John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island, 1997), 2: 20 and 3: 25.

22. Today, while lifting the Torah scroll at the beginning of the service according to the rites of the Congregation Mikve Israel-Emanuel, the leader of the Theba still chants a prayer in the Hebrew and Portuguese languages for the Dutch royal family and the government in honor of that historic relationship between the House of Orange and the Jewish nation and as pledged by Menasseh ben Israel, 364 years ago, during the official visit to the Amsterdam Sephardic synagogue in 1642 by "Frederic Henric, PRINCE van ORANJEN" and his son Prince Wilhelm: "And in order to demonstrate so much better our affection to Your Illustrious House, we have thought it to be proper to include with our usual Prayers some opening prayers for your Right-honorable Son Wilhelm to commemorate this day on which Your Highness together with him accredited our Synagogue with this honor. We hope that such Prayers from us shall not be disagreeable to you after the same have been welcomed by the Persian Monarchs and Roman Kaisers. May God forever save You Great and Invincible Prince, together with Your Right-honorable son, for our Fatherland and us." (Menasse ben Israels Welkomst, Roelof Joosten, Boeckbinder in de Baefgessteegh, Amsterdam, Anno 1642, 6) Joep de Koning, trans., (2004).

23. Orde van Regieringe in West-Indien, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Den Haag.

24. Gans, *Memorboek*, Introductory Page.

25. *Records of New Amsterdam*, Vol. ii, 346, 347.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE FREEHOLDER

WOMEN OF LONG ISLAND: MARY WILLIAMSON AVERELL HARRIMAN; HER DAUGHTER, MARY HARRIMAN RUMSEY

by Judith Ader Spinzia

The former Stewart house, shown here c. 1910, served as the first home of the Eugenics Record Office. From Houses for Science[1991], courtesy of Elizabeth L. Watson.

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory is a presence we take somewhat for granted today and the study of genetics is not the little experimental corner of biology, still dominated by Gregor Mendel's experiments with garden peas, that it was in the late 1950s when this author chose to pursue a discipline still in its infancy. Far-sighted people of immense dedication studied and researched and exchanged ideas in Cold Spring Harbor under the auspices of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. If the clock is turned back just a bit further, the legacy becomes clearer, controversial, and more fascinating because it is the establishment of the Eugenics Research Office at Cold Spring Harbor, although, in retrospect, based on faulty science, through which a home for the study of inherited human characteristics was created. The philanthropy of Mary Williamson Averell Harriman provided for the institution whose presence has enabled us to watch the growth of the science of genetics right here in our midst, a discipline through which we have been brought to knowledge of the human genome.

Mary Williamson Averell Harriman (1851-1932) was the daughter of William J. Averell, a banker from Rochester, NY, and his first wife, Mary Lawrence Williamson. In 1879 she married Edward Henry Harriman (1848-1909) in Ogdensburg, NY, where Mary had spent much of her childhood, since her father was president of the Ogdensburg and Lake Champlain Railroad,[1] and to which she and E. H. would eventually return to build a country home Arden House, a sprawling estate on 7,860 acres. The estate would, by 1905, comprise some 20,000 acres in both Orange and Rockland Counties.

E. H. was the son of The Reverend Orlando and Mrs. Cornelia Neilson Harriman, Jr. He was born at St. George's Rectory at the intersection of Peninsula Boulevard and Greenwich Street in Hempstead, Long Island, where his father served as pastor from 1844 to 1849.[2] Harriman, a self-made man who went to work on Wall Street at the age of fourteen because his father's clerical salary was insufficient to provide for his further education, had established a one-man brokerage firm and held a seat on the New York Stock Exchange by the age of twenty-two.[3] He envisioned a standardized transportation system, national and integrated, and at his death he controlled the Union Pacific Railroad and its subsidiaries and the Southern Pacific Railroad system, encompassing 16,000 miles of main track, employing 100,000 people.[4]

In the early years of their marriage the Harrimans had resided in an 1885 Queen Anne-style house, designed by Robert W. Gibson, in the Wave Crest Park section of Far Rockaway. Even

after E.H.'s death, Mary spent considerable time on the Island, traveling to and from on the family yacht *Sultana* and staying with her daughter Mary, who lived in Brookville, her daughter Carol, who married William Plunket Stewart and resided in East Williston, and her son Averell, who owned residences in Old Westbury and Sands Point.[5]

Mrs. Harriman was a reserved, rather shy woman, who nevertheless was knowledgeable about business and passionate about philanthropy. While Mary, their eldest daughter, managed the affairs of Arden House after E. H.'s death in 1909, a responsibility she had assumed before her father's death, Mrs. Harriman alone controlled E.H.'s financial estate.[6] Mrs. Harriman was determined to make the money work. She was interested in activities and philanthropies that related to people as was her husband, who at the age of twenty-eight had set up the Boys Club of New York. Mrs. Harriman continued to support the Boys Club program and that of the Trudeau Tuberculosis Sanitarium at Saranac Lake, NY, charities close to E. H.'s heart, but she saw many more opportunities to help people and help people help themselves and their nation.[7]

E. H. had not felt that a woman needed a college education but Mary, the eldest of the Harrimans' six children, defied him and attended Barnard College, traveling to classes in a horse-drawn carriage and graduating in 1905. She majored in sociology and biology but became so deeply interested in eugenics that she was nicknamed "Eugenia" by classmates.[8] The idea that the plight of the underclass in America could be relieved; that the children of this underclass need not perpetuate an underclass; and that, in the end, Americans would contribute more to America and its future, took hold of Mary's imagination. She, as did many, entertained the possibility that the burden of inherited inferior physical and mental characteristics could be excluded from the national gene pool, a radical and controversial concept viewed through our twenty-first-century eyes. Birth control was not enough; education was needed. This was very appealing to Mary, whose work with settlement houses had shown her much that those of her social class knew little about.

Mrs. Harriman became interested in eugenics due to her daughter Mary's enthusiasm. Consequently she accepted the proposal of the American Genetics Association to finance and support Dr. Charles Benedict Davenport's plan to collect data, quaintly referred to as pedigree information, and to apply this under the assumption that phenotypic data would infer genotype.[9] In 1910 the Eugenics Record Office was established in Cold Spring Harbor. Dr. Davenport collected data among prison inmates, the feeble-minded, and those institutionalized under state care.[10] Essentially it was an attempt to document dominant and recessive human characteristics and to determine how reproduction among the mentally ill would affect future generations and society at large – a better gene pool, a better society.[11] During World War I, cooperation came from both New York State and the federal government for research enabling Mrs. Harriman's transfer of the privately funded Eugenics Record Office to the Carnegie Institution of Washington in 1914, an association that continued until 1939.[12]

Mrs. Harriman's philanthropic activities were diverse but she continued to be interested in the mentally ill and was active in work for retarded children through the radically different, progressive treatment approach of Letchworth Village, the New York State institution in Thiells, NY, which opened in 1912, and from which Dr. Davenport was allowed to collect data for the eugenics project. She invested in training people for public service with a goal of creating efficient government. In 1911 she set up and financially supported the Committee on Public Health, Hospitals and Budget in the New York Academy of Medicine to collect facts related to public health, sanitation, and hygiene and set up public hospitals. She paid the secretarial expenses of the committee until her death. She established the Harriman Research Fund for Medical Research at Roosevelt Hospital and set up the Harriman Research Laboratory in 1912.[13]

Mary Williamson Averell Harriman died at the age of eighty-one on November 7, 1932, two days before the newspapers announced the landslide victory of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the "New Deal" administration that was to set America on the road to recovery after the

continued on p. 16

ASK UNCLE PELEG

Your uncle has noticed a significant decline in the number of queries directed his way in recent months. As he likes to feel he is fulfilling a useful purpose, this has understandably gotten him a bit down in the dumps. I might remind you, our readers, that this magazine is only as good as its contributors (Society members!) care to make it. So please do yourselves, Uncle Peleg, and the Oyster Bay Historical Society some good and send some interesting questions in. [Ed. Note: I will add my voice to that of Uncle Peleg's in requesting that queries be sent to him. We love our uncle when he is busy at work. When he is not kept busy he tends to get underfoot!]

Dear Uncle Peleg,

I was visiting a local house museum recently and saw something there that struck me as odd. In a room that was decorated as an early eighteenth century parlor was a small carpet. However the carpet was not on the floor, but rather lying on a table. Is the curator of the museum implying that the lady of the house had absentmindedly placed it there en route to taking it outside to beat it, or was that rug *meant* to be there for some reason?

Frank Martin

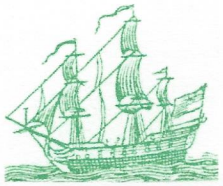
Dear Frank,

Believe it or not, the curator who executed that room setting which so puzzled you was on the level. Up until the late seventeenth century, and even later here in America, it was quite common to place rare, expensive Turkish rugs on tables, rather than on the floor. Those who could afford such luxury might place a larger Oriental rug on the floor, but if you had a smaller one it was best displayed on a table, while the floor went unadorned. By the late seventeenth century in Europe, the importation of Turkish rugs had increased to the point that they were more often placed on the floor rather than on the table.

Another thing that might strike a twenty-first century person as odd was the fact that during the same period curtains were more often placed around the bed rather than on the windows.

A Dutch family is shown in a bedchamber, c. 1670. The man of the house is sitting at a table reading, a table-carpet providing a bright spot in an otherwise drab interior.

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 in ***The Freeholder.***

SOCIETY PLANS JUNE EVENTS

The Annual Meeting of the Oyster Bay Historical Society will take place Friday, June 20, at 7 PM at the Matinecock Masonic Lodge on West Main St., Oyster Bay and will feature John Taylor speaking on "Homestead Farm: Then & Now." The farm, which was on Cold Spring Road, was bought by his grandfather a hundred years ago and John will cover the history of the farmhouse, which is believed to date from the 18th century, as well as how life on the farm changed in the course of the last century. He will also be covering some of the flora and fauna that reside there. All are welcome to attend. Admission is free and refreshments will be served following Mr. Taylor's talk.

Visit the Earle-Wightman House, home of the Oyster Bay Historical Society, on Sunday, June 22, 1-4 PM, for an Ice Cream Social. Enjoy free tours of the museum and the Colonial Garden. Visitors may view the new exhibition on "Oyster Bay in the Revolution," which features a hands-on area where children of all ages can dress in an eighteenth century uniform and try on a period soldier's equipment. Ice cream from Gooseberry Grove will be available. Join the Society as a Family (or higher!) Member and the ice cream is free! New members will also receive private tours of the extensive gardens of Rosalinda Morgan. Join us!

"THE ROOSEVELTS....IT WASN'T ALL POLITICS"

by Yvonne Noonan-Cifarelli,Curator

This first, historic exhibit will feature Oyster Bay Roosevelts' artwork from past and present generations. When one thinks of the name Roosevelt it immediately conjures up associations with our former presidents, Theodore and Franklin Delano. However, the Roosevelt family tree also contains a vast collection of talented artists. Most are professionals in the visual arts, but also included are writers, musicians and film directors. It shouldn't surprise us that the artistic gene runs deep in the Roosevelt family. The visionary concepts of Theodore Roosevelt were inspired by nature and the raw reality of life; this is the exact formula that engenders the life of an artist. It is only how we use this creativity that separates the politician from the artist, poet from speaker, and businessman from inventor. Art in essence is a personal expression of how we see the world. Some may lay that vision down on canvas; others may write that vision into law, but all in all life itself is art.

The concept to present a collaborative Roosevelt family exhibit has been a vision of Elizabeth Roosevelt. The exhibit is a significant statement of the brilliance and diversity of the Roosevelt family. Ms. Roosevelt, a professional photographer, will be exhibiting her work along with that of the rest of the Roosevelt family. The exhibit will feature works in oil, lithographs, photography, jewelry designs by Elizabeth's mother, Elise Roosevelt, and metal and silver work. There is a long line of Roosevelt artists, going back to the portrait painter Samuel Montgomery Roosevelt (1858-1920), who often painted portraits of his famous cousin TR. The exhibit will give us a glimpse into the intimate side of this historic and powerful family. The work will be on exhibit in October 2008, in conjunction with Theodore Roosevelt's 150th birthday. The celebration of America's most beloved President is a perfect tribute to the generations of Roosevelts and their amazing journey through life and art.

THE ARCHIVIST'S ANGLE

by Philip Blocklyn

Before the current array of digital navigational devices to which we subject ourselves daily, people used to consult maps, and not just to get from one box store to another. Maps tell us what people value about where they live, because we map what we value. It's a way that we preserve the lands we travel through in our daily lives.

One map in the Oyster Bay Historical Society bears the ponderously long title of "Map Showing Approximate Location & General Direction of Bridle Paths Maintained by the Country Lanes Committee in District Bounded by Glen Cove, Oyster Bay, Cold Spring, Woodbury, Jericho &

On Wednesday, June 4, the Oyster Bay Historical Society honored six families in the historic Florence Park section of Oyster Bay with Historic Preservation Awards. These homeowners had graciously opened their beautifully-restored homes to Society members for our 2004 Candlelight House Tour of Florence Park. The photo above was taken in front of the Harty residence and shows Steve and Christine Mills, John and Yvonne Cifarelli, and Tom Harty, representing three of the six families recognized by the Society. In presenting the awards, Society President Maureen Monck stated that the credo of the Oyster Bay Historical Society was "preserving our past and protecting our future," and noted that these homeowners reflected the essence of that goal.

Photo courtesy of the ***Oyster Bay-East Norwich Enterprise-Pilot.***

East Williston Including Locust Valley, East Norwich, Roslyn, Brookville, Wheatley, Old Westbury, Westbury and Syosset: June 1924." It was published by the Country Lanes Committee of Locust Valley, and as a piece of cartographic art, it's not very impressive. But it was printed on a water- and tear-resistant stock that remains bright and clean today. Clearly it's a map made to withstand repeated use in field conditions. So who was the Country Lanes Committee that produced it?

It would be nice to report that the Country Lanes Committee was a grass-roots organization of committed citizens fiercely standing in the path of Long Island's growing environmental degradation during the Gold Coast era. That's not exactly the case. The committee formed around a core of equestrian hunt enthusiasts from Piping Rock Club, annoyed by the automobile's increasing encroachment on open fields. But even worse than the automobile was the real estate boom in the years before the First World War, as agriculture made way for "estates"—

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garish, private and hostile to horseback riding.

Beginning with a two-square-mile tract of property under the ownership of several Piping Rock members, the Committee developed a network of paths over two hundred miles long through a district nearly ten miles square, avoiding wherever possible the motorized traffic of macadam roads. Trails were marked with green enamel signs bearing the initials "P.R.C." – originally standing for "Piping Rock Club" but easily broadened to mean "Private Road Committee." Still, to ensure that newcomers to the trails didn't get hopelessly lost, the Committee printed maps of the district, as evidenced by the Society's 1924 edition.

Just the quickest look at the Society map reveals how much has changed in the districts that the Committee worked—how much wood and orchard land has disappeared, how few dirt and cinder roads remain, how quickly this world disappeared, preserved only in patches here and there and, of course, on the map itself.
911 M-24 Oyster Bay. *Map of Bridal Paths Maintained by the Country Lanes Committee.* Locust Valley, June 1924. 32 x 38 in. 3 in. = 1 mile.
Source: *New York Times*. 3 Aug 1913.

SAGAMORE HILL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The first of the John A. Gable Lectures, "Managing a Country Estate" was given on March 27 by Professor Natalie Naylor. Since March was Women's History Month, Dr. Naylor's talk focused on TR's wife Edith as the CEO of Sagamore Hill.

On Saturday, May 24, Memorial Day Weekend, the U S Army Reserve 319th Division "Statue of Liberty Band" presented a variety of musical selections played on the front porch. That was followed on Sunday, May 25, by Jessica Semins, Johnnie Cuomo and Dan Lowery playing selections of traditional Irish music.

OYSTER BAY RAILROAD MUSEUM

Saturday, May 10, saw the OBRM's inaugural "Smoke n' Steam" BBQ Grilling Competition. The event was sanctioned by the New England BBQ society and music was provided by Cadillac Moon.

Every Saturday and Sunday through October 19th, noon to 4 PM, the Railroad Museum Preview Center (558-7018/7036) will be open to the public. Located on Audrey Ave., just north of the bandstand, on the right side of the street, the Preview Center features interactive displays, museum plans, and gift items (shirts, mugs, and other items).

FARMINGDALE-BETHPAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society's current exhibit, "Broadway Comes to Farmingdale" is on display at the Farmingdale Public Library, a colorful array of materials displaying the theatrical talents of the communities' public and private schools dating as far back as 1929.

May marked the 70th Anniversary of America's First Blackout, held in Farmingdale. Long forgotten by most, this was of such importance at that time, that all of the New York City newspapers covered it, the CBS, NBC and Mutual (now ABC) radio networks broadcast nationwide reports and the "Life" magazine issue of May 30, 1938, had a photo report of the event. The area's population of 20,000 was augmented by 30,000 visitors that night to witness the blackout. At 10:30 PM sirens sounded the beginning of the "attack" by 144 planes, which dropped dummy bombs and were met by defending aircraft and anti-aircraft guns. At 1 AM the "all clear" signal was sounded and normal activity resumed.

C. O. Schmidt opened his original store in 1915 in the John Duryea building at the corner of Main and North Front Streets. In 1928 he relocated to a new building at 208 Main Street. After 93 years of operation, Schmidt's Hardware Store closed its doors for good at the end of March 2008.

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 $25 plus shipping. Contact the Society at (516) 922-5032 to order yours today!

Also available are an 1833 map of Oyster Bay ($10) and a map of Gold Coast estates c. 1920 ($17). Shipping is additional.

LONG BEACH ISLAND LANDMARKS ASSN.

The Association is happy to report its success in having the Long Beach City Council award landmark status to the 1909 Historic Red Brick District. The landmark designation will protect the red brick streets from demolition or alteration. The installation of historic lampposts on West Penn St. is the result of the proposal from the Association's architects, Alexandra Karafinas and Georgette Maciunaite. Documentation has been forwarded to the State of New York nominating the district for national landmark status.

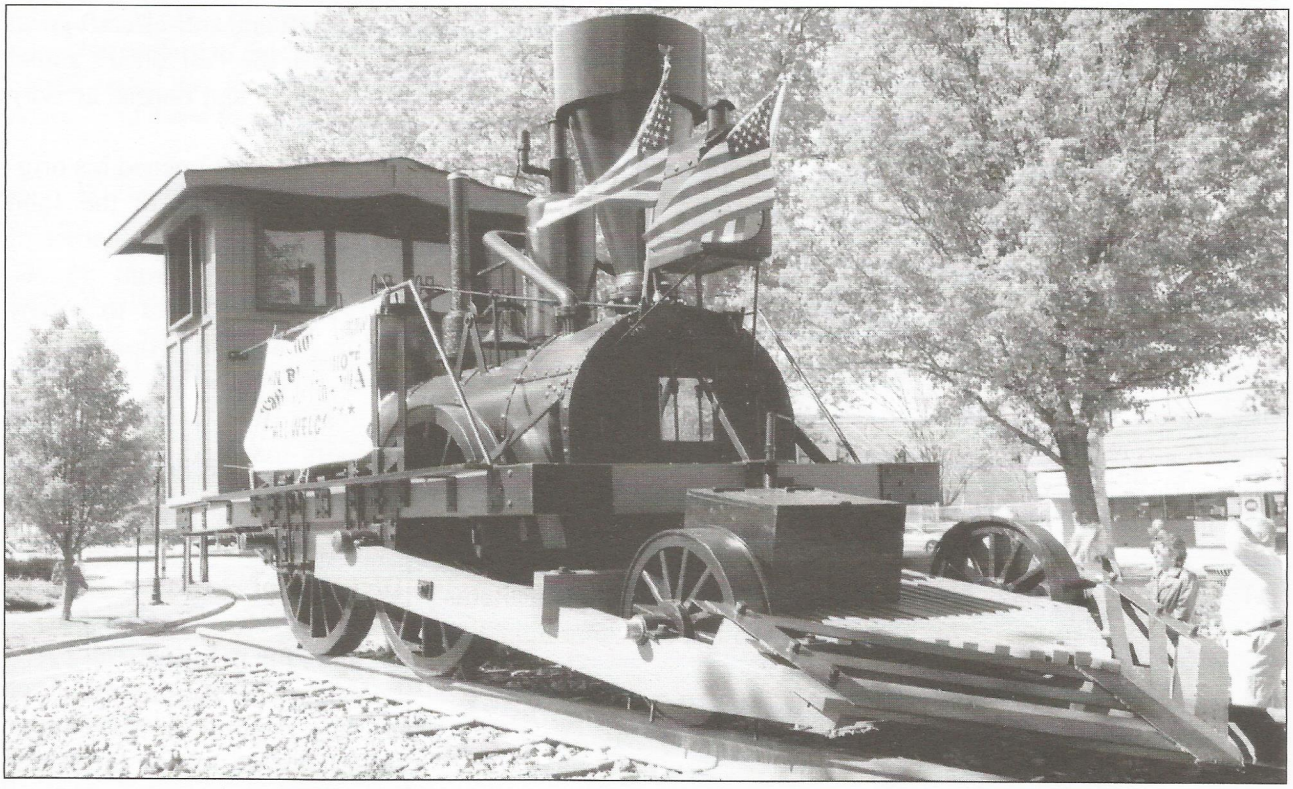
"Long Beach Architectural Styles" will be presented at 2 PM on Saturday, June 21st, at the Long Beach Public Library by LBILA President Alexandra Karafinas and videographer Barry Rivadue.

Details will be forthcoming about the "Living History Tea" scheduled for Sunday, July 20, 2008.

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

A Community Archaeology program will be offered this summer at the Joseph Lloyd Manor site in Lloyd Harbor from June 2 to July 18. Partnering with the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA), there will be an excavation of remains associated with an 18th century structure used as slave quarters. The public is welcome to visit the site and learn more about the project. To schedule a visit and for details contact Prof. Chris Matthews at (516)463-4093 or anthlab@hofstra.edu

The Joseph Lloyd Manor is well known for African-American history and culture. One of its residents, Jupiter Hammon, an enslaved servant of the Lloyd family, was one of the first published African-American writers and poets.



*On Saturday, May 17, at Hicksville's Kennedy Memorial Park a public ceremony was held dedicating the replica of the historic **John Bull** locomotive built by Chamber of Commerce President James Pavone. The **John Bull** will remain in the park under the auspices of the Town of Oyster Bay. Photo courtesy of Robert L. Harrison.*

THE GATHERING PLACE

"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.

Remembering the East Norwich Elementary School

by Rick Robinson

My early education occurred in the Cossitt Elementary School in LaGrange, Illinois. In 1947, when I was eleven years old, my parents and I moved to East Norwich on Long Island. I was an only child and the prospect of entering a new school was daunting, to say the least. In early September I joined the sixth grade class at the East Norwich Elementary School, later known as the Fox School.

The old East Norwich School House, shown here, was replaced by what was later known as the Fox School.

This one-story brick structure was a far cry from the large three-story school I had attended in Illinois. My previous school had three sections of each grade, with approximately twenty kids in each class room. The first morning I arrived at the East Norwich School I found that I was one of only four kids in the sixth grade. I was also surprised to find that my new school had two classes in each room!

Our teacher was Mrs. Gladys DeVine and as expected, she divided her teaching time between the 5th and 6th graders each day. I should add that the school building had a large gym/auditorium and a spacious playground in the rear.

The principal of the school was Mrs. Mabel Fox, and in later years the building would be named in her honor. In addition to her administrative duties, Mrs. Fox taught 7th and 8th grade. Needless to say, during my first few weeks in my new surroundings I suffered a form of culture shock. The two-class arrangement did provide time to study or do our homework, but it was sometimes difficult to ignore what was being taught to the younger students in grade 5.

Twice a week our physical education instructor, Howard Imhof, would visit the East Norwich School to teach gym class. During the outdoor season I was, for the first time, exposed to the sport of soccer. I also learned that in the East basketball or gym shoes were called sneakers.

Mr. Imhof later rose through the ranks and as Dr. Imhof he served as superintendent of the Oyster Bay-East Norwich Central School District for 19 years. He did, of course, visit several other elementary schools within the then-large OB-EN District during his years as a "gym teacher." In those days, Oyster Bay High School drew its students from such faraway places as Locust Valley, Syosset, Bayville, Centre Island, Brookville, and a section

of Plainview. Obviously, we East Norwich students would enter the high school in 9th grade.

In 1948 I was promoted, along with my three classmates, to the 7th grade where we were taught by Mrs. Fox. I would estimate that our companion class, the 8th grade, was made up of twelve students. Following two years in East Norwich, my parents moved to the Incorporated Village of Cove Neck where was I was eligible to attend Oyster Bay High School on East Main Street. Actually, the high school housed kindergarten through 12th grade in those days (1949).

Here again, the change to a larger school was a difficult adjustment. Most of my 8th grade classmates had been in the same building since kindergarten. In any case, I gradually made the adjustment and traveled by bus to and from school. In the spring of 1950, I joined the junior high school track team and performed well in the "running broad jump" and the 100-yard dash, thereby gaining acceptance among my peers.

Even today, however, I often recall my two years at the East Norwich Elementary School with a twinge of nostalgia. For me, it was, indeed, an old-fashioned country school experience.

Women of Long Island

continued from p. 9

Great Depression. She would have been pleased to see that her, then widowed, daughter Mary Harriman Rumsey, a dedicated "New Dealer" would become an important part of the recovery through her close association with Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins [Wilson], representing and advocating for the consumer with the title Advisor on Consumer Problems, the only woman other than Secretary Perkins serving on the National Emergency Council.[14]

Mary, like her father, didn't wait around to see what the world might offer, as clearly demonstrated by her drive for an education and, as previously mentioned, her convincing presentation to her mother about the potential of eugenics.

On the way home from her debutante ball, surrounded by the bouquets of flowers given to her, Mary agonized over the incredible waste and the next morning persuaded several friends to join her in distributing their collected bouquets to those in hospitals. In 1901, nineteen-year-old Mary, with her friend Nathalie Henderson and eight other young women, formed The Junior League for the Promotion of Settlement Movements. They envisioned an inexhaustible supply of young women of their class to whom the league could appeal for volunteers to help in the improvement of social conditions in their city through the Settlement Movement.[15] Later in life, despite the nationwide spread of Junior League chapters, Mary disassociated herself from the organization protesting against its lack of outreach, saying that the League had become "a service club for its members."[16]

Prior to the death of E. H. Harriman, Willard Dickerman Straight had proposed marriage to Mary. Their intention to marry was rejected by her father, who refused to have the young diplomat as a son-in-law.[17] Mary again faced family opposition when she decided to marry Charles Cary Rumsey, Sr. Mrs. Harriman and Mary's brother Averell had been opposed to Mary's marriage to Rumsey because of his reputation for excessive drinking. Mary persevered and she and Charles were married in 1910.[18]

Charles Cary Rumsey, Sr. was a 1902 Harvard graduate and talented sculptor from Buffalo, NY, who had been among the artists who had been hired to decorate Arden House. He and Mary had met in 1906 at the Meadow Brook Club in the Town of Hempstead [in the area known as East Garden City today] and were instantly attracted to each other because of their love of horses.[19] In 1910, Mary and Pad, as he was known, built their Dutch Colonial Long Island country home on Wheatley Road in Brookville, the activities at which revolved around their mutual love of horses, Pad's passion for polo, and the world of art.[20]

Anxious to remain involved in the farm life she had known at Arden House, Mary purchased a farm near Middleburg, VA, in an enclave then known as The Plains, which became a place for family time and a center of cattle breeding where Mary applied her interest in genetics. [21] Even after Charles' death in 1922, she maintained the Virginia farm while raising her three young children—Charles Cary Rumsey, Jr. was eleven-years-old when his father died, Mary Averell Harriman Rumsey was nine, and Bronson Harriman Rumsey was just five years of age.[22]

Mary had continued to maintain a residence on Long Island, living in the Brookville residence until 1929, when she commissioned McKim, Mead and White to design a French Chateau on Middle Neck Road in Sands Point, next to the home of her brother Averell. An unusual mix of people of varied backgrounds and interests gathered at her Sands Point estate, at her New York City house, and eventually at the octagon house on O Street in Washington, DC, which she shared with Frances Perkins. The O Street house became a gathering place for social, political, and intellectual friends that included poets, economists, journalists, society members of The Junior League as well as those who rode-to-the-hounds and those polo friends with whom her late husband had socialized.

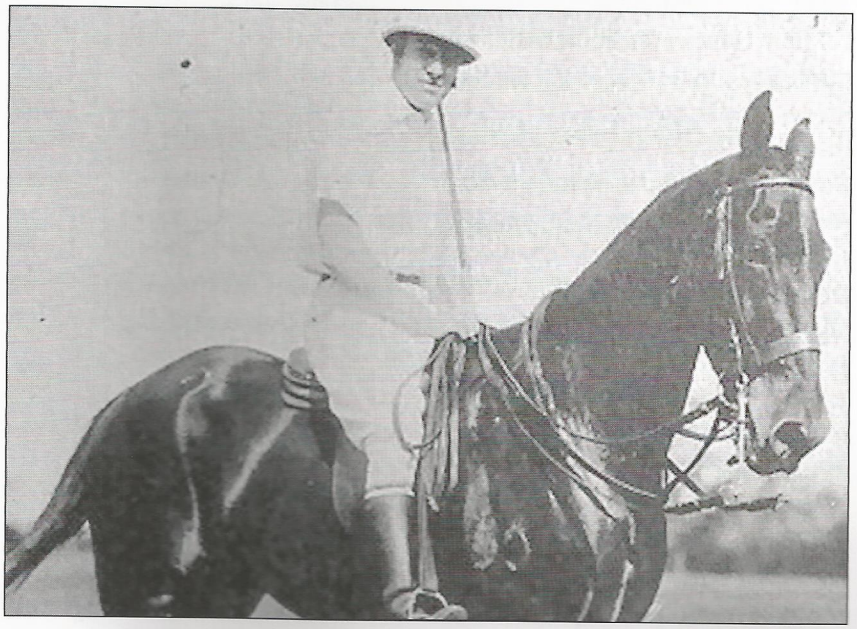
The writings of George Russell, the Irish mystic, poet and social reformer known as Æ, greatly influenced Mary's own philosophy. She stated that her intense belief in the agricultural cooperative, to which she was dedicated, and in the general concept that community action could meet national challenges was greatly affected by Russell's *The National Being*, written in 1916, and her subsequent pursuit of his philosophy.[23]

In 1929, at the very beginning of one of America's most difficult periods, Mary had become involved in the work of New York City's Emergency Exchange Association, a Depression-era barter system.[24] She helped to organize the Eastern Livestock Cooperative Marketing Association[25] and was also the organizer of the Farm Foundation Board in 1933.[26]

These were stimulating years but, because of financial reversals in the Southern newspaper chain that she owned, Mary's financial situation became tenuous in 1932, just prior to her mother's death, and without the help of her mother and brother she would have been forced to sell the Sands Point estate and her husband's studio to raise cash.[27] In part, to get her financial situation on a stronger footing, her brother Averell proposed an investment proposition through which Mary and he, together with William Vincent Astor, Long Island neighbors all, became business partners in a news magazine called *Today*, which merged with *News-Week* to become *Newsweek*.[28]

In June 1933, based in large part upon her organizational skills, President Roosevelt appointed Mary to the chairmanship of the Consumers' Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration, a board compiled mostly of academic economists and clubwomen, which tried to establish a code of fair practices. She organized two hundred county councils to provide aid to homemakers in a "grass roots" drive to prevent price gouging thus stimulating recovery, in part, via the watchfulness and decisions of American families.[29]

Mary's work with the national recovery was tragically truncated by her death which resulted from complications after a fall from her horse at her Middleburg, VA, farm on her fifty-third birthday in 1934. One wonders how much more we might know about this exuberant and talented woman if her papers, stored in a Brooklyn warehouse, had not been destroyed to make more room for those of her brother Averell.[30]



Charles Cary Rumsey, Sr.
Library of Congress

ENDNOTES

1. George Wheeler, *Pierpont*

Mary Harriman
Library of Congress

Morgan and Friends: The Anatomy of a Myth. (Englewood, NY: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), p. 153.

2. Rudy Abramson, *Spanning the Century: The Life of W. Averell Harriman* (New York: William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1992), p. 28.

3. Abramson, pp. 31-34.

4. Persia Crawford Campbell, *Mary Williamson Harriman* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 5; *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White & Co., 1917) 14:196-9; and Richard O'Connor, *Gould's Millions* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962), p. 298.

5. Campbell, p. 79 and Raymond E. and Judith A. Spinzia, *Long Island's Prominent North Shore Families: Their Estates and Their Country Homes* (College Station, TX: Virtualbookworm.com Publishing Inc., 2006), vol. 1, pp. 350-353 and vol. II, p. 695.

6. Abramson, p. 95.

In Mrs. Harriman's obituary the estate left to her by her husband was valued at approximately $100 million. (*The New York Times* Nov. 8, 1932, p. 21.)

7. *Notable American Women 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*, volume II G-O. (Cambridge, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 141.

8. *The New York Times*, Dec. 19, 1934, pp. 1 and 20.

9. Dr. Charles Benedict Davenport, Sr. (1866-1944) served as director of The Biological Laboratory of The Institute of Arts and Sciences, and the subsequent Station for Experimental Evolution, founded in 1904 under the auspices of Carnegie Institution of Washington, Cold Spring Harbor, (now, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory) for thirty years. He authored several books including a textbook entitled *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics* in 1911, which was hurriedly written and in which hypotheses were represented as conclusions putting him in the indefensible position of "conclusions-before-evidence." *Naval Officers Their Heredity and Development* (1919) sought to apply his theories to the selection of naval officers during peace time and *Race Crossing in Jamaica* (1929) was a treatise on interbreeding between white and black populations. Dr. Davenport co-authored, with his wife Gertrude Crotty Davenport, also a scientist and educator, I*ntroduction to Zoology, Heredity of Eye Color in Man, Heredity of Hair Form in Man,* and *Heredity of Hair Color in Man.* He was co-editor of both the *Journal of Experimental Zoology* and *Psyche* and held editorial positions at two German journals, both of which had been founded in 1935. The Davenports lived in the 1884 Victorian house built by Frederic Mather on the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory campus, on the site of a house built by John Divine Jones which had been destroyed by fire in 1861. The present house is still known as the "Davenport House."

The lack of distinction between the expression of characteristics and gene sequences was ignored by Davenport and the eugenicists although there was clear evidence at the time that the instructions of the genes might or might not be expressed. Researchers were aware of the apparent distinction between the gene heredity of an organism and the expression of that heredity, the phenotype, and a proposal relevant to that distinction and its implications had been published in 1911 by Wilhelm Johannsen. Dr. Davenport's research was doomed from the start because he chose neither to recognize the potential for modification of the

gene instructions nor the influence environmental factors might have on gene expression. Dr. Davenport and his associates were clearly on the wrong track.

10. Campbell, p. 42.

11. The philosophy and quasi-scientific theories of the eugenicists was seriously questioned after World War II with the revelations of the racial purity experiments of the Nazis.

12. Elizabeth L. Watson, *Houses for Science: A Pictorial History of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory* (Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, 1991), p. 73-76.

13. Campbell, pp. 21-22, 35-36, 38, and 43-45.

14. Although the Harrimans were long-time Republicans, Mary had become a member of the Democratic Party and convinced her brother Averell to follow her in support of the presidential candidacy of Al Smith in 1928, with whom she had served as joint chair of the Citizens Summer Playground Committee. Smith had also impressed Mary through his crusade against unsafe workplaces and for corrective legislation after Manhattan's Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in 1911. (*The New York Times* Dec. 19, 1934, p. 20.)

See also Christopher Ogden, *Life of the Party: The Biography of Pamela Digby Hayward Harriman* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1994), pp. 113 and 350.

Pamela Digby was William Averell Harriman's third wife. They were married in 1971 and were married at the time of Averell's death in 1986. (Spinzia, *Long Island's Prominent North Shore Families* . . . vol. I, pp. 350-353.)

15. Cleveland Amory, *Who Killed Society?* (New York: Harper Brothers Publishers, 1960), p. 219; Jacqueline Thompson, *The Very Rich Book* (New York: William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1981), p. 197; and Stephen Birmingham, *America's Secret Aristocracy* (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1987), pp. 233-235.

In 1903 Mary Harriman's friend Eleanor Roosevelt joined the New York Junior League. It was the future First Lady's first entry into public life when she became involved in settlement work in New York City. (www.nyjl.org/ny)

16. *The Washington Post*, Feb. 6, 1934, p. 13.

17. *The New York Times* July 30, 1911, p. SM5.

See also Spinzia, *Long Island's Prominent North Shore Families* . . . vol. II, p. 764.

In 1911 Willard Dickerman Straight married Dorothy Payne Whitney. The Straights' son Michael was the subject of an article, "Michael Straight and the Cambridge Spy Ring" by Raymond E. Spinzia published in *The Freeholder* in the Winter 2001 issue.

18. Abramson, p. 96.

19. *The New York Times* May 5, 1910, p. 1 and *The New York Times* Dec. 19, 1934, p. 1.

Her 1934 obituary in *The New York Times* also references her excellent horsemanship. She enjoyed fox hunting and was known as an excellent whip in the days of the Ladies Coaching Club for her four-horse-coaching skills.

20. Spinzia, *Long Island's Prominent North Shore Families* . . . vol. II, p. 695.

Charles Rumsey's commissions included the hunt frieze on the Manhattan Bridge and the bronze statue of a bull, originally named "Taureau," which is located on Route 25A in Smithtown and which sat in front of the Brooklyn Museum for years before finally being installed in Smithtown. (Raymond E., Judith A., and Kathryn E. Spinzia, *Long Island: A Guide to New York's Suffolk and Nassau Counties* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1991), p. 194 – an updated edition of which is to be published in 2008.) Of a more personal family nature, he created the fountain at Arden House and a memorial to E. H. Harriman at Goshen, NY, "in recognition of Harriman's services as a breeder of blooded horses and a builder of good roads." Rumsey created a statue of Francisco Pizzarro in his Paris studio for the San Francisco Exposition. After the exposition it was cast in bronze in the United States with the expectation that it would be erected in Trujillo, Spain, Pizzarro's birthplace. (*The New York Times*, April 15, 1925.) The 22-foot-high bronze statue of Francisco Pizarro was given to the Peruvian government by Mary Harriman Rumsey. It stands in front of the Government Palace in the Plaza de Armas in Lima, Peru. Rumsey was expert at equestrian figures and created "The Friar" with W. A. Wadsworth astride; statues of "Hamburg" and "Burgomaster" for Harry Payne Whitney of Old Westbury; "Good and Plenty" for Thomas Hitchcock, Jr., who had bought W. Averell Harriman's

Mary Harriman Rumsey
Harriman Family Collection

Sands Point home; "Rock Sand" for August Belmont of Bay Shore; and "Nancy Hanks" for John E. Madden. "The Centaur" and "Le Dernier Indian" are exquisite examples of the fusion of his equestrian sculpturing talents with his interpretation of the human form. His work "The Pagan," a nude female figure, initially criticized for its literally interpreted animalistic characteristics, has received somewhat kinder criticism as the years have passed.

21. Abramson, p. 245 and Edward T. James, editor, *Notable American Women 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary,* volume III P-Z. (Cambridge, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 208.

Arden House was actually transferred by Mary Williamson Harriman to her son William Averell Harriman in 1916. (Edward T. James, editor, *Notable American Women 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary,* volume II G-O, p. 142.)

22. In September 1922, Charles Rumsey was killed at the intersection of Jericho Turnpike and Tulip Avenue in Floral Park when the convertible automobile in which he was a passenger over-turned. He was traveling home from polo practice with friends to join his wife Mary who was returning there after attending the marriage of Katherine Mackay to Kenneth O'Brien in St. Mary's Church in Roslyn. (*The New York Times* September 22, 1922, pp. 1 and 2.)

Benson Harriman Rumsey died at the age of twenty-two in an airplane crash near Guadalupe Victoria, Puebla, Mexico. The plane was piloted by Daniel S. Roosevelt, who also was killed. (*The Los Angeles Times* April 19, 1939, p. 1 and *The New York Times* April 19, 1939, p. 1.)

Daniel S. Roosevelt was the son of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt's brother Gracie Hall Roosevelt and grandson of Elliott Roosevelt, Sr., President Theodore Roosevelt's brother. For a discussion of the life of Elliott Roosevelt, Sr., see Raymond E. Spinzia "Elliott Roosevelt, Sr. – A Spiral into Darkness: The Influences." *The Freeholder*, 12 (Fall 2007), pp. 3-7, 15-17.

23. *The New York Times* Dec. 19, 1934, pp. 1 et. seq. and *The New York Times* Aug. 6, 1933, p. SM5. In the August 1933 interview with S. J. Woolf, "Champion of the Consumer Speaks Out," Mary Harriman Rumsey discussed the influence *The National Being* had on her social philosophy and direction.

24. *Notable American Women 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*, volume II P-Z, p. 209.

25. Abramson, pp. 245-7.

26. www.farmfoundation.org

27. Abramson, p. 247.

28. John N. Gates, *The Astor Family* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1981), pp. 295-6.

Astor bought out Mary's share, after her death, increasing his share in the magazine to seventy-five percent.

29. *Notable American Women 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*, volume II P-Z, p. 208; *The Washington Post* May 15, 1934, p. 12; and *The New York Times* Dec. 19, 1934, p. 1.

30. Abramson, p. 8. Both Mary Harriman Rumsey's papers and those of Katharine ("Kitty") Lanier Lawrence Harriman, Averell's first wife, were originally stored in a former Brooklyn bank which had been converted into a warehouse by Averell. They were discarded to provide additional storage space for Averell's papers.

One of the most beautiful memorials to Mrs. Rumsey is the Mary Harriman Rumsey Playground at the site of the old Casino in Central Park. It was created and named for Mrs. Rumsey by then Parks Commissioner Robert Moses in 1935. Mary Harriman Rumsey was responsible for the creation of approximately five hundred parks in New York City.

THE LONG ISLAND DEAD POETS' SOCIETY
Part V

by Robert L. Harrison

Many members of the Long Island Dead Poet's Society ventured onto our Island as others left. While some of our Long Island poets went off to find fame and fortune in New York City and beyond, they were soon replaced by other bards. These new bards looked at our beautiful island with its sandy beaches, tranquil harbors, fishing and hunting, and country life-style and decided to stay. Both Isaac McLellan and William P. Hawes (aka J. Cypress, Jr.) were avid sportsmen who thought Long Island was a paradise in the nineteenth century. Both of them used their reflections of this island's bountiful harvest of scenery, wildlife and fish in their poetry and writings.

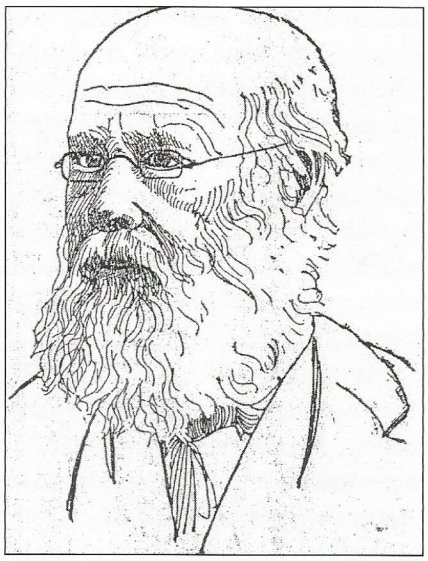
Isaac McLellan (1806-1899), was born in Portland, Maine, on May 31, 1806. McLellan's formative years were spent in Boston and he attended Phillip's Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, where he became a lifelong friend of his classmate, N.P. Willis. McLellan then went on to Bowdoin College in Maine and was one class behind the later literary giants, Longfellow and Hawthorne. While at Bowdoin, McLellan would spend his off-class time roaming through the woods and fields pursuing the wildlife and fish. This became a life-time activity for McLellan and would lead eventually to the east end of Long Island. There he became a respected poet of nature and the newspapers later gave him the title of "Poet of the Rod and Gun."[1]

After graduating from Bowdoin College in 1826,[2] McLellan soon joined his friend N.P. Willis in Boston where they were associated with various magazines and newspapers. McLellan was employed by the *Daily Patriot*, *The Weekly Pearl*, *The New England Magazine* and *The Knickerbocker* among others as an editor, poet and prose writer. During these early years McLellan also practiced law, but soon gave up this endeavor to pursue the life of a sportsman.[3]

In 1838, at the age of 32, McLellan went off on a two year sporting tour of Europe. His taste for hunting and fishing lasted throughout his life. McLellan, during the next fifty years, would hunt lions in South Africa, hippos in Central Africa, elephants in Ceylon, along with most of the beasts of prey, and he boasted of fishing in all of the world's waters. [4]

McLellan, during this time, became friends with Daniel Webster and spent time hunting and fishing at Webster's retreat at Marshfield, Massachusetts.[5] In 1851, McLellan came down to New York City and later to Long Island in pursuit of a literary career. McLellan's poetry output at this time was published in the books *The Call of the Indian* (1830), *The Year* (1832), and *Mount Auburn* (1843). It would not be until 1886, while living in Greenport, that his acclaimed poetry book *Poems of the Rod and Gun*, was presented to his admirers. McLellan's poetry was well crafted and full of details, like his friend William Cullen Bryant's poetry. Examples of his verse demonstrate his enthusiasm and clarity of thought on his chosen subject matter.

From "On Long Island"



Isaac McLellan

I wander daily by the shore
Thy rocky shore, Long Island Sound,
And in my little boat explore
The secret of thy depths profound.

From "Hauling of the Seine"

The sea like a mirror - scarce a crest
Of the white froth-foam gleams across its breast;
And like an infant's bosom, fast asleep,
Scarce sinks, scarce swells the smooth breast of the deep.

From his poem "Sea Bass"

Wide off Long Island's yellow beach
Where fisher's plummet scarce may reach
Deep-sunken in the depths of brine,
Where kelp its be added ribbon flings
And sea-dulse their long tresses flaunt
There the dark sea-bass makes his haunt.[6]

McLellan lived on Long

Island's east end, mostly in Greenport, but spent time on Shelter Island and in Springs.[7] As a keen observer of nature he once lamented the loss of trees here that caused an increase in the strength of the wind. He also noted the decrease of migratory birds on Long Island that followed the forest's demise.

When McLellan died in 1899, at Greenport, he was 93 years old and was considered the oldest of the well-known American poets. According to Longfellow, "Had McLellan fished and shot less and written more he might have been America's leading poet."[8]

Our other sportsman poet was William P. Hawes (1803-1841), who wrote during his life-time under the pseudonym of "J. Cypress, Jr." Hawes, like McLellan, loved to roam the countryside and shores of Long Island to hunt and fish and gather up stories to tell around the camp fire. Hawes received his B.A. from Columbia College in 1821 and his Masters in 1824. Hawes, like McLellan, became a lawyer and two years later married Priscilla Morris, who also enjoyed his outdoor living habits. It was not as a lawyer but the call of the Long Island wild that dominated his life. Hawes wrote about his ramblings in the *Mirror*, the *American Monthly Magazine* and various other papers.[9]

Hawes wit and writing style retained a wide following for his articles and poems. In his late thirties, Hawes met an early demise from an untreated cold. Frank Forester, an admirer of his writings, gathered up Hawes' stories and poems and published them in a book after his death in 1842.[10] Both McLellan and Hawes were outdoor poets who are seldom read today but both reached out to an audience that was enriched by their poetic musings.

Notes

1. "Isaac McLellan Dead," *New York Times*, 08/22/1899, p. 7. He was also called the "American Laureate of the Brookside and Riverside."

2. It is interesting to note that McLellan was awarded his Masters from Bowdoin College in 1829 by observing their rules, which stated that one had to be of good moral character for three years after graduating, perform at the commencement unless excused (he read a poem) and paying $5.00 to the treasurer of the college. Per Kathy Peterson, Archives Assistant, Bowdoin College. Letter of 02/25/08.

3. Some other Long Island lawyer/poets were William Cullen Bryant, John G. Saxe, Charles Greene, C. Augustis Haviland and Albert De Pietro.

4."A Poet and a Sportsman," *Brooklyn Eagle*, 01/03/1892, p. 2

5. "Sportsman Poet is Dead," *Boston Herald*, 08/22/1899

6. Berbrich, Joan D. *Sounds and Sweet Airs: The Poetry of Long Island.* Publisher: Ira Friedman, Port Washington, NY 1970.

7. The 1880 Federal Census has McLellan in Shelter Island. His interview by the *Brooklyn Eagle* was taken at Springs in 1892. He died in Greenport in 1899.

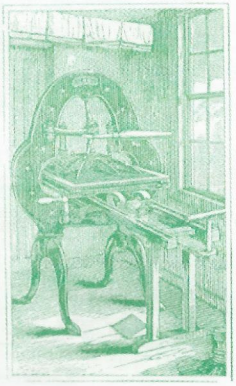
8. "A Poet and a Sportsman," *Brooklyn Eagle*, 01/03/1892

9. *Sounds and Sweet Airs*, under William Hawes.

10. *A Week at the Fire Islands.* Gould Bands & Company, NY, 1842.

Long Island's wildlife was much more abundant in the mid 19th century. Photo courtesy of Robert L. Harrison.

Blocklyn's Books



Book Reviews by Philip Blocklyn

Crossing The Sound: The Rise of Atlantic American Communities in Seventeenth-Century Eastern Long Island. By Faren R. Siminoff. New York, New York University Press, 2004. 213 pp. One map, notes, bibliography, and index. $40.

It's always important to remember that Long Island Sound was in the seventeenth century an international arena in which the English, Dutch, and Native American powers fought for hegemony. We all know how the story turned out, beginning with the short, unhappy Pequot War of 1637. The annihilation of the Pequots at the hands of Massachusetts Bay Colony mercenaries seriously upset the balance of regional power. Native tribes of the East End, having acquiesced in the heavy-handed protection that the Pequots of Connecticut offered them, found themselves facing a power vacuum waiting to be filled. So it's not surprising that within three days of reports of the Pequot massacre, the young Montaukett sachem Wyandanch traveled to Saybrook to ask Lion Gardiner whether the English were in fact "angry with all the Indians."

Siminoff makes much of this meeting in Saybrook, seeing it as evidence that Gardiner, unlike John Underhill of the Pequot War, viewed negotiation (what she calls "boundary crossing") with the Ninnimissinuok peoples as a viable option. But self-interest played a role in Gardiner's thinking as well. His disapproval of Underhill's war reflected his fears that war would threaten his Saybrook fort. And after the Pequots' defeat, he was quick to encourage East End natives to "kill all the Pequits that come to you, and send me their heads, then…you shall have trade with us." So it seems the English were not in fact "angry with all the Indians" – just with the Pequots.

Siminoff, however, is right to maintain that the English settlers and native peoples did indeed share some commonality of purpose despite their frequently adversarial relationships. An alliance between the two peoples served the interests of both by establishing long-term exclusive trade relations, avoiding bloody warfare, and laying a basis for lawful and mutually recognized land transactions. She contends that Ninnimissinuok political and social organizations were not that different from their English counterparts, and that both settler and native saw access to land and its resources as a sign of community membership. Further, she recognizes in the East End settlements of the Hamptons a distinctly native cultural influence: homes and house lots settled in close proximity; a common street, village green, and home pasture, augmented by common fields individually allotted outside town for mowing and tillage; and undivided town lands held in reserve and used for pasture and woodland.

Whether this is true cultural influence, even cultural sympathy, or simply a recognition that such civic organization made sense on Long Island, it's hard to say. At least it's preferable to the land-use strategies of, say, the grandly named Sir Fernando Gorges, whose vision of New England encompassed huge hereditary estates worked by copyholders, leaseholders, and tenant farmers – laborers as serfs on feudal lands. Elsewhere, however, Siminoff completely overstates her case for drawing commonality between settler and native peoples and should probably have thought again before claiming settlers' assumption of Algonquin place names as "this confluence of language [standing] as a lasting testament to the influence of native culture on what became the more populous settler communities."

The Nissimissinuok may never have viewed their relations with the English as one of total submission. Still, for the English, cooperation with the End End natives was never more than a passing convenience, allowing them to replace the Pequots in a balance-of-power competition with the Dutch. Meanwhile, the settlers merely had to wait the Ninnimissinuok out. By mid-seventeenth century, native population in the region had fallen from 90,000 to 9,000, while settlers' numbers grew to over 18,000.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

JUNE

Friday, June 20, 7 p.m.

Annual Meeting/Lecture

Matinecock Masonic Lodge

The Annual Meeting of the Oyster Bay Historical Society will feature John Taylor speaking on "Homestead Farm: Then & Now." The farm, which was on Cold Spring Road, was bought by his grandfather a hundred years ago and John will cover the history of the farmhouse, which is believed to date from the 18th century, as well as how life on the farm changed in the course of the last century. He will also be covering some of the flora and fauna that reside there. All are welcome to attend. Admission is free and refreshments will be served following Mr. Taylor's talk.

Sunday, June 22, 1-4 PM

Ice Cream Social

Earle-Wightman House

Visit the Earle-Wightman House, home of the Oyster Bay Historical Society for an Ice Cream Social. Free tours of the museum and the Colonial Garden. View the new exhibition on "Oyster Bay in the Revolution," which features a hands-on area where children of all ages can dress in an eighteenth century uniform and try on a period soldier's equipment. Ice cream from Gooseberry Grove will be available. Join the Society as a Family (or higher!) Member and the ice cream is free! New members will also receive private tours of the extensive gardens of Rosalinda Morgan. Join us!

Blocklyn's Books

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The English may not have been angry with all the Indians, but neither did they ever engage them seriously as equal political or cultural partners. After 1664, Long Island Sound was politically and commercially under English control, a fact of imperial life that the pale legacy of Dutch and Algonquin place names and other cultural relics could hardly challenge.

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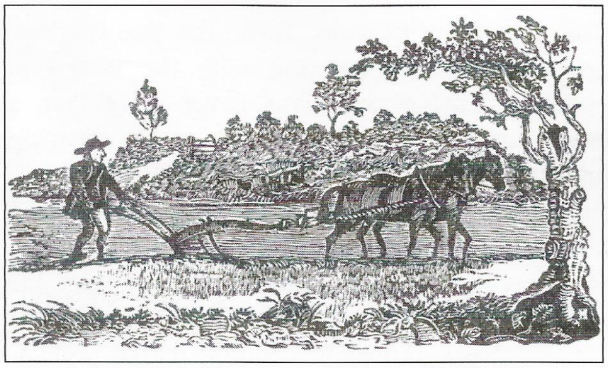

Join us for the Society's Annual Meeting, Friday, June 20th.