



THE *FREE-HOLDER*

SUMMER 1996

THE OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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♦ SEAGOING
DELICACIES

♦ AN HISTORIC
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THE HISTORY MAGAZINE OF THE TOWN OF OYSTER BAY

Editorial

This magazine, named, appropriately enough, *The Freeholder*, (after the first settlers of Oyster Bay) will be devoted to researching and publishing articles which illustrate Oyster Bay's history, as well as articles of a general historical nature

which shed light on life as it was lived here over the past 350 years.

We count among our contributors a number of Long Island's most talented historians. I can't wait to read their submissions, and I hope that you'll feel the same. Let us know!

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Letters to the Editor

To The Editor:

I am seeking information on the Harcourt family of Oyster Bay, especially the following: Benjamin, b.O.B. c. 1659/60; his wife Mercy Dickinson b. Barnstable, MA 23 Feb.1657; their 10 children -

especially sons Nathaniel H b. O.B. c. 1690 & Richard {Robert} H b. O.B. c.1692. I am seeking family information for Richard {Robert} Harcourt b. O.B. c. 1692 who married Esther "Hetty" Townsend c 1710 and their children, especially their son Richard H. b. O.B. c. 1720 who married Mercy Latting. Contact Bob Harcourt, 2980 Viaje Pavo Real, Santa Fe, NM 87505.

THE FREEHOLDER

of the
Oyster Bay Historical Society
Vol. 1 No. 1 Summer 1996

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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.

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ABOUT OUR FRONT COVER

Shown is the demise of a carriage on South Street, Oyster Bay in June 1904. The horse pulling the carriage was frightened by the noise and appearance of a strange new monster - the automobile! See story on page 15.

*Photo from collections of the
Oyster Bay Historical Society*

To The Editor:

When I was trimming "A Minor Christmas Mystery" to fit the space available for it in the Fall *Currents*, I chopped a quotation of Clement Moore's "Pig and Chicken" poem.

The question included a line which did not begin with an anapestic foot and I referred to it in my text. I carelessly left

continued on p.18

SEAGOING DELICACIES: EARLY SAILORS' FARE

By Gus Stahl

The diet of sailors aboard ships of a hundred and fifty years ago and earlier was seldom of epicurean quality and often downright miserable. On the other hand, despite a lack of variety and a limited number of ingredients, few sailors starved. Moreover, the "Doctor", a frequent name for the cook, was often quite skillful and was able, at least occasionally, to provide meals that were somewhat more appetizing, at least to the sailor's rough palate, than a perpetual course of hardtack, a chunk of salt beef or pork, perhaps an occasional indifferent vegetable and strong coffee or tea served in a gallon pot. It is strange to think of a seacook preparing "made" dishes in the manner of Escoffier but on his own level of expertise he did just that. He often demonstrated a degree of ingenuity in coping with missing ingredients that no land based chef would have found necessary. Perhaps the unusual, often extravagant, quality of many of the names given fo'c's'le fare is an indication of the real fondness of the seaman for dishes that would send his landlubber brother from the dining room unfed. Who but a devotee would remain at the table if, for instance, "dunderfunk" were announced?

Dunderfunk, also called "dandyfunk", has no convincing explanation for its name. The basic recipe is sea biscuit, pounded into crumbs, mixed with fat and molasses - sometimes stretched with water - and baked brown. The fat might be that trimmed from salt beef or pork that usually formed the sailor's meat ration or it might be slush, the grease left after frying or skimmed from the

pot in which meat was cooked. The slush barrel stood just outside the galley. Into it was dumped all the leftover grease. This was used to slush, or lubricate the masts. If any remained at voyage-end, it was by tradition the perquisite of the cook who could sell it when the ship came to port. Perhaps it went to the soapmaker. Till then it was



available to supply grease for cooking. We are obviously talking here not just of rough palates but of strong stomachs. All substitutions, however, were not for the worse. One stand-in for molasses in the making of dunderfunk was marmalade.

Another special occasion dish was a pudding, not the sort marketed under the Royal or Jell-O labels but the kind that's boiled in a bag at Christmas time. On shipboard it was not reserved for Christmas but appeared whenever a festivity appeared and the galley stores provided the ingredients. It was called plum duff and was the seagoing cousin of plum pudding. Duff is a dialect pronunciation of dough. In its simplest state it is made of flour and

water. Add plums to it, an unlikely occurrence on shipboard, and it becomes plum duff. Dried plums, prunes to you and me, were available however, as were raisins, and sometimes dried apples. Any of these added to duff created a delicacy announced as plum duff and never challenged by the consumer. On some ships plum duff was so highly regarded - by the owners - that it was served in place of the meat ration every Thursday, a cheap treat instead of meat. Jack Tar probably appreciated something sweet instead of salty, anyway.

Perhaps even more outlandish sounding than dunderfunk was lobscouse. It was also called cracker hash which sounds a bit less exotic to shore-based ears. The cook started by breaking up hardtack, the hard baked ship's biscuit that was the usual shipboard substitute before the mast for the landsman's white loaf bread. Aft the mast in the officers' quarters something very like what comes to tables ashore but called soft tack or soft tommy was served. For lobscouse the fragments of hardtack were soaked in water till softened, then mixed with minced salt beef or pork, singly or in combination. If potatoes or onions were available, they were chopped and added to the mixture. Baked until little moisture remained and the top was crisp, lobscouse was highly regarded except by newcomers with queasy stomachs.

Aboard ship the salt meat was often termed salt horse or salt junk. These names were deliberate aspersions on its quality. Junk in sailor's talk was old cable. The term doubtless implies

that the meat was tough, stringy, and generously impregnated with salt. Salt horse was an insulting disparagement of the ethics of the dealer who packed and sold the meat. On its way to table, salt meat from the great three-hundred-pound barrels in which it was packed stopped for a day or two in the harness cask, a staved vessel wider at the bottom than the top. Filled with salt water not so concentrated as the brine that had been used to preserve the meat, the harness cask was used to soak out as much of the salt as possible. Perhaps the harness in the term was an allusion to the salt horse the cask contained.

Having named two containers commonly found on deck, we mustn't forget an important third, a cask called the scuttle butt which contained drinking water. Called that because it was a butt or staved container and had in its head a scuttle or trap door, the scuttle butt was a place of resort for idlers who gathered around it to exchange gossip or rumor. The name has entered the language of landmen as a synonym for rumor and its maritime origin has been largely forgotten.

Better than a trip to the scuttle butt, the seaman liked a mug-up, a piece of ship's bread with coffee. Often the "coffee" had never seen Brazil. Called Scotch coffee, it was concocted of burnt bread boiled in water and sweetened with sorghum molasses.

Burgoo was an early landman's term for porridge before it went to sea. Ashore it eventually became a stew but on board ship it remained porridge. Made of oatmeal or corn meal cooked in water, it was hot and filling and

sustained the sailor against hard work in the wet and cold.

The sailor's word for stew was slumgullion, often abbreviated to slum. Basically composed of meat and vegetables, but at sea improvised of whatever the Doctor had available, slumgullion came ashore and found its way into the vocabulary of tramps who compounded it of whatever ingredients they could beg or steal and often called it slumgudgeon.

Something more of a treat than slum was sea pie. Into a baking dish the cook placed layers of meat or fish and vegetables alternating with layers of pastry. Baked and served piping hot, it was a dish to help Jack Tar forget the hardships of his environment.

Cooked in a kettle was chowder and that's how it got its name. The French word for kettle or boiler, *chaudiere*, was altered in English mouths to chowder a long time ago. To make a chowder, fish was needed so they were more common among the fishermen than with other seamen but chowders were made whenever fish were available. Recipes for chowders eaten ashore have ingredients like milk not to be had at sea in early days. What the sea cooks used is a question to which no answer has been found.

In the 1850's fishermen of the Bay of Fundy were eating smotherers, duff and jo-floggers. These were explained as pot-pie of seabirds, pudding and pan cakes. Other sources suggest somewhat different meanings for the first and last items. In 1874 a smother was said to contain mutton while in 1826 a smotheration, surely the same, was a sailor's dish of

beef and pork smothered in potatoes. The basic dish seems to have been of fowl or flesh with a lid of either pastry or potatoes.

Both jo-floggers and Joe Froggers appear in reminiscences of sea life. They seem to have been the same word to which different meanings were attached. One story has it that Joe Frogger was a black baker in Marblehead whose specialty was large, round, hardbaked, ginger cookies that the fishermen took to sea by the keg. Another report has Joe-Floggers represented by a sort of peculiar pancake stuffed with plums (doubtless prunes). We can probably assume that all varieties shared roundness as to shape.

No doubt the sailor's diet was less rich and varied than was his vocabulary but he seems to have found his food interesting and sustaining. Although most accounts of fo'c's'le food describe it in rather disparaging terms, sailors did not stop going to sea because they felt they were badly fed. The dainty appetite of the landsman reader to the contrary, the fo'c's'le favorites were not regarded by the sailor as abominations. Abominations could not have lasted over the years without mutiny and they certainly would not have inspired the affectionate, if outlandish names recounted here.



THE OYSTER BAY CONNECTION: THE FIRST AMERICAN NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT OFFERING ITEMS FOR SALE

by Elliot M. Sayward

Part I

AT Oysterbay on Long-Island in the Province of N. York, There is a very good Fulling-Mill, to be Let or Sold, as also a Plantation, having on it a large new Brick house, and another good house by it for a Kitchen, & work house, with a Barn, Stable, &c. a young Orchard, and 20 Acres clear Land. The Mill is to be Let with or without the Plantation: Enquire of Mr. William Bradford Printer in N. York, and know further.

A copy of the newspaper advertisement shown above was dug out of the Society's files by Director Tom Kuehhas. He recognized that, while a piece of history itself, it also furnished a window on a plethora of fascinating subjects having to do with the early days of Oyster Bay and other parts of the original colonies.

The advertisement appeared in the *Boston News-Letter* of May 8, 1704. It is an historic milestone. Appearing early in the paper's first year of publication, it is thought to be the first newspaper advertisement announcing something for sale published in this country. Of course, Boston was the seed bed of newspaper publishing on this side of the Atlantic. Not only was the first newspaper published there but so was the second, *The New-England Courant* which was launched by James Franklin, elder brother of Benjamin Franklin. Benjamin Franklin will make another appearance in this account so it is germane to mention that, when material printed by his brother gave offense to the Assembly and he was prohibited from publishing, the paper appeared for a time under the name of the seventeen year old Benjamin who had already displayed considerable promise as a journalist.

The close ties of the residents of Oyster Bay with New England may have had something to do with the placement of the advertisement but it is more likely that "Mr. William Bradford printer in N. York" had become aware through the brotherhood of the press of the intention of the *News-Letter* to accept advertisements and had recognized that such a notice would reach a larger than usual group of prospective buyers for a productive farm and a going business. How did it happen that Bradford of New York City was attempting to dispose of property in Oyster Bay?

The deceased owner of the property, John Dewsbury, had been in debt to William Bradford who was not only a printer in New York but, as William S. Pelletreau tells us in his *A History of Long Island*, was also "a merchant of Oyster Bay", a description which he gave of himself in deeds prior to 1703. We don't know what brought Dewsbury into debt to Bradford; it may be that he borrowed money for the improvement of his business, the fulling mill, or for his "large new Brick house." Whatever the reason for the debt, the General Assembly of the Colony of New York passed an act "to Enable the S[ai]d William Bradford of the City of Newyorke printer to Sell

and dispose of the Real Estate of John Dewsbury, late of Oysterbay inn Queens County within the Colony Deceased for the payment of debts.. ."

Who was this William Bradford? Very likely you already know of him as an important American printer of the 17th and 18th centuries. He was born in Leicestershire, England in 1663. He served his apprenticeship to a London printer and on completion thereof he emigrated to Philadelphia in 1685. Another account says he came with William Penn in 1682. In Philadelphia he set up the first printing press in Pennsylvania, as Benjamin Franklin who met him tells us. In 1688 he established a bookstore, perhaps his first venture as a merchant. Surely most of his stock must have been imported from abroad preparing him for later mercantile operations in Oyster Bay and New York City. Bradford also joined the Dutch Rittenhouse brothers to found a papermill, the product of which would have been important to his printing house.

However, shortly thereafter he printed the Pennsylvania charter for which act he found himself in trouble with the authorities. Deciding that the climate of Pennsylvania was not healthy for printers, Bradford removed in 1689 to the city of New York.

There he became the royal printer serving the administrators of the colony. It was a profitable connection but he had plenty of time for his own work. It is known that he issued some 400 publications including the first American *Book of Common Prayer* and pamphlets, almanacs and political writings. In 1725 he began the publication of the *New-York Gazette*, the first newspaper in that city.

One of Bradford's apprentices was John Peter Zenger who was to become famous in part because he thought Bradford's political writings "dry, senseless and fulsome panegyrics" and did something about it. He also thought that Bradford's ties with the government and his paper's role as mouthpiece for the administration should be challenged. As part of Bradford's bread and butter resulted from his connection with the government he was apparently loath to challenge his friends on issues important to Zenger who left him in 1733 and founded the *Weekly Journal* in opposition to the *Gazette* and the government. Zenger scathingly attacked the administration and its partisans, for which he went to jail. It took a Philadelphia lawyer, Alexander Hamilton, to get him out. Zenger's stand and eventual victory were major foundation stones in the developing idea of freedom of the press. It should not be thought that Bradford was without principle because of his adherence to constituted authority and his own best interests. He had already been through a freedom of the press controversy in Philadelphia.

In New York he had much earlier demonstrated his willingness to stand against wrong when he issued in 1693 the first published American attack on slavery, George Keith's *An Exhortation and Caution to Friends Concerning Buying or Keeping Negroes*. (The author wishes to thank Mildred DeRiggi, Ph.D. of the L.I. Studies Institute for bringing this piece to his attention.)

When Ben Franklin left Boston after a quarrel with his brother he went to New York seeking work. There he talked to Bradford who had nothing for him but sent him to Philadelphia to his son, also a printer, who had lost his chief assistant. This came to nothing although Franklin did get work with another printer, beginning his long Pennsylvania career. In Philadelphia he again met Bradford who had come to visit his son. Franklin watched Bradford pry business information out of a competitor. He assessed him "as a crafty old sophister".

Bradford seems to have had Quaker connections even before he arrived in Philadelphia. He arrived there just three years after the proprietor of the colony, the Quaker William Penn, if not earlier. Another Quaker, George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends was the means of his introduction to Oyster Bay. Merle-Smith tells us that "a letter from George Fox to one of the Wrights of Oyster Bay introduced Bradford giving him his first contact with the village." He sets the date about 1685 which would have put Bradford in touch with Oyster Bay from the time of his arrival

in America.

Fox, who came from Leicester as did Bradford, had preached to the inhabitants of Oyster Bay during his visit to America. While in this country, Fox journeyed from North Carolina to New England, calling on Quakers and Quaker congregations and preaching whenever opportunity arose. Pelletreau tells us that he "preached in the woods with a rock for a pulpit because there was no house in the place large enough to accommodate his auditors." Later that year Anthony Wright gave land to the Society of Friends for a meeting house and burial plot. Anthony Wright appears to have been a leader among the Quakers and may have been the Wright to whom George Fox wrote introducing Bradford.

Bradford engaged in real estate purchases in Oyster Bay until at least 1703. On one piece of land he bought he built the first bolting mill in the town. A bolting mill is a grist mill equipped with a machine that sifts ground grain into various grades or products suitable for different uses, as bran, coarse meal, flour, etc.. Prior to the introduction of bolting machines the job had to be done with a hand sieve.

Another of the properties Bradford purchased was a house and lot where he may have stayed while in town looking after his business interests or relaxing from his city labors. How extensive Bradford's connection with the town was is not clear. Considering what we know of his property purchases, his transactions with Dewsbury and his bolting mill it would seem he was a

substantial, if part-time, citizen. If we remember that he described himself as a merchant of Oyster Bay, we may speculate that he engaged in a very considerable trade in imported goods landed at our port, which was able to accommodate vessels of substantial size for the times. According to Pelletreau, Oyster Bay was one of four Long Island ports that in 1699 handled a full third of all the goods imported into the colony of New York.

TO BE CONTINUED
IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THE FREEHOLDER

MELTING POT

By Lee Myles

A pair of simple tools serve to remind us how close the Dutch and English settlers were in 17th century America. Dominions ran side by side, of course. For instance, when it was decided whose jurisdiction included what Long Island territory, the line of demarcation between the authority of the Dutch and the English was set just west of Oyster Bay. The line surely did not interfere with trade and fraternization. In fact, the two peoples were so close in 1658 that the people of Oyster Bay, finding their relationship with the mainland English unsatisfactory, actually sent representatives to the Dutch to ask that they be governed by the authorities in New Amsterdam. Certainly, the two cultures must have exchanged much almost without knowing it. One of the things Englishmen received from



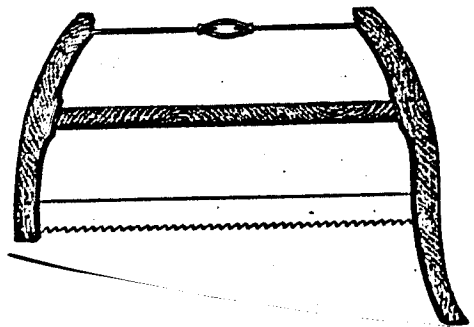
Dutch Scaters

the Dutch, perhaps here, perhaps elsewhere, was the name by which the Dutch called the rest on which wood was sawn. The English heretofore had called it a trestle. Joseph Moxon did in the 17th century. The Dutch called it a "zaagbok" or "saw goat". The English translated the first word of the compound and rearranged the pronunciation of the second to a similar English word, "buck". The trestle was now a "sawbuck". This was not surprising. The English had been borrowing useful things from the Dutch for at least a couple of centuries, but this word wasn't adopted until the English came to America.



This story began with a statement about a pair of tools. What was the second one? The English Americans had renamed their trestle. Now, those who were using the sawbuck thought it

convenient to rename the saw used with it to discriminate its chief purpose, cutting wood on the sawbuck. So they called it the "buck saw".



It isn't clear precisely when or where these things happened but it is clear that the English adopted a large vocabulary of Dutch words as the American melting pot came into operation. Perhaps the number is larger than we realize. Of course, the words are no longer either Dutch or English adoptions. They are American words. When examined they give testimony to the richness of our diverse cultural inheritance.



ASK UNCLE PELEG

Dear Uncle Peleg:

The "wight" of playnes in the 1682 inventory of Samuel Forman referred to a *right* of plains and meadows. When the original town lots were laid out each freeholder was allotted a home lot, usually six acres, plus a share or right of commonage in the salt meadows, the plains and meadows for planting. These rights were bargained and sold like any other real property and were passed to heirs through wills. A good example is the following will of one of my ancestors, Elizabeth Dickinson, dated 10 Sept. 1691:

"Imp. I give to my son Samuel, five shares of land, at the plains, more than that which I have already given him, and this to be his full portion.

"Imp. I give to my son James, two-thirds, or two rights of three, of my land in the Old Purchase of Oyster Bay, on the west side of Nicholas Wright's land, in the Old Purchase, going to Lusum, as the Records of Oyster Bay showeth how it is bounded and

laid out, with half a share of meadow on the WestNeck, at Oyster Bay south, five acres of land at the plains, and my right of commonage belonging to my home lot I give to my three sons Samuel, Jobus, James, equally between them."

Many times the terms "right", "share", and "privilege" were used interchangeably, which of course muddled the issue. Some researchers were better than others in their ability to transcribe the cursive writings of the 17th century. The problem is further exacerbated by the limited skills of those who did the original writing. They frequently had little education, poor writing skills, and very poor spelling. In old wills and documents the writer would frequently spell his own name several different ways within the same document. In the example used in Currents, "wight" was supposed to read "right".

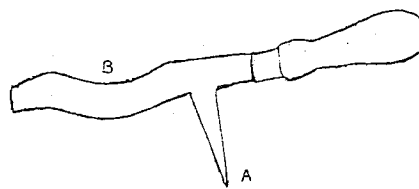
John Hammond

Our thanks to John Hammond who has achieved the distinction of being the first person to participate by answering one of the questions in this space.

Dear Uncle Peleg:

A friend showed me the illustrated implement some years ago and asked what I thought it was for. I didn't know but made a sketch of it and have since asked several persons, with no answers forthcoming. Overall length is twelve inches. The end of "A" is 9/16" wide and sharp. The in-curve "B" tapers to knife-thin and may once have been sharp. The

chisel-like end is similar. Can you explain the object's use?



It's Uncle Peleg's opinion that this is a grafting froe {froe}, a tool used by orchardists both to cut a graft from the parent tree and to open a cleft for its reception in a branch of the tree being improved. Grafting froes come in a wide variety of patterns but they usually include a cleaving tool and, sometimes separate from it, a part for levering open the cleft to take the graft. There is sometimes a chisel for removing a bud for grafting.

Dear Uncle Peleg:

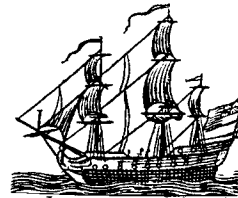
Would it be appropriate to include a wind-driven whirligig in an interpretation of a c.1786 house and garden?

Perhaps, but the first description I could find of what I take to be your kind of whirligig is in The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. by Washington Irving, published in 1820 after appearing serially in 1819-20. It occurs in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow": "...watching the achievements of a little wooden warrior, who, armed with a sword in each hand, was most valiantly fighting the wind on the pinnacle of the barn." That's over thirty years after your date but, as Irving doesn't treat the wooden warrior as a novelty, he may have had a long ancestry.

continued on p. 19



CURRENTS OF THE BAY



This section will focus 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 will be covered, so send your submissions to the Editor if you would like to see your events covered by The Freeholder.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PLANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The Oyster Bay Historical Society is embarking on an oral history project that will be coordinated by society trustee Rick Robinson. Several years ago he had begun an independent series of taped interviews, intended to document the social and academic history of Oyster Bay High School as experienced by its students over the past nine decades. The school will mark its centennial in 1999 -- the first senior class of four young ladies having graduated in June, 1900, at the old Methodist Church on South Street.

At that time, the first official high school had just been completed at the corner of Anstice Street and Weeks Avenue in Oyster Bay. This imposing brick structure replaced an 1872 wood-frame central school on School Street. In February, 1929, students from all grades carried their books and other belongings down the hill to the "new" central school on East Main Street. This magnificent art deco brick building has always been known as Oyster Bay High School and currently houses grades 9-12.

In his interviews, Rick will pose many of the same questions to each of the graduates he visits. This will provide a frame of reference for the entire project and

allow for comparisons of school life in different eras. The taped conversations will also delve into activities in the village of Oyster Bay and surrounding communities, thus offering a broader historical setting for the overall study. At present, the oldest high school graduate already on tape is the late Gertrude Miller Layton, Class of 1912, who provided many vivid and fascinating memories of her days at "OBHS". Mrs. Layton's recollections included the daily task of getting to and from school from her parents' home on the Tiffany estate in Laurel Hollow. Although there was a school bus in those days, it was a single vehicle and made only two runs: morning and afternoon.

The Historical Society recognizes the fact that it is rare to find a public school that has been situated in the center of its community for nearly one hundred years -- first on Anstice Street and then East Main Street. It is felt that the Oyster Bay-East Norwich Central School District provides a perfect source for tracing the social and educational history of a small Long Island village and its inhabitants.

Ultimately, the Society hopes to transcribe excerpts from the taped interviews and assemble a printed record. This will supplement the audio tapes, which can also be excerpted onto a single cassette or listened to in their entirety. A new school of thought

(forgive the play on words) advances the opinion that oral history interviews are much more revealing and entertaining when listened to, rather than read. In the case of Gertrude Miller Layton, who was in her nineties at the time of the interview by Rick Robinson, her snappy responses and humorous anecdotes are a delight to the ear!

WALKING TOUR GUIDE TO OYSTER BAY NOW IN PRELIMINARY STAGES

Society Director Tom Kuehhas announces that work has begun on a new walker's guide to the historic homes and commercial buildings in downtown Oyster Bay -- specifically, on East and West Main Streets and "lower" South Street. The Society's headquarters, the Earle-Wightman House, will also be included on the tour. The guide carries descriptions of each building and its history. Sketches will illustrate many of the listings. A map will be included to aid the reader in visiting all the listed sites.

The guide will, understandably, include quite a few buildings carried in *The Walls Have Tongues*, a popular Historical Society publication devoted to notable buildings in the village of Oyster Bay and beyond. This book is in the process of being updated prior to re-publication later this year. It

available at the Earle-Wightman House and the Book Mark Cafe.

The purpose of the walker's guide is to provide information and directions for individuals or groups who wish to tour the village within an hour or so. Additional or supplemental guides will be published periodically, widening the scope of these tours. Oyster Bay is a treasure-trove of unique buildings, whose history weaves a fascinating story of this famous sea-coast community.

SEA CLIFF VILLAGE MUSEUM ANNOUNCES OPENING OF NEW EXHIBIT

The Sea Cliff Village Museum, located at 95 Tenth Avenue (behind the village library) has installed a new exhibit. Entitled "Hang on to Your Hat", the exhibit features hats dating from the 1880s to the 1960s. Coordinating costumes will also be included, as will a history of the hats on exhibit. The museum is open 2-5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Weekday group appointments can be arranged by calling Curator Helen Davis at 671-0090.

BAYVILLE HISTORICAL MUSEUM OPENS NEW EXHIBIT

Gladys Mack and Tom Alfano, Co-Directors of the Bayville Historical Museum, announce the opening of their new exhibit, "Bayville Collections".

The exhibit features several of the happy breed of men and women living in Bayville who collect for the sheer joy of

collecting, and about some of the unusual things they collect. The museum is located on School Street in Bayville. Call 628-1720 or 628-1439 for hours and information.

FARMINGDALE- BETHPAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFERS "AROUND THE SOUND" TRIP ON JUNE 29

The Farmingdale-Bethpage Historical Society is offering an all-inclusive one-day tour which will take participants around Long Island Sound by motor coach and ferry on Saturday, June 29. Sites to be visited include the General William Hart House (1767) in Old Saybrook, and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and the Lyman Allyn Museum in New London. The luncheon site is the Lighthouse Inn, a fine restaurant housed in a 1902 manor house. Participants will return from Connecticut on the New London-Orient ferry and will arrive in Farmingdale at about 8 p.m. The cost for this mini-vacation is \$70 per person, which includes all transportation,

admissions, a full luncheon, and refreshments on the return leg of the journey. Call program coordinator Bill Johnston (516) 249-3099 for further information or to register for the trip.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT ASSOCIATION PLANS OCTOBER ANNUAL MEETING IN BOSTON

The Theodore Roosevelt Association will hold its 1996 Annual Meeting in Boston, MA from October 25 through October 27. Included will be trips to Harvard University to view the TR Presidential Collection; an evening Boston Harbor Dinner Cruise, with renowned historian David McCullough as featured dinner speaker; a special guided tour of the USS Constitution; and plenty of free time in the historic city of Boston. Call 921-6319 for more information.

We encourage other historical organizations and museums to send us releases on their upcoming events for inclusion in this space.

OYSTER BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY Categories of Membership

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

Member Benefits: Quarterly Newsletter, Members' Party, Invitations to Exhibition Previews and Special Events, 10% Discount on Publications and Workshops.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEEDS SUPPORT FOR MAGAZINE, VOLUNTEERS

The Oyster Bay Historical Society requests the support of its members and friends throughout the Town of Oyster Bay and Long Island in publishing its quarterly magazine, *The Freeholder*.

Society Director Tom Kuehhas stated, "In these days of restricted spending on the part of various governments, it has become increasingly necessary to look to the private sector, and individuals concerned with the preservation of their history, for assistance. With help from our friends, we can offer a bigger and better magazine for our readers." Please send donations to the Oyster Bay Historical Society in care of the Editor, *The Freeholder* (see inside front cover).

The Historical Society has a number of volunteer opportunities available. Positions that require filling include museum guides, education program volunteers, library researchers, and computer-literate typists. Rest assured that Director Tom Kuehhas can tailor a volunteer position to your particular interests! Visit the Earle-Wightman House today and see how you can help!



OUR WARMEST WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS

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Many of those listed above were recruited by other members of the Society. If you have a friend, or friends, that you think may be interested in joining the Society, ask Director Thomas Kuehhas to send you some membership brochures and pass them along! We are a growing Society and as we gain in numbers, we strengthen our ability to implement programs for both our members and the general public. Your assistance is vital in this effort to enlarge our membership base!

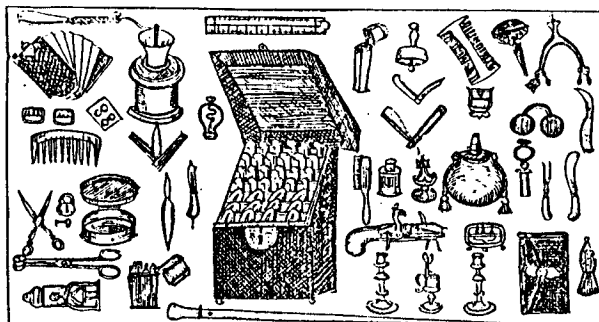
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The Board of Trustees would like to send their heartfelt thanks to those listed above who have given generously to our Annual Appeal campaign in 1995. Your financial support for this appeal has enabled us to go forward with the reprinting of our popular publication *The Diary of Mary Cooper*. This book has become a valued text on many college campuses in the teaching of Colonial American history. Thanks to all who contributed!



John Brailsford

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Our illustration is the trade card of a London cutler. As a list with pictures of more than forty objects that might have been found in an eighteenth century home in Oyster Bay, it is interesting in itself, but that is not our reason for printing it. In order to appropriately furnish various rooms of the period, which we hope to be able to do in future exhibits, we are hoping possible, to acquire gifts of individual pieces until the Society owns the whole inventory. If you own one or more of the items, why not consider making a gift to your Society? Your gift will be used for the benefit of everyone in Oyster Bay and everyone on Long Island with an interest in history who visits our village.

YESTERDAY IN OYSTER BAY

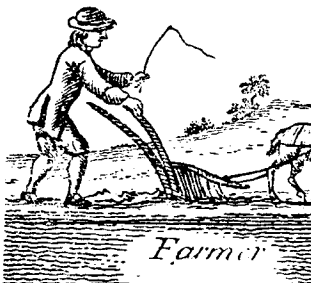
Charles Reichman, Editor

A FARMER'S CHATTELS

As mentioned in the Oyster Bay Town Records, on May 1, 1784 Thomas Hendrickson, an Oyster Bay farmer, for reasons unknown, decided to sell his moveable assets to a person presumed to be a member of his family, Stephen Hendrickson. He was also an Oyster Bay farmer. The chattels comprised cattle, household goods and farming tools for which Thomas Hendrickson received fifty pounds.

Here is what, according to the contract, Stephen Hendrickson had "bargained" for: two horses, four cows and two calves, two hogs, one wagon, one set of horse tack, two plows, two axes, two scythes, four beds and bedsteads, two tables and four chairs, one cupboard and "that is within" it, twelve plates, two pewter platters, one dresser, three pots, one teapot, six cups and saucers, three pewter basins, one tea kettle, two spinning wheels, one looking glass and "all the lumber found" on the property.

Which of the Hendricksons got the better of the deal is difficult to determine. What is most remarkable about the inventory is the few tools, pieces of furniture, and housewares with which a late eighteenth century farmer's family could subsist.



FARMERS AS JACKS-OF-OTHER-TRADES

Through the ages farmers were always known to practice other crafts to ensure steady income or to tide them over during periods of drought or damage to crops by such pests as the Hessian fly. One such farmer, according to the *N.Y. Advertiser* of March 15, 1773, was Zebulon Frost who ran a two hundred acre farm in Oyster Bay during the eighteenth century.

Frost grew such customary crops for that time as hay, wheat, other grains such as rye, oats, and barley, and possibly, some vegetables and fruit. In addition, he operated on the fringes of his farm, bordering what was described as a "fine" stream, a grist mill and fulling mill.

While most people would know that a grist mill ground grain into flour, few would know that a fulling mill cleaned and contracted home-made woven cloth to increase its weight and bulk. (*More about fulling mills in the next issue of The Freeholder.* Ed.)

OYSTER BAY'S POPULATION

In or about 1830 the Superintendent of Common Schools in New York State undertook a population census of Long Island. The results were published in an 1832 issue of the *Hempstead Inquirer*. Of the six towns comprising Queens County at that time, Oyster Bay, with a population of 5,193, came in second

behind Hempstead with 6,215 inhabitants. Population figures for the other four towns were as follows: North Hempstead 3,062; Flushing 2,822; Newtown 2,610; and Jamaica 2,376.



NINETEENTH CENTURY TRAVEL NOTE

If in the 1800's you didn't own a "waggon" (period spelling), cart or carriage, and were fearful of traveling by schooner, or later steamboat, chances were that when you needed to get from Oyster Bay to Brooklyn or vice versa, you did so via a stagecoach.

In the 1830's the stage was probably the South Oyster Bay Stage owned by two brothers, Peter and Silas Vandewater. Every Tuesday morning the Vandewaters' stage would leave from their home in South Oyster Bay (now Massapequa) at 8:30 in the morning and make the return trip every Wednesday afternoon at 3 p.m. According to the May 10, 1832 edition of the *Hempstead Inquirer*, stops would be made coming and going at Merrick, South Hempstead, and Jamaica. The Hempstead stop gave the passengers the opportunity to imbibe a refreshing drink, usually alcoholic, at Bedell's Tavern. The return trip from Brooklyn also emanated from a tavern or inn, known as the House of Smith and Wood.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE UTENSILS OF YESTERDAY

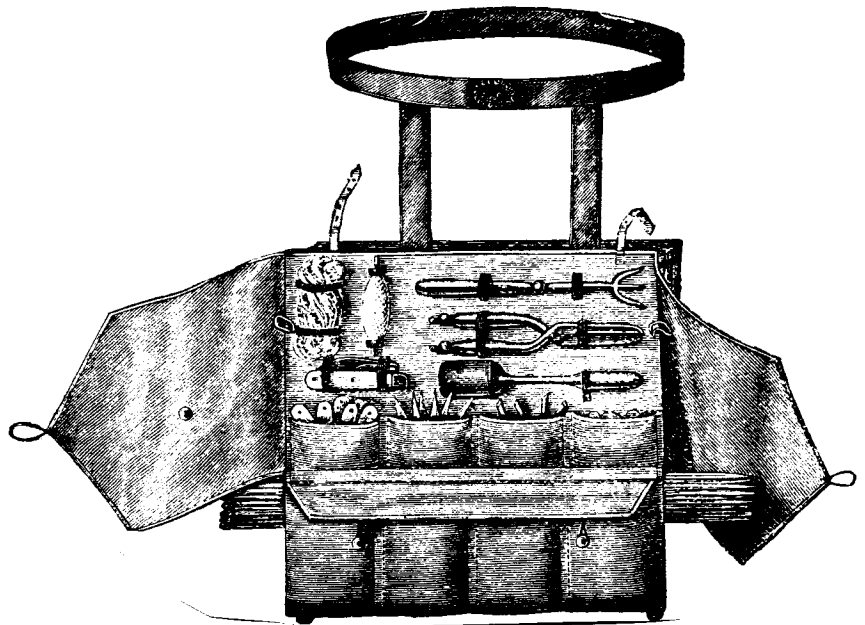
Can you match the objects on the left with their function on the right?

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Spattle | A. the cheapest type, usually used above doorways |
| 2. Boot jack | B. cooper's tool, used to cut groove inside barrel for the head |
| 3. Dutch crown | C. layering of apples, straw, and pallets from which cider is pressed |
| 4. Box iron | D. used to take baked goods from the oven |
| 5. Croze | E. spatula |
| 6. Heater | F. used for pressing clothes |
| 7. Cheese | G. iron hooks from which poultry and fowl were hung |
| 8. Bull's eyed glass | H. soft lead writing implement |
| 9. Hornbook | I. used to remove muddy footwear |
| 10. Traphook | J. element put in the fire for ironing clothes |
| 11. Plummet | K. used to remove meat from a storage barrel |
| 12. Peel | L. children learned their lessons from this in school |

Answers on p. 19

GARDEN WEAR A CENTURY AGO

This 19th century canvas container for small garden tools and equipment becomes an apron when unfolded. Perhaps it anticipates the tool holster carried by construction workers today. Designed for the lady of the house, it seems a little too bulky to be practical. Does any reader have one in the attic? Wouldn't it be better displayed in our museum?





THE GATHERING PLACE



"The Gathering Place" is intended as a department of the magazine housing contributions of an historical slant but short length that might otherwise be lost among the longer pieces. Part of the reason for its being is to persuade members who are not ready to attempt long or deeply researched articles that there is a place and a desire for their notions and comments, however abbreviated.

THE CARRIAGE'S DEMISE

By Richard Kappeler

**From the Oyster Bay Guardian,
June 24, 1904**

A runaway with a ludicrous ending occurred here on Tuesday afternoon. Justice Franklin and Town Clerk Long hired a horse of Liveryman Sniffen with a driver, for the purpose of driving to ...Brookville. Long rode to his boarding house where he stopped for something before driving up for Franklin. He had hardly got in the house when Norman Allen came up behind with an Orient buckboard. The horse did not seem to be frightened until the team had passed when it reared, and turning around went on the sidewalk in front of the John Adam place and started down town. Between the fence and the trees, he soon demolished the wagon and freed himself, when he turned, recrossed the street and started for James M. McQueen's house. The ladies saw him coming and ran screaming to the rear. He ran into the yard and up the steps to the front porch, and here apparently debated...whether he should...call on the ladies or not, but evidently not wishing to enter unannounced, he turned and ran into the back yard...and brought up against the wire fence inclosing Jerrie Van Sise's chicken yard.... Here he was captured. No one was injured, and no serious damage was done except to the wagon and the Adam fence...

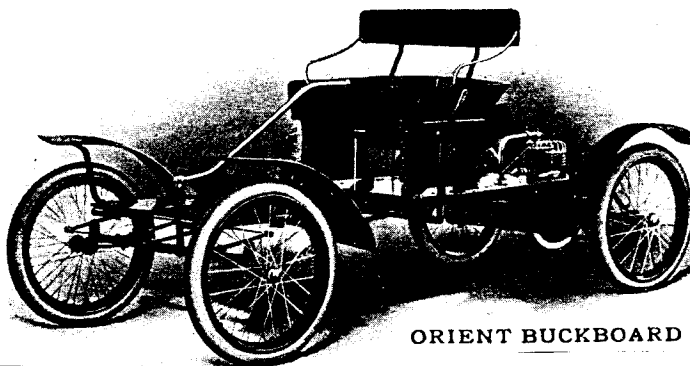
The newspaper reports a "ludicrous" accident wherein a runaway horse climbs the front porch stair and debates a parlor visit with the ladies. The passage of time makes for a perspective which indulges a glimpse of an all

but forgotten part of transportation history.

The photo focuses our attention on the crashed remains of what was probably an older two passenger (circa 1885) Top Buggy which has likely seen better days and has been surrendered as a rental for hire and converted to a Stick seat Runabout by the simple removal of the restricting top and seat assembly and its replacement with the more modern and more roomy open stick seat, seen

dobbin had been lashed to pull the three men in their overladen vehicle.

A careful read of the story tells us something more than apparently even the reporter understood. The real culprit in this scene is not the horse but indeed the accursed automobile. Norman Allen's Orient Buckboard (referred to incorrectly as a team) was not a horsedrawn buckboard type of wagon but actually a smoking, popping, 400 pound, 20



ORIENT BUCKBOARD

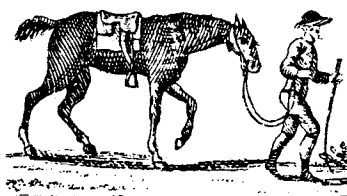
mile per hour, one cylinder, four horse-power horseless carriage. Ballyhooed as "The

up-ended in the foreground. We note the iron tires suited for the dirt roads (which would soon be macadamized) mounted on large (probably 40" front and 44" rear) wooden dished spoke wheels, and the overturned piano type body suspended on elliptic springs. A closer look at the photo reveals the rather heavy step plates to either under side of the body, the awkwardly up-angled remnants of the reach which connect the front and rear axles, the tangled mass of the pivoting fifth wheel assembly for steering the front axle and the broken shafts, now pointing downward, wherein old

Cheapest Automobile in the World" by its maker, the Waltham Manufacturing Corporation of Waltham, MA, it truly was a bargain, selling for some \$375, while the comparable two seater Ford Model A Runabout was more than twice the price at \$850. A brand new carriage, much like the pictured wreck might be had for \$30. The purchase of a horse and his harness was a matter between buyer and seller, and buyer beware.

Elaborate measures were taken to calm the horse and the economically-threatened livery trade of their fears when the

automobile first appeared. Patently absurd laws were legislated, fashioned to discourage automobiling. One such law required automobile owners to walk ahead of their vehicle at night with hand held lamps and flares to warn the oncoming traffic. One early auto maker actually mounted a stuffed horse head to the front of his vehicle to fool the horse. It didn't work.



WHAT'S A MUX?

By Jon Ward

One item among the trade articles making up the price of the earliest Oyster Bay land purchase from the Indians was "thirty Aulne-blades or Muxes". The transaction took place on April 1, 1653 and the sale was recorded in a contract that itemized the articles traded. The word mux is occasionally found in other 17th century Long Island documents, chiefly among listings of tools made in connection with trades with the Indians. The quantities are usually considerable. *A Dictionary of Americanisms* defines mux as: "Any sharp-pointed instrument that may be used, according to its design, for boring holes, spearing fish, etc..." However the origin and precise meaning was apparently unknown to the dictionary-makers. Based on the Oyster Bay example of the word we can expand the dictionary definition a bit. It is reasonable to infer that the instruments

in question were most probably blades of either shoemakers' pointed awls or woodworkers' chisel-ended brad awls. These being already in existence, it would have been unnecessary to make a special and likely more expensive order to the cutlers of Sheffield for a specially designed piece of trade goods. The different applications to which muxes were put suggest that people on the frontiers of civilization and even well within its boundaries were of necessity in the habit of "making do". Even later and right into our own time, handy men and women not so commonly but quite as effectively continue to make do when purse or distance makes a trip to the store undesirable. A fictional but entirely probable account of 18th century frontier life has a young bucket maker grinding his awl to a chisel point in order to excavate the wood from the croze or groove that retained the bottom in a bucket. Doubtless the Native American and the frontiersman used the mux for a multitude of purposes, making for example fish and eel spears, piercers for opening sewing holes in skins, and instruments for carving. The mux's carving role carried on for some time, it would seem. In his *An American Sailor's Treasury*, Frank Shay offers a vocabulary of sailor's speech that includes "mux or muxing....another term for scrimshaw." The entry suggests that the tool name had been transferred to both the product and the process, probably in the 18th or 19th century.

We are left with a question. From what language was mux derived?

THE BALDWIN-HILBERT HOUSE

By Arlene Goodenough

In 1770, the first of many extremely beautiful, well built, large country homes was constructed close by present day Merrick Road in Massapequa. It was named Tryon Hall and was built for Judge Thomas Jones, grandson of Massapequa's original settler, Major Thomas Jones.

A few days before Thanksgiving, 1995, the very last of these stately homes was bulldozed down. It was on the very easterly edge of Massapequa, on the border of Amityville, on the corner of County Line Road. At one point it was a toll booth for South Country Road, (later Merrick Road). For some years it had been unused, obscured by trees and bushes. But the beauty of its gingerbread trim was still apparent. It was three stories high, embellished with six gabled dormers, intricately cut barge-board, and a magnificent front porch. The second and third story windows were arched, double windows, each crowned with elaborately carved trim with a pendant in the middle. Obviously, this was the work of real craftsmen who took a great deal of pride in their painstaking work. Very few people today could afford such labor-intensive, purely decorative work. It was painted white and could be seen from Merrick Road, veiled in vines.

The house was already standing at the end of the Civil War. Purchased in 1873 by Timothy Bald-

continued on p.18

DO THE MATINECOCK STILL OWN THE NORTH SHORE OF LONG ISLAND?

By Gerald A. John Kelly

Readers of *The Freeholder* may have noticed articles in *Newsday* over the past summer regarding efforts by the Matinecock Nation to have a small portion of Caumsett State Park in Huntington set aside for Matinecock use. Their plan is to build a living replica of a Matinecock village for educational purposes, complete with native agriculture, ceremonies, and crafts. State Park Commissioner Bernadette Castro replied that "we do not have the authority under the law to dedicate State lands to the Matinecock Indian Nation for the purposes stated..." Instead, the possibility exists that the Matinecock may have the right under the law to compel New York State to do exactly that.

At about the same time that the *Newsday* articles were published, my children and I were doing research on the Celts of Oyster Bay at the Historical Society of the Massapeguas and came across Governor Lovelace's Executive Committee minutes from the 1660's and 1670's relating to the Matinecock Nation. These minutes are contained in *Executive Council Minutes, Francis Lovelace*, Volumes I and II, published by the State of New York. The index contained in the volumes gives exact page references to issues related to the Matinecock. The minutes demonstrate the following:

The Matinecock once owned the northern half of Long Island from about Jamaica in Queens County to about Hauppauge in Suffolk County. In the early 1660's, the "Men of Hempstead" claimed that Tackepausha, sachem of the Massapeguas, had

sold the land of the Matinecock to the Town of Hempstead on terms that reserved to the Matinecock "a Planting ffield upon the same, when ever they desire it". When the Matinecock protested that Tackapausha had no right to sell their land, he immediately sided with them and "disowned" the sale. (From this I conclude that the English interpreters had failed to accurately inform Tackepausha of what he was signing in the first place.)

John Underhill, well-known for his activities against the Massapeguas during the 1640's, now filed a petition and complaint on behalf of the Matinecock on October 1, 1666 against the Town of Hempstead. By 1669, the facts of the case were clear and the Hempstead men were ordered by the Governor "to prove that (the land of the) Matinecock was really at the disposall of Tackpowsha the Marsapeag Sachem." The inhabitants of Hempstead dropped their appeal in October 1669 (presumably because they could not prove that the above was the case) but they continued to claim Matinecock land which "the Indyans who are reputed the true Proprietors thereof doe absolutely disallow of and disown the same..." as noted by Governor Francis Lovelace in 1671.

Unfortunately, by this time, Lovelace had decided to favor the Hempstead men so that they might "conclude with the Indyans for their Right and Interest in any part of Matinecock Lands not already purchased or disposed of, to the end that the said Land may be manured & improved for the public Good, the said Indyans reserving out of it only a piece of

Land convenient for them to plant themselves." In June 1671, he ordered the Matinecock to "come to this place before mee to make good their Clayme to their Lands, & ... to treat concerning a Settlement ... of which the said Indyans are not to faile as they will answer to the contrary at their perill" (my underline).

In other words, Governor Lovelace's own minutes demonstrate that this was a coerced sale, not a transaction entered into by two parties of their own free will. The Matinecock were told that it was their problem to come up with a settlement of the dispute with the men of Hempstead, even though the Matinecock hadn't initiated the dispute. Failure to resolve the dispute to Hempstead's satisfaction would result in punishment for the Matinecock.

The Matinecock well knew that this threat could mean attack and massacre (as had befallen the Massapeguas only twenty years before), or capture and sale into slavery in the Barbados (the sentence Lovelace had given to Nangemuge of the Montauks in a rape case three years before, and also to leaders of the New Sweden colonists who defied English rule the year before), or arrest and public execution (as Lovelace would proceed to do to some of the Mahicans for rebellion in the succeeding year).

Nevertheless, incredibly, the Matinecock still refused to sell their land (Executive Council Minutes, Francis Lovelace, Vol.II, p.577, for July 11, 1671). Lovelace then ordered Hempstead and the Matinecock to the Court of Assizes. Captain John Seaman (founder of Seaford) and Richard

Gildersleeve appeared for Hempstead and Robert Williams appeared for the Matinecock. The case was heard on October 6, 1671. As it progressed, the Matinecock were alternately threatened and coaxed to sell. Having lost faith in the "Men of Hempstead", they refused to negotiate with anyone but Governor Lovelace as representative of the Province of New York.

Finally, consenting to sell, the Matinecock asked one month's time to agree to a price amongst themselves and "bring in their Demand for the same to the Governor, reserving a Planting field to themselves" (Court of Assizes, vol. II, pp. 259, 260, 277, 280). In this way the land of the Matinecock was sold to New York and not Hempstead. However, I can find no evidence that the required planting field was ever marked out and reserved to the Matinecock.

If my understanding is correct, the 1790 Non-Intercourse Act says that any sales of Native American land after 1790 are invalid unless sold to the Federal Government. (Because the Passamaquoddy and other Cape Cod tribes sold their land after 1790 to individuals, those sales were not valid, and were the basis of the successful Passamaquoddy lawsuit in the 1970's- 1980's.) However, and again if my understanding is correct, sales before 1790 were treated as subject to normal contract law.

Therefore, if the sale of Matinecock land is subject to normal contract law, then it seems to me that either 1) the deal's off and the Matinecock still own a large piece of the north shore of Long

Island because a contract forced at gunpoint is invalid, or 2) the deal's off and the Matinecock still own a large piece of the north shore because the required consideration in the form of the planting field was (as far as I can tell) never paid, or 3) the State of New York, as legal successor to the Province of New York, owes the Matinecock one planting field "convenient for them", "reserved to themselves" and "when ever they desire it" plus 324 years back-rent at compound interest, plus damages.

I'm not a lawyer, so I wonder if my interpretation is correct. Perhaps some readers who are expert in the law could comment.

THE GATHERING PLACE

continued from p. 16

win, a Union Army veteran, his family lived there until 1910. By 1930, it belonged to a man named Brooks, who rented it to a young veterinarian, Kenneth Hilbert. The rent was applied to the purchase price and by 1947, Hilbert owned the house outright.

The original owners had built the house in the southeast corner of a two and one half acre site. Dr. Hilbert and his wife Evangeline turned it into a little Eden with a goldfish pond, separate rose and perennial gardens, black swans, thirty different species of pheasant, peacocks, and spotted fallow deer. Dr. Hilbert was a world renowned expert on poultry diseases and a Director of the Cornell Poultry Laboratory at the State University at Farmingdale. In 1930, there were only three other vets in all of Nassau County. Hilbert was always busy

with the usual veterinary work, as well as the unusual. A short distance from his house on the south side of Sunrise Highway stood Frank Buck's Zoo, for whom Hilbert worked for many years. The doctor's son, Stuart, has many interesting stories to tell of the days when the roar of lions could be heard in Massapequa, and escaped monkeys roamed the woods.

In 1992, Stuart Hilbert sold the house and land to buyers who pledged to restore the house and not tear it down. Unfortunately, the house recently met that sad fate. Now no one can stand in the parlor, look out at Merrick Road and try to imagine what it must have been like when horses' hooves were the only sound of traffic on the road. Only old photographs remain of the last of the old country homes in Massapequa.

Letters to the Editor

continued from p. 2

the reference intact resulting in a seeming description of the first line of the poem as beginning with an iamb. Of course that line does not. To you and any reader confused by the error I apologize.

Elliot M. Sayward

To The Editor:

In *The Corrector*, 1804, believed to have been written by Washington Irving, is the passage, "In the county of Suffolk on Long-Island, lives a man by the name of Hunting; an owner of whaling vessels and a dealer in Blubber." I believe this was

continued on p. 20

AUNT EEK



Olde Things: Advice on the Care & Feeding of Antiques

This is a column about the care and preservation of old things. It is fueled by your questions, and welcomes your thoughts and opinions. There are accepted professional standards as well as a general philosophy about old things that will guide our responses to your queries.

History, Webster tells us, is "A chronological record of significant events, usually with an explanation of their causes." The record of our historical past is in part verified to the present by the existence of surviving material artifacts from the past, collected and preserved by individuals and institutions dedicated to the preservation of these material witnesses to the events that make our history.

The historians' record of an historical subject or event is usually rather like the account of a witness to an incident whose eyes were closed just before the explosion. The interview of those in attendance will likely yield as much confusion as conclusion. Add a hundred years to the pot,

and you have a tasty stew whose exact recipe can never truly be known. Edward Forster said "The historian must have some conception of how men who are not historians behave." We are as interested in the daily life of the peddler as we are of a king. We are as concerned with the proper preservation and care of grandmother's shawl or grandfather's woodworking tools as we are of Booth's derringer.

This column will be devoted to objects. Dimensional, man-made artifacts suffering from the vagaries of time. What to do with them, why we have them, and what we have to learn from them as survivors of the past will guide our comments.

Generally speaking we will be advocating the absolute minimum, reversible treatment for your treasures. We need to know the details of your association with the object so that our advice on what to do for it protects any part of its significance, and we encourage any and all reasons for collecting and researching. If we are dealing with a chair sat on and crashed by Lord Weightworthy in 1787 we will have different views as to its treatment than if Uncle Roughhouse bought the chair last month at Fortunoff and fell from it while changing a lightbulb.

We look forward to the challenges which will come to us and hope to serve you and your antiques with care and consideration. We may not be able to answer all of your inquiries through this column, but we will make a strong effort to not let your questions go unanswered.

ASK UNCLE PELEG

continued from p. 8

The word "whirligig" meaning "a child's plaything" is first recorded in 1440.

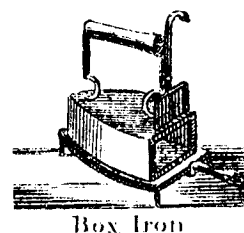
Please send your inquiries and comments to:

Ask Uncle Peleg, (or Aunt Eek) c/o
Editor, The Freeholder
P.O. Box 297
Oyster Bay, New York 11771

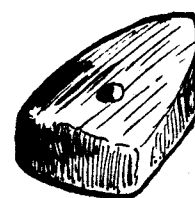
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Answers to quiz on p. 14

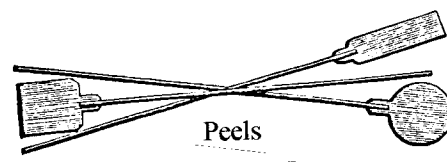
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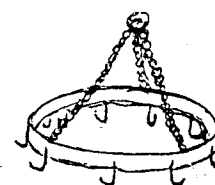
Box Iron



BOX IRON HEATER



Peels



Dutch Crown



Boot Jack

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

JULY EXHIBIT

Take advantage of this last chance to see the current exhibit at the Historical Society's Earle-Wightman House which features the paintings of long-time Society Trustee and popular Oyster Bay resident Frances W. Roosevelt. Many are available for purchase, and a contribution will be made to the Society for each painting sold. Call for more information and hours.

AUGUST EXHIBIT

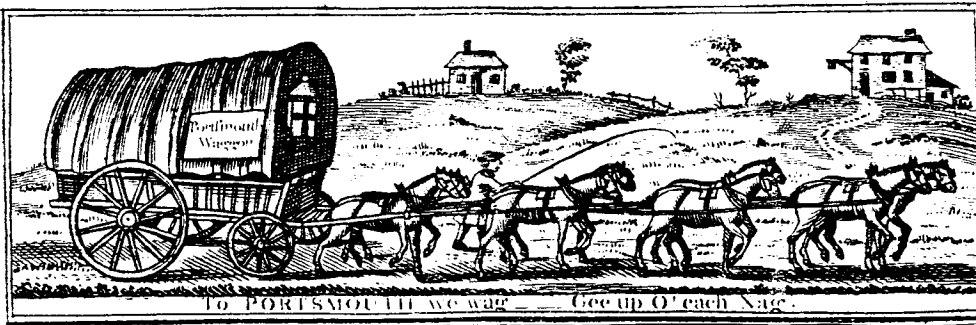
Visit Oyster Bay Town Hall East to see the latest Historical Society exhibit on Oyster Bay's maritime heritage. The exhibit is the first in a series that introduces modern day residents to the craftsmen who built the ships that sailed from Oyster Bay and other ports during the 18th and 19th centuries. Shop signs, tools and the products the craftsmen produced are included.

SEPTEMBER

Sat., Sept. 28, 12-5 p.m.

SECOND ANNUAL OLD-FASHIONED CHILDREN'S FAIR

Join your friends for a fun and educational afternoon at the Earle-Wightman House. Period crafts, rides, games, a farm stand, handicrafts, and loads of activities for the younger crowd will be featured at this enjoyable event which appeals to children of all ages! Reserve your tickets early!



Letters to the Editor

continued from p. 18

Benjamin Hunting, a New York State senator and a supporter of DeWitt Clinton. Is there anything known of his whaling business and his blubber dealing?

Robert Pomeroy

A quick search through the collections of the OBHS failed to turn up anything substantial. Perhaps one of our readers can assist?

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