



THE HOURGLASS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER ~ WILLINGTON

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MARCH MEETING

SLIDE PRESENTATION - SCENES OF
STAFFORD SPRINGS REPRODUCED
FROM OLD POSTCARDS

Date: March 19, 1982

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: Center School

Members of the Stafford Historical Society will present a two-fold program. They will give a talk on the Medicinal Springs of Stafford and show slides of scenes from Stafford taken from old postcards dating back to the late 1800's. This promises to be an interesting program and you are encouraged to bring friends to share this fine presentation.

COMING EVENTS

The Connecticut League of Historical Societies is sponsoring a program on preservation and conservation of textiles and costumes with Jane Hutchins, Conservator at the Textile Conservation Center, Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, North Andover, Mass. After an introduction of the Center's facilities and services there will be an illustrated presentation of basic preservation and conservation techniques.

Date: March 27, 1982 Time: 10:00 A.M.

Place: Connecticut Historical Society
Elizabeth St., Hartford, CT.

MAY MEETING

May 21 - Barbara Shaw will give a talk on the identification and uses of wild flowers and herbs including a colorful slide presentation of local wild flowers

Barbara has researched the uses of wild flowers and herbs and has become a local authority in this area.

JOB'S TEARS

Our thanks to those who responded so quickly to our inquiry about Job's Tears. We have been told that it is a broad-leaved annual, a type of gamma-grass or sesame grass. It's seeds are used to make rosaries among other things. The seeds are available through Burpee's.

Anyone interested may try planting the seeds and, if successful, we could try making necklaces just as Jannie Church did so many years ago.

RECENT GIFTS

Barbara Stawicki of Old Farms Road has given several interesting items to the Society:

1. Two Bibles with family records of Alohus Wallen and John C. Murray. Since both of these families were from Mansfield, the Bibles will be given to the Mansfield Society

with the permission of Barbara Stawicki.

2. Several unidentified pictures.
3. A coffin plate inscribed Leonard Locnis, Age 64.
4. A series of 12 letters written at the close of World War I from Maurice Cushman to his sister, Edith dated from November 4 to December 18, 1918. Maurice was in the Fort Devens Base Hospital at the time and was hoping to get home by Christmas.

A quote from one letter dated Nov. 21, "I shall come home next Sat. if I can possibly get a pass. But don't be disappointed if I don't come because you know we can't always do as we like in the army."

"I had a letter from mother today and she wrote me to be sure and not enlist again. Well I will tell you right now that you need never worry about me doing any such thing as that."

5. Three hand written recipes for Sweet Pickles
Molasses Drop Cakes
Jenny Lind Cake
6. A telephone bill dated Feb. 26, 1923 belonging to Mrs. Merrill Cushman.

WORK DAY

A group of volunteers is needed to organize and catalog our collection of books, to prepare and insert name plates, etc. We will meet on April 17th at 10:00 a.m. at the Old Town Clerks Office.

PEN PICTURES OF WILLINGTON BY JENNIE H. CHURCH AUGUST 21, 1930

"The Home Messenger"

Willington once aspired to the honor of publishing a magazine, which measured nine inches by six inches and had thirty-five pages. The print was good and there were illustrations and a few advertisements. It was published over forty years ago. On the light blue cover was inscribed in gilt letters, "The Home Messenger." A monthly journal of general literature comprising brilliant stories, sketches, beautiful poetry, popular songs, elegant quotations, valuable household recipes, poultry articles,

fashion notes and other things. Published and edited by John D. Taylor, 35 cents a year."

One of the features was a thrilling continued story by the editor, "From the Equator to the Poles; or Sailing through the Air." The Magazine was not published long, owing to lack of patronage, but it was a good little monthly for the time. Mr. Taylor now resides on his farm in Moose Meadow.

Editor's Note: John Taylor also published a newspaper called "The Nation's Hope" which he subsequently changed to "Connecticut Herald", then to "The Voice of the Oppressed" to "Tolland County Advertiser," to "Grape and Cannister" and finally to "Home Messenger". We have four issues of the "Home Messenger" and one "Grape and Cannister".

HISTORY OF WILLINGTON

Work on the history is virtually completed including the organization of pictures, information for the appendix, etc. The next step will be to investigate prices and determine whether we can underwrite the cost.

Letters were sent to all organizations in town requesting pictures and information about dates of organization, history of group, and so forth. Only three groups responded. We did receive some invaluable pictures of East Willington and the old school house which later became the VFW Hall from Merrill Wilson which we had copied for our collection.

RECOLLECTIONS OF LIFE IN WILLINGTON

Mrs. Beatrice Malo Brett has started writing her recollection of life in Willington in the early 1900's and recalls her visits to the Thread Mill, her school life, holidays and special celebrations, the ice works and church suppers. Her contribution is a valuable addition to our historical research. Anyone interested in reading her letters may contact Fatty Robertson or a member of the Society.

COLONIAL HOUSES—SLIDE PRESENTATION IN NOVEMBER.

The Society enjoyed a presentation by Grant Meitzler at the November meeting on examples of colonial architecture throughout New England and especially in Willington. Grant was able to determine the ages of many houses in Willington by their architectural features. Many of the dates have since been confirmed through research.

Grant has generously donated his slides and the information about the houses to the Society, which will be an invaluable source of help when researching houses in town.

LIBRARY CLUB HELPS SOCIETY

The Hall School Library Club under the direction of Ms. Joan Egan, Librarian, is undertaking a project which will be of great help to the Society in its attempt to preserve photographs and to make the photographs we have available to the public.

Students are reproducing the old pictures and putting them on slides so they can be shown to large groups. They are also planning to interview persons in town regarding such things as the Thread Mill, the ice works, button shops, etc. as part of an ongoing Oral History project. Isabel Weigold is acting as advisor to the Club.

CATALOGING HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION.

The Society has a completed card file on all the acquisitions received to date. The library at Hall School has a separate drawer devoted to the Historical Society and its collections so that persons interested in researching Willington's history or wanting to know more about the Society may have access to this file.

TOWN RECORDS PRESERVED

Isabel Weigold completed the organization and typing of the vital records from 1847 to 1877 in September, 1981. This process took over a hundred hours and will result in the preservation of the original records as well as save researchers hours of time in locating records.