



FYLER HOUSE

# Windsor Historical Society News

VOL. II, No. 3

June, 1984

## 80th Reunion

The Society Of Descendants Of Henry Wolcott will descend on Windsor August 3, 4 & 5th, 1984 with headquarters at Dunfey's Sheraton-Tobacco Valley Inn.



## THE ASSOCIATION FOR GRAVESTONE STUDIES

On Saturday, August 4th we will entertain this group with our slide show "Windsor 1633-1983" after they lunch and tour Oliver Ellsworth Homestead. That evening they will have their banquet at Loomis Chaffee School, just a few hundred feet from the original home lot of Mr. Henry Wolcott, Sr.

This group held its annual meeting at a three day conference at Trinity College on June 22, 23 and 24. On Saturday a public forum was held at The Connecticut Historical Society. This is a national organization that is interested in the early stones, their carvers and the preservation of these monuments and works of art. The Old Burying Ground at the rear of Palisado Cemetery was on the Friday tour agenda and I was asked to meet them at 2:30 p.m. and give a walking tour through the old stones.

After church services on Sunday and a visit to the Wolcott stones in the Old Burying Ground, there will be a trip to Litchfield and the home of Oliver Wolcott.

## Wolcott Family



This will complete a busy year for the Wolcotts which started in the Spring when 40 members visited England to tour Tolland Co., Somerset, including the ancestral homestead and village churches with Wolcott connections.

We look forward to their visit.

Stones of interest that I pointed out were the Simon Chapman stone dated 1737 and some 20 others that were carved by an early engraver known only as 'The Bat' because the style of the angel wings resembled bat wings. The Rev. Ephraim Huit stone, the oldest original gravestone in Connecticut (Sept. 4, 1644) that was probably engraved by George Griswold of Windsor--Connecticut's earliest known gravestone carver, the 1749 Elizabeth Bissell stone which is also inscribed in memory of "her father Capt. Roger Neubary who died in the Kings Service in the Spanish Westenges -- 1741" and the only slate stone in the cemetery which was dated 1719.

Another stone reads:

B/W Died Sept. 2, 1680  
What once was writ  
By one upon this stone  
He hears is now washt out  
and lost and gone  
Twas writ hoping in-  
Time he might it find  
not on this stone  
but on the reders minde

continued.....

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# President's Message

Planning has begun on ways to provide increased opportunities for members to participate in activities at the Society. The first of these is outlined in the enclosed letter. Others will be announced in the August issue of the News.

A. B. Hooker



## GRAVESTONE STUDIES.....

I also pointed out the grave-stones of Governor Roger Wolcott 1767, Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth 1807 and closed with the stone engraved:

Nancy Toney  
Born a slave to  
Hezekiah Bradley  
on Greenfield Hill, Conn. was for  
many years in the family of  
Col. James Loomis by whom  
This monument to her fidelity  
is erected -- 1857

Do you remember Daniel & Jessie Lie Farber? A few years ago they presented a program for us on New England gravestones that was very well received and later presented the Society with 23 of Dan Farber's photographs of gravestones from the Old Burying Ground. The Farbers have probably been in every 'Old Burying Ground' in New England. Dan Farber complimented the people of Windsor, saying that we have one of the best kept and maintained Old Burying Grounds in all New England.

*Wm. Pease Shelton*

AN EXTENSIVE ASSORTMENT of  
HATTER'S  
DRY GOODS ARTICLES,  
Of their own importation con-  
stantly on hand.

Hat making was carried on as early as 1800 by Almerin Gillet, who lived in the house on Palisado Ave. now known as the Timothy Phelps homestead (now 204 Palisado Ave.). His shop was in the rear of the house. Apparently his enterprise was successful. Almerin Gillet was an ardent Democrat. His brother-in-law, Shem Stoughton, was a staunch Federalist. When Mr. Gillet presented Mr. Stoughton with a new hat he accompanied his gift with the following rhyme:

"Her's your new hat, Sir,  
Made of skunks and cats, Sir"

and promptly received the following acknowledgement:

"Yes, I see that, Sir,  
Made by a Democrat, Sir"

At about the same time that Mr. Gillet was making hats on Palisado Avenue, William Shelton was engaged in hat making in a shop that stood on Mill Brook a short distance north of East Street in the rear yard of the brick house built by Mr. Shelton in 1830. For several years the business was operated under the name of Pease & Shelton, then in the name of William Shelton until the late 1850's almost to the time of Mr. Shelton's death. They made the familiar top hats that were then in general demand covered with otter, beaver, or nutria (a beaver-like South American animal). Their output went mainly to hat dealers in New York, Philadelphia, and New England cities.\*\*\*

\*\*\*from 'A New History of Old Windsor, Conn.' by Daniel Howard - 1935.

continued.....



The final tally amount to \$835.90 for tools and stock with the shop assessed at \$300.00 for a total worth of \$1135.90.

Included with this collection were many personal papers, including such things as monthly grocery bills of merchandise purchased from the James Loomis store on Broad Street.

The mechanics of organizing these papers involves unfolding, filing chronologically and separating into classifications such as orders, correspondence and business records.

The final goal will be to have this fine collection catalogued and made available as a research tool documenting a successful Windsor business that was carried on from the early to mid-19th Century.

Anyone interested in coming in to our air-conditioned library for a couple of hours to assist in this project would be most welcome.



*Mr. William Shelton*  
*Notary Public*  
*Windsor 1888*

HAT MANUFACTURING IN WINDSOR.....

Nancy Mathews Swain, daughter of the late Arthur and Marion Mathews, recently presented the Society with several thousand documents related to Pease & Shelton and Mr. William Shelton. The manuscripts consist of correspondence and business records relating to the manufacturing of hats for the period 1828-1858. Among the papers is an inventory taken Sept. 25th, 1828. Included are raw materials such as wool, sheep skins, muskrat, beaver, nutria, rabbit, mink, other and raccoon. Among the finished products were: 4 boys wool hats, 68¢; 6 youths hats, steamed and packed, \$9.00; 20 Coney & Muskrat @ \$35.00; 5 Russia & Muskrat @ \$9.35; 6 Palmetto Hats @ \$2.00; 6 damaged hats @ \$11.28 and 2 second hand hats @ \$2.68.

The list went on for 4 1/2 pages listing 35 Bushels of coal @ \$3.50; a dung fork @ \$1.25; 1 coffee mill @ 25¢; 3 gallons alcohol @ \$1.80; Boiler @ \$12.00; steam kettle @ \$2.50; hat irons @ \$3.50; Fire shovel and tongs @ \$1.50.

*Mr. James Shelton*  
*Windsor*  
*James Loomis*





**The Windsor Historical Society**  
**of Windsor, Connecticut 06095**

**Incorporated**

**Windsor Settled in 1633**

**The First English Settlement in the Colony**

June, 1984

TO ALL MEMBERS:

Many of you may have an interest in doing more, as members of the Windsor Historical Society, than attend the four regular meetings each year. You may want to be a part of what goes on "backstage". To encourage such additional participation, specific opportunities will be offered.

The first such opportunity is a monthly workday at the society headquarters which will be open to all interested members. The "workday" will involve work on the collections of the library and museum. It will include such things as repairing and storing garments and textiles, inventorying collections and identifying, labeling and arranging artifacts. It is hoped that each participant will find activities matching his or her interests and skills.

The workday will be held on the second Tuesday of each month from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Those who intend to stay all day should bring a lunch. Beverages will be provided. No reservations are required; just come and join in. The first workday will be on August 14th.

Come if you can.

Sincerely,



A. B. Hooker,  
President

Mrs Samuel T Hinckley  
209 Palisado Avenue  
Windsor CT 06095

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## NEW MEMBERS

Scott Thomas Barber

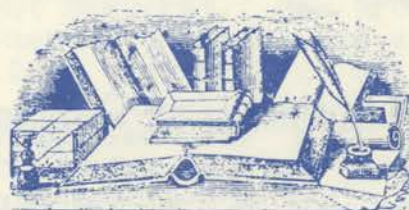
Mary K. Katz



## Archival Workshops

This Spring the State Historical Records Advisory Board and the Connecticut Historical Society sponsored two basic workshops held in five locations around the State for those with a responsibility for documents, photographs, and old books but much of the information such as collection policies, acquisition procedures, environmental conditions, and publicity, applied to museum collections as well.

Your Director attended these workshops which came at a most appropriate time. As you know, the Society is reviewing and developing a new acquisition policy as well as updating our record keeping methods and we have recently received three valuable collections (including William Shelton's) that need processing.



There was no cost to the Society for this workshop as it was underwritten by a grant from the National Historical Publication and Records Commission with additional support from each workshop host institution. Llyn Conrad, who organized and chaired the workshops, made a real contribution to Connecticut's historical community.



### FYLER HOUSE AND WILSON MUSEUM

10 to 12 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m.  
Tuesday through Saturday

April 1 through November 30

Genealogical Research in Library  
By Appointment

203-688-3813

President: Alexander B. Hooker  
Director: Robert T. Silliman