



Westerly's Witness

www.westerlyhistoricalsociety.org

March 2015

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Calendar of Events-Continued



STEAMER RHODE ISLAND WORKING AT THE CAVALRY CHURCH
STRUCTURE FIRE ON ELM STREET
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1905

Calendar of Events

March 22, 2015

Assistant Chief Joseph Fusaro
Westerly Fire Department

"The History of the Westerly Fire Department"



ORIGINAL ENGINE HOUSE (RIGHT) BUILT IN 1856
(PHOTO CIRCA 1887)

April 19, 2015

Ann Snowden Johnson
President

Watch Hill lighthouse Keepers Association
(WHLKA)



"The History of the Watch Hill Lighthouse"

Ann Snowden Johnson will present a descriptive history of the first Watch Hill lighthouse from 1808 to present and will discuss projects facing the association.

**Westerly Historical Society Programs are held in the Carriage House of the
Babcock-Smith House Museum, 124 Granite Street, Westerly, RI.
Sundays at 2:00 P.M. ~~These programs are free & open to the public.**

Editor's Notes

Ann L. Smith

This month we are proud to present a wonderful piece contributed by Thomas E. Wright entitled, "The Mystery of the Bow and Arrow." This article explains how the Westerly Historical Society emblem came to be. It is an interesting bit of research and sheds light on the old question. "Just what does that bow and arrow have to do with anything anyway?"

The conclusion of "Boots, Saddle, to Horse, and Away!" by Tom O'Connell is also included as promised in this issue. I wish to thank both "Toms" for their hard work on these pieces. One other note to our readers: submissions from our members at large are always welcome. Until the 1970s oral presentations accompanied by written essays were required for admittance to the Westerly Historical Society. Even though those days are gone, we would still love to hear from our members. If you have a topic of interest, please email me at whstreasurer@gmail.com.

Plans are underway for our annual dinner which will be held in early May. We are changing the venue and drawing up our agenda while attempting to keep the cost in the "reasonable" range. Look for details next month!

PUBLICATIONS CORNER

HALF-PRICE SALE

Prices Reduced on Two of our
Popular Publications!

Veterans War Stories.....	\$10.00
Tax (RI residents only).....	.70
Shipping.....	<u>5.00</u>
Total.....	\$15.70

Along the Shore.....	\$ 5.00
<i>By Howard Burdick</i>	
Tax (RI residents only).....	.35
Shipping.....	<u>2.50</u>
Total.....	\$ 7.85

Please make your check payable to the
Westerly Historical Society and
mail with your name and shipping address to:
P.O. Box 91
Westerly, RI 02891

"Westerly Bachelors" (Circa 1873)

Editor's note: We continue this anonymous piece from our last issue. We do not know the name of the publication in which it first ran, nor the date. It was published around 1873 judging by the ages of subjects mentioned. Our thanks to Dwight C. Brown for forwarding it.

EDWIN F. HULL

Ah, here you are ladies. Just the one to make a nice and loving husband. Handsome, talented, well-formed, and best of all, plenty of money, to foot the bills with, and doing a very heavy and profitable grocery and dry goods business, on Quarry Hill, in company with his father. About 23 years of age, dresses in the latest style, right up to the match every time and drives a knobby turnout. Reported to have made \$15,000, clear of all expenses, at the store, during only last year. A great catch, ladies. Angle for him sharp, make an elegant match, and never want for a luxury, or sigh for an allowance of "pin money," as "Phil" is as liberal as he is handsome.

FRANK BRAYTON

"There goes handsome Frank," is a remark often heard among the maidens hereabouts, and it is no wonder they say so when he is possessed of so many fine qualities. He is 25 years old, 5 feet in height, weighs 143 pounds, and sports a beautiful black moustache. Occupation: a mechanic. With a kind and genial disposition, he is a favorite with all, especially the ladies. A lucky girl that catches him.

OTIS CHAMPLIN

Age 28, medium height, good build, dark hair, moustache and chin whiskers. He is a dealer in coal and wood, is very jolly, never gives offence, but likes fun as well as any one. He is much admired by many a fair one who smiles on him in vain. The young lady who is successful in bringing him to her feet and leading him to the altar will never regret this step. So far as his financial condition is concerned, it can be said with safety that he has been saving, and that his investment will produce a fine income.

EVERETT WATROUS

This young gentleman has been about 25 years in this wicked world, stands 6 feet in his socks, weighs 156 pounds, very good looking, has rosy cheeks, and by profession a superior mason. Everett has very good habits, and his future prospects are very promising. He is very bashful among ladies, and seldom associates with them. A good catch, ye fair maidens.

(Continued on page 7)

The Mystery of the Bow and Arrow

By Thomas E. Wright

At our monthly meeting just before the 100th anniversary of the Westerly Historical Society (WHS), our board was puzzled in regard to our logo. Seen in the picture below it contains a bow and arrow as well as the date of the founding of the WHS in 1913. We could not figure out why a bow and arrow were depicted. It could be a general reference to the Indians who lived in and around Westerly, but why was that selected by the founders of the WHS to be part of the logo? The answer ironically is found in a book written by Mary Agnes Best (“Molly”) published by the Westerly Historical Society in 1943.



Molly Best resided in North Stonington in 1936 when she was commissioned to publish a book in celebration of the tercentenary of the founding of Rhode Island. The title of her work is *The Town that Saved a State – Westerly*. Miss Best passed away in 1942 but the WHS at the time decided to take on the responsibility of publishing it. Her book describes in detail the early days of Westerly and of particular note, the relationship and interaction between the white settlers of Rhode Island with the native tribes in Roger Williams’s day circa 1636 through King Phillip’s War of 1675.

The early Puritans who arrived with the Mayflower left Great Britain through Holland to escape religious intolerance. Yet, these same “purists” would accept no one into their religious communities who disagreed with their dogma any way. Roger Williams and many others were driven out of the Bay Colony for this very reason. It was Roger Williams who established the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in 1636.

Prior to the landing of the Mayflower in 1620 the Indian population was very high. Camps comprised of many tribes occupied all of New England, primarily along the coast. The arrival of fishing vessels plying the waters around Cape Cod brought the plague to coastal tribes and decimated the population during this time period. The Narragansett tribe that was based in

Rhode Island off the waters of Narragansett Bay escaped this decimation and thrived. The population of the Narragansetts at the time was estimated to be about 30,000. The other main tribes in the area were the Pokanokets, the Massachusetts, and the Pequots. These tribes aligned themselves with the Puritan Bay Colony against the Narragansetts and the “radical” white settlers who were colonizing Rhode Island.

Enter now into our story the sachem chiefs Miantinomi and his uncle, Canonicus. Both were chiefs of the Narragansett tribe during the period of settlement under Roger Williams in 1636 and thereafter. Williams was accepted by the Narragansetts and given a deed by them to settle in the area of Providence Cove. Through the years Williams later received deeds to occupy Portsmouth, Newport, Warwick, and soon after, Westerly. It is in that deed to Roger Williams that the mystery of the bow and arrow is solved. Quoting from Miss Best’s book

The powerful Narragansetts were then in possession of all the land within the present state of Rhode Island. We have Roger Williams’s word for it, that the land for settlement was a gift to him personally, for which he returned gifts more than equivalent to the selling price. Money could not have bought it; he was welcomed as a desirable neighbor. Two years after landing it was conveyed to him by formal deed, signed by the bow of Conanicus and the arrow of Miantinomi.

The bow and arrow of these great sachems is depicted today on the logo of the Westerly Historical Society. The image on the following page is one of the actual deed showing the bow and arrow previously described.

But why would the Westerly Historical Society adopt these symbols and not, for example, the Rhode Island Historical Society since it was in essence as statewide deed? The answer comes some thirty years later in 1666. Miantinomi was killed in 1643 by Uncas of the Mohegan tribe mainly for his support for the English settlers and his contempt for the Bay Colony. His son Canochet would become sachem of the Narragansetts from then until the King Phillip War of 1675. In 1666, a group of Newport

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The Mystery of the Bow and Arrow

(Continued from previous page)

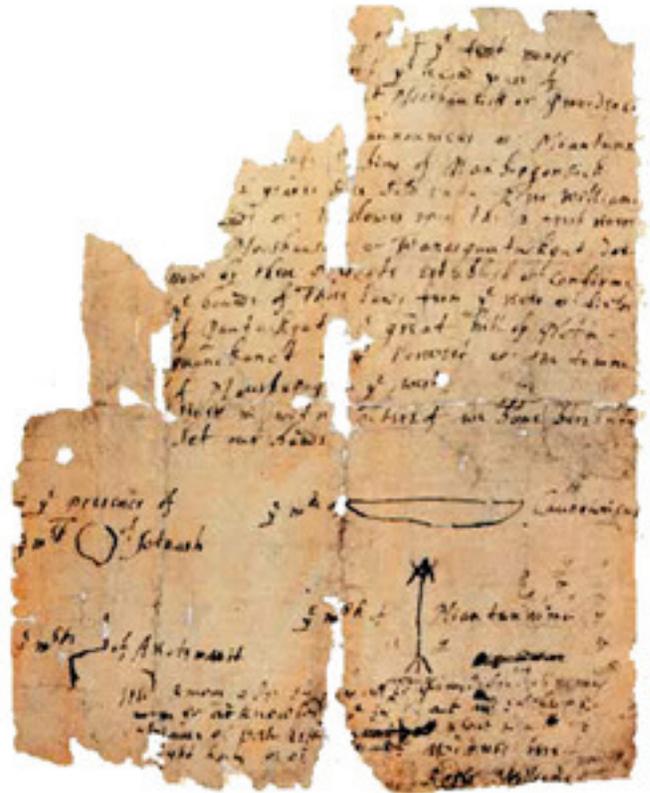
businessmen purchased a ten by twenty-mile parcel of land from Socho, a captain of the Narragansetts. This parcel, named Misquamicut by Roger Williams, comprised tracts of land that are now Westerly, Richmond, Charlestown, and parts of Hopkinton. The name “Westerly” likely came from the Newport group since the land was pretty much due west of Newport. This part of our state was in a constant state of turmoil since the Pequots in Connecticut, and later the white settlers of Connecticut, claimed it was their land as well as the Narragansetts.

The deed from Socho would provide legal proof in later years that Westerly was a legal jurisdiction and indeed part of the State of Rhode Island. The sale was challenged by Chief Ninigret who we honor today with a statue in Watch Hill. His claim was refuted by the widow of Miantinomi and, quoting again from Miss Best’s book,

“Whereas my Uncle Ninegrad (Ninigret) sayeth that it is his land, I Wawaloam do utterly deny before all men, for it was my husband, Miantinomi, and my uncle, Conanicus long before the English had any war with the Pequots. Therefore, I, Wawaloam do really confirm it, and affirm it to be Socho’s land.” Pessicus, brother of Miantinomi, signed a similar statement.

In 1883, the Rhode Island Historical Society named a Providence committee to render belated “public honors to the memory of Conanicus.” In digging a sewer a symmetrical granite boulder was unearthed. Reverend Fredrick Denison of Westerly spied it and secured it for the Indian Memorial. As stated by the committee, “If there had been no Conanicus, the light of Rhode Island’s history through Roger Williams might never have cast its bright and cheering rays upon a then half civilized age.”

In 1913 the founders of the Westerly Historical Society recognized the contribution of these great sachems and made their legacy part of the logo that we use today.



Deed to Roger Williams signed by the bow of Conanicus and the arrow of Miantinomi. The transcribed text appears below.

“AT NANHIGGANSICK, THE 24TH OF THE FIRST MONTH, COMMONLY CALLED MARCH, IN YE SECOND YEARE OF OUR PLANTATION OR PLANTING AT MOOSHAWICK OR PROVIDENCE.

MEMORANDUM, THAT WE CANNAUNICUS AND MIANTUNOMI, THE TWO CHIEF SACHEMS OF NANHIGGANSICK, HAVING TWO YEARES SINCE SOLD UNTO ROGER WILLIAMS, YE LANDS AND MEADOWES UPON THE TWO FRESH RIVERS, CALLED MOOSHAUSICK AND WANASQUTUCKET, DOE NOW BY THESE PRESENTS, ESTABLISH AND CONFIRME YE BOUNDS OF THOSE LANDS, FROM YE RIVER AND FIELDS AT PAUTUCKQUT, YE GREAT HILL OF NOTQUONSKANET, ON YE NORTH-WEST, AND THE TOWN OF MAUSHAPOGUE ON YE WEST. AS ALSO, IN CONSIDERATION OF THE MANY KINDNESSES AND SERVICES HE HATH CONTINUALLY DONE FOR US, BOTH WITH OUR FRIENDS AT MASSACHUSETTS, AS ALSO AT QUINICKICUTT AND APAUM OR PLYMOUTH, WE DOE FREELY GIVE UNTO HIM ALL THAT LAND FROM THOSE RIVERS REACHING TO PAWTUXET RIVER; AS ALSO THE GRASS AND MEADOWES UPON YE SAID PAWTUXET RIVER. IN WITNESS WHEREOF WE HAVE HEREUNTO SET OUR HANDS.

YE MARK OF + CANNONNICUS.
YE MARK OF + MIANTUNNOMI.”

Boots, Saddle, to Horse, and Away!

By Thomas A. O'Connell

(Part Two of Two)

Imitation is the highest form of flattery. In the June 1930 issue of *Seaside Topics* and succeeding weekly issues appeared an advertisement challenging the Watch Hill Riding and Polo Club's dominance in the business-

THE FLETCHER RIDING SCHOOL

On the Bradford-Weekapaug Road

Stalls Available

Miles of Riding Paths

The Watch Hill Riding and Polo Club rose to meet the competition by adding more horse stalls and fitting out an old garage with more of the same. Mr. Ray Tupper replaced William Olsen as the new manager and riding instructor. Tupper brought in or recruited 17 more horses to the club's herd. Several more members and their mounts also joined the club. Among those who brought their own horses to the club were Harold Moore and Thomas Moore of Westerly.

Golf, tennis, motor and sail boating dominated the *Seaside Topics*' columns in 1930 Watch Hill season.

Plans were made for the 3rd Annual Horse to be held in early August of that year. Miss Harriet Cottrell won a hoard of ribbons (two blue, three red, two yellow – 1st, 2nd & 3rd places) at that horse show. Thus ended the 1930 season at the WHR&PC.

In June of 1931 Arthur L. Perry and the Westerly zoning board decreed "that Watch Hill Road will be practically devoid of advertising sign boards." This according to a report given at the Westerly zoning board that month. The Watch Hill Riding and Polo Club drew very little notice in the 1931 issues of the *Seaside Topics*. Several of the usual races were run. Miss Carolyn Gatch and Miss Denise O'Brien garnered some prizes. However, more competition for the Watch Hill Riding and Polo Club made itself known in *Seaside Topics* – the Shore Road Riding Stable opened in July with William C. Olsen as the manager and riding master. He had recently retired from the Watch Hill Riding Lodge. Olsen offered essentially the same instructions as he had formerly.

SHORE ROAD RIDING STABLE

Private Lessons, One Pupil with Master \$5.00

Beautiful bridle paths for riding exclusively and safe for children.

The year 1931 closed with the Watch Hill Riding and Polo Club's annual horse show.

The 1932 season, too, saw little reported of the Club's activities. Its annual horse show was held at the Lewis Farm in Ashaway. The horse show drew a decent crowd, but the show seemed to have lost its flair and spirit. To entice fans a steeple chase and a drag hunt were added. Arthur Cottrell's 30 year old horse, Governor, showed that he could still perform the nine gaits, *i.e.*, walk, trot, several paces, canter, and gallop.

The early June 1933 issue of *Seaside Topics* told horse lovers that they would be pleased to learn of a new addition to their riding facilities "in the opening of the Watch Hill Hunt Club, located on Shore Road at the former Oaks Inn property." In its large 2-3 column displays the Hunt Club indicated that it was a "branch of Hunt View Farms of Bryn Mawr, Pa." The club was now part of an out-of-state corporation. Karl Whittindale would run the place. "Mr. Whittindale's outstanding abilities as a trainer and instructor were sought for the benefit of Watch Hill riders to build up a following for the sport here." It would appear that both gratitude and loyalty were not attributes on which riding masters could depend. The Hunt Club was out of business by the end of the following year.

Under a new lease with Dr. John Champlin, Joseph Grills and Dominic Nigrelli reopened The Oaks Inn in 1935 as an "attractive tavern." Diners were offered lobster, steak, chicken, and shore dinners. The new partners added some space to the dining facilities, but the idea of an equestrian center was over.

There seem to be several reasons why the Watch Hill Riding and Polo Club was not able to survive: the economic losses of the Great Depression,

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Boots, Saddle, to Horse, and Away!

(Continued from previous page)

increased competition from rival venues, and a falling off of interest in the sport by the founders of the club itself. Perhaps, if one were to wander through those woods and overgrown bridle paths a red arrow painted on a rock would still guide the hiker back to Shore Road.

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The *Seaside Topics* 1928-1935 issues were the sources for names and places mentioned in this article.

Many thanks to **Jim McCormick**, my primary muse for this narrative.

Also, **Bob Watz** for the valuable background information he provided.

Miss Abby Parsons of Allie's Tack Shop, Quaker Lane, North Kingstown for the details of equestrian attire, and

Samuel Kuzu, my grandson, who unbaffled this text when my computer nearly drove me nuts.

---T.A.O.



“STEAMBOATS OF THE PAWCATUCK RIVER”

EXHIBIT COMING TO THE BABCOCK SMITH HOUSE MUSEUM IN MAY

Ever since Carolyn Burkhardt’s framed prints of nineteenth-century steamboats took their places on the walls of the newly-renovated carriage house, folks have been gazing upon them with interest. This beautiful collection of images was donated to the Westerly Historical Society by Ms. Burkhardt upon the closing of her popular restaurant, The Mermaid Café.

The nine photographs represent the essence of life on the Pawcatuck River between 1878 and 1905. Most of the vessels in these photographs were built by George Greenman and Company, which maintained shipbuilding operations in Mystic, Pawcatuck, and Westerly during that period. Orlando Smith Jr. had a financial interest in at least five of these boats and several were named for his female relatives.

In May of this year, the five boats in which Orlando Smith was most closely involved will be the subject of a museum exhibit entitled, “Steamboats of the Pawcatuck River.” Along with informational placards, visitors will be able to view some of the original documents and artifacts related to these ships. All of the boats pictured in the collection were documented in a 1932 Westerly Historical Society publication by Everett Barns and Herbert A. Babcock entitled, *History of Pawcatuck River Steamboats*. Many other well-known steamboats of that era such as the *Ella*, the *Belle*, and the *Tiger Lily* were written about in that volume and we have used this book as a valuable resource during our research.

We hope you will take the time to visit the Babcock Smith House Museum this summer and enjoy all that it has to offer. Museum tours are free to members of the Westerly Historical Society and you can find directions and hours of operation at

www.babcocksmithhouse.org

Westerly Bachelors

(continued from page 2)

WILLIAM PEARCE

Willie is a sweet looking fellow, sweet on the girls and they are sweet on him, and he would make a sweet husband. His age is 29, and he has dark hair and a moustache. Is well off, a mason by trade, and has been dealing in real estate to a considerable extent of late, worth about \$25,000. Young ladies you should note down this young man's address in case of reference. He is fluent in conversation, of good appearance, and attentive to business. He is said to be traveling toward the matrimonial goal at a tremendous pace, and perhaps before the pale goddess of night again shows a silver quarter in the starry canopy, Billy may be reckoned with the lost -- bachelors.

ROLLIN NOYES

Is a good looking fellow of 28, medium height, fair build, his graceful form and winning ways are very fascinating, especially to the young ladies who notice that he carries a cane and sports a beautiful pair of side whiskers of the blonde order. He dresses well, and is a son of his parents, living on West Broad street. Is of good appearance and very attentive to -- well Rolly is out of business just now. He possesses all the dignity of the ancestral family combined with the pleasant freedom of our American education. Steady, with no bad habits, no girl, good catch.

WILLIAM RANDALL

Age 24, tall, stout build, blonde hair and moustache, is interested in the firm of Denison & Co., jewelers, Broad Street. He is very polite and attentive to business. Here is a model moral young man. Willie likes the girls but is very bashful. He has enough to support a wife.

JAMES E. SISSON

James has had the experience of nearly 37 winters in the struggle of life and the raising of Pekin ducks, &c. , and still he is not happy. He is rather inclined to the fair sex, but as yet never found the particular one who would be chosen to wander with him hand in hand through the highway of life. He is of good build, about 5 feet 10 inches in stature, with auburn chin whiskers and moustache. On the street his hat generally covers his eyes, he is fluent in conversation, as he has studied law, but we have not heard of him as yet being admitted to the bar. James

is in the soap business at present and very attentive, he realizes a large income. He loves the girls, steady fellow, and a good catch.

DENNIS DOLLERY

Without a doubt the fairest specimen of a bachelor that inhabits the whole of Washington County. He is about 60 years of age, short, thick set, smooth face, dark hair, dark complexion, is known by his friends as "Black Denny." Thinks he would make a model husband, but none of the fair sex seems to appreciate his good looks, loud clothes, and many other good qualities. Worth \$20,000 or more cash. Years gone by Denney could be seen six days in the week driving from one to three yoke of oxen through the streets, wending his way to the depot with stone from the granite quarries of Orlando Smith, of which even to this day he takes a great interest in. He fancies no girl in particular. Delays are dangerous; don't wait too long Denney.

FRANK HOLMES

Is of another order, and may possibly have two negative qualities, but somewhat doubtful. Of medium height, good build, and smiling ways, about four-and-twenty, and prefers Mars, the god of battles, to Bacchus the god of bottles. He's a very polite bachelor, if he isn't handsome. He deals in carpets, oil cloths, and shows the ladies how patent curtains and window shades "pump up," as though by magic-wand, and "come down" rather mysteriously! He likes to wander about on Quarry Hill by moonlight and admire pyramidal tops!

CHARLES MORGAN

And have we not in our midst, a young and genial sailor bachelor? Only 25, attractive, good-looking, and winsome; always ready to receive a *billet-doux* full of Beecher-true-inwardness*. He's "traveled" sufficient to satisfy his inexperienced heart that there's always a woman at the bottom of man's difficulties. Sentimental maidens, play shy.

(Editors note: a quick Internet search shows that this gentleman was not the person for whom the sailing vessel "Charles W. Morgan" was named; nor was he the son of Charles W. Morgan.)

**Billet-doux here meaning "love-letter."* *"Beecher-true-inwardness" is a reference to the Beecher-Tilton sex scandal of the late 1860s.*

(To be continued in April, 2015)

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
The Westerly Historical Society
P.O. Box 91
Westerly, RI 02891



WESTERLY BACHELORS – SPOTLIGHT ON THE WHIPPLE FAMILY

JOSEPH AND EVERETT WHIPPLE

Two very handsome and attractive young brother bachelors, both in the "twenties." Both superior carpenters, and plenty of money in the bank. Two good catches for some lucky couple of Mother Eve's family, so play sharp girls. Joseph and Everett are both good moral young men, with no bad habits or petty vices. Are the sons of our popular sheriff, and at present employed by C. Maxson & Co., architects and builders.

Joseph and Everett Whipple's father, Sheriff Whipple, later became Judge Henry Whipple and was Westerly's beloved magistrate for many years. Although Judge Whipple never held a law degree, he was revered and esteemed by all who knew him. He died of a sudden heart attack on June 3, 1898. In addition to his two sons, Joseph and Everett, he left a wife, Mary (Spicer) Whipple and a daughter, Mary Edith Whipple Burke.

Joseph H. Whipple married Ella Hammett in 1884

and had two children, Bernice E. and Mary M. After leaving the Maxson Company, he worked as a pattern-maker for C. B. Cottrell & Company of Westerly.

Everett E. Whipple also left the Maxson Company to work as a pattern maker for C. B. Cottrell & Company and was foreman of his department. He joined the Rhode Island Militia in 1873 and eventually rose to the rank of colonel, having served in the Spanish-American War. He was appointed aide-de-camp of the staff of Governor George H. Utter in 1906.

Everett E. Whipple married Annie L. Campbell on February 24, 1877. She died on March 23, 1890. He later married Mrs. Lizzie Clarke Randolph on September 21, 1904. Everett Whipple served as chairman of the town committee for many years, was moderator of the school district, and later the moderator of the fire district. We was the secretary of the Westerly Savings Fund and Loan Association, (where his father had served earlier as president) and lived at 49 Elm Street in Westerly.