

NEW LONDON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2010

Twenty Five Years of Crime in New London Police Record Book 1854-1880 Donated to Historical Society

The police record book listing every individual arrested for a crime in New London beginning in 1854 and continuing through 1880 has just been donated to the historical society. Essentially rescued from the trash as New London Police headquarters was in the process of being moved from its North Bank (formerly Bradley Street) location to its new building on Union Street (now the Stanton Building) in the 1950s, the book is simply an amazingly rich source of information.

Examining the crimes, there is an abundance of drunkenness, keeping a house of ill fame, visiting a house of ill fame, breach of the peace, and obtaining liquor under false pretenses; but in many respects it is surprising how quiet New London appears. The first page covers July, August and September of 1854 — there are only ten entries for all of August. But on that first page, two thefts were by boys, one nine years old, both of whom were sent to the State Reform School in Meriden for two years, their “term” and “place of imprisonment.”

There are a host of research projects that this one source can provide the data

for. Although it’s doubtful we’ll ever know the difference between intoxication, drunkenness, common drunk, and intemperance (all of which appear). And we can only imagine why Thomas Slate was arrested for stealing a sailboat in 1855. (His father’s portrait looks down upon us in the reading room.)

One of the first steps in mining this data will be a transcription of the text into a spreadsheet so that the information can be sorted and analyzed. Joan Prentiss,

one of our regular volunteers, has already begun this process. Fortunately, the handwriting is quite legible.

This may be a source of genealogical information that some people may not want to see ... but comparing the names listed to the city directory would be one way to determine if many of the people were transient or settled, and what neighborhoods predominate relative to various sorts of crimes.

Konstanty Bucko joined the New London police force in 1939, retiring as a Detective Lieutenant in 1982. Mr. Bucko died in 2003 and his wife died just this year. His son William, cleaning out his parents’ house, recognized the value of this ledger and donated it to the historical society (for which we are very grateful).

You may want to come see what some of your ancestors were up to. And keep the historical society in mind when you go sorting through your old documents or begin clearing out the attic and closets.



Police headquarters on North Bank Street

"Ye Towne's Antientest Buriall Place" The Adams Family, Part II

In the last newsletter, we looked at the Rev. Mr. Eliphalet Adams, his wife, Lydia Pygan, and her parents. This time we'll cover the Adams children and their children. Not all of these have stones in the Antientist Burial Ground.

Eliphalet and Lydia Adams had six children. The youngest two of them died in infancy, and have no stones. The oldest child was William, born Oct. 7, 1710. He graduated from Yale in 1730 and tutored there for two years. Among the Adams papers at the Shaw Mansion is a list of the 31 books William "put up to carry to Colledge Nov. 5th, 1726." These include Latin and Greek grammars and Bibles and "observations on the present state of Turkey." The next year he took another 23 books. After the tutoring stint, William was licensed to preach, which he did in various parishes for over 60 years, with the longest stretch being on Shelter Island. He never accepted a call to a church, and was therefore never ordained. William had preached frequently at New London after the death of his father, but was not called. Joshua Hempstead notes (Feb. 23, 1756) *att the Society meeting about Settling a minister. Mr adams was Negatived 45 against him & 42 for him. . .*

After his many years of preaching, William retired to New London, where he lived in the house of his widowed sister-in-law, Anne. Frances Caulkins, writing in 1849, says, "Some persons now living remember him well. He was short and stout; wore a white wig and a cocked hat; and when walking about the town, was usually arrayed in a black study-gown, confined by a belt. Fond of so-

cial enjoyment and domestic repose, he would often drop in to take tea with some staid matron. . . Still, he never forgot that he was a minister. . . . He delighted to ramble into the country, . . . he was fond of angling. But he never left a house without prayer and exhortation. . . ."

William died Sept. 25, 1798, aged 87. "It is said that he often congratulated himself on never having been incumbered with wife or parish." (HNL) His stone is with the family group in the burial ground.

Thomas, the youngest son of Rev. Eliphalet and Lydia, was baptized Jan. 4, 1716. Joshua Hempstead summed up his life: (May 17, 1754) *toward night I Rid up to the funeral of Samll adams a Child of 8 yr old, Son of Thos adams of Easthaddam who was the youngest Son of our Late minister Mr adams Decd. Sd Thomas was brot up att our Colledge [Yale, 1737] & Lived a while with his Brother in Law ye Late Colln Bulkeley of Colchester & Learned of him to be a Doctor of Physick & married at Easthaddam to a Daughter of the Revd Mr Hosmer the minister there by whom he had 4 Children. 3 died young. at length She Died & left only this Samuel and the Sd Thomas after Some time married again but Died Soon after & this his only child was brot hither to be brot up with his 2 uncles. but now Thomas is gone & all his offspring.* There is no stone for Samuel in the burial ground, and Thomas is buried in East Haddam.

The *Brother in Law* with whom Thomas studied was the second husband of his only sister Mary. She was born March 5, 1714. As Hempstead said on hearing the news of her death Jan. 24, 1750: *She was . . . first Married to Mr Jonathan Gardiner*

of ys Town from Gardners Island by whom She had one Son only. her first husband was lost at Sea, & She bath had 5 Children by Colln Bulkeley & Died with the Dropsie this day about one of the Clock. aged I Suppose about 34 or 5. She is buried in Colchester.

The middle son of Rev. Eliphalet and Lydia was named Pygan, his mother's maiden name. These days it is usually pronounced "pie-gan," but variant spellings show it was pronounced "piggin" in the eighteenth century. Pygan was born Mar. 27, 1712, and lived his whole life in New London. He became a gold- and silversmith, as well as a merchant. He sold buttons several times to Hempstead, and once mended his watch mainspring. Caulkins says that Pygan made "many

(Continued on page 4)

New London County Historical Society Incorporated 1870

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G'day from Australia from President Deborah and City Historian Sally Ryan

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We have had some interesting adventures these last few weeks and have visited places that remind us of New England, and at least one that held a surprising artifact from the days of the last of the whalers.

Last week we visited the port of Eden in New South Wales. This was one of the more interesting whaling cities in the Antipodes. The town is situated on Two-fold Bay, so-called because it has two sides divided by a small peninsula – sort of an E shape facing east. Southern Right Whales, Blue Whales and Humpback Whales all migrate past here southbound to Antarctica in the summer (our winter) and the reverse in the winter (our summer) to warmer northern climes.

In the 19th century, the fishermen who settled here learned from the local Aboriginal population (who had been whaling here for thousands of years) that they could enlist the services of the local Orca (Killer) Whale population in hunting the migrating Humpbacks and Rights! The Orca pods would locate a lone whale and “herd” it into the bay for the whalers who would launch their boats from shore, harpoon the whale and kill it as whalers normally would from ships. The Orcas would be given the lips and tongue of their deceased prey to eat, after which the whalers would haul the carcass to shore for cutting in and trying out.

When I first heard this story I thought it was a myth. Not so. Very true. In fact, there was a legendary Orca, named “Old Tom” by the locals, who seemed to lead all the local pods of Killers. When he and his group found a likely whale he would swim into the bay and alert the local population by whacking his tail and flippers until they were roused to launch their boats. If, after the harpoon was set into a hunted whale, the chase was taking too long, Tom would get the line in his teeth and pull the whale under! Old Tom was found dead one sad day in 1934, and his skeleton now resides in a place of honor in the Eden Whaling Museum. The teeth on the left side of his jaw clearly show the wear and tear from rope pulling. Hard to believe. Yet, after his death, the Orcas disappeared from Eden and whaling ceased. Now it is a whale watching capital. Whales may be seen clearly in the Bay during migration season, but alas, Sally and I joined several other people in scanning the horizon for several hours to no avail. Good pictures were taken of water however.



Eden was just one of the many interesting sites we visited. And lest I forget, the surprise: Spending an afternoon at the Heritage Farm at Churchill Island, Victoria, the summer estate of a wealthy, influential 19th century family, we found in front of the house, a cannon from the *Shenandoah*, the notorious Confederate raider who sailed the seas during our Civil War in search of our Yankee whalers. The *Shenandoah* visited Melbourne in February 1865 and was feted by the locals. The cannon was a gift to the owner of the farm. We can talk about this later. The cannon story may be apocryphal, but the whale story is NOT.

See you in December!

~ Deborah Donovan

The Adams Family Part 1 (continued)

(Continued from page 2)

voyages to the West Indies, as owner and factor of valuable cargoes of country produce.” Besides his commercial activity, he was an officer in the militia, becoming captain of the second company by 1745; a judge of probate; a deputy to the General Assembly; and a deacon of the Congregational Church. Pygan married Anne Richards on June 7, 1744. He was 33, she 16. They had seven children, six of whom survived to adulthood. There is a stone in the family area of the burial ground for Lydia, who “died Septemb. ye 2, 1751, aged 2 Mo & 6 Days.” Following common practice of the time, a later daughter was also named Lydia.

Both Pygan and Anne are buried in the family area, but the front of Anne’s stone has spalled completely with time. She died Jan. 8, 1809, aged 83. Pygan’s stone commemorates not just him, but also his three sons:

In memory of Pygan Adams, Esq., who died July 1776 aged 64; and of his three Sons: William, who died at St. Pierres, Martinico, April 4, 1778, aged 33; Alexander Pygan, who was lost at sea, in the year 1782, aged 35; and Thomas, who died in the Island of St. Martins Sep. 8th, 1815, aged 55.

The first two sons died unmarried during the Revolution. William first served in the army, at the siege of Boston. After that he joined a privateering vessel, and died at Martinique. Alexander Pygan was purser of the ship *Trumbull*, and was lost at sea. Thomas also apparently was never married, so the name of this branch of the Adamses was lost.

Pygan and Anne’s daughters are not bur-

ied in the old burial ground, but all three married and lived long lives, surviving their husbands and some of their children. Anne married John Champlin and they later moved to Baltimore, where she died April 6, 1838, aged 89. Her sisters remained in New London. Elizabeth married Thomas Pool, and died Oct. 21, 1845, aged 92. The NLCHS has a letter she wrote describing the burning of the town by Arnold and his troops. Lydia married Robert Hallam, and died eight days after her sister, on Oct. 29, aged 88. Elizabeth and Lydia lived together after their husbands’ deaths. They were apparently well loved locally. As Caulkins put it, “To this venerated shrine [the sisters’ house] the young went, as on a pilgrimage, to learn the history of the past, or to gain treasures of wisdom from the rich stores of experience.” They are both buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery.

~Patricia M. Schaefer

References:

Caulkins, Frances Manwaring, *The History of New London, Connecticut to 1860.*

Escape the "DEN" Speaker Series

New this winter is a speaker series hosted and sponsored by the B. P. Learned Mission of Child and Family Agency, and co-sponsored by the Public Library of New London, NLCHS and New London Adult Education.

January 27th: Nicholas G. McDonald – “Jurassic Valley: Connecticut during the Age of Dinosaurs.”

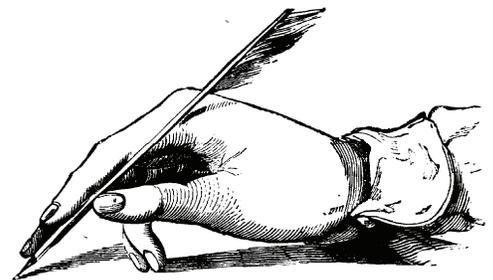
February 10th: Philip Devlin – The Thames waterfront and Connecticut during WWI.

New London, CT: New London County Historical Society, 2007

Caulkins, Frances Manwaring, *Memoir of the Rev. William Adams, of Dedham, Mass., and of the Rev. Eliphalet Adams, of New London, Conn. by Miss F.M. Caulkins.* 1849. Metcalf and Company, Cambridge, Mass.

Hempstead, Joshua, *The Diary of Joshua Hempstead, 1711-1758.* New London, CT: New London County Historical Society, 1999.

Prentis, Edward, *Ye Antient Buriall Place of New London, Conn.* New London: Press of the Day Publishing Co., 1899. (Quotations of gravestone markings.)
Schaefer, Patricia M., *A Useful Friend: A Companion to the Joshua Hempstead Diary 1711-1758.* New London, CT: New London County Historical Society, 2008.



War of 1812 Exhibit Planning Begins

The Connecticut Humanities Council has announced the award of a \$30,000 grant to fund the planning of a bicentennial exhibit on the War of 1812 and its effects on Connecticut and the region. Scheduled to open just after Independence Day weekend 2012 at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum, the exhibit will feature items from the collections of the Stonington Historical Society, Mystic Seaport, the New London County Historical Society, the New London Maritime Society, and the Lyman Allyn.

“The Rockets’ Red Glare,” will focus on important local events including Commodore Stephen Decatur’s naval fleet taking refuge in the Thames River to avoid the British, the bombardment of Stonington, and the effects of the British blockade. “The exhibit will showcase our own Star – Spangled Banner,” says Meredith Brown, President of the Stonington Historical Society, who led the effort to get the five museums to collaborate on the exhibit. The Stonington Battle Flag and a coat worn by a Stonington defender wounded at the battle will be a couple of the objects that will be featured in the exhibit.

2010 NLCHS Ornament Honors 250th Anniversary of New London Harbor Light

The fifth in our series of pewter ornaments depicting important buildings in New London County is available just in time for Holiday gift giving. The ornaments are offered at \$15, and in special recognition of the transfer of the light-

Operation Sail 2012 (OpSail) is scheduled to host a tall ships event in Boston harbor over the 4th of July. They are currently in negotiation to follow up with a visit to New London for SailFest the next weekend. “It will be great if OpSail arrives in New London the week this exhibit opened!” stated Deborah Donovan, President of the New London County Historical Society. “Think of the opportunity to learn the history behind the fireworks.”

Developing an exhibit catalog with photographs and background information to accompany the exhibition is an integral part of this planning process. Historians Glenn Gordinier of Mystic Seaport and Nancy Steenburg of the University of Connecticut will provide some of that background. Published for the first time will be a manuscript written in 1828 by historian Frances Caulkins based on her interviews with survivors of the 1814 battle in Stonington. Author James Tertius de Kay, an expert on the US Navy during the War of 1812, will also be a contributor.

“Although most people know the national anthem, ‘The Star - Spangled

house to the New London Maritime Society this year, \$2 from each 2010 ornament sold in December will be donated to the Maritime Society.

Also, for the month of December, there is a special offer: for \$35 you can

Banner,’ I’m not sure that fifty percent could tell you it’s connected to the War of 1812,” stated Edward Baker, Executive Director of the New London County Historical Society. “Our plan is to create a major exhibit, combining our stories and collections in order to have a bigger impact. Hopefully we can change that percentage.” Baker will serve as the project director for the exhibit. Curator for the exhibit, guiding the process of choosing artifacts and stories will be Fred Calabretta, Mystic Seaport Curator.

The Connecticut Humanities Council grant to the New London County Historical Society will be used to pay for services from exhibit designers, photographers, a book designer and editor, plus consultants with expertise in historic textiles and lighting design. Work on the initial proposal for the exhibition began a year ago. With the approval of the grant funding, planning for both the exhibit and the book begin in earnest.



buy a Gift Membership in the historical society and get an ornament to wrap to acknowledge the gift. We have some ornaments from each year so you can still get the whole set!

Events and Second Sunday Programs Scheduled For December, January and February

Friday 17 December — Holiday and Volunteer Reception — 4:00 to 6:00 pm

Please join staff and board members for some Holiday Cheer and to honor and thank our many volunteers.

20-30 January — Flock Theatre Production of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*-

Tuesdays-Thursdays \$25 for adults, \$20 for students and seniors; Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays: \$35 for adults, \$30 for students and seniors Limited seating — Tickets sold through Flock Theatre: 860.443.3119.

26 & 27 January — Dinner and Theatre Fundraiser — \$75 tickets include Dinner

at Dev's on Bank; a performance of "Little Women;" Dessert at Dev's during intermission; and a \$25 Donation to the Historical Society! Call 860.443.1209 for details and to make reservations

Sunday 13 February — Briann Greenfield and Mary Donohue presentation based

on their new book, *A Life of the Land: Connecticut's Jewish Farmers*, 4 pm at the Shaw Mansion.

New and Renewed Members

Contributing

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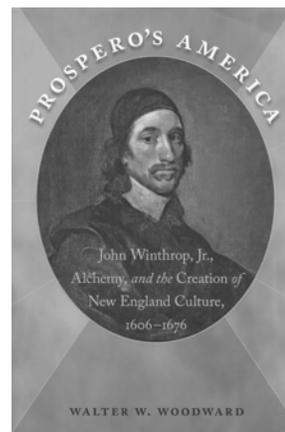
University of Connecticut, Avery Point	Groton
Connecticut College	New London
Charter Oak Federal Credit Union	Groton

Books available from the New London County Historical Society

<i>The Amistad Incident as Reported in the New London Gazette & General Advertiser.</i> (NLCHS)	\$5
<i>The History of the Amistad Captives.</i> (NLCHS) A reproduction of a pamphlet by JW Barber, 1840.	\$10
<i>Black Roots in Southeastern Connecticut, 1650-1900</i> by Barbara Brown and Dr. James Rose (NLCHS) This republished book is a milestone in genealogical research of African Americans and Native Americans in New London County.	\$35
<i>The Diary of Joshua Hempstead 1711-1758.</i> (NLCHS) Revised 1999. Personal journal serves as fascinating and invaluable account of Connecticut life in early 18 th century.	\$75
<i>For Oil and Buggy Whips: Whaling Captains of New London County, Connecticut</i> by Barnard Colby Biographical sketches of local whaling captains document New London's role in this industry.	\$18
<i>Greetings from New London</i> (NLCHS) Collection of early 20 th -century postcards from our archives.	\$10
<i>Life on a Whaler</i> by Nathaniel W. Taylor (NLCHS) Story of Taylor's two-year Antarctic voyage as physician aboard New London's <i>Julius Caesar</i> (1851-53).	\$25
<i>A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture.</i> (NLCHS) Autobiography of former slave Venture Smith, originally published in 1798. NLCHS facsimile of 1897 edition.	\$5
<i>Tapestry: A Living History of the Black Family in Southern Connecticut</i> by Dr. J.M. Rose and B.W. Brown An introduction to the role of African Americans in early New England history. Contains genealogies. (NLCHS)	\$5
<i>Steam Coffin: Captain Moses Rogers and The Steamship Savannah Break the Barrier</i> by John Busch, Well-researched history of New London native son's amazing feat. 700 pages.	\$35
<i>Common to this Country: Botanical Discoveries of Lewis & Clark</i> by Susan Munger. Illustrated volume exploring plants discovered by Lewis and Clark on their westward expedition.	\$23
<i>The Day Paper</i> by Gregory N. Stone. History of New London's award-winning daily newspaper.	\$30
<i>In the Footsteps of George Washington</i> by William G. Clotworthy. A guidebook to Washington sites along the East Coast, including the Shaw Mansion.	\$25
<i>Murder of Mayhem? – Benedict Arnold's New London, Connecticut Raid, 1781</i> by Dr. Walter L. Powell. Excellent research in a small readable format.	\$10
<i>History of New London, Connecticut: from the first survey of the coast in 1612 to 1860</i> by Frances Caulkins With a new introduction and a revised index 2007 (NLCHS).	\$60
<i>Prospero's America: John Winthrop, Jr., Alchemy, and the Creation of New England Culture, 1606-1676</i> Excellent new history from Walter Woodward, the Connecticut State Historian.	\$45
<i>Leviathan The History of Whaling in America</i> by Eric Jay Dolin A good one-volume history of an important local maritime enterprise.	\$28
<i>A USEFUL FRIEND—A Companion to the Joshua Hempstead Diary 1711-1758</i> by Patricia Schaefer (NLCHS) A truly useful resource guide, if you have the Diary, you should have this book; includes a subject index to the Diary.	\$25
<i>History of Norwich, Connecticut: from its possession by the Indians to the year 1866</i> by Frances Caulkins With a new introduction and a new index 2009 (NLCHS).	\$60

These *Images of America* titles available from NLCHS

<i>New London</i>	\$20
<i>New London Firefighting</i>	\$20
<i>Reinventing New London</i>	\$20
<i>Naval Submarine Base New London</i>	\$20
<i>Lighthouses and Life Saving along the Connecticut and Rhode Island Coast</i>	\$20
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<i>Groton Revisited</i>	\$20
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