



## *As the Society moves toward 100 years...*

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We hope you find this newest edition of the Waltham Historical Society's newsletter of interest. It is our hope, initially to publish and mail a newsletter to our membership prior to each meeting. Our long range goal is to increase the frequency of its publication, since it is our belief that a well-informed membership will become more actively involved in Society affairs.

Having celebrated our 90th Anniversary last year, it is now time to look ahead and plan for our Centennial Celebration. With that in mind, the Board is working on assessing our goals and objectives with an eye toward developing initiatives in which we can all become involved.

First among those goals is to establish the communication necessary for a healthy organization. This newsletter is our first step.

In these pages you will find information on current happenings surrounding the Society, such as notice of meetings. There will also be opportunity for members to submit material for inclusion, such as snippets of history, or queries on items of interest to Society

members. Occasionally, we will include correspondences of interest to the entire membership.

You are encouraged to help us define what is presented in these pages, and we welcome your thoughts and comments.

If there are those of you who would like to be involved in creating and producing the newsletter, we eagerly accept any assistance offered.

Items contained in this issue include an excerpt from a publication of the Society dating back to 1926. The publication from which it is drawn is currently available for purchase from the Society, but there are very few copies remaining.

Also inside is information about our search for a home, recent inquiries made by visitors to our web site, and news of the upcoming house tour during Historic Waltham Days.

Please enjoy this edition, and be certain to let us know how to better serve the interests of our membership.

Sheila FitzPatrick and  
Wayne T. McCarthy  
*Co-Presidents*



*A view of the Boston Manufacturing Company looking over Moody Street. Probably taken from the roof of a building on the current Cronin Landing site.*

## *Mayor McCarthy to speak at the March Meeting of the Waltham Historical Society*

The next meeting of the Waltham Historical Society is scheduled for Sunday, March 14, 2004 at the Waltham Public Library, beginning at 2:00 pm in the Lecture Hall. Our guest speaker will be the Honorable Jeannette A. McCarthy, Mayor of the City of Waltham.

Join us to learn more about the upcoming Historic Waltham Days activities. This year the Society will be holding our Annual House Tour on Sunday, June 13, 2004. The houses open to our tour promise to be exceptional in quality. Please volunteer to help with this most important Society activity.

Contact Sheila FitzPatrick or Wayne McCarthy for more information.

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## About this issue's featured story



Early Boston Manufacturing Company

In coming issues of the Waltham Historical Society's Newsletter, it is our intention to provide you with information on current and upcoming events in which the Society is actively involved. We will also attempt to include items of interest that are currently in the possession of the Society. As an example, the following text is an ex-

cerpt transcribed from *Publication No. 3, Waltham Historical Society Incorporated, "WALTHAM COMMON."* The pamphlet was published in 1926 by Mrs. Sumner Milton in memory of Mr. George Arthur Milton. The complete title of the Pamphlet is *WALTHAM COMMON Its Ownership and History by Thomas H. Armstrong. Reminiscences of*

*Homes and People by Sumner Milton.* This excerpt was read at a meeting of the Waltham Historical Society on March 17, 1914. The accompanying drawing was made by then Society Secretary, Edmund L. Sanderson. Subsequent issues of this newsletter will continue the article to its conclusion.

## The Common

By **Thomas H. Armstrong**

Perhaps no spot in Waltham has a stronger hold upon the affections of the citizens of the city than the "Common." Located in the heart of the city, it affords that place of rest, both for body and for eyes that are tired with the strain of factory work or the glare of the garish day, that resort for recreation gladly availed of by both the old men who are past the days of labor and for the infants who seek here a cool and refreshing leaf-shaded play spot, safe from the dangers that surround them more and more in the busy streets, their only other recreation ground, and lastly that attractive green which greets the traveller upon his alighting from the dusty and smoky train, all of which evidently were in the minds of these wise fathers of the

town who seventy years ago carried through town meeting the votes of the inhabitants appropriating money for the purchase. It behooves us, who have grown so fond of this bit of God's nature in the midst of man's works that we look with disfavor upon any encroachment upon its limits occasionally to consider, and even dwell upon, the foresight and wisdom and sacrifice of those fathers who so wisely furnished us this place to be a joy forever.

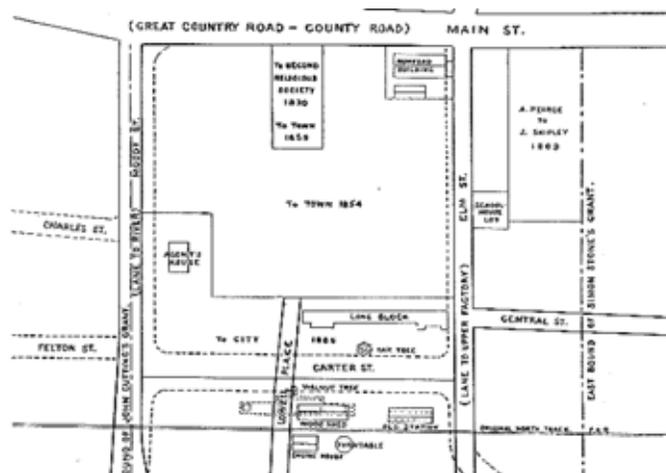
Waltham Plain was always a beautiful place. It has been described by travellers 240 years ago as a delightful plain, well watered and diversified with beautiful trees. This part of Watertown was first known as the further, or great plain, and was divided into small parcels among the free men, as Beaver Brook Plowlands. These lots were

granted in series, alternating on the north and on the south of the great country road, and are listed in three separate schedules furnished by the town under requirement of the colonial government. These three lists do not wholly correspond with the schedule of the original grants as to the location of the lots, some of the lots appearing first on one side of the road and then on the other side. The east and west bounds, wherever they are mentioned, agree in nearly every instance.

This particular tract seems to have been granted to three of the inhabitants: To John Cutting three acres, to Isaac Mixer four acres and to Simon Stone fourteen acres. The grant to Simon Stone is described as bounded east by John Hayward and west by Isaac Mixer. The so-called first inventory, which was probably the third in date, does not mention this lot in the list of Stone's possessions. It was probably sold to John Page, who was the owner of several other lots granted to Stone. I think we may justly claim that the fourteen acres sold by John Page and Phoebe, his wife, to Isaac Mixer in 1658 was the same granted by the proprietors to Simon Stone. This lot is thus described in the deed to Mixture. After describing a lot of 70 acres as "Stone's Dividend", it says: "As also fourteen acc'rs of plowland lying upon ye great playne being bounded on the east with John Hayward the west with the aforesaid Isaac Mixture." This deed was signed by

"consider, and even dwell upon, the foresight and wisdom and sacrifice of those fathers who so wisely furnished us this place to be a joy forever."

Illustration drawn by Edmund L. Sanderson, Publication Committee Secretary



## *The Common (continued)*

John Page only, of so little importance was the wife in business affairs in those days.

Isaac Mixture had a grant of four acres adjoining this Stone lot on the west, making his holdings there 18 acres. In 1698 he, signing his name Isaac Mixer, and described as Planter, "for severall reasons causing me thereunto moveing I gave to my Duty full son Isaac Mixer J<sup>nr</sup>. of ye same towne, husbandman, eighteen acres of Plough land be the same more or less, situate, lying and being within ye limits and bounds of the great Plaine and is bounded East w<sup>th</sup> the land called Hayward's West w<sup>th</sup> the land of John Cutting, North with the road leading to Sudbury, South with Charles River." This deed is dated May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1698, "and in ye tenth year of the reign of William by the Grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland. Mary Mixer, his wife, releases her rights.

John Cutting of Watertown, Locksmith, who received a grant of three acres of Plowland on the further plain adjoining the grant to Isaac Mixer, in 1705 conveyed to Isaac Mixer three acres on the further plain on the south side of the road to Sudbury bounded South by Charles River, west with Jona. Livermore, north with the country road aforesaid, and east with the said Isaac Mixer's own land. These two deeds together give Isaac Mixer

twenty-one acres, and they are now located on the south side of the road where they belong.

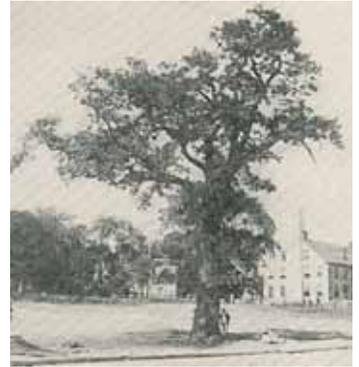
Isaac Mixer owning these lots died, and his will dated in 1721 and allowed in 1725 gave to his widow, Elizabeth, "the improvement of all my estate, raile and personal, during her widowhood," and after a few legacies it proceeds: "I give and bequeath unto my cuzon Isaac Peirce, which I brought up and to his heirs and Assigns forever all my reale and personal estate of kind and denomination whatsoever not before given away in this will and testament all my lands after my wife's mard-edg or decaz."

Isaac Peirce seems to have lived upon this tract, for in 1760 he sold Abraham Peirce, his son, two parcels of land in Waltham, the first, 22 acres, with a dwelling house and barn standing thereon, bounded East by land of Jonas Priest, southerly by Charles River, Westerly by land of Samuel Mansfield, Northerly by the Country road. This is undoubtedly the same 21 acres that he inherited from Isaac Mixer, the area does not show any unusual elasticity, and the bounds are easily identified. The Hayward lot on the east had become the property of Jonas Priest, and the west bound on land of Jona. Livermore now is upon land of Samuel Mansfield who had acquired Livermore's lot. This bound

was substantially at the present location of Moody street, the deed to Mansfield describing his easterly bound as land of Isaac Peirce, in the center of a lane to the river.

In 1790 Abraham Peirce, Gentleman, sold to John Boies of Waltham, Gentleman, for £62 about an acre of land at the southwest corner of this parcel, Also the right of way in the lane, Also the privilege of building a damn across said river, &c. Here Boies built his dam and established his paper mill. It is recorded that a rival of his securing a location a little further down the river proposed to build another dam, and it was a race to see which would first secure the water privilege, that being the right of the one who first utilized his power, and Boise set his wheel and geared it up to turn a grindstone before the lower dam was built, so that his rival withdrew. This was the beginning of the enterprise that resulted in the great industry of the Boston Manufacturing Company in this city.

*This article will be continued in the next issue of the Society's newsletter. Should you wish to purchase a copy of the publication, contact the Society with your request and arrangements will be made to accommodate your desires.*



**"This was the beginning of the enterprise that resulted in the great industry of the Boston Manufacturing Company in this city. "**

## *Annual House Tour*



The Waltham Historical Society is now planning for our Annual House Tour, to be conducted on June 13, 2004. Each year, the Society conducts tours of houses of significance in Waltham, and this year promises to offer some new and exciting opportunities.

If you are interested in supporting the Historical Society, and can make your house available to visitors for a few hours on June 13, please contact Wayne McCarthy at 781-899-2155.

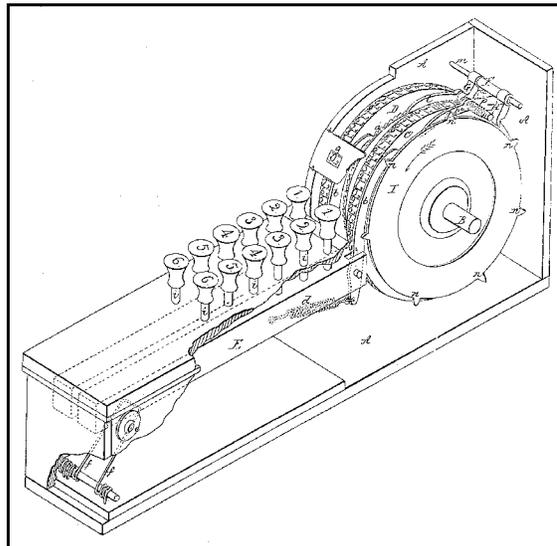


190 Moody Street  
Waltham, MA 02453

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
[WWW.WALTHAMHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG](http://WWW.WALTHAMHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG)

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Our web site has been the recipient of quite a bit of traffic lately. We have had queries from around the world asking about everything from Nuttings to families whose ancestors owned photography studios, to requests for information concerning an "arithmometer" shown above.

The most recent acquisition was a donation from Mr. and Mrs. Maglio of Northborough, MA. They sent a copy of *Waltham: Past and Present*, a photograph of a boiler room, (possibly the mill or watch factory), and a copy of a special report from the W.H. Nichols company, in appreciation of the efforts of their employees during the Second World War.

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## *Society in need of space for storing holdings*



*This is a photograph taken of some of our holdings that are currently being stored in an unheated garage.*

As the Waltham Historical Society celebrated the 90th anniversary of its founding, we still find ourselves seeking a home for our collection. Currently housed at the Mill building on Moody Street, we have a single large room containing most of our collection. The room has no windows, and the ventilation is poor, making it extremely difficult to work there for any extended period of time.

We also have stored in a garage across town, maps and books that are in dire need of protection. There is a roof over the material, but the garage is unheated and the 100 year-old books and maps cannot be expected to survive long in such an atmosphere.

Please help us find a home. Contact your local City Councilor and ask them to help find a solution.