

Wallingford Historical Society  
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# *Wallingford Perspectives*

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Greetings! Maple trees are beginning to flaunt fall foliage which means it is time for the Wallingford Historical Society's autumn newsletter. This edition details family heirlooms with fascinating back stories of items added to the historical society's collection on display at Wallingford Town Hall on School Street. A treasured stroller used by the Chase family of Franklin Street and a pocketbook featuring old German handwriting are two of the latest additions. Dr. John Fox is also featured in this edition with stories of his patient care within a 30 mile radius of Wallingford in the late 1700s and early 1800s. This issue is dedicated to Marlene Poole Dawson 1931-2017. She summered at the Fox house as a child (owned by her

grandmother) and eventually married Cliff to become a full time resident and avid supporter of the society.

The Wallingford Historical Society is always interested in sharing your stories. Please contact us.

Joyce Barbieri, president.

### **Hedstrom Union Wicker Stroller**

The Wallingford Historical Society was the recipient of a *Hedstrom Union* wicker stroller donated by Judith Pennock from Bennington, VT. The stroller features a Hedstrom label from the company formed in Gardner, MA in 1915. Four years later, Hedstrom owners bought an interest in Union Manufacturing, which made reed-bodied baby carriages and hoods. Hedstrom and Union merged in 1922 to form the Hedstrom Union Company.

“Our research indicates that this (stroller) was one of their earliest pieces,” Judith noted. “It has a lot of miles on it, but everything is original and the tires are still good. It pushes easily and smoothly.”

The stroller manufactured over a century ago was purchased by Judith’s grandparents, Nettie and Ernest Chase of 44 Franklin Street. “Our family doesn’t know or at least remember as much about this stroller as we would like. It was just always part of our lives and now we feel as if it has come home to the Wallingford Historical Society,” Judith noted.

She fondly recalled traveling to her grandparents’ home on Franklin Street on many occasions with her sister and a gaggle of cousins. “It was always such a great joy to come to visit them. The attic was a place of particular joy, filled with cast offs and treasures, including this stroller, and spooky dark corners.”

“When my sister and I, and our cousins, were little girls, we used to push each other in it but we also dressed up our Nana’s very patient cat and would put him/her into the stroller for a trip to pick up the mail at the post office,” Judith remembered. The stroller eventually found a new home with Judith’s family in Manchester. “When our mom and died and we were cleaning out the house in Manchester, the stroller had made it into their basement. I agonized over whether or not to bring it to my home in Bennington, but I have no place for it. So two of our cousins in the Albany area bought it at the estate sale. It accommodated a few more babies...and maybe cats...and then it was offered back to me,” Judith explained.

She then contacted the Wallingford Historical Society and offered to donate the stroller. “So it is with great memories and joy that we donate it to you to be a part of Wallingford’s rich history. The Chase girls were Florence Pennock and Louise Tubbs, and Louise actually lived in the Franklin Street house for quite some time before her death. The cousins are Jill Pennock Frost, Sherry Tubbs Lapier, Donna Tubbs Babonas, Carol Tubbs and me,” she said. “Enjoy our stroller as it becomes yours.”



*Hedstrom Union Wicker Stroller*

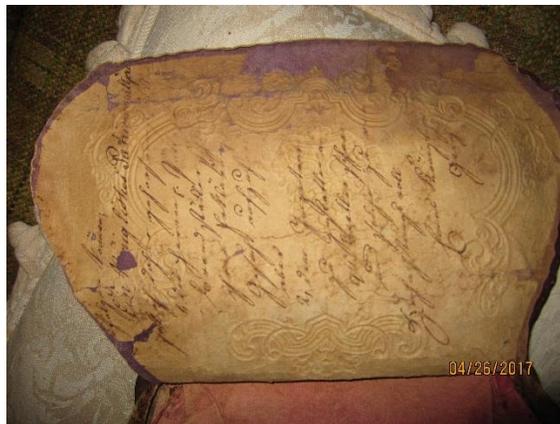
### **A Bump is a Bumpus is a Bumpus**

Bethel Wheeler Fox of Austin, TX provided a treasure trove of documents related to the Bump/Bumpus family of Wallingford dating back to the 1800s. Bethel explained her grandfather, Joseph Wheeler, inherited the Bump house in Benson from his great uncle, Oscar Bump. When her father, Robert Wheeler, cleaned out the house – he found a leather purse filled with Bump/Bumpus papers from Wallingford. “He brought them to Texas and many years later, I inherited them. As I am going through mountains of genealogy material, I thought that these papers should really be in Wallingford rather than Austin, TX,” Bethel said.



*Bumpus Purse*

The delicate tan leather purse features a metal clasp and ornate border. The lining of the purse was imprinted with “old” German handwriting that was partially translated into phrases like “should I therefore follow obediently,”... “request petition”...and “I, the gentleman.”



*Inside Purse Flap with Old German Writing*

The translator, according to Bethel, indicated the “old” German language changed in 1930s so most people would be unable to read it. He guessed a page from a document was used to line the purse resulting in the imprint on the flap. Papers belonging to James, Salathial and Oscar Bump(us) stored inside the purse included wills, IOUs, school records and contracts. (The Bumpus family lived at 202 Van Wyck Road and 2016 Route 140E.) All have yellowed with age and most feature clean, crisp cursive handwriting detailing the many aspects of daily life in Wallingford. Among the documents was a contract signed on November 11, 1817 by Salathial and Bela Bumpus agreeing to construct a sawmill for Elezer Mighell on Roaring Brook by the first of November the following year. In exchange, Elezer was to construct a dam and build it “well and firm.” Once the dam was completed, Elezer

was to let Salathial and Bela have one half the mill and mill spot for as long as “they think it best to keep a mill there.”

A legal document dated in 1825 lists claims against the estate of James Bumpus of Wallingford to include: \$4.11 on note to Salathial Bumpus, \$37.96 to Doctor Joseph Randall Jr. for last sickness, \$4.21 for funeral expenses, \$2.50 for a coffin, \$1.50 for digging the grave, \$6.56 on note to Seth Leonard, \$1 on book to James Bucklin as well as more claims totaling \$189.36.

The 1872 Grand List of School District No. 7 featured a list of property owners with grand list including: Ainsworth, Sutton \$6.60, Adams, Chet \$1.08, Brown, Jerome \$1.52, Crandall, Silas \$2.00, Grover, Joel \$2.00, Hagar, Orrin, \$3.50, Johnson, Emery \$6.68, Monahan, James \$19.00, Preston, Martin \$1,80, Smith, Nathan \$6.84 and several more totaling \$194.43.

An agreement between Salathial and James Bumpus signed October 24, 1816 detailed an arrangement whereby Salathial would plant, weed, and gather crops on James’ land in exchange for half the crop. James indicated the boundaries of the property were “to the west by the apple tree” and “to the east by the cherry tree” near the stone wall.

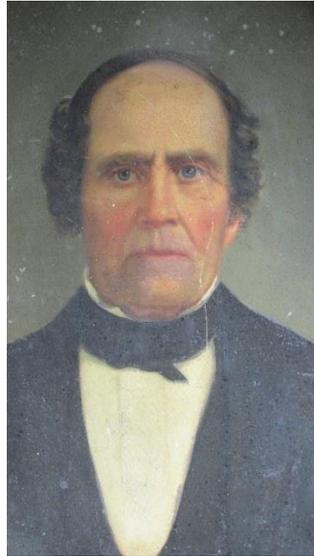
An 1883 three-fold pocket Exclesior Diary contains faded entries detailing where the writer worked on any given day, attendance at Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 6, 1883 and a trip to Castleton the prior day. The apple trees were mulched on May 17<sup>th</sup> of that year and on May 21<sup>st</sup>, the writer stayed inside the house all day with a bad cough. Other activities included halving walnuts on January 1 and traveling to Fair Haven for dental work on January 4. The writer noted it was 19 degrees below zero on January 12<sup>th</sup> and activities that day included hiking into the woods for timber.

The Mount Moriah Lodge by-laws printed by Tuttle and Company of Rutland in 1871 were enclosed in the purse. Of note, Article VIII states “The Lodge may grant a dimit to any member in good standing about to leave the jurisdiction of the lodge. Provided, no such dimit shall be granted to any brother who is indebted to the lodge.”

According to a genealogy report provided by Bethel Wheeler Fox, James A. Bumpus was born May 10, 1743 in Wareham, MA. He died in Wallingford on March 1, 1825. His son, Salathial Bumpus, was born in 1785 in Wallingford and he died on December 2, 1871 in Wallingford. His son, Hilon Bump was born in

August of 1823 in Wallingford. His son Oscar Bump was born in June of 1845. Bethel's father inherited the Bump house in Benson from Oscar and it is at that location the Bump(us) purse was discovered then delivered to Wallingford.

### **Dr. John Fox**



*Dr. John Fox*

Dr. John Fox was born in Tinmouth on August 24, 1781 and died 72 years later in Wallingford on June 17, 1853. He was the son of William and Philena (White) Fox, one of the early families to settle in Wallingford. William Fox moved from Woodstock, CT to Tinmouth in the latter half of the 1700s then exchanged or sold his farm in Tinmouth for one in Wallingford. The elder Fox was a prominent figure in town having served as Justice of the Peace and Town Clerk for 30 years and a member of the state Legislature for 15 years. His son studied for three years with Dr. Zac Hamilton of Wallingford and a year with Dr. Ezekiel Porter of Rutland. He received his license to practice medicine in 1807 from the first Vermont Medical Society and he received the degree of Medical Doctor from the Academy of Medicine at Castleton in 1829.

Mr. Batcheller in his History of Wallingford states about Dr. John Fox as follows: "As a medical practitioner Dr. Fox early gained and ever afterwards retained the full confidence of the community. He was regarded as particularly skillful in surgical operations, but so eminent did he become, in all branches of his profession that his services were frequently sought for in extreme cases, twenty or thirty miles away." And this: "Dr. Fox believed in good food and plenty of it. No doubt his strenuous life demanded it. Whenever asked by a member of a patient's family

what to feed a convalescent, he often replied “Be sure you do not let him get hold of any of your iron ware.”

Mr. Batcheller goes on to say “Dr. Fox was called to visit a very poor family in Tinmouth on a cold winter’s day. He concluded from what he saw that the trouble was mostly cause by too meager diet. He left a little medicine and said he would send later on that day whatever else they might need. He came home, packed a large box with food, including a quantity of salt pork, and sent it to the family as he had promised.”

On March 20, 1811, Dr. John Fox purchased of Neri Cramton a house and lot located on the east side of the road at 74 Main Street, adjoining and south of the School House Lot, having an area of one and one-half acres with a frontage on Main Street of 198 feet. The School House Lot is notable as the Paul P. Harris Memorial Building, built by Paul’s great grandfather, James Rustin in 1818. Paul Harris founded Rotary International.

Mr. Batcheller states further about Dr. John Fox’s house that it must have been a simple frame house on what was originally part of the Lent Ives farm. And further “Probably Dr. Fox pulled down the frame house and built the large brick house” which is still standing today. In its day, one of the finest houses in town.

Dr. Fox’s wife, Mary “Polly” (Crary), was the daughter of Captain Elias Crary, a soldier of the Revolutionary War. It is said Dr. Fox never returned home from a long day’s work at any hour of the day or night without finding a warm welcome with every comfort at the readiness. It has also been reported when Dr. Fox was worn out during periods of great sickness in the region, Mary with a “few quiet words and a careful wrapping up” would send him forth upon his errand of mercy. Mary was a devoted Christian and an honored member of the Congregational Church for 50 years.

Dr. Fox’s saddlebags, packed with medicine of various sorts to meet almost any emergency, have been preserved to the people just as they were laid aside by the venerable doctor. Anyone interested may view the exhibit at Wallingford Town



*Dr. Fox's Saddle Bags*

Hall. They were found years ago in the attic of the house once owned by Dr. Fox's son, Dr. William Crary Fox. When Dr. W.E. Stewart purchased the house after Dr. William Fox's death in 1880, he found the saddle bags and in 1898 when he sold the property to Dr. J. H. Buffum, Dr. Stewart passed the saddle bags on to Dr. Buffum, who took them to Wallingford, CT when he moved out of state. Mr. Batcheller relates this history of the saddle bags in his book and states that he visited Dr. Buffum at one time in 1933 and after his visit Dr. Buffum sent them back to Wallingford, VT so they could be preserved in a suitable public building.