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THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE TOWN OF PROSPECT

Vol. 3: Pleasantries and Peculiarities of Prospect: For your information and diversion. Some is old and some is new. Some is fable, some is true!

This series will include booklets on Wars; Education; Mail and Post Office; Library; People and Places; Industry and Agriculture; and the manner in which they relate to the growth of Prospect. Readers who desire certain subjects or are able to assist are asked to contact the Bicentennial Commission.
If Adam and Eve had kept a diary and each succeeding generation also, imagine all the day to day stories and records that would have been gathered together. Since they didn't and since most records since that time have been of the legal, and larger historic events, pleasantries and peculiarities of people and their surroundings must be culled from other diverse sources. The lives of strong men and women, in the two hundred year span of our country have faded into dim memories shown only on old deeds, letters, diaries, newspapers, and worn stones in the cemetery. In this time of bicentennial activity, it is good to pick out the humors and habits of those who lived before us in Prospect.

We don't have to look into memory to find that Prospect's elevation (91 ft on top of Turkey Hill, by Geodetic map), gives us the distinction of being the highest settled point in New Haven County. It also gives us the distinction of having more than the ordinary share of fog and ice storms, or rocks and winds. Almost one hundred years ago a visiting minister at the Congregational Church spoke of "Nature being in her misty, moisty, mood, and noted that Prospect is a place where every prospect pleases and only the weather is vile".

This is not always so, but we cannot argue with that when one reads that on April 11, 1785, Deacon Gideon Hotchkiss in his account book recorded "This day I measured the snow as it lies level solid in the woods, and it is 18½ inches deep! And again almost a century and a half later, April 1924, 11 inches of snow was recorded. That may have been the time when 3 State Snow Plows were stuck on the Waterbury Road, and men with shovels dug them out, as of old "digging out the road"!!!!!!
Pleasant views are still to be seen from the Center; to the "Blue Hills" of Meriden in the East, to Hartford in the North, to Waterbury and Middlebury in the West, ringing the horizon. If one could climb to the steeple of the Church on the Green, it might be possible to see Long Island, 18 miles distant. In 1878 according to one record, the view of Long Island Sound showed it to be dotted with white sails, with the water "glistening in the sun". The steeples of 17 churches could be counted in all directions. And when one lady remarked how far she could see on a clear day, her neighbor retorted that he could see even further on a clear night. He "could see as far as the moon".

Just as over two hundred years of history records that white men have persevered in living on the height of land now called Prospect, Indians too once roamed these hills. Arrow heads and a stone mortar have been found. According to Anderson's History of Waterbury, in 1731 New Haven Proprietors purchased of Waterbury 50 acres of land on East Mountain "for the use, benefit, and behoof of the Indians that now do, or hereafter shall be properly belonging to or descending from that tribe called Quinepiag". This was in the Bronson road section of Prospect and was not used for long, but soon sold. These and other Indians used such mortars to grind corn, as cornmeal was one of the staple foods of early settlers. Did Indian Pudding get its name because it was a way the Indians used the meal, or because settlers used Indian Meal to make it?

One old rule copied from an ancient note book was.
Indian Pudding

3 cups milk  2 Tbs. butter  1 egg
1/4 cup molasses  1/4 tsp salt  1/2 cup cornmeal
2 Tbs. sugar  1/8 tsp baking powder

Mix all ingredients with half of the milk and bake in a hot oven until the mixture boils. Stir in the remaining half of milk and bake in a slow oven for 2 to 3 hours.

In earliest times no doubt, maple syrup would have been used. That too, was a gift from the Indians, since white sugar was a luxury to early settlers. With a wealth of maple trees for men to tap, and boil down the sap, maple syrup and honey were used as "sweeteners". With brick ovens the pudding may well have baked all night. Measures were often variable. A cup might be a coffee cup, or a tea cup. No measuring cups as we know them today. And a "pinch" of this, or a "smitchen" or a "handful" of that, according to which grandmother passed the rule on to her descendants.

The children played games, much as today, altho they had their "chores" to do. Hide and seek, tag of various sorts. Stone tag, where you were safe if you could keep one foot on a stone should have been easy here. Counting out, to a hundred while the others hid, could help the children "learn their numbers", if they counted by fives, or twos, etc. The fastest way of counting to one hundred was "ten, ten, double ten, fortyfive, fifteen". Ready or not here I come. There was "Duck on a Rock" that consisted of knocking a small stone off a large one, with a thrown stone. Sometimes a standerby got hit!. There was "Run sheep, run" and "Pom,pom,pull away" all with various pronunciations and spellings in different localities. In the snow there was "Fox and Geese". With its many hills Prospect was
ideal for sliding. Now most children seem to use a circular metal saucer, or a long plastic tobagon. In the 1930s you really had arrived if a Flexible Flyer was leaning against your house. Earliest small sleds were of wood, perhaps with metal runners; called for some unknown reason "pig stickers", they could only be steered by leaning the body, or dragging one foot (not good for boot toes). Two together, with a plank mounted on them made a double ripper, for a crowd of young people, and sometimes even their parents. Another winter frolic might be a skating party. No "shoe skates" then. Just straps that fastened around the ankles, and a screw into the heel of the shoe. Even "double runners" for the little ones.

Little girls made dolls of corn cobs, or corn husks, and wild flowers. Boys whittled whistles and tops, or would wind old yarn and rags around a base to make a ball to play with. Those little round balls on the burdock could be a source of entertainment. Collected and stuck together they made baskets, or dolls, or any number of objects. Maybe they could be called the erector set of early times! So even weeds had their use. Both boys and girls rolled hoops, and the modern 1950 hula hoop that required one to roll one's hips to keep the hoop in mid air around the body is just modern fun, and exercise.

A game a busy mother might invent for a restless toddler would be to dip one baby finger in molasses and hand baby a feather. The child would spend a quiet time transferring the feather back and forth and trying to pick it off. A small boy could be given a cake of hard soap, a hammer, and a few tacks. He could hammer to his heart's content, the tacks retrieved for another occasion and the soap still used.
A mother of older children might on a winter evening pop corn, or make molasses candy. One recipe for candy is

Molasses Brittle
2 cups sugar 2 cups molasses 1/8 tsp soda.
Boil sugar and molasses in a heavy iron skillet (295 degrees now) until it cracks when tested in cold water. Remove from fire and stir in soda. Pour immediately onto well buttered tin or platter. Cool, crack, and munch. A layer of hickory nut meats placed on the buttered pans before pouring the candy added a very special "something". Try it some day.

In every town, indeed in every neighborhood or family there are phrases or expressions or superstitions or words that add sparkle and perk up a conversation. Is there anyone who hasn't seen "receipt" for a cooking recipe? But just as often a cook might make a "rule" or a "batch" of something. A spider is a skillet is a frying pan. But a "griddle" might be the lid of a wood stove, or a low sided pan to fry griddle cakes on, instead of in a frying pan. And they tasted just the same if you called them griddle cakes or pan cakes. But "fried dough", when the bread didn't get light early enough to bake, and pieces were dropped into hot fat, was something else again. The niceties of a "husher" might be lost on us with our modern indoor plumbing. But in a day when ladies crocheted, a "husher" on the lid of the chamber pot, hushed the replacement of the lid. (If you find one in the attic you might think it a queer shaped cap). A chamberpot might also be called a "thunder mug" making explanation of what a "Husher" hushed unnecessary. During W W 1 there was a song with a line "the pot of amber ice beneath the bed". Now in 1975 there is a Waterbury Rock Musical group by the name of "The Thundermugs". We wonder!
Playing "barnyard golf" in any farmer's time is highly descriptive of a nimble toe scattering "balls" in his pasture. Today to call someone "flaky" or "light" or "soft" would mean just about the same as an older "doesn't know beans when the bag's untied", or "doesn't know enough to come in out of the rain". A "waist" is a lady's blouse. "looked like a hurrah's nest" meant a mess, but WHAT WAS a "Hurrah? Someone might be said to look as if "she combed her hair with the back of the brush". A fresh child was a mischievous child. When babies were born at home, it was believed good luck for the child to go up stairs before he came down, so he would be carried up to the attic. The superstitious, when an unforseen shiver occurred would say "someone's walking over my grave". And just not feeling too good, might be "feeling like an accident going somewhere to happen", or "feeling like death warmed over".

Sly humor abounded. An old remark "Well, if we had some ham, we could have some ham and eggs, if we had some eggs" seems depression style. Related as a fact, but repeated in many stories of different families, is the tale of two men, traveling in sparsely settled ground. At nightfall, they came to a log cabin. The housewife agreed to let them sleep in a haystack, but when asked for food, could only offer bread and milk. They accepted willingly, and she asked "Will you have it mumbled or crumbled?" Not being sure what she was offering, they played it safe. One took crumbled and the other mumbled. She filled two bowls with milk, took part of a loaf of bread and crumbled it into the milk. Then to the dismay of the other man, she put the bread into her own mouth, mumbled it, and spat it out into the bowl as if she was preparing to feed a toothless child!
The fact that housewives of earlier times laboured hard and long was put into verse in "Lester Green's column" at one time. The author was "unknown" but we suspect it was Lester himself.

Grandmother on a winter day
Milked the cows and fed them hay,
Slopped the hogs and saddled the mule
And got the children off to school.
Did a washing, mopped the floors
Washed the windows and did some chores;
Swept the parlor and made the bed
Baked a dozen loaves of bread,
Split some firewood and lugged in
Enough to fill the kitchen bin.
Cleaned the lamps and put in oil,
Stewed some apples she feared would spoil;
Churned some butter, baked a cake,
Then exclaimed "For Heaven's sake,
The calves have got out of the pen".
She went and chased them in again.
Gathered the eggs and looked the stable,
Back to the house and set the table,
Cooked a supper that was delicious
And afterwards washed up all the dishes.
Fed the cat and sprinkled the clothes,
Mended a basket full of hose.
Then opened the organ and began to play
"When you come to the end of a perfect day  !!!!!

Lester Green was Carl Louis Mortison. He lived in Prospect much of his life. He brought fame to the town for his "tall" stories, that included chickens crossed with storks, to have legs long enough to go through tall grass, apple trees sprayed with glue, to keep the crop on the trees until the price was right, Chickens hatched from ice encased eggs that wore fur instead of feathers. Some of the most far fetched stories were reprinted in papers all over the country and brought correspondence from
the credulous and from those who couldn't see a joke and protested against such "lies". His cartoons, as Mort, both of farm life and politics won him a place that will be more fully dealt with in our booklet on famous people of Prospect.

A farmer would work "from can see to can't see" meaning from daylight until dark, but "Man works from sun to sun, but woman's work is never done" is another old saying. Men and women found their play by working together. They would join in harvesting, or building. If in shingling one man moved too slowly, and found his coat tails nailed down, it was part of the game. When the ladies met for sewing, or quilting, or to help each other make apple butter, or dip candles, the men often joined them for the evening meal, and after a "sing" went home together.

Did you know that during the Revolution we had our share of "Minute Men"? Whether on the Waterbury or the Cheshire side of the hill, they stood ready on a minute's notice to join the local militia. It was said that every baking day, the man's haversack was filled with fresh bread, and the previous filling used in the household. In case he should be wanted, he would not need to wait for provisions. The stories of our soldiers, in the wars, and of the women left at home, who worked in factories, farm, and home will be the subject of an entire booklet. But Stephen Talmadge, the last Civil War veteran was much in demand as a speaker. Of one soldier he said "the durn fool coulda been home if he hadn't stood up on a parapet to take aim at an enemy, and the enemy took aim at him". "Gramp" Talmadge could also tell some stories of camp life, of the size of the snakes, etc, that school children listened to in amazement.
Say "cranberries" and it brings to mind Cape Cod. But cranberries did grow in Prospect and a few still do. Where they were a real crop, the field lay where it could be flooded in winter, thus protecting the plants, and making a safe skating place. Harvesting the berries must have been a bone chilling chore in autumn, as the pickers walked through swampy, marshy, land for the red berries that even now mean family feasts and holidays. Cranberry pie might also be called mock cherry. And a true cranberry pie should have a lattice top crust, a colorful checkerboard of red and gold.

**Cranberry Pie**

\[
\begin{align*}
&\frac{1}{2} \text{ cups sugar} & & 1 \text{ cup seedless raisins} \\
&\frac{1}{4} \text{ cup orange juice (1 orange)} & & 2 \text{ tsp grated fresh peel, orange} \\
&\frac{1}{2} \text{ tsp salt} & & \text{ or lemon or mixed} \\
&\frac{1}{2} \text{ cup boiling water} & & 2 \text{ Tbsp. flour mixed with} \\
&3 \text{ cups cranberries} & & 2 \text{ Tbsp water.} \\
&\quad & & 2 \text{ Tbsp butter or margarine.}
\end{align*}
\]

Stem cranberries, cook with first 4 ingredients until berries "pop". Add raisins, rinds, and flour and cook until it begins to thicken. Cool a little, put into unbaked 9 inch shell. Dot with butter. Add a lattice of pastry. Bake in hot (425) oven for 10 min. then medium (350) for 30 min. or until juices bubble in lattice openings and crust is golden brown.

There are still a few mulberry trees growing in Prospect. Mulberry pie is delicious, but they planted trees at an early date endeavoring to foster the silk industry in Conn. The silk worms were fed on the leaves, but the labor of caring for the worms was expensive here. In 1747 Gov. Jonathan Law, of Cheshire planted mulberry trees and grew silk worms from which were fashioned clothing for himself and his family. The industry spread, and the first silk mill on the continent was built in Mansfield in 1810. However a blight killed many of the trees; the ones best suited for silkworm feed were too tender to endure Conn.
winters. The work of unwinding the cocoons was delicate, and
careful workers not too easy to find. By 1844 the business of
raising silkworms had practically vanished. The Cheney Bros.
in Manchester continued, but with imported silk. A scattering
of mulberry trees remained throughout the state. Birds and
humans enjoy the fruit, so replacements have been planted.

Prospect's stony fields were well suited to growing sheep
and with homespun wool, and linen from the flax that was culti-
vated for many years, our ancestors were well dressed, even
tho without luxury of silk.

A shrub native to Prospect that has slowly disappeared
along with many of the stone walls it found favorable as a
rooting place is witch hazel. It's starry golden blossoms in
late summer mature into seed pods that burst the next spring
with a loud pop, sending seeds out perhaps 50 feet. It was used
as a lotion, or in many medicinal ways by early settlers. The
witch hazel branches were cut by farmers, and the loaded wagon
driven to the Dickinson's plant in Hamden, where the material
was shredded and used as a base for "Witch Hazel Lotion" The
plant is now in Essex, and Witch hazel branches have been sent
there within recent years.

Fruit trees of all sorts abounded. Cider was a usual bev-
erage. Orchards and distilleries will be discussed in booklets
on agriculture and industry. But one pear that abounded in town
at one time was the "Orange" pear, so called because a family
moving here from the town of Orange brought a sapling with them
when they arrived on horseback.
One of the earliest bug killers in a garden was a good black snake. Farmers often said the black snakes were worth money to the farmer, since the snake ate so many different bugs as well as mice and moles. One of the children's chores was "pickin' potato bugs", and dropping them into a can of oil. Just like today's Jap Beetles. And of course there were those who would catch snakes, as snake oil was a "sure cure for rheumatism."

Schools were all over town. Pupils were expected to pay for each sheet of paper "fools cap", common to begin with after graduating from a slate, then a finer "copy Paper". Making a fine pen point from a goose quill was an art. The teacher would write a "maxim" and the student copy it. We have a number of samples saved from the 1812-1820 period. Some of the lines follow.

"The cock doth crow to let us know, if we are wise what time to rise."

"A man of words and not of deeds is like a garden full of weeds"

"Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll, Charms strike the sight but never wins the soul".

"Many men of many minds, many birds of many kinds, Many fishes in the sea, many men do not agree".

"Tis education forms the common mind Just as the twig is bent the trees inclined.

"Kings must die as well as you and I".

"Hail lovely art whose beauties shine And grace the penman's every line".

As a rule boys had more opportunity for schooling in winter, and the girls learned when roads were better in spring. But enough women received good education so that many of the teachers were ladies.
Did you know? Prospect Grange was established in 1894. The Grange has always been a focal point for sociability as well as work. It was unique in its founding that men, women and youth over 14 were all on equal standing. The potato was an early crop and an important one, Such a sober plain underground tuber could non-the-less be cause for fun. A competitive program between Prospect and Mad river took place in 1900, with prizes for size, shape, and most ways of cooking. A poem written for the occasion; by Rev. William Phipps was printed in the Waterbury newspaper.

A potato lay in the cellar
With no blankets to keep him warm
And he shivered and shivered all winter
And wished he was dead and gone.

So he buried himself in a meadow
And wrapped himself warm in a sod
And he waited and waited to perish
He was so exceedingly sad.

But there came a ray of bright sunlight
And shone on his sightless eyes
And its warmth quenched all his sadness
He repented his wish unwise.

His eyes grew bigger and bigger
As his heart tried in vain to see
And he reached toward the light still further
And he cogitated what might be.

But the sunlight made him prolific
And around him soon were piled
Such a heap of little potatoes
That he thanked the sunlight and died.

O potato, tato, potato! There's a much better life for you
For as yours is lost in the summer it is found in potatoes new!

Rev. Phipps and all his talented family will be covered in our "People" book. The Grange will be in "Organizations".
Did you know? Electricity was first installed in Prospect in 1929. It came up Rte 69 as far as the center. The Grange Hall, The Congregational Church, and 3 street lights made up the number of customers required by the company for service. An earlier line came from Meriden by way of Cheshire on the trolley power, and served lower Summit Rd. and that area.

Did you know? the first Radio transmitter in the area was near the Bethany line on Rte. 69, in 1934 for station WATR. Opposite Radio Tower Road, the name remained after the towers were removed.

Did you know? The railroad built in 1888 went through the northeast corner of the town near the Cheshire line. Colloquially it was called the "loop" line, as it turned and twisted according to the terrain. "The engineer could lean out of the front window and shake hands with the brakeman on the rear". It went from Dublin St. Station in Waterbury through Prospect to Cheshire, to Cromwell. The trains traveled on some sort of spur track onto Conn. River barges, and continued to New York without unloading, then transferred to the line of their destination. It to a certain extent paralleled the Plank Road, that was a toll road. A few years later the trolley to New Haven crossed the same part of town. The trolley made its last run in 1934.

About the same time in 1934 the first CR&L busses came to Prospect Center. The drivers on the bus line came to know the daily passengers. A loyalty to the passengers, bus driver, and to the Company developed. For many years a Mr. McElligot drove the regular line. Often the bus was run for only a few. Woe betide the commuter who accepted a ride from a passing car. He or she would receive a scolding the next time. But the driver
could also kindly wait while a passenger ran back home for a forgotten lunch, or even stop at a house and wait for an unseen but regular customer to come dashing out.

There may have been a stage coach run through Prospect Center at the time there were two stores and a hotel at the top of the hill. Research has not yet found evidence. There was a short lived bus run to Naugatuck. More of these in the booklet on Roads and Transportation, with details on the Plank Road.

The earliest that canning of fruit or vegetables at home, would have been around 1856 when jars were first made. Even then they were expensive and other means used. Foods were dried, salted, or put in a root cellar. Butchering was generally done after cold weather, and then the meat salted or smoked, or neighbors took turns with "fresh" different weeks. A butcher's cart might make regular rounds, and he would also buy the calf, or other animal from the farm. One poor old lady is reported in late winter to say "don't want no salt, don't want no fresh, juat want some greens". Someone thought to go down cellar and cut off the sprouting tops of some turnips, and cook.

Blueberries grew plentifully in town. For many years, people from Waterbury, or other neighboring towns, came armed with pails. Some walking, sometimes "hooking" a ride with a milkman returning from his early route. Some were willing to pay a small fee to pick where the picking was good. Others "snuck" in, if they could, and were not very considerate of the farmers fences, or his own rights to satisfy his family. Nuts, blackberries, and grapes met the same fate.
In the early days berries were dried. They are still a favorite
in many old recipes. If the berries were dried they could be
used in the same manner as raisins, or steeped in water until
soft. Indians had dried berries and taught the whitemen.

One rule using berries was

Blueberry Slump

1 quart of blueberries 1/2 cups flour
3 cups of water 1/2 tsp baking powder
2 cups of sugar 1/2 tsp salt
milk

Boil berries, water and sugar in a broad saucepan until there
is plenty of juice. (Use less water if fresh berries are used
instead of dried). Mix the flour, baking powder, and salt and
add sufficient milk to make a soft dough. Pour over the berries.
Cover closely, cook for 15 minutes on top of stove. Turn out
on a hot platter. Serves six. Apples may be used in the same
manner.

General stores were the fore runner of today's supermarkets.

In the general store one could purchase all types of household
needs. Early accounts list "yards of tobacco", "pints of gin",
"skeins of thread", "kalerco", and many other needs. Some lists
credit on the other side, butter and eggs, the housewife traded for
her needs. Within more recent years, there were barrels of kerosene,
molasses, or vinegar. The molasses or vinegar jug was corked with
a corncob. Be sure the storeman filled the right jug from the
right barrel! A potato on the spout of the kerosene can kept it
from splashing on the way home, under the seat of the buggy, or
by hand. And woe to the child who stopped to play on the way if
mother was waiting to fill the lamps with oil, before dark, or
needed the molasses to make cookies for supper. One old recipe
for cookies is in a notebook, hand written and autographed
from each of her friends for a bride. What a nice present!
Molasses Cookies

1 cup molasses 1 egg
½ cup shortening 1 tsp each cinnamon, clove, ginger
½ cup strong coffee and nutmeg. Vary according to taste
1 tsp soda.

Mix all together with enough flour to make a soft dough to drop from the end of a spoon. Bake in a quick oven (400) for 8-12 minutes. Turn out on a towel sprinkled with sugar.

A popular means of raising money and socializing has been suppers. Prospect has a reputation for good cooks. Before the day of automobiles, wagon loads would drive out from Waterbury or other towns for a "Strawberry Festival", or "Baked Bean Supper". And at 25¢ a serving they made a profit in 1900! In June a feature would be sheets of flaky hot biscuits, split, spread with butter, and layered with fresh local strawberries. Topping would be heavy cream. Ummm!.

Biscuit

1½ cups flour ½ cup shortening
2½ tsp baking powder about ½ cup milk
3/4 tsp salt

Cut shortening into sifted ingredients until mixture is crumbly. Add milk to make a soft dough. Pat out onto a greased cookie sheet. Bake in a hot oven (375) about 15 minutes or until light brown.

Oysters were a delicacy then as now. When an ox load of produce was driven to New Haven (a two day trip), any sort of sea food might be returned. Some of the earliest plastered rooms if not made with lime from the lime kiln just off New Haven Road, were made of burnt clam shells. The lime was held together with hair, from local slaughtering. An old house may show in its walls bits of shell, and black, sorrell, or grey hair that was used as a binder, on the old uneven split laths. And the clams were made into chowder, no doubt. Old record books show "sent Pomp to
the river for shad" using a neighbor's horse and wagon. Each family would have a barrel of shad to salt down. Sometimes flower beds would be bordered with clam shells.

But in later days a fish man came to the door, with a selection on ice. Fish markets in Waterbury could supply the seafood needed for special occasions. It was a custom in Prospect for the winner of the Republican caucus for Representative to put on an Oyster Supper to all. (In those days winning the Republican Caucus was equivalent to Election). Soup plates were borrowed or rented from a friendly hardware store, as no one family had enough. During the depression, and with the growth of the town, it became apparent that the money could be spent for more needy causes, than Oyster Stew.

Among the suppers put on to raise money for different uses were "Oyster Scallop Suppers". The Prospect Cornet Band, in 1879 advertised an Oyster Supper and Hop!!!! Admission to the hall 10¢; Tickets to the Hop 50¢ and Oyster Supper 25¢. Those purchasing tickets to the Hop will be admitted to the hall free.

This band was organized in 1858. A complete story of the present Drum Corps, with some notes about old singing schools, and more about the Cornet Band will feature another booklet.

An old recipe for

Scalloped Oysters.

Place a layer of broken crackers in a buttered baking dish, then a layer of oysters, alternating until one pint of oysters is used, ending with crackers. The dish should be large enough to use only 2 layers of oysters or the middle one may not be done with the top and bottom. Season with salt and pepper. Use the oyster broth (strained, lest a bit of shell be found) and cover well with milk. Bake covered in a quick oven until bubbling lightly, (about 20 min.) Remove cover, dot with butter, and brown quickly.
ars for preserving the town's identity, or land, is to the last half of this century. In 1931 citizens actively resisted efforts of the State to have Rte 69 go the Green. The fact that the highway to New Haven was west of the Green, proves their success. Petitions were filed and a town meeting called enlisting townwide Two poems were published in the Waterbury American, against the proposal. Mrs. Halsey Clark wrote.

Fellow citizens stand!
Is your own to hold
Children of Prospect fold.
Grass so green on the mold,
More worth more than gold
Spect now a Century old.
Let these treasures of today
Be the new road another way!

Representing the practical view of many, Harry W. Talmadge entered with the following.
The road right through the green
Our natural beauty may be seen,
A road with modern skill
Travelers by see our hill.
So it in sight of passers-by
The children going to schools,
A road that's free of pools.
The monument of our honored dead
Be it where it may be seen and read,
Be it where we may add
Green much larger than we ever had.

This was before the Consolidated School was ever thought and it is true some motorists whiz thro' town without ever knowing they are here. But we don't mind, do we?

Another copy book Maxim. "Opportunities neglected bring repentance."

18
Again in 1970 a road widening program was planned for Rte 69 that would continue a truck climbing lane almost to the doorstep of the Hotchkiss House, built in 1820. Efforts of the Historical Society, spurred on by a young man, a law student who had lived nearby all his life, to have the extra lane end further north were successful.

During the August 1955 flood the Grange Hall was a collection site for clothing, food, and household items for those who had lost their homes to the rampaging river in the Naugatuck valley. Countless meals were served with the help of local Civil-Defense group, as the Grange kitchen used bottled gas. Entire families from Naugatuck were bedded down in the Community School for a few days, until electricity was restored.

Did you know? An article of faith of the early Church in Prospect forbade members from "frolicking, card playing, or other gaming, horse racing, and ought not to allow such evil practices in their houses". Horse racing in houses? Must have been tiny horses, as the houses in those days were smaller than today.

Did you know? At one time there was a strong Adventist Church in town. Until they built their own Chapel (now our Chapel Schoolhouse), they met at member’s homes. Captain Mix had one room reserved for their meetings, and members were baptised by immersion in Mix’s pond. This later became the New Haven Reservoir, and folk lore has it that some declined to drink the water "with all those black sins washed into it, as they might pick up the sins themselves".!!!
Did you know? All sorts of crops were once grown in the town? Rye, wheat, oats, corn and barley flourished in the fields. Sometimes dried beans became the standby food for a family for many a winter meal, particularly if there had been a pig or two raised, so there was salt pork. Some old houses had, built into the chimney in the attic, a "smoke chamber". Others had a smoke house, along with the corn crib, the ice house, the pig pen, the carriage shed, the feed room, and the barn. The barn would have stantions for cows, stalls for horses, a "loose box" for need, a calf pen and other sections. In the hay section generally the loft was over part of the stable. The mow was where most of the hay was stored, but if the barn was large enough to have a double mow, the second section would be "over in the bay". Cats and chickens could "steal a nest" in the far corner, and a few boards nailed to the upright timber made a ladder to climb when looking for them. Barns were good places to play on rainy days, but when "mowing it away" that is moving the hay to the far side, up under the roof on a July day, HOT is a mild term.

Did you know farmers grew their own hops to make their own beer? and later a pillow stuffed with the dried hops, eased the pain of many a tooth ache, after being put in the oven to "gum a little. Herbs and native wild plants were both gathered and dried. Mint, of several varieties used as tea, The bark of slippery elm when cooked with water and lemon juice, and maybe a little honey, was a cough medicine. Dock, dandelion, plantain, milkweed, were cooked as greens. Plantain had another use. The long seeded stem made a gentle "switch" when punishment required.
For those interested in following any general subject further there are books of old recipes. Books of old gardens, and farm life, are to be found in libraries and stores.

We propose as time permits to extract from old records more material that particularly applies to PROSPECT. If your family have different versions of the same or other stories, think how different even in one day two people would report an event.

The recipes are copied as read, altho' in some cases brought up to date a little. Baking powder was only introduced in a few generations. Soda and cream of tartar, or sour milk and soda were more frequent. Even then don't blame us if it doesn't turn out any better than your own "rule".

More firsts; Probably the first Irish family were in Prospect about 1827, the John Reid family. The first Negro family was Andrew Oliver, about 1860. The first mayor of Waterbury was Julius Hotchkiss, born in Prospect. The Drum Corps was organized 1949.

And a few more copy book maxims

"An ingenious mind denotes a good education".

"God made man and man made money
God made bees and bees make honey".

"Places and honors can be bought for gold
But esteem and love never can be sold."

"Wisemen commonly measure time by improvement".

"Behold the wretch whose lusts and wine
Had wasted his estate
He begs a share among the swine
To taste the husks they eat".

These items have been gathered from many sources to show a little of what Prospect has been like during the last 200 yrs.
Compiled by Mrs. Mark Baker

from papers, book, and
conversations with Senior
Residents of the town.

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