

NORTH CASTLE HISTORY

NEW ARRANGEMENT!
Daily Accommodation Line of Stages from
North Castle
TO
PORT CHESTER.



IN CONNECTION WITH THE
New-York and New Haven R. R.



On and after Thursday, June 20th, 1850, a Stage will
LEAVE PORT CHESTER
On the arrival of the 4 o'clock Accommodation Afternoon Train from New-York, passing by the way of
King Street, through to H. Finch's Store, North Castle.

LEAVE NORTH CASTLE
From H. Finch's Store at 3 o'clock in the Afternoon; Samuel P. Smith's Post Office, at 2, passing by
the way of King Street; Glenville Corner, &c. in time to take the 6 Train to New York.

Fare from Port Chester to North Castle, 37 1/2 Cents.

HIRAM FINCH, Proprietor.

N. B.—Passengers wishing to go to places adjoining this route, viz: Glenville, Portboro, Round Hill,
Quaker Ridge, Mile Square, and Middle Farms, will be conveyed at reasonable rates.

Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

STAGE TO PORT CHESTER, 1850

THE NORTH CASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 41 -- 2014

Table of Contents

Letter from Ree Schultz, President of The Society.....	2
Doris Finch Watson, 1923-2014	3
Windmill Farm, A Brief History by Ed Woodyard	15
A Bilby Tower in Whippoorwill by Sharon Tomback	24
Remembering Patriot Ann Fisher Miller by Cynthia Kauffman.....	27
Trustees of The North Castle Historical Society.....	Inside Back Cover
Stage to Port Chester, 1850.....	Back Cover

Photographs, Drawings and Maps

Stage to Port Chester, 1850.....	Front Cover
Doris Finch Watson.....	3
Dorrie Watson Thanking the NSDAR White Plains Chapter	4
Dorrie Watson - Her 90th Birthday Party	4
Dorrie Watson – Nova Scotia.....	13
Dorrie Watson – Sahara Desert.....	13
Dorrie Watson – Honoring Supervisor John Lombardi	14
Supervisor John Lombardi.....	14
Dorrie Watson – Zip Lining in Costa Rica – Age 88 Years	14
Dorrie Watson – The Castle Spa, Ludlow, Vermont, 2014	14
Dorrie Watson – India	14
1911 Map of Windmill area published by G.W. Bromley	16
1850 Advertising the Stage from North Castle to Port Chester	19
Windmill Entrance Gate and Cottage	21
Windmill Club and Lake.....	22
A Windmill Road View.....	23
Bilby Tower being Constructed	24
Climbing the Armonk Bilby Tower under Construction.....	25
Tightening a Nut on the Armonk Bilby Tower	26
Final Stage of Construction – Armonk Bilby Tower	26
Westchester County Sign at Miller House.....	29
Miller House – A Role in the Revolution – Now Unprotected.....	29
First Presbyterian Church Cemetery and Building, White Plains.....	32



Smith's Tavern
Society Headquarters
Listed in The New York State
and National Register of Historic Places

The North Castle Historical Society

440 BEDFORD ROAD ARMONK, NEW YORK 10504

Dear Friends,

It is with heavy hearts that we end this year with the loss of Dorrie Watson. Dorrie played an integral part in the development of The North Castle Historical Society. She was our Town Historian. She was extremely active in The Middle Patent Rural Cemetery Association, Friends of Miller House, Banksville Community House and other associations. We will miss her warmth and spirit and her willingness to help all. Mostly we will miss her friendship.

Our Trustees have been extremely active in keeping The Society a vital part of our community. Thanks to our finance committee, good investments have provided some funds to help keep the complex well maintained. We are working with the Library in preserving old North Castle newspapers, converting oral history tapes to newer technology format and continuing our support for the preservation of the Elijah Miller House/Washington's Headquarters in North White Plains. Our goals to educate and keep history alive are of paramount importance. Colonial Crafts Days, presented in a fun environment, bring students back to the early days of North Castle and allow them to experience what life was like. Thanks to our wonderful volunteer docents, we are open on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons from April through November.

My thanks go out to all of you – our fellow members. With your help and support, The North Castle Historical Society continues to be an important part of our community. I am thankful to our Trustees who are always willing to give of their time and keep things running smoothly. Hope to see you at the Tavern!

Sincerely,

Ree Schultz, President

DORIS FINCH WATSON
1923 - 2014



Dorrie was an organizer, with a capital “O” – in every good way. Many of us remember happily those calls that began, “Hello Dear, I’ve just had a thought.” One never said “no” to Dorrie.

She loved life, family, friends and her community.

She tirelessly supported several organizations with energy, which was boundless, time and financial contributions. The Banksville Community House, Banksville Independent Fire Department, Middle Patent Rural Cemetery Association, The North Castle Historical Society, the Elijah Miller House Committee, The Friends of Miller House/Washington’s Headquarters, Inc., Bedford Presbyterian Church and the residents of North Castle - through her role as Town Historian - all benefited from her courage, grace and strength of purpose.

Michael Genkerell, 2nd Lieutenant for the Banksville Independent Fire Department posted a moving tribute on the Fire Department’s website, noting that he was doing so with heavy hearts throughout the Department.

Michelle Boyle posted a loving memorial on her website “All About Armonk”, with her usual thoroughness and attention to detail. She wrote of Dorrie’s family – parents Walter Sutherlin Finch and Emma H. Miller Finch; husband of more than 50 years William J. “Bill” Watson who predeceased her in 1998; children Phoebe, Walter and William Jr.; their partners Drew, M.J. and Carmel; Dorrie’s grandchildren Tucker, Samuel, Kiley, Casey and Kimberly.

Michelle wrote of the legacy of contributions that Dorrie left to our North Castle community. “Farewell to a woman who left many fond memories and passion for her town, memories that can never be taken away ... what she did for the town, and how she did it.”



**Thanking the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution
White Plains Chapter for Awarding her the Historic Preservation Medal**



**Thanking family and friends for her 90th Birthday Party
Son Walter and Grandson Tucker appear in the background.**

Dorrie loved to travel the world. In later years, she met “travel buddy” Barbara Earle. They created many happy memories. Dorrie and Barbara were members of “The Twelve Dragons”, a group who enjoyed traveling together. They called, emailed and kept contact during the year and annually held a reunion trip. One year Dorrie hosted them at her Cape Cod home in Dennisport, Massachusetts. Dorrie made friends wherever she traveled.

EULOGY TO DORRIE¹

by Michael Schiliro, Supervisor, Town of North Castle

I cannot have been bestowed a greater honor than being asked to speak today at Dorrie's service. I am truly humbled and touched.

Role Model

People ask me all the time, "why do you serve, why do you do what you do?" Well, I have pretty good role models just in this town, and Dorrie was certainly one of them. Look at the history of our town alone, which Dorrie knew well. It's filled with people who did things that they didn't have to do, like Dorrie. But they did them, like Dorrie, to make our lives better. Her zest for life and her civic commitment are lessons for us all.

Confidence and Strength

Dorrie had class and grace, but the strongest impression she had on me was in her confidence and strength – Dorrie wasn't backing down from any one. My latest real-life experience exemplifying this was her work to preserve the Miller House. For Dorrie, we will fulfill her mission of restoring the Miller House in North White Plains; we will carry on her confidence and strength in finishing that for her!

There was an incident when, let's just say, Dorrie was not treated properly. I needed to find out what happened. Well, with much trepidation, I called Dorrie to ask her what happened. Her response to me was, "Mike, I'd be happy to give you every detail."

Politics

I don't think it's a secret that Dorrie was a staunch Republican. It always seemed that when I ran for office, and campaigned in Banksville, my opponent's signs were always on her front lawn!

Royalty

We live in America, so we are not a monarchy nation. But, I will tell you this. Doris Finch Watson was as close to royalty as you can find in these parts.

¹ A eulogy given by the Supervisor at her funeral on January 5, 2015 at Bedford Presbyterian Church, Bedford, New York.

A few of you know that I enjoy country music. Some of the lyrics from a song by Florida Georgia Line titled “Dirt” sum up my lasting impressions of Dorrie:

*You get your hands in it, plant your roots in it.
Dusty head lights dance with your boots in it*

You write your name on it ... You bet your life on it

*Her blue-eyed summer time smile looks so good that it hurts
a 10% down white picket fence house on this dirt*

You know you came from it and someday you’ll return to it.

Remember the Past

It’s important, so important, that we never forget the past. Dorrie was our bridge to the past in this town. And now it’s our responsibility to ensure that not only new generations in this town embrace the future, but that they and we never forget how we got here. Names like Jack², and Becky³, and Dorrie are never forgotten, and need to live on forever in this great town.

My Perspective

In closing, I’ll offer the perspective in my mind. If someone said to me, “Mike, you have been asked to speak at the funeral service for Dorrie Watson, but also, you’ve been asked to speak at the service for the President of the United States.” I’m coming here. That’s just how important Dorrie was and is.

**GOD BLESS YOU DORRIE.
YOU ARE A CONSTANT REMINDER OF
WHAT WAS, AND IS, GOOD.**

² A reference to long-time North Castle Supervisor Jack Lombardi who died in 2008.

³ A reference to long-time Deputy Supervisor Rebecca Kittredge who died in 2013.

DORIS FINCH WATSON - IN HER OWN WORDS

Writing for greenwichtime.com, Anne W. Semmes published the following interview with Dorrie on Friday, May 7, 2010.

Do you live in Greenwich? All my life -- in Banksville. My cousin Bill Finch was the historian of the Town of Greenwich. My dad attended what is now Greenwich Academy.

Are you married? No, I'm a widow.

What was your spouse's name? William J. Watson, Sr. We were married two months short of 50 years.

Do you have any children? Grandchildren? Yes, three children: Phoebe Finch Watson, Walter Finch Watson and William J. Watson, Jr., and five grandchildren -- two boys and three girls, which includes a set of twin girls.

Are you retired? No, I'm not retired. I'm still secretary/treasurer of the Middle Patent Rural Cemetery in Banksville, which dates to 1743, when my eighth great grandfather was buried at the top of the hill where his cattle grazed. It became a burial space for him and the other family relatives and neighbors. This continued until 1907 when my grandfather and several others incorporated it, and it became an association.

What did you do when you were working full time? My first job was with Blythwood Center on Stanwich Road for the treatment of alcoholics. I worked for Auto Ordinance Corporation, later Maguire Industries, then as executive secretary to Henry Fonda, the movie actor. I saw Jane growing up as a young girl, I appreciate her talent, but I don't like her politics. I left that position to help my husband run Finch's Country Store Inc. in Banksville.

What did you want to be when you grew up? As you're growing up, your ideas change. I wanted ultimately a happy marriage and children, and I was rewarded with both.

What are your main hobbies and interests? Preservation is my number one interest, preservation of historic buildings and of the history of life as it was lived in the early days of our country. I love antique furniture and am fortunate to have inherited my family pieces, including this 1720 settle (a wooden bench) I am sitting on. I am a founder of the North Castle Historical Society in 1971. My husband was president and I was program director of the Banksville Community House for 27 years. And,

I am very happy to be one of the two honorary members of the Banksville Independent Fire Co. Inc., of which my oldest son, Walter, is the chief.

Are you computer savvy? Yes, I'm computer savvy. I e-mail, but I don't wish to blog -- I don't have time.

Do you have a favorite work of art? I treasure the paintings and photographs of my family, including an 1842 oil painting of William Sutherland Finch. And I love the folio size picture of Autumn in New England, which is a Currier and Ives.

Do you listen to music? I listen to a great variety of music. I enjoy country music. I played the trumpet in high school and taught all my three children to play the trumpet -- John Philip Sousa marches. I'm weird aren't I?

Do you have a favorite movie? "Gone with the Wind," "Casablanca" and "The Sound of Music."

Do you have a favorite actor or actress? As a young bride I was in love with Clark Gable.

What is a TV show that you watch regularly? "Jeopardy!" and "The Antiques Road Show".

Who do you think was the best President of the United States? Reagan.

If you could tell the president of the United States one thing, now, what would it be? Have courage and always consider what is best for this beloved country and its people.

What is your greatest guilty pleasure? Eating sweets.

Do you have any regrets in life? No, we did it all. I have traveled a great deal of the world. My husband and I traveled for many years, and I've continued to travel after he died. I've been to Africa, Asia, India, most of the countries in Europe, including Russia. I've been to almost every country in the Caribbean, I've crossed the U.S., visited Alaska, Canada, Central America, and many countries in South America, and I've sailed around Cape Horn, the roughest waters.

What achievements in your life are you most proud of? I was instrumental in saving the historic Smith's Tavern, which is now the home of The North Castle Historical Society, and in the saving and moving of the Brundage Blacksmith Shop, the one-room East Middle Patent School and the 1798 Quaker Meeting House -- all moved behind Smith's Tavern [in Armonk,

New York]. So, it's like a mini-Williamsburg. I'm very proud that we do colonial crafts days for the fourth grade to enjoy games and contests that reflect the early history of our country.

Best piece of advice to give to the younger generation? Try to remember that there is life beyond the computer and television.

What brings you your greatest joy? My grandchildren.

What are you looking forward to? Continuing a happy life.

§

Dorrie continued a happy life. She was upbeat, gracious and full of life.

She left us on December 30, 2014 having enjoyed good health and her usual energetic lifestyle until a couple of days before her death. She traveled each year with her "roomie" Barbara Earle. She spent her summers at her home on Cape Cod enjoying a group of friends - especially her pal Pam Olson.

She continued admirably filling her responsibilities within our community: Town Historian for the Town of North Castle, a Director of the Banksville Community House, Secretary-Treasurer of the Middle Patent Rural Cemetery Association, Inc., Honorary Member of the Banksville Independent Fire Department, Inc.. Trustee of The North Castle Historical Society, Chairman of the Elijah Miller House Committee for the Town of North Castle, and member and advisor of Friends of Miller House/Washington's Headquarters.

"DORRIE" - IN OUR WORDS

**Thank you for being a friend;
Traveled down the road and back again.
Your heart is true. You're a pal and a confidant.⁴**

After Dorrie's funeral the family held a luncheon at her treasured Banksville Fire House. Those attending were given cards and asked to

⁴ Written and recorded by Andrew Gold in 1978, the song was later adopted as the theme song for a popular television show "Golden Girls" which originally aired from 1985 to 1992.

write a favorite memory of, experience with, or something they loved about Dorrie. Following are some of those comments.

My memories of Dorrie include that of having a second mother; hot cocoa for us after playing football in the yard between the store and the house; and most recently, our new tradition of sharing Christmas Eve Dinner. Lots of laughs. I will miss you Mrs. Watson. *Love from your other son, Johnny Troy.*

All the parties when we were together; me opening the bottle of Champagne; and getting my thank you hug and kiss. I looked forward to the lipstick print from her lips on my cheek ... how we laughed every time. *You will be forever missed. Bobby Barker.*

I will always have fond memories of playing ball with the boys at Banksville Community House and the 4th of July parties at the Troys. *With Love, Rest in Peace, Brian Salerno, Jr.*

Ninety miles an hour through life and beyond! A best friend – to young and old and in between. Christmas mornings with our families. Summer visits. Phoebe coming to visit Missy for a week on Nantucket. Dorrie, Bill, Walter and Billy delivering Phoebe and staying the night. Meeting them at the boat. We'd look up and there they all were proudly wearing their life jackets. Boy, were we mortified! *Muffy Troy.*

Dorrie and I shared DNA. We were cousins, members of that ancient Banks clan who settled the Hamlet and formed it for generations. I worked with her on cemetery matters. We were both trustees. I know she is now in Heaven, being introduced to all her ancestors whose resting places she cared for, for so many devoted years. *I'll miss you, Cousin. Chuck Banks.*

Dorrie was my "Welcome Home" mama. When I came back to run the family farm (slightly terrified) I moved to Banksville prior to moving "au campus" two years later. Mrs. Watson of my youth became Dorrie, my friend. She spread so much warmth and enthusiasm. Tom Wolff was wrong. You can come home again. Thank you Dorrie and thank you Bill! *Easy Kelsey.*

Dorrie was a great inspiration for me. Her strength and intellect were always at the highest level. Her passion for being involved in what was going on around her community was remarkable. Many meetings were held in her home preparing for the 2014 Armonk Antiques Show. While we went over things the fireman's radio was always going on and she

would stop our conversation to hear the message in case of an emergency where she could be of assistance. I have known Dorrie less than three years. I will never forget her. *Leo Vircillo.*

Two weeks after I retired as the North Castle Assessor, I received a call from Dorrie. She asked me how I liked my retirement and immediately asked me to join the Historical Society. I tried to tell her that I might not be good for that. She replied, "Dear, you will be great!" I have enjoyed it and loved working with her. She will be dearly missed. *Anna Maria Marrone.*

I remember the Colonial dinners we had at NCHS. Dorrie had the recipes and some good food was served. Several of us worked as servers for those who had come to dinner. We worked very hard. I decided that next time I would participate in the fundraiser as a diner. Needless to say, the next time I was working again. Dorrie was very persuasive. *Diane Brown.*

"Hey!! It's Dorrie!!" was what I heard every time I answered a call from her. I will truly miss that voice. We worked (and played) together since 1980 as members of The North Castle Historical Society, and several years later, on the Middle Patent Rural Cemetery Association board. She was one of the most remarkable women I have ever had the pleasure of calling my friend. I will truly miss her. *Stu Brown.*

Every year we looked forward to receiving a Christmas card from Dorrie. It was our way of finding out about her special trips. We especially loved the pictures of Dorrie "riding" the elephant and zipping down the zip line. She was always ready for an adventure. She lived life to the fullest! We'll miss her. Love to Dorrie! Our memories are so fond and so many that is difficult to put pen to paper. When something happens in our daily lives, when suddenly something Dorrie did or said comes to mind, it makes us smile and glad and grateful that she let us be a part of her rich and enthusiastic life. Thank you Dorrie for all that you did and for being who you were. *Ed and Nancy Woodyard.*

I remember the first phone call I had with Dorrie when she asked me to "work the kitchen" at the antiques show. I met many great people and found myself in a new world – The North Castle Historical Society. I am so very lucky to have had that happen, and I will be grateful forever. This memory is, of course, only the tip of the iceberg of loving, fun memories of Dorrie Watson, the Amazing Dorrie Watson. *Joan Krantz.*

Dorrie Finch Watson was more than a community leader. She was the

community. To have had the honor of knowing her, working with her and calling her a friend and colleague is to know that I must have done something right in life for she knew exactly what was needed and when it was needed. I was happy to be a cog in her kaleidoscopic wheel! God Bless and Godspeed, dear Dorrie. *Sheila Smith Drapeau.*

My favorite memory of Nana was when our family went to her house and we played different games that she made up off the top of her head. They always ended up being some the most fun games I had ever played when I was younger. *Casey Watson.*

My favorite memory of Nana is when she and I used to go up to Cape Cod – just the two of us for a week to do whatever we wanted. *Tucker Watson.*

My favorite memory of Nana was back a few summers ago when she treated us to go-karting at Cartwheel's. All five kids were in line, and she knew that I lost at go-karting a lot, because I am the youngest. While everyone was getting into their cars, she grabbed me by my arm and whispered, "I want you to win. Go get'em girl!" She said that to me out of the kindness of her heart. I'll never forget that, because she was the best! I love you, Nana. *Kimberly Watson.*

My favorite memory of my Nanna is when we went over every Christmas to put the Christmas family ornaments up. She used to tell us about where she got them and the stories behind all of them. Love you, Nana. *Kiley Watson.*

One of my favorite memories of spending time with Nana is when I had sleepovers at her house in Banksville. My cousin Tucker, Nana and I would all sneak next door to Finch's store when we woke up. I was pretty picky back then, and I would always get an egg and cheese on a plain bagel and a chocolate frosted donut with rainbow sprinkles. Later my Dad Bill, Mom Carmel and Sister Kim, my Uncle Walt, Aunt MJ and my two younger cousins Casey and Kiley would join us. *Samuel Joseph Watson.*

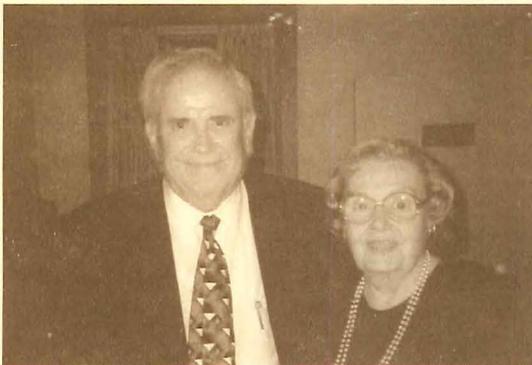
I always loved how Dorrie hosted every event with such grace and attention to detail. I remember helping her prepare a breakfast meeting at Smith's Tavern. The meeting was on the Miller House, and she invited the County (officials). She must have gotten there at the crack of dawn because the table was set with china, and fruit salad was set out in a crystal bowl. When Dorrie hosted a meeting the opposition didn't stand a chance. She was the ultimate advocate. No one could say "no" in the face of such class, grace and heartfelt conviction. *Dorrie, we will make sure that your dreams for the Miller House come true. Kerri Kazak.*

SOME OF DORRIE'S HAPPY MEMORIES



NOVA SCOTIA

SAHARA DESERT



**HONORING NORTH
CASTLE SUPERVISOR
JOHN LOMBARDI
MAY 26, 1998**



**ZIP LINING IN
COSTA RICA
2011 -- AGE 88 YEARS**

**THE CASTLE SPA
LUDLOW,
VERMONT
2014**



INDIA

WINDMILL FARM A Brief History

by Edward L. Woodyard

The six windmills of Windmill Farm in their present state date to the early 1920s when Dr. Charles V. Paterno decided to convert his newly purchased North Castle Farm into a gentleman's farm, one that included sports facilities for hunting, boating and polo, as well as growing Christmas trees.

Some of the present Windmill Farm acreage had been called North Castle Farm by its previous owner Elijah Watt Sells, a prominent Manhattan CPA, head of Haskins and Sells in Manhattan, which did the accounting work for several national railroads and was a forerunner of Deloitte and Touche.

Sells began purchasing his farmland in North Castle in 1903, buying acreage from local farmers Norman Lander, Eugene Rich, Enoch Sniffen, and William Beddolph (Biddulph). His North Castle Farm grew to about 260 acres, including property that Hiram Finch had owned in the mid-1800s that also encompassed his general store, which was a stagecoach stop and the North Castle post office; the executors for his estate had sold his tract to Lander and Rich.¹

In 1919, Sells sold North Castle Farm to Arrow Holding Corporation, Frederick Brown, president.² Brown was a real estate developer in Manhattan, who built a "manor house" on the corner of what-is-now Maple Way and Upland Lane. Two years later, Vanderbilt Avenue Realty Corporation, Dr. Charles V. Paterno, president, purchased the farm from Arrow Holding.³ Among Dr. Paterno's real estate holdings in New York City were several lavish apartment houses along Riverside Drive and the early development of Mosholu Parkway in the Bronx, which Paterno had envisioned as the Champs Elysses of America.

¹ Refer to North Castle History, Volume 29, 2002, "Sells' North Castle Farm (Today's Windmill Farm) by Doris Finch Watson).

² Westchester County, New York Land Records, Liber 2212, page 353.

³ According to The New York Times, September 21, 1921 issue, the residence consisted of twenty rooms and five baths, a group of farm buildings, a large orchard, and a picturesque lake.



Collections of Tim Mattison

**1911 map by G. W. Bromley showing E. W. Sells' North Castle Farm property (lower center) and the proposed Westchester Northern Railroad (dotted line from the lower right corner to the upper left corner).
A Windmill prior to 1909**

Although Dr. Paterno had windmills installed in the mid-1920s, soon after his purchase of North Castle Farm, previous owners Elijah W. and Mabel E. Sells had already used a windmill prior to 1909.

“By the well-house and water-supply hangs a story, short but instructive. There was a well in commission, good but insufficient. As has been said, there were also springs. The boldest of them came out in the woods half a mile away ... A little way off the house was another spring – sluggish to be sure, but making marsh of some good land. He had the water analyzed; it turned out free of contamination. Next he dug down to bedrock, struck a bolder stream there, controlled it by pumping out, while a cemented wall was built to a little above earth level, set a tight, small house above the walled spring, laid pipes from it, put in a windmill and two tanks, one outside and one in the attic, and found he had abundant water for everything – at a cost of less than one thousand dollars.”⁴

⁴ A Land-Lover and His Land by Martha McCulloch Williams, page 25, privately published Armonk, New York, 1909

Dr. Paterno's Windmills

Almost immediately upon taking ownership of North Castle Farm, Dr. Paterno installed eight windmills throughout his property. They were galvanized steel-framed obelisks with rotating blades built by Chicago Aeromotor. They were the six surviving ones which Paterno encapsulated with stone and wood (Robison Lake, Spruce Hill, Windmill Road, Maple Way and two at the Windmill Club), as well as two others that were not encapsulated, and were later disassembled in the 1960s. One was located at the "First Gate" entrance to Windmill Farm, behind the stone wall at the southeast corner of Windmill Road and Route 22, at the site of Hiram Finch's former store, and the other was just to the west of the current parking lot at the Windmill Club, on property once part of the "manor house" built by Brown.

Dr. Paterno used the windmills to pump water for the farm buildings and residences; they were also used for regulating the water levels of two lakes Paterno was dredging and enlarging on the property. In the late 1920s, the windmills were given their now-familiar hexagonal wooden and stone structures, prompting the change in the property's name to Windmill Farm.

Dr. Paterno built four man-made lakes in Windmill Farm: Robison Lake, Windmill Lake, North Lake and Long Pond. He saw the lakes as both a source of water for his farm and those of surrounding farms, seeking to form his own water company to do so, but that plan never materialized. Instead, the lakes became a feature of his venture to turn his acreage into a sporting venue for wealthy industrialists from New York City, such as corporate attorney John W. Sterling and Standard Oil investor Stephen V. Harkness, two of the later benefactors of Yale University.

Later, in 1935 Charles V. Paterno would mention the windmills in testimony before the New York Supreme Court that he had purchased North Castle Farm in 1921 as a parcel of 263 acres for \$55,000. In that same testimony, he twice referred to 253 acres. Responding to a question from the plaintiffs' attorney regarding whether the purpose of the windmills has been a large drainage development, Paterno responded that the windmills "were only built lately".⁵

⁵ Case on Appeal, Volume 1 – Pages 1 to 595, New York Supreme Court, Appellate Division, First Department, questions at 2143 and 2144.

Windmill Farm as a Sports Enterprise

Paterno had long been an associate of industrialists and entrepreneurs from Manhattan. In the 1890s, he, Sterling, Harkness, and others had formed a consortium during the Gilded Age to buy land along Route 22 from North White Plains to Bedford, for the expressed purpose of building a rail spur to Bedford, linking it to the rail lines which then ended at North White Plains, with stops to be added at Kensico, Mile Square (Armonk), North Castle (Windmill Farm), Bedford Corners and Bedford Center. The plans for the railroad did not materialize when the City of New York decided that it would instead replace the Croton Reservoir (the present site of the New York Public Library and Bryant Park in Manhattan) with another, significantly larger reservoir north of the City with the creation of Kensico Reservoir.

With no railroad to build, the consortium sold off sections of the land they had bought for the right-of-way for their never-to-be-built railroad line. Harkness and Sterling donated a large section of the land to Yale University. When that area was developed with residential homes it was named Yale Farms; Sterling Road honors the generosity of one of those men.

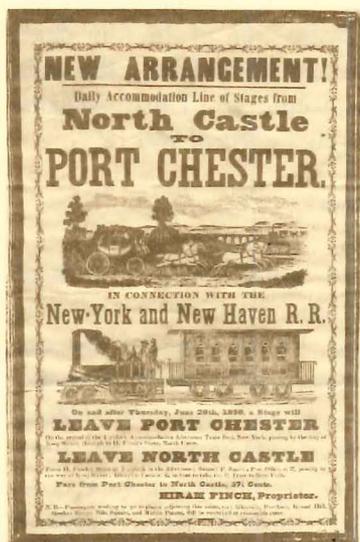
During that same time, Dr. Paterno bought North Castle Farm and put together his sporting operation, including the dredging and building of lakes for recreational purposes, a deer pen to breed prey for hunters, and a polo field on what-is-now Upland Lane. He also built guest houses and stables across from the polo field, and a boating house on one of the lakes, which is now the site of the Windmill Club. When his son Carlo Paterno decided to develop Windmill Farm into a residential community after World War II, most of the roads in Windmill evolved from the horseback-riding trails that were scattered throughout the "farm."

Windmills Enclosed

Once Paterno had set out to build his sports enterprise, he decided to use windmills as a source of power to pump water and to regulate the water levels in his lakes. Possibly taking a cue from his friend Harkness who decided to put a Gothic brick shell over the smokestacks at the electrical power station on the Yale campus, Paterno decided to put shells around his windmills.

The architect, designer and builder of the encapsulating stone and wood structures around the galvanized windmills was Edmund Petre. Born in eastern Canada, he, his wife Kathleen and their six children moved from White Plains into the house that was once Hiram Finch's General Store, and is now the Woodyard home at the entrance to Windmill Farm. The house dates to 1820 as an outbuilding on the Andrew Sniffen farm and is the second oldest home in Windmill Farm; the oldest one is the Carpenter House at the corner of Evergreen Row and North Lane, which dates to 1790. The Sniffen farm building was converted by Hiram Finch into a general store, post office and stagecoach stop. On the town maps of the era, the store is indicated as 'North Castle.'

1850 STAGE FROM NORTH CASTLE TO PORT CHESTER



Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

On and after Thursday, June 20th, 1850,
a Stage will LEAVE PORT CHESTER
On the arrival of the 4 o'clock
Accommodation Afternoon Train from
New-York, passing by the way of King
Street, through to H. Finch's Store,
North Castle

LEAVE NORTH CASTLE
From H. Finch's Store at 3 o'clock in the
Afternoon; Samuel P. Smith's Post Office
at 3 ¼; passing by the way of King Street;
Glenville Corner, 4 ½, in time to take the 6
½ Train to New-York

Connecting with the New-York and New
Haven Railroad – 37 ½ Cents each way

HIRAM FINCH, Proprietor

The stone on the house was put on during the Civil War, with a stone fireplace also added during that time. After Finch gave up his business and before Sells bought it, it was converted into a hunting lodge in the 1880s with a large open first floor and four bedrooms added upstairs in the former storage area; at that time, the roof was raised, a staircase built, chestnut flooring laid on the first floor, and wavy glass-paned windows installed. Sells later turned the lodge into a guest house and walled off the

downstairs, creating a hallway that was removed when Mrs. Olivia Seeler bought the house in 1963. Paterno added “indoor plumbing” to the house at the time the Petre family moved in.

Petre Family Memories

In the late 1930s, Edmund Petre came to work for Dr. Paterno and to help build the Paterno estate – and the windmills. Petre gave each of the six encapsulated windmills a slightly different design, which he drew by hand and built with available labor from the area. His wife, Kathleen, puttied and glazed all the windows in the basement of their home and led the crew of painting laborers.⁶

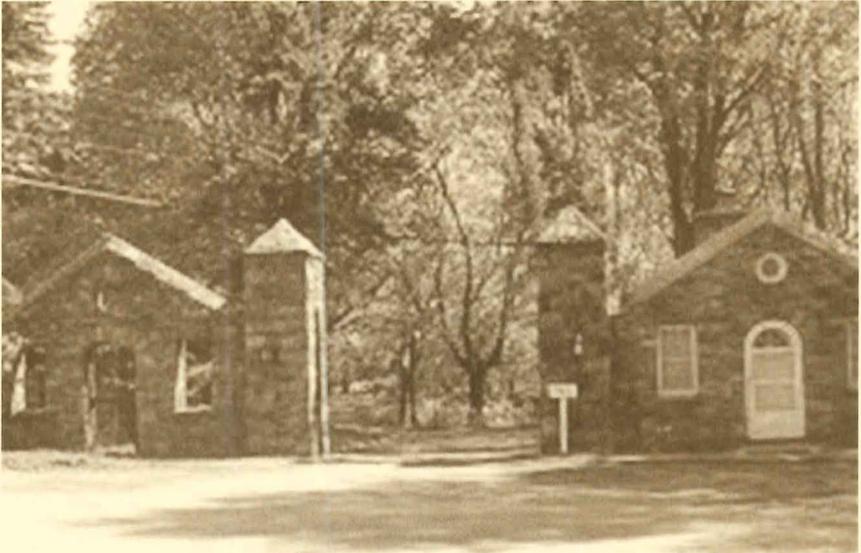
At that time, the estate included a number of farm buildings and stables on what-is-now Upland Lane, including guest cottages and employee housing. In addition, he helped with the construction of the four dams (Windmill Lake, Windmill Road, Long Pond and North Lake), the eight windmills, and the mile-long-plus wall along Route 22. This timeframe spanned from approximately 1939 until the close of World War II.

A Note about the Wall

The idea for the wall evolved at the close of World War I when those doughboys killed in action in Europe did not have a national cemetery in the New York City area in which to be interred. Paterno pursued this idea with the federal government and, to make the property more attractive for such an operation, he had the wall built, along with two stone pillared entrances with gatehouses which would serve as cemetery offices. (One entrance is now “First Gate” and the other is on Banksville Road.) As World War II broke out, Paterno renewed his efforts to make Windmill Farm into a national cemetery, but his plans were met with resistance both in North Castle and in Washington, DC. Town officials opposed the idea, not wanting such an operation and preferring instead something that would benefit “living” residents, a housing development of gracious homes.⁷

⁶ Correspondence in 2013 with Stephen Petre, grandson of Edmund Petre.

⁷ The Herald Statesman newspaper reported on February 25, 1944 that Dr. Paterno withdrew his application for rezoning the property for a cemetery, but that he promised to renew his application after residents were educated on the proposition. He envisioned a \$4 million memorial park comparable to Forest Lawn in Los Angeles, California. The North Castle Planning Board stated that New York State Law forbid another cemetery in a County with more than 175,000 residents and more than 500 acres already in cemetery lands.



Collections of The Society

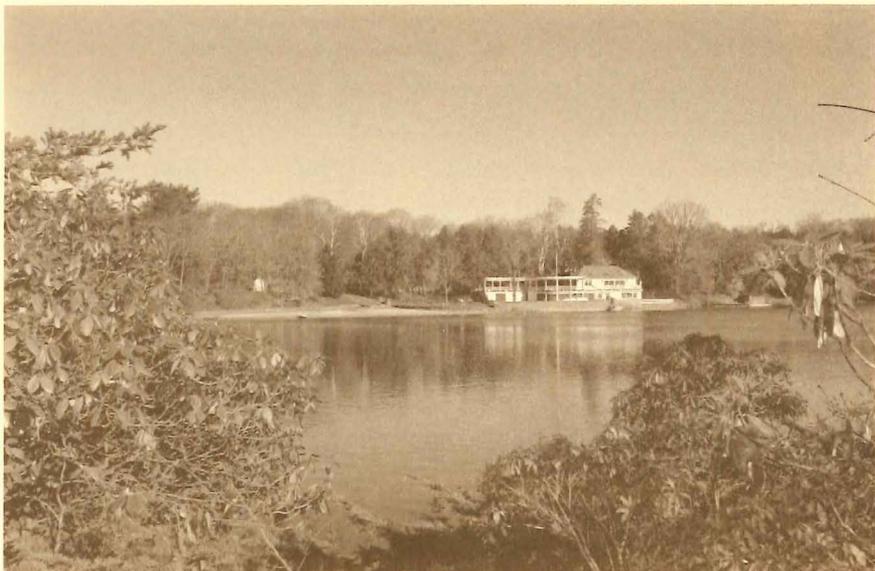
ENTRANCE GATE AND COTTAGE

The cemetery idea was also rejected by federal engineers and surveyors when they found too many underground springs within the proposed site, which they noted would not necessarily guarantee that coffins would remain six feet under in perpetuity.⁸

The Property After 1946

When Dr. Charles V. Paterno died in 1946, his son, Carlo Paterno, inherited about 1,260 acres. Dr. Paterno had expanded the original acreage of North Castle Farm, spanning both sides of Bedford Road (Route 22) in Armonk. The holdings included a 14-room farmhouse (“manor house”), several houses, a buttery, “ice houses,” barns, stables, a polo field, cemetery, boathouse, chicken coop, additional farm buildings, small cottages, four lakes, and eight windmills. In an interview in 1963, Carlo Paterno said that the farm was an active concern with chickens, cows and one and a half million evergreen trees, but that it was not practical to operate. He envisioned a community of homes built around a club.

⁸ Conversation in 1990 with Jean Seeler Gifford, daughter of Olivia Seeler.



Courtesy of Houlihan Lawrence, Armonk

WINDMILL CLUB AND LAKE

After building 60 homes, which were featured in a major article in *Better Homes and Gardens*, Paterno sold the property in 1954 to Edward J. Tobin and Mac Welson.

Another 270 homes, mostly colonial and split-level, were built by Tobin and Welson. They sold to Mrs. Seeler in 1963. At that time, she had renovated the small farmers' cottages on Upland Lane and was renting them. She also built the colonial homes along Maple Way. According to an April 5, 1963 article in *The Herald Statesman*, a newspaper published in Yonkers, New York, she called her project 'Windmill Meadows'.

Windmills Today

Of the six windmills in Windmill Farm, two are owned by The Windmill Club; they bookend the dam located on the club's property. One windmill is privately owned and presides over Robison Lake.

The other three are owned by Water District Number 2 for the Town of North Castle, one each being located on Spruce Hill Road, Windmill Road, and Maple Way.

Although the windmills are now decorative and are no longer functional, they remain icons which inspired the name of a wonderful community.

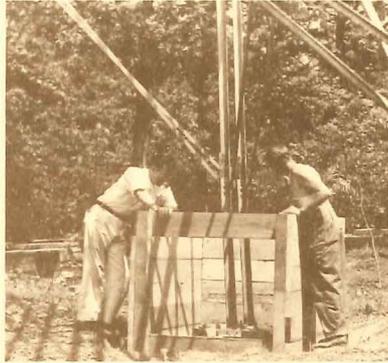


Collections of the Society

AN ICON INSPIRED THE NAME

A BILBY TOWER IN WHIPPOORWILL, 1934

by Sharon Tomback



Westchester County Archives

One of Mr. Bilby's towers was constructed in the Whippoorwill section of Armonk in 1934. The exact location is not known.

The Bilby tower is a surveying tower. Named for its designer, Jasper Sherman Bilby, it is designed so it can be erected and taken down the same day, and the parts transported to the next site.

Jasper Bilby devised an ingenious solution for overcoming the curvature of the earth. He worked with Aermotor Windmill Company to design and build re-usable steel survey towers. A large steel survey tower would have hundreds of interlocking parts; each one had to be placed exactly in the right place during both construction and tear-down operations.

By the early 1930s, experienced survey building crews could erect a 103-foot Bilby tower in less than a day.¹

It was put into use in 1927 by the U. S. National Geodetic Survey. Equipment was mounted atop the tower. Four lights were aimed in four directions. Work was done during the night taking repetitive measurements.

Bilby designed two braced tripods, one within the other. Author C. Barton Crattie said, "They'd pop up like mushrooms in the evening and be gone the next morning."²

¹ www.hydro-international.com - November - December 2011, Volume 15, Number 6
² *The American Surveyor*, Vol. 8 No. 4, 2011, www.Amerisurv.com



Westchester County Archives

**Climbing and constructing the Armonk Station Bilby Tower
for the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, August 8, 1934**

Jasper Sherman Bilby was born on a farm in Indiana in 1864. One of nine children, he was employed by the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey as a laborer and carpenter when he was twenty. At that time surveys were conducted by climbing trees or building wooden observation towers which were discarded after one use. After 42 years on the job, Mr. Bilby devised another method. He proposed to build a portable tower that would achieve line of sight for triangulation surveys.



Westchester County Archives

**Tightening a nut during construction of the Armonk Station Bilby Tower
for the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, August 8, 1934**



Westchester County Archives

**Final assembly stage during construction of the Armonk Station Bilby Tower
for the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, August 8, 1934**

REMEMBERING PATRIOT ANN FISHER MILLER¹

by Cynthia Kauffman

Following are remarks delivered by Cynthia Abbott Kauffman on July 6, 2014 to a Heritage Day gathering at the White Plains Presbyterian Church, where readings and reflections to honor Revolutionary War Patriots were given. More than forty Revolutionary War Patriots lie buried in the cemetery of the Church.

Thank you Pastor Geary² for inviting us to join in your celebration and remembrance of the Revolutionary War Patriots that rest here. When Debra (Debra Palazzo) and I first met with you and spoke about telling a story about the life of one of the people, we all had the same person in mind. Her name was not on the list we just read, but her husband and two sons were listed. Her name was Ann Fisher Miller, and she, too, was a Patriot.

Ann Fisher was born on March 8, 1728. Her father John had a farm where Orchard Street and Broadway now meet near the White Plains Rural cemetery³. Ann met Elijah Miller who was born on May 8, 1728. By 1754 they were married and raising their daughter Sarah in a small house on the hill above her parents home. In 1770 Ann, Elijah and their seven children moved to the more than 600 acre Miller farm near where Virginia Road and Broadway now meet in North White Plains. Elijah's grandfather John Miller had settled there in the 1680's.⁴

After the Boston Tea Party in 1773 tensions were very high in all the colonies. The Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4th 1776, and it was first read publicly here in White Plains on July 11, 1776.⁵ Lt. Elijah Miller was made Adjutant of Col. Samuel Drake's Regiment of Minute Men. He wrote his Will, to 'his beloved Ann' and their children, on July 21st, 1776. Elijah and two of his sons, John and Elijah, along

¹ Ann's name has also been spelled as Anne, Anna, Annetjie and Annatjie.

² Rev. Jeff Geary, Pastor, White Plains Presbyterian Church, 39 North Broadway, White Plains, New York.

³ <http://www.whiteplainshistory.org/treasures.html>.

⁴ The Heroes of the American Revolution and Their Descendants: Battle of Long Island, by Henry Whittemore, The Heroes of the Revolution Publishing Co., 1897, pages 48 to 55.

⁵ Some sources report the date as July 9, 1776. All agree that the reading occurred at the Courthouse on present-day South Broadway, White Plains, New York. The White Plains Armory was later built on the site.

with 200 Westchester Minutemen, headed for New York City. Drake's minutemen were posted at Horn's Hook, opposite Hell Gate, where they began work on the first battery marked out for the defense of New York City.⁶

A letter from Gen. Scott described their terrible conditions: "*You may judge of our situation, subject to almost incessant rains, without baggage or tents, and almost without victuals or drink, and in some parts of the lines the men were standing up to their middles in water.*"⁷

On August 21st, 1776, just one month after writing his Will, Elijah Miller was wounded and died. Ann was now a widow with her four youngest children at home and two sons still away at war. Adding to her sorrow, both of Ann's soldier sons died in camp on December 22 of 1776. They all rest here in this churchyard.⁸

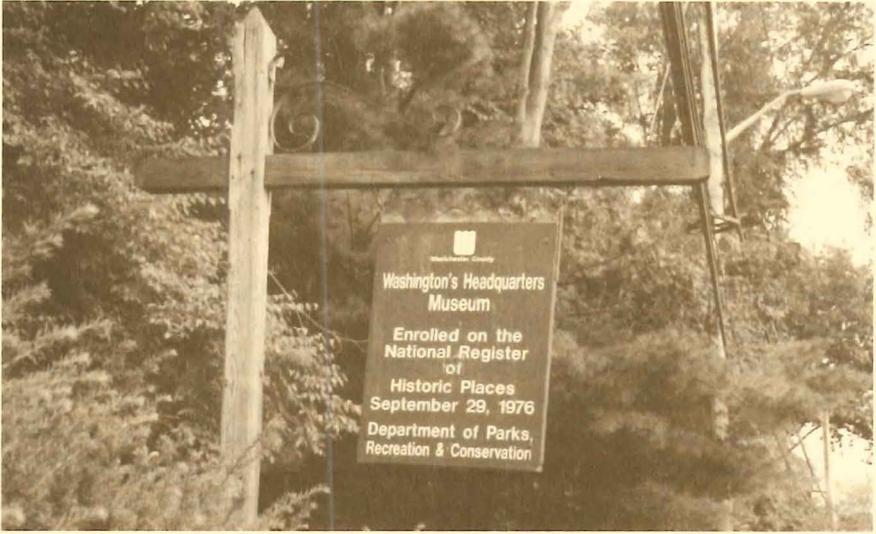
During October of that year the battle came to Ann's home. The battle had been on Chatterton Hill, and General George Washington was quartered on the Purdy farm, right here behind us. As the battle progressed he moved his troops to the hills to the north. They arrived at Ann's home on October 21st. Ann was told to pack up her family and head for safety to North Castle.⁹ She did so, but returned a short time later. It is believed that General Washington made his headquarters at the Miller farm until early November. Ann was a strong and patriotic woman. She offered her home and property to the American troops, she nursed the sick and wounded. Her farm was covered with tents, and permanent fortifications were built. Though we remember Ann as a Patriot, we need to remember that to many people at that time, she was a traitor to the King (of England). She risked her life, freedom, and property to support the fight for liberty.

⁶ New York Legislative Documents, Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, published 1920, Volume XXXVII, Nos. 117-118, page 153, J. B. Lyon Company, Printers, Albany.

⁷ Although specifically writing of the misery after the Battle of Long Island, it is apparent that the general living conditions for the men were abhorrent. Op. Cit., Henry Whittemore, The Heroes of the American Revolution.

⁸ White Plains Presbyterian Church, 39 North Broadway, White Plains, New York.

⁹ Statement of Zipporah Miller Davis on November 6, 1845, daughter of Ann and Elijah Miller, The McDonald Papers, edited by William S. Hadaway, Westchester County Historical Society, Book II pages 263-265.



Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

**WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS MUSEUM -
WESTCHESTER COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION &
CONSERVATION**



Photo Credit: Suzanne DeChillo/The New York Times

A HOUSE WITH A ROLE IN THE REVOLUTION IS NOW LEFT UNPROTECTED – article by Peter Applebome, July 4, 2010, *The New York Times* newspaper.

Ann's farm was chosen because of its location. It was the highest hill and bordered on the west by a river and the east by a swamp. The main road, now Broadway, would funnel the British right up to the hill within shooting range. Ann would have been able to see the British troops as they approached, marching through her father's farm. It is impossible for us today to understand what it would be like to live with the war at our doorstep.

When the war came back to White Plains in August 1778, General Washington's troops again made camp at the Miller farm. Knowing the courage and loyalty of the family, the General asked Ann's two daughters to deliver a message. Martha and Zipporah were about 14 and 10 years old. They delivered the message and returned home safely, but it is hard to imagine a mother's worry of what could happen if her daughters had been captured by the British. General Washington was quartered at the house once again before the war was over.¹⁰

During the war, this Presbyterian Church was burned down and Ann's home became the Methodist church for many years. I will let the Pastor better explain the significance of that.

The importance of what happened at the Miller farm was not forgotten. The street names on Miller Hill and Mount Misery reflect the history with Washington Avenue, Smallwood Avenue for Col. William Smallwood, General Heath and McDougal Drive for Major General Alexander McDougal's 1st New York division, Virginia Road, Custis Avenue and finally Freedom Road.

There is a park at the prominence where the soldiers made their stand. It is the only remaining 'permanent fortification' Revolutionary War site still untouched in Westchester. The Miller house is designated as a museum but has fallen into disrepair and is no longer open to the public.¹¹

Ann lived in the house until her death. She joined her husband and sons on June 13th 1819 at the age of 92. In her Will, she left the table and chair that General Washington used to her son James¹². I will end Ann's story

¹⁰ Op. Cit., Henry Whitemore, The Heroes of the American Revolution, page 51.

¹¹ Owned by Westchester County since 1917, repairs and reopening of the National Historic Register site is anxiously awaited.

¹² Historic White Plains, by John Rosch, White Plains, 1939.

with something that was written in her eulogy in the Methodist Magazine by people who knew and loved her...*an account of Mrs. Miller, The Grace of God Manifested. Her land was for some time General Washington's headquarters. Her land was covered with tents, and on an eminence overlooking her house a permanent fortification was made so that for many years not a day passed without the noise of war, and the sight of garments rolled in blood. The thundering cannon, the hissing ball, the moan of death and the cries of wounded bleeding officers and soldiers were familiar to her. She lived in the fire, unhurt, while she gave relief to the war worn soldier; she gave instruction to her children and was so successful that she lost not one. Sorrow and joy visited her habitation.*

Mrs. Miller was a nursing mother; she gave water to wash the hands of generals, Washington, Putnam, Lewis and other officers and soldiers. She provided for the disciples of Christ bread and water, her hands ministered their wants. She prepared her house for meeting and bore the expense for several years without seeing much fruit, though not altogether without success; some fruit appearing in her friends and neighbors. She, who aided the physician to help the body, was aid to the physician of souls in the glorious work of instructing and comforting sinners. Prosperity succeeded adversity. She lived to see her children have children and great prosperity, both in temporal and spiritual mercies.¹³

So on this sunny morning as we reflect on the sacrifices that were made by these Patriots who rest here, let us also remember the brave women, such as Ann Miller, who lost their husbands and sons, fathers and brothers yet never lost sight of the cause of liberty.

... Cynthia Louise Abbott Kauffman

Postscript from the author: Further research done since the writing of this story has revealed more information about Ann's life. Not only did she continue to run her farm for the remainder of her life, which many women could not do, she also purchased property on her own. In December of

¹³ The 1819 date is extremely important because many who lived during the battles fought for liberty during the American Revolutionary War years were still living in 1819. First hand personal memories were still alive.

1785 Ann purchased 64 acres to add to her farm from the Philipsburgh Manor property that had been confiscated from the loyalist Frederick Philips, by New York State, after the war.

Also, the grave of Ann Fisher Miller has been found. She rests at the Presbyterian Church with her husband and sons. Her stone is no longer standing but was recorded in the 1910 *Spies Report* which was written by Francis Spies before the 1930s vandalism that happened at the church yard. Some of Ann's children rest in the White Plains Rural Cemetery on the hill just above where her father's home stood and hugging the former Methodist church (now cemetery office) where Ann prayed.

Cynthia Kauffman is the Registrar and Historian, and Debra Palazzo is the Assistant Registrar and Assistant Historian and Americanism Chair for the White Plains Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution.



Findagrave.com photograph by Pat December 11, 2007

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING AND CEMETERY
WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK**

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STAGE TO PORT CHESTER, 1850

If you lived in the present-day Windmill Farm area in 1850 and wanted to travel to New York City on the train, you would have taken one of the stagecoaches from Hiram Finch's Store to Port Chester to connect with the New-York and New Haven Rail Road.

Maps of the time indicate that Hiram Finch's Store, at the present-day entrance to Windmill Farm and now known as 1 Spruce Hollow Road, the home of Nancy and Ed Woodyard, was known as North Castle.

The 1850 handbill pictured on the front cover advertised a "New Arrangement" and "Daily Accommodation Line of Stages from North Castle to Port Chester".

The stage from North Castle to Port Chester made several stops. It left from Hiram Finch's Store at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, arrived at Samuel P. Smith's Post Office at "3 ¼", passed by way of King Street to Glenville Corner arriving at "4 ½ in time to take the 6 ½ Train to New-York."

One would arrive at Port Chester on the 4 o'clock train, "pass by way of King Street, through to H. Finch's Store, North Castle." The fare from Port Chester to North Castle would have cost you 37 ½ cents one way.

Mr. Finch advertised, "Passengers wishing to go to places adjoining this route, viz: Glenville, Purchase, Round Hill, Quaker Ridge, Mile Square and Middle Patent, will be conveyed at reasonable rates."

Please forward any corrections or additions to the information presented herein and/or your constructive suggestions for improving this publication to the editorial board at The North Castle Historical Society, Historic Smith's Tavern, 440 Bedford Road, Armonk, New York 10504. If you would be willing to research and/or author an article, please let us know. Different writers and diverse perspectives are vital. We would appreciate hearing from you.

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