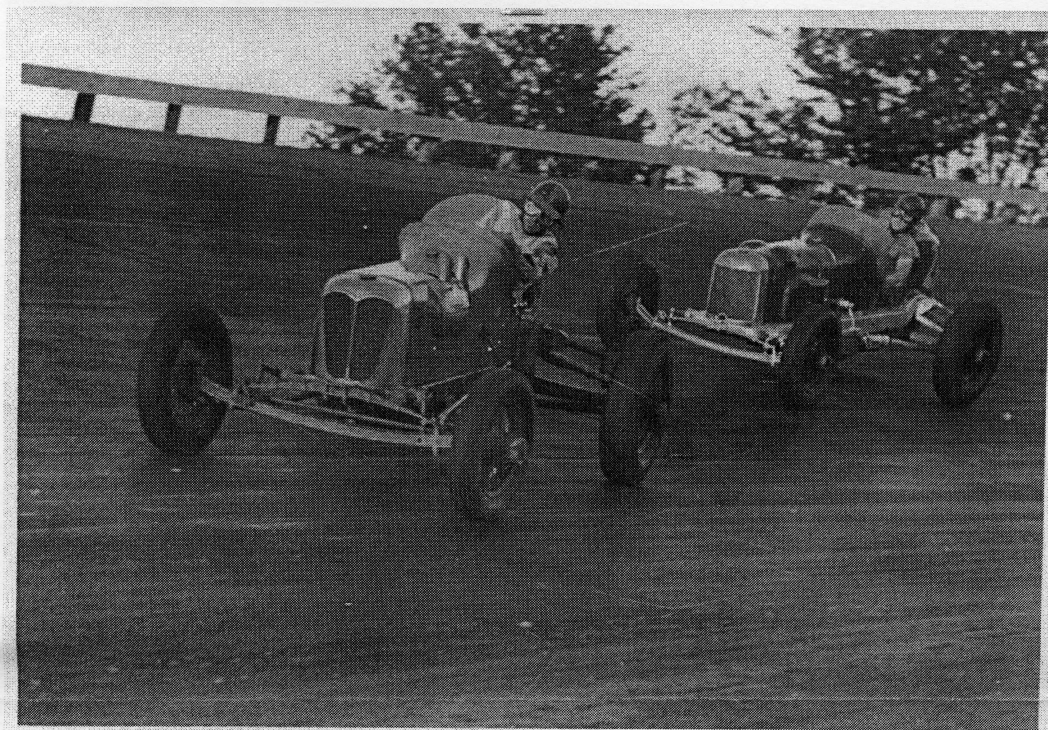


The Thompson Historical Society Newsletter

www.thompsonhistorical.org

May 2008



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Officers / Contact Info:
President: Joe Iamartino
Vice President: Burton Rhodes
Treasurer: Susan Vincent
Secretary: Ruth Barks
Curator: Mark Savolis
Photos: Alice Biesiadecki
Museum Shop: Lucille Barrette,
Helen Flood, Carol Holewa,
Val Iamartino, Henrietta Panu,
Jane Provost, June Schoppe, Sue
Vincent
Website: Blair Cole

www.thompsonhistorical.org
or call Joe Iamartino:
860-923-3776

Society Events:

Board of Director Meetings:
7 PM at the Community Center on the following date: 5/22/08.

Annual Meeting & Picnic:
Monday 6/16/08 at Greystone Farm. Food at 6 PM and meeting at 7 PM in the Alice Ramsdell Barn on the property.

All members of the Society are invited to the picnic.

If you'd like to bring a dish or dessert, call Sue to coordinate.

Susan Vincent's Phone #: 860 923 5728.

Thompson Museum at the Ellen Larned Building, Rt. 193

The museum features a permanent exhibit on the 10 towns of Thompson plus artifacts from Thompson's last country doctor, Dr. R. C. Paine.

In our revolving exhibit, our theme for the year is "Racing in Thompson" and includes information on both the Thompson Speedway & Raceway.

This new exhibit will open Saturday, June 7, from 10am – 2 pm. Learn more about the history of racing in Thompson at our museum.

Membership Info:

Membership dues are:
Individual Membership: \$10

Family Membership: \$15

Contributing Membership: \$25

Student/Gift Membership: \$5

Dues to be paid by July 1, 2008 for '08-'09 year.

Our Museum Shop will be open June 7 from 10 am to 2 pm. History books, clothing, gifts, toys, artwork, postcards, animal treats & more.

Location: At the Thompson Common, Rt 200 & Chase Rd

President's Quill:

My wife and I own an old home. Like many who treasure old buildings, I cringe when we put a nail in an old plaster wall or pull out old wiring. However, I didn't say we didn't do it. Owning an old house requires a willingness to compromise. Owning and loving an old house requires a willingness to sacrifice some modern comforts to save the essence of the old building.

I have been tempted many times to sell my old home and build one with every modern amenity—the entertainment room with theatre seating for 8, the stainless steel kitchen with granite top islands and counters, the garage for 3 cars with the latest workshop and separate parking for my tractor. Then I wake up. The old house is still there. Peeling paint. The sagging floor. Old drafty windows. Six beautiful but useless fireplaces. One hundred year old radiators. A garage 100 feet away from the house....wonderful when there is 24 inches of snow. Am I complaining? You bet! Would I sell it? No way! See the bipolar part of owning an old home!?

Yet, there is a certain something in knowing that I am living where a dozen families before me lived. Many of these folks never saw a TV, never flew in an airplane, never used a cell phone. On the wall in my hallway, there is an old phone that is 100 years old. I am tempted to put my now-obsolete BlackBerry in a glass box and mount it next to the old crank phone. I am not scared of the passing of time. Instead, I like to be reminded of it daily so I can better appreciate my time here with my family and friends. Is it a coincidence that many who love history own and renovate old homes?

Peter & Jane Vercelli showed me the innovative solutions in their wonderful old home. Peter designed a snug window system that cuts heating costs, blocks out road noise, while maintaining the original window structures in their home. In another room, he designed a very special ceiling that conceals its real purpose of providing easy access to overhead piping. In the Vercelli kitchen, the modern refrigerator is there but concealed in a historically appropriate way. Sue & Rob Vincent are reusing a 160 year old chestnut beam barn on their new property on Quaddick Road. The Underhills put solar panels on their old barn. Old can be new...again!!!

Administrator's Corner *(by Joe I for this issue)*

Our long-time administrator, Blair Cole, has resigned due to the increasing workload from the media and advertising company he owns and operates. I want to thank Blair for the many hours he spent working on our behalf—coordinating volunteers, dealing with

contractors, handling our computer archives, struggling with downed trees and flooded basements. Luckily for us, Blair will continue to serve as our webmaster and as a valued member of our board of directors. Thanks for all that you did for us, Blair. Your shoes will be hard to fill!

Miscellaneous Notes

Concerning our mystery photo from the last newsletter, we received a note from Judith Swayze, who said that the photo of the schoolchildren with the flag was from Little Pond School, circa 1916. She has supplied us with other 1916 photos from Little Pond school, one showing the same flag. Susan Vincent and Jane Johnson have also confirmed that the names are certainly from the Little Pond area in that time period. Thank you ladies....

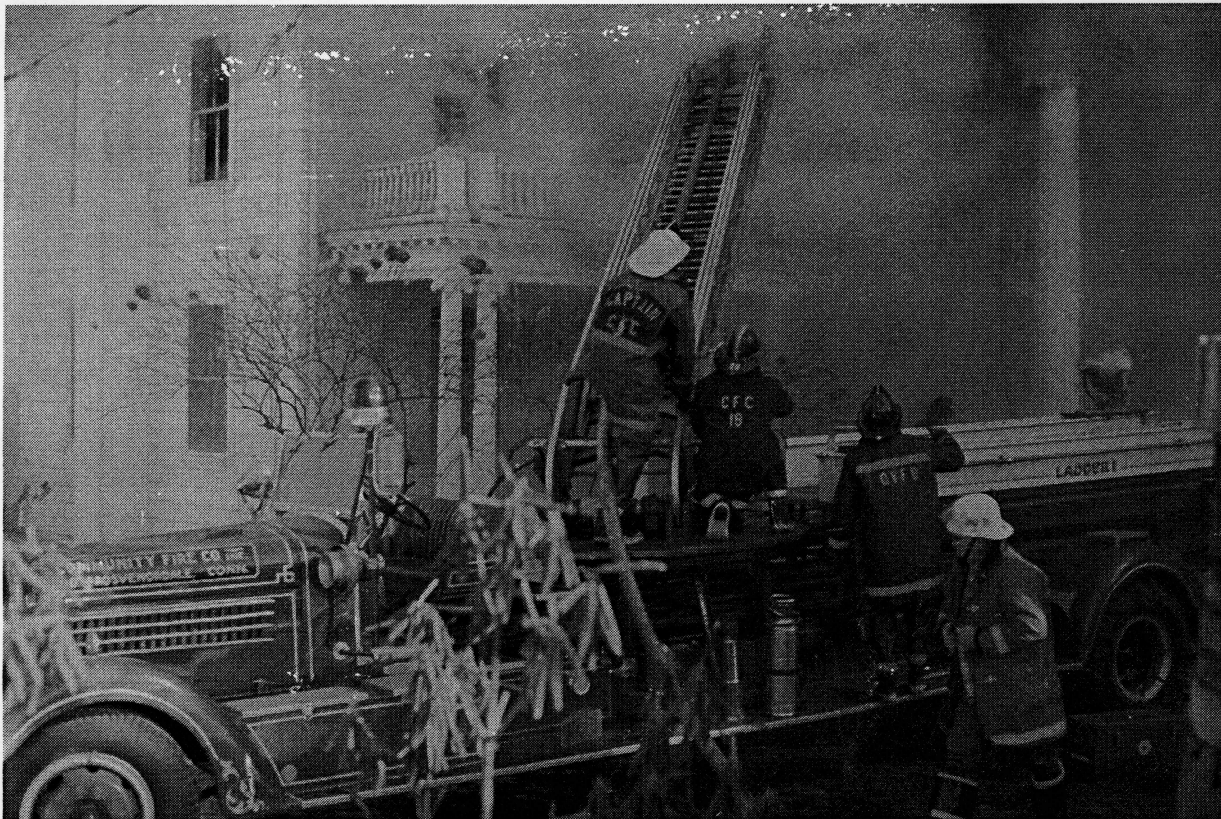
In the last newsletter, I said 3rd grade tour. It should have read 2nd grade tour.

About 30 years ago, the NE CT Oral History Project collected dozens of interviews, preserved on cassette tapes. Those tapes are beginning to degrade. The Thompson Historical Society and the Thompson Library are working together to transfer the recordings from cassette tape to a digital

format such as .wav file or .mp3 file. Several methods are available to do this transfer. The one we are using is based on free software called Audacity. Having used this software for over 30 interview transfers, I can say that it is very simple to use, yet packed with useful features and I highly recommend it to anyone trying to do similar transfers. Visit <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> to obtain the software.

Several have asked why some old leases started on March 25th. Until 1752, Great Britain & its colonies used the old Roman first day of the year, March 25th. An Act of Parliament changed the start of the year to January 1. France changed from March 25th to January 1st almost two hundred years earlier (1564), with a Charles IX decree.

For more, see ALL ABOUT THE MONTHS by Maymie Krythe, 1966



Roger Santerre submitted these photos he took ~30 years ago of the fire at the old mill agent's house on Rt. 12, next to the Knights of Columbus building. He found the undeveloped roll recently!! Thanks for thinking of us Roger...

**Wilsonville School June 1945**

submitted by Ted Raszka 2004

E-Mail: traszka@emergencyprinting.com**Standing: (L-R)**

Wanda Poplawski Janet Daniels Richard Munga Edward Sharples Dennis Langer

Teacher: Mrs. Koswig**Middle:**

Daniel Worthington Chester Raszka Fred Vigue Arthur Whetherbee Ted Raszka Karl Koswig

Front

Barbara Pytko Wilma Langer Barbara Roteth Beverly Derosier Barbara Whetherbee Gloria Derosier



Text on Rear of c1919 WW I Medal:
Presented by the Town of Thompson,
in Grateful Recognition of Service.
From THS collection.

**The Thompson Historical Society
seeks two people for paid
positions:**

- A) Collections / Museum** – This position requires about 6 hours per week to work on our archives, identifying items and entering details in our Past-Perfect museum software and assisting with the coordination of museum volunteers of the Thompson Historical Society. We are very flexible on time. Jan – March typically off.
- B) Buildings & Grounds** – We are looking for a person who will check our buildings regularly, manage contractors doing repairs, identify areas needing repairs, schedule furnace cleanings & oil deliveries, coordinate volunteers doing painting, cleaning, gutters, snow plowing, mowing, repairs, plumbing, electrical etc. 3-4 hours per month typical.

A stipend is paid for each position, the amount based on candidate experience and availability. If interested, call Joe 860-923-3776



Fairbanks House, Rt. 197, Quinebaug area. Does anyone know the background of this house?

Ladies Missionary Society of the Thompson Congregational Church:

Recently, a very interesting box of journals was left anonymously at the door of the Thompson Historical Society. These journals, many over 100 years old, are of the Ladies Home & Foreign Missionary Society of the Congregational Church.

A few selections:

November 1902

The annual Thanks Offering meeting of the Ladies Missionary Soc. was held in the church parlor Nov. 5; there were 38 present. Mrs. Jones presided. After singing a hymn and reading the 75 psalm Mrs. Jones led in prayer and followed with some very helpful remarks on thankfulness. This was followed with a duet, "I heard the voice

of Jesus say", rendered by Misses Blackmar & Munyan. Miss Lewis read a letter from Mrs. Dorset, one of the teachers of Blowing Rock School and Miss Knight (read) a letter from Rev. C.A. Milstead of Calera, Ala., the missionary to whom we sent our annual barrel* this year. After which, Ms. Shaw gave us an account of the opening of a missionary barrel.

Mrs. Paine sang a selection from Elijah "Rest in the Lord". Mrs. Lewis read Margret's mite box and Miss Larned – the daughters of Tyre "Give what you have".

Miss Knight announced the amount of the offering – \$40.49 and after singing a hymn, we were led in prayer by Dr. Jones and the meeting was dismissed.

Tea was served and a pleasant social time followed. One of our summer residents present made the remark to one who has recently spent the winter with

us. "I do not wonder you like to stay here if you have many pleasant gatherings like this.".. Showing it was enjoyed by all.

- Susan S. Evans, Secretary

Jan. 1903

....Letters were read from Blowing Rock acknowledging the receipt of our barrel, and from Jacksonville Fla asking help towards furnishing a church that was rebuilt after being destroyed by fire in 1901.

A long interesting letter was read from Miss Anna Cummings of So. Africa. It was voted to send \$13 of our thank offering to the House Missionary Soc; \$13 to the Eastern CT branch of Woman's Board; \$13 to the Am. Miss. Association and the remainder \$3.30 to the Church in Jacksonville.

* the barrel contained clothes, bibles, food

Windham County Transcript

17 January 1878

The last pay-day at the Mechanicsville mill was made amusing by the payment of the help exclusively in silver dollars. Two men carrying a bushel basket full of dollars accompanied the paymaster on his rounds, the latter fishing out the silver by the handfuls.

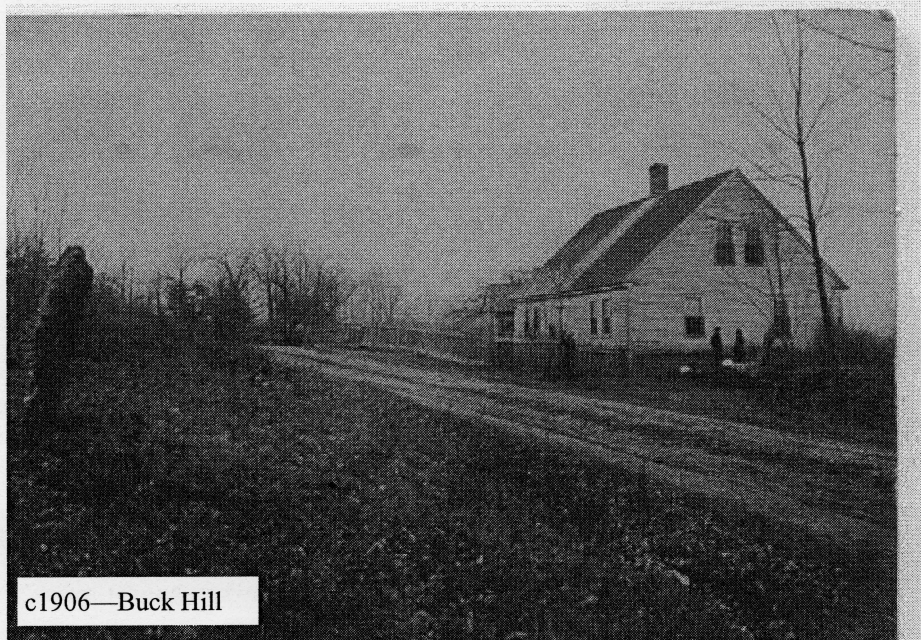
Hartford Courant

9 October 1905

The Connecticut Agricultural College team won the championship of eastern Connecticut on Saturday afternoon when they defeated the Andems of North Grosvenordale on the Morse diamond by 14 to 6 in the presence of 1,500 people.

(Ed. Note: Andem was the last name of the mill agent of the Grosvenor-Dale Company and he personally sponsored the Andems team)

This photo was recently purchased off eBay and it is believed to be circa 1906 Buck Hill section of Thompson. If anyone can help further identify / confirm the location of this photo, we would be most appreciative. Is the stone on the left the RI / CT marker?



c1906—Buck Hill

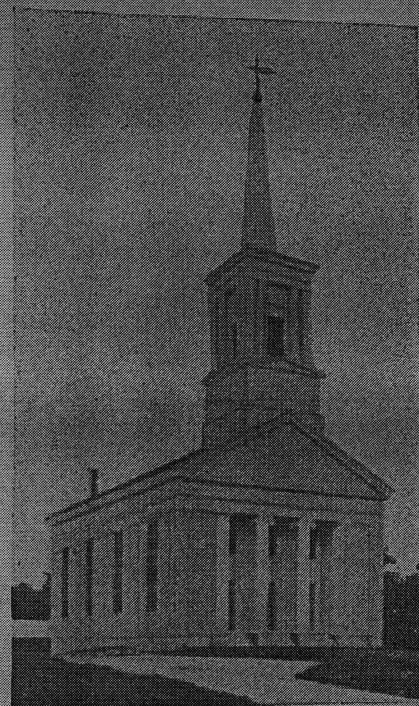
1828. I. Bonney.
I. M. Bidwell.
O. Robbins.
P. Townsend.
1829. I. M. Bidwell.
O. Robbins.
P. Sabin.
J. Lovejoy.
1830. P. Sabin.
R. Gould.
J. Lovejoy.
1831. Ben Paine.
R. Gould.
William Livesey.
1832. Charles Virgin.
Ben Paine.
E. J. Scott.
1833. Charles Virgin.
William Livesey.
P. T. Kenney.
1834-35. Hector Bronson.
1836. W. Rimbart.
1837-38. J. W. Case.
1839. Abram Holway.
1840-41. George May.
1842. Erastus Benton.
1843-44. Benjamin C. Phelps.
1845. Richard Livesey.
1846-47. George Stearns.
1848. James Mather.
1849-50. Sidney Dean.
1851-52. Edward A. Lyon.
1853-54. Charles Morse.
1855-56. B. M. Walker.
1857-58. L. B. Bates.
1859. George Burnham.
1860. Albert M. Allen.
1861-62. John W. Case.
1863. John Cooper.
1864-65. Silas S. Cummings.
1866-70. Warren Emerson.
1871-74. Samuel Fox.
1875. S. V. B. Cross.
1876-77. D. C. House.
1878-79. Seth B. Chase.
1880-82. Lorenzo W. Blood.
1883-84. Charles Hammond.
1885-86. Walter P. Stoddard.
1886-88. B. F. Raynor.
1889-90. Daniel Brown.
1891-92. D. G. Ashley.
1893-94. J. Q. Adams.
1895-96. T. W. Douglass.
1897-1900. E. J. Sampson.
1900-06. Merrick Ransom.
1906-07. Amos Nichols.
Frank W. Gray.
1907. John R. Miller.

1820 Samuel J. A. Beech

SOUVENIR

OF THE

Methodist Church



West Thompson, Conn.

The West Thompson Methodist Church, built about 1841, was moved to Belmont, MA where it now sits on the campus of a private school for boys called Belmont Hill School. This booklet was printed sometime after 1907.

Take note of the mention of the missionary society founded in 1838. While the missionary movement grew for many reasons, Methodists and Baptists missions from the north increasingly took an anti-slavery tone.

THE church at West Thompson, Conn. is an outgrowth of the services conducted in Pomfret under the direction of Rev. John Allen, who labored there during the winter of 1792-93. During that time Noah Perrin, who resided near Putnam, was converted, and opened his house for services. A class of six persons was formed in 1793, and he was appointed leader, which position he held for nearly sixty years.

In 1793 another class was formed at West Thompson, led occasionally by Noah Perrin. Portraits of himself and wife have been placed in front of the original pulpit, where they now stand.

Another remarkable character was Captain Jonathan Nichols, at whose house at West Thompson preaching was established as early as 1795. In 1796, in an upper unfinished room of this house, which is now standing near the church, the Conference of New England met. This notable Conference was held September 19-21st, Bishop Asbury presiding. There were thirty preachers present, and seven deacons and five elders were ordained.

West Thompson in those early years was included in the Pomfret circuit, which, in 1827, was changed to West Thompson circuit.

The first Methodist Church in Thompson, was erected in 1797, a little east of where the church now stands. Rev. Daniel Ostrander preached the dedicatory sermon.

A Missionary Society in connection with this old church was organized in 1838. The present church edifice was built in 1841, and was dedicated July 5, by Joshua Soule, Senior Bishop of the Methodist Church. It became the mother of thirteen churches, including Danielson, Putnam, Eastford, East Woodstock, North Grosvenordale, East Thompson, Webster and Attawaugan.

The Centennial of the Conference already referred to was celebrated in the church, December 6, 1896. Great interest was manifest by many persons assembling from these churches. Presiding Elder, G. H. Bates, delivered a most interesting discourse.

Through the generous assistance of N. S. Johnson, Mrs. Chamberlain and Elijah Nichols, the church underwent repairs in 1892-93. The late J. W. Doane has rendered valuable assistance in the financial support of the church.

Mr. J. N. Perrin was elected Sunday school superintendent in 1887, which office he still holds.

Pastors

1793.	John Allen.
1795.	Daniel Ostrander.
	William Chapin.
1796.	Joel Ritchen.
	D. Brunley.
1797.	Stephen Hull.
	Joseph Crawford.
1798.	Daniel Ostrander.
	Asa Heath.
1799.	William Thatcher.
1800.	Daniel Ostrander.
1801.	Peter Vanast.
	Phineas Peat.
	James Annis.
1802.	John Nichols.
	Samuel Goslin.
1803.	John Gove.
	Dyer Burge.
1804.	Thomas Brenich.
	Noble W. Thomas.
1805.	Joshua Crowell.
	Thomas Rawlin.
1806.	Thomas Perry.
	Elisha Streeter.
1807.	Ebenezer Washburn.
1808.	Hollis Sampson.
	Abner Clark.
1809.	Isaac Bonney.
	Samuel Cutler.
1810-11.	Theophilus Smith.
1812.	Phillip Munger.
1813.	Theophilus Smith.
1814.	Joel Winch.
	Job Pratt.
1815.	Elias Marble.
	Job Pratt.
1816.	Edward Hyde.
1817.	John Walker.
1818.	Ebenezer Blake.
	Benjamin Sabin.
1819.	Ebenezer Blake.
1820.	Amasa Cowles.
1821.	Joseph Ireson.
1822.	Joseph Ireson.
	Samuel G. Atkins.
1823.	Elias Marble.
	E. R. Avery.
1824.	Elias Marble.
	Milton French.
1825.	John W. Hardy.
	John W. Case.
1826.	Heman Perry.
	Milton French.
1827.	Heman Perry.
	George Sutherland.

The Second Great Awakening, a religious period in the 1805-late 1830s, had more and more missionaries answering the call to bring the word of God to the Indians and other 'unconverted'. In the process, they helped pave the way for great migrations of white settlers to many regions—notably Oregon, Utah and Hawaii. Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, grew in numbers and strength and these new churches were taking members from the old order, the Congregational Church. Devout members of these churches, including the established eastern Congregationalists, took their families to distant lands to save souls. While many left home ultimately to find low cost land or gold, huge numbers left their homes to promote their religious beliefs and, finding pleasant surroundings and willing converts, they elected to stay, depopulating the mother towns of New England. Many newspapers commented about the numbers leaving Thompson after the 1830s.

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Quarterly Newsletter
The Thompson Historical Society
P.O. Box 47
Thompson, CT 06277
www.thompsonhistorical.org

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Ask The Society

Q. What happened to the barn on the Covill farm? Was it torn down? A. According to letters given me by the Kapitulik's, the red barn visible today from the road on the left side of Route 131 as one heads towards Quinebaug, past the junction of Route 12 and Route 131, is the old Covill barn. The barn is intact but the location is not the original one. Below is a photo (from the Kapitulik's) showing the barn being lowered on its new foundation. While the Covill farm dated from 1809, I have no date for the barn. This barn is featured in our '08 Calender for October.

