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The Norwell Historical Society P.O. Box 693 Norwell, MA 02061 781-659-1888 www.norwellhistoricalsociety.org

#### MUSEUM & LIBRARY HOURS

The Jacobs Farmhouse is open by appointment only. Please contact the Society for further information or to schedule a tour.

The Norwell Historical Society Library at the Norwell Middle School (328 Main Street) is open on Wednesdays from 2:00 to 3:00 during the school year or by appointment.

The Norwell Historical Society Archives Center on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Sparrell School is open by appointment only.

The purpose of this Society shall be: a.) to plan and arrange for the promotion of knowledge about the Town of Norwell by discussion, research, meetings and publications; b.) to collect, solicit and preserve documents, manuscripts, charts, maps, records, photographs, relics, and items of local interest; c.) to arrange, index, catalog and file/ maintain such material for use by the members of the Norwell Historical Society and other interested parties; d.) to work with and cooperate with other entities, groups, organizations, and individuals directly and indirectly.



NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY P.O. Box 693 Norwell, Massachusetts 02061

WWW.NORWELLHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG

# Two Historic Elections: 1916 and 2016

#### by Samuel Olson

There have been fifty-seven presidential elections since the first in 1788. In my opinion, the most historically significant since the first would be:

- 1800 (Jefferson)
- 1828 (Jackson)
- 1860 (Lincoln)
- 1916 (Wilson)
- 1932 (Franklin Roosevelt)
- 1980 (Reagan)
- 2008 (Obama)

The 2016 election could be another if Hillary Clinton, the first woman to be nominated by a major party, became the first female president of the United States.

In this article, I shall look at not only the presidential election one hundred years ago in 1916, but also the statewide contest of that same year. Did the choices made by Norwell voters mirror the sentiments of the country as a whole?

If the Republicans had not split into two competing parties—Old Guard conservatives and Bull Moose progressives—with two presidential candidates, Democrat Woodrow Wilson might not have been re-elected as chief executive in 1916.

Wilson launched a legislative program that was one of the most prolific in American history. Early in his tenure, he had said that given his background it would be an irony of fate if he would be remembered as a wartime president. The potential war he feared was *not* involvement in the European war that had broken out in 1914, but a second war with Mexico. The unsettled political situation in revolutionary Mexico caused chaos along our southern border, most notably Pancho Villas' raid on Columbus, New Mexico resulting in the death of seventeen Americans. In 1916, Wilson ordered a so-called peace action under the leadership of General John ("Black Jack") Pershing.

By the presidential year of 1916, the Republican rupture had healed. Charles Evans Hughes, an associate justice of the Supreme Court and earlier reform governor of New York, was selected as the Republican candidate following his resignation from the Supreme Court. The



1916 Republican presidential candidate, Charles Evans Hughes: the "animated feather duster"

Democrats nominated Woodrow Wilson for a second term. Hughes' recipe for ongoing national reform was so similar to Wilson's that he was called "Wilson with Whiskers." Because of his luxurious beard, former President Theodore Roosevelt referred to him as the "animated feather duster."

#### Re-Elect Woodrow Wilson. He Kept Us Out of War.

Most Americans applauded Wilson's efforts to maintain peace despite provocative German U-Boat attacks on our shipping. In 1915, America had come perilously close to war with the sinking of the British Cunard passenger liner *Lusitania* in which 1,198 lost their lives including 128 American citizens. Wilson's attempts to keep peace despite this outrage caused Theodore Roosevelt

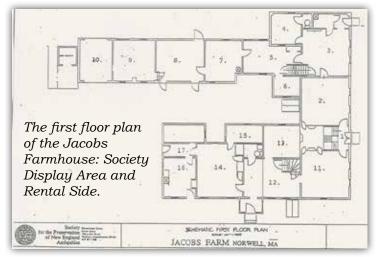
# THE JACOBS' FAMILY HISTORY, FINAL CHAPTER

by Bill Slattery

Editor's Note: The following is the sixth (and last) installment of a history of the Jacobs Family written by Society Archivist Bill Slattery for the Town of Norwell's application for the Jacobs Homestead property to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The application is still pending with the Department of the Interior. Parenthetical notes have been added to help with context.

[Dr. Henry Barton Jacobs, the last Jacobs' family member to live in the Jacobs Farmhouse, and his wife] were childless and a prenuptial agreement forbade that one would inherit the wealth of the other. Henry, having been a vice-president of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA, today called Historic New England—HNE) was aware of a developing interest in Norwell/South Shore history by the organizing in 1935 of the Norwell Historical Society. He provided in his will that his family's farm estate could go to either SPNEA or to the Town of Norwell. Therefore, SPNEA controlled the estate from 1939 until 1988, [when the Town of Norwell took ownership]. In that time, part of the house was rented to an overseer to protect the property from vandalism.

SPNEA invited the Norwell Historical Society to supervise those rooms not being rented—to see if they could make the area one of local history exhibits for public viewing. It was not until around 1966 that the exhibit area was fully developed by the local volunteer group. Many donations were made to the Homestead by Society members, but some of the pieces on display are original Jacobs family pieces.



In the Henry Barton Jacobs Room (#2 on the map):

- the red painted desk dating from 1800
- the stand up Overseer's desk for a short man made by Elijah Damon
- the portrait of Rev. Hosea Ballou (c. 1825)
- pictures of Dr. Henry Barton Jacobs and his wife's Newport mansion

In the Dining Room (#5 on the map):

- the dining room table and chairs
- the Jacobs mill photographs

In the Kitchen (#7 on the map): the pull-down desk (probably used in the tool shed for farm business).

Throughout the house, the cast iron stoves in various rooms are original. In the tool shed, there is an original Jacobs trunk. On the second floor, the red painted desk in the corridor and the straw matting in the southeast corner bedroom are also family pieces.

In conclusion, while there were many Jacobs homes built around the pond, certainly one of the earliest was built by Joshua Jacobs and companions for his new wife, Mary James, in 1726. The house was <u>un</u>common in that it was a two story dwelling. It was common in the sense that the main entry faced south, as did most homes built in that century. (Of course, not everyone had convenient access to a grist and saw mill complex.) Some of the hardwood floor boards are about two feet wide and indicate the availability of enormous trees.

When Henry Barton Jacobs placed the farmhouse in his will as a property to be preserved for future generations, he was well aware of the legacy he had received from his forebears. He left behind framed documents of his heritage showing he descended from John Alden and Priscilla Mullens and showing descent from Colonial War veterans, and he was a member



Dr. Henry Barton Jacobs, circa early 1900s, decked out in colonial costume.

of the Mayflower Society. He had a photograph made of himself in colonial costume (see picture above). Jacobs' ancestors arrived in Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1633 and married with those arriving at similar early dates, including the Stetson family one of the earliest in this area. Members of various branches of the Jacobs family had a major impact in American history: they fought for the patriot cause in the Revolutionary War, socialized with Vanderbilts, and Henry is still remembered as a co-founder of Johns Hopkins Hospital of Baltimore.

Henry's pride in this heritage, however, went beyond familial relationships, military exploits and friendships. He was vastly proud of the industriousness of his

# JACOBS', CONT'D.

(continued from previous page)

ancestors whose resourcefulness allowed them to be virtually self-sufficient—a requirement for survival and prosperity. He clearly saw these qualities in the farmhouse and mills of his youth, which he treasured and wanted preserved—not only for others to admire but also so that citizens might go and do likewise.

Today, the visitor to the Jacobs Homestead may not be able to see more than pictures of the mills, but they can also see the tools used to cook, wash, make clothes and shoes, build houses, make apple cider, cultivate the land, allow horses to stay upright in the marshes when gathering winter hay, make the wide floor boards, and provide heat. These tools were used by generations of Jacobs family members from the 18<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

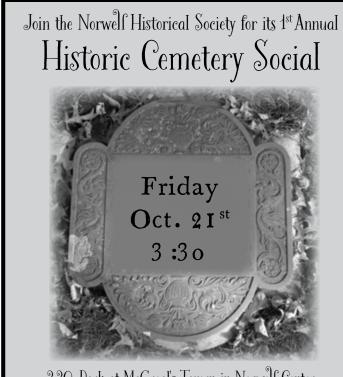
The Jacobs Homestead is symbolic of the independent and self-reliant spirit that created the industrious nation we call the United States of America. It represents the beginnings of the entrepreneurial ambitions of a family that, with many other similar families, created the fabric of a people and nation. The Jacobs Farmhouse is, therefore, worthy of the preservation that Henry Barton Jacobs had envisioned for it.





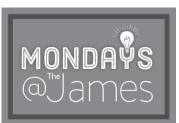
Robert Merritt of Rockland recently donated a number of photos of this Norwell athletic team. This picture, circa 1935, features (left, standing) Raymond Merritt and Ken Torrey; Coach Dan Wilder (center standing); Arthur Merritt (left, sitting) and Eldon Whiting (far right sitting).

What is the name of the team and where did they play in Norwell? (Location/Answer at the bottom of page 7)



3:30: Park at McGreal's Tavern in Norwell Center 4:00: Tour First Parish Cemetery with historian Joanne Howard 5:00: Refreshments at McGreal's Tavern & Tinker's Son

> For more information or to RSVP: www.norwellhistoricalsociety.org.



The James Library & Center for the Arts is beginning a new series of low or no-cost informational, educational, and interactional events led by local experts and leaders on Monday evenings. Many of these events feature historic topics that may be of interest to Society members.

Held at the James Library & Center for the Arts at 24 West Street in Norwell Center, reservations are not necessary, but are encouraged. **All programs begin at 7:00 p.m.** See **www.jameslibrary.org** for more information.

**SUOSSO'S LANE BY ROBERT KNOX** Date: Oct. 17 2016 is growing remarkably similar to the year 1920 when Nicola Sacco and Plymouth resident Bartolomeo Vanzetti were arrested in a climate of violence and political repression. Bob Knox's book *Suosso's Lane* is based on the scandalously unjust trial and execution of Sacco and Vanzetti for a murder most people believe they did not commit.

THE LEWIS & CLARK TRAIL Date: Oct. 24 George and Meredith Atkinson just returned from their own journey along the Lewis & Clark Trail. Join them as they discuss their adventure and the original "Corps of Discovery:" 31 men, one woman, and a baby traveling from the plains of the Midwest to the shores of the Pacific Ocean from May 1804 until September 1806.

# 1916 AND 2016 ELECTIONS, CONT'D:

(continued from page 1)

to label him "that letter-writing sissy in the White House afraid to fight."

A best selling song of 1915-16, possibly the first antiwar song in American history, was entitled "I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier," dedicated to mothers everywhere.

> "I Didn't Raise My Boy to be a Soldier" Lyrics by Afred Bryan

I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier, I brought him up to be my pride and joy.

Who dares to put a musket on his shoulder, To shoot some other mother's darling boy?

Let nations arbitrate their future troubles, It's time to put the sword and gun away.

There'd be no war today, If mothers all would say, I didn't raise my boy to be soldier.

An opposite view was expressed musically in the lyrics of "Uncle Sam, Here's My Boy."

Below is a page from the 1916 Norwell Town Report recording Norwell's vote in one of the closest presidential elections. Norwell opted for Republican Hughes substantially, but not to the degree Norwellians had voted Republican earlier and in later elections (often giving the Republican eight or more times the vote accorded the Democrat!).

The national popular vote for Wilson was 9,129,606 and 8,538,221 for Hughes. Wilson received 277 electoral votes to Hughes' 254. Hughes had gone to bed election night thinking he had been elected

Blanks

president. Then the vote for California came in with just a few thousand more votes for Wilson, and hence a second term.

One might also note how Norwell's tabulation of votes for statewide offices reveals an overwhelming Republican bias. Most state offices were for one-year terms, and this often meant campaigning for office went on more or less continually. In 1917-19, a constitutional convention would

king he had been elected	1
The polls were opened at 6 A. M. and were of 12.16 P. M. 312 ballots were east. The ballot canvassed and counted in open meeting and the reclared as follows:	s were:
ELECTORS OF PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT	
Benson and Kirkpatrick, Socialist	Ъ
Hanley and Landridth, Prohibition	F
Hughes and Fairbanks, Republican	179
Reimer and Harrison, Socialist Labor	0.
Wilson and Marshall, Democratic	107
Blanks	24
GOVERNOR	
James Hayes, Socialist Labor	4
Chester R. Lawrence, Prohibition	5
Samuel W. McCall, Republican	203
Frederick W. Mansfield, Democratic	74
Dan A. White, Socialist	0
Blanks	26
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR	
Calvin Coolidge. Republican	209
Alfred H. Evans, Prohibition	3
Sylvester J. McBride, Socilaist	0
Thomas J. Maher, Socialist Labor	0
Thomas P. Riley, Democratic	53
Blanks	47
SENATOR IN CONGRESS	
John F. Fitzgerald, Democratic	71
Henry Cabot Lodge, Republican	199
William N. McDonald, Socialist	2

be held to modify the 1780 Massachusetts state constitution (famously written by John Adams). One noteworthy revision of the convention was two-year terms for governor and other state offices.

One might also note that Calvin Coolidge was elected lieutenant governor of Massachusetts in 1916, only seven years before becoming president. Also of note is the defeated candidate for United States senator: John "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, President Kennedy's grandfather. He was bested by Henry Cabot Lodge, Sr., a close friend of Horace Fogg of Norwell, and a frequent visitor to our town. 1916 was also the first

"Hughes had gone to bed election night thinking he had been elected president. Then the vote for California came in with just a few thousand more votes for Wilson, and hence a second term."

> year U.S. Senators were elected by popular vote (17<sup>th</sup> Amendment) rather than by the state legislatures.

> In the new year, German atrocities accelerated even though the war was stalemated. 1916 had seen both the battles of Verdun and the Somme, with casualties numbering in the hundreds of thousands for



Germany, Britain, and France. Germany knew that actions against a neutral nation might mean war with the United States, but calculated that the war-weary Allies would agree to a negotiated peace before the United States could raise an army and transport it overseas.

On April 2, 1917, Wilson appeared before a cheering joint session of Congress. With his war message highlighted with the words, "We must make the world safe for democracy." Four days later, Congress declared war with only six dissenting senators and fifty dissenting House members.

# **New Neighborhood History Parties Planned**

Hanover

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Ever wonder about the history of your Norwell neighborhood?

The Norwell Historical Society Board realized that even if most of its members don't live in historic houses, many are fascinated by the history of the area surrounding their home.

- Were there Native • Americans in their area?
- When did the first settlers arrive and who were they?
- What was the primary industry?
- Where was the nearest school?
- Was there a tavern or a store in the neighborhood?

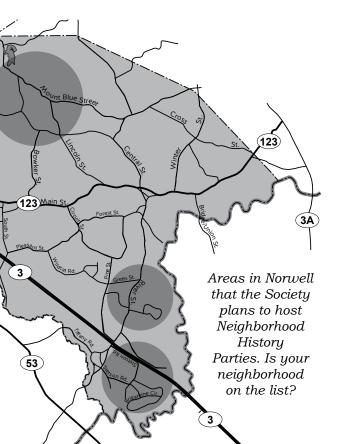
These and many other questions will be answered when the Society begins its "Neighborhood History **Party**" series this December with a focus on the Jacobs Pond area. Residents from Jacobs Lane, parts of Main and Prospect Streets and newer cul-de-sac neighborhoods such as Captain Joshua Lane, Laura's Lane, and Loring Drive will be invited to a historic home in the neighborhood. Residents will be treated with a self-guided tour of the house during a brief meet-and-greet period, then the Historical Society will present a short history on the Jacobs Pond area and take any questions from residents.

This event is the first of (hopefully!) many more Neighborhood History Parties planned—it is the hope of the Society Board that two neighborhoods per year will be featured.

The following areas are on the Society's "wish list" for sponsors (note the map above showing these areas):

- Mount Blue
- Norwell Homes
- Ridge Hill/High Street/West End
- River Street/Green Street
- Stetson Meadows/Church Hill

If you are interested in hosting one of the future Neighborhood History Parties or would like to see a Party initiated in *your* neighborhood, please contact the Society via email at info@norwellhistoricalsociety. org.





In celebration of their 375th Anniversary, First Parish of Norwell, Unitarian Universalist, is announcing a number of events.

Founded originally as the Second Parish of Scituate and led by William Vassal, the church built its first meeting house at what is now Old Meetinghouse Lane in Norwell and called its first minister, William Witherell

First Parish of Norwell Unitarian Universalist

For a complete calendar of celebratory events happening throughou the year, Celebrating 375 Years visit www.firstparishnorwell.org.

**Free Organ Concert:** October 9<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm. Heinrich Christensen, music director of King's Chapel, Boston, will perform a recital celebrating 375 years of music.

**Community Harvest Picnic:** October 15<sup>th</sup> from noon to 4:00 pm. Free fun activities, food and games for kids of all ages.



(great-grandson of our town's namesake)

have moved out of the Norwell House on Norwell Avenue. In the midst of their busy move, they took the time to contact the Historical Society and donate a number of items related to Henry Norwell: a ladies' writing desk, dining room chairs, a hallway mirror, a Gov. Winthrop desk, a parlor table and a water wheel. Thank you for your generosity and support of the Society, Mr. and Mrs. Norwell!

## LEARN ABOUT THE OTIS WATER TOWER AT THE SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23<sup>rd</sup>

Historical Society member David DeGhetto has generously agreed to host the **81<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Norwell Historical Society** at his property on Pleasant Street: the John F. Otis house, barn and water tower.

Mr. DeGhetto bought the house in 2014 and has been painstakingly overseeing its restoration. One of the showpieces of the property is the water tower—brought back from disuse by Restoration Carpenter Pret Woodburn. Mr. Woodburn will be speaking about the rehab process of both the tower and the Otis barn on **October 23<sup>rd</sup>** at the Society's Annual Meeting.



This area of Pleasant Street—a section of Norwell known as "Wildcat" or occasionally "Old Pond" was settled in the early-to-mid 1700s by the Otis Family when Ephraim Otis married **Rachel Hersey** of Hingham and built the house at 191 Pleasant Street in 1732. Ephraim was the great-great-

grandson of Richard Warren, a Mayflower traveler and original settler in Plymouth Colony.

Ephraim and Rachel's oldest child, Ephraim, Jr., was educated at Harvard and served as a surgeon at Fort William Henry in the French and Indian War. In 1769 he married Sarah Harris of Providence, RI, became a Quaker like his new wife, and moved to Scituate (now Norwell). Daniel, brother of Ephraim, Jr., inherited the family farm (at 191 Pleasant Street) and married Mary Greene of New Bedford. After Daniel's death (ca. 1899), the house and farm were inherited by Daniel's son Ephraim and later by Ephraim's nephew Joseph Clapp Otis.

The builder of DeGhetto's house at 143 Pleasant Street was John F. Otis, son of Daniel and Mary and nephew of Ephraim. John was born in 1824 and had at least two siblings: Ephraim and Sarah. At age 29 in 1854, John married Ellen M. Clapp (22). At the time of his marriage, he built the house at 143 Pleasant Street next door to his parents' house at 191 Pleasant. The Clapp family homestead (where wife Ellen grew up) used to stand next door at 105 Pleasant Street, but was demolished and replaced in 1995 by a large multistory house.

Records note that John Otis was a farmer throughout his life (which is consistent with the complex of farming buildings on the property). He and Ellen had at least three sons: Herbert W. (born ca. 1855), Franklin (born ca. 1859) and Joseph Clapp (born ca. 1865). Gravestones at First Parish Cemetery also note that John and Ellen had other children: Eddie Russell Otis and Freddie Winthrop Otis. By 1880, Ellen was suffering from hemorrhaging of some sort and she died on April 27, 1884 at age 52 from a "uremic coma" (often caused by kidney failure). John Otis died from Bright's disease (a kidney disorder) at age 74 on February 23, 1899. He is buried in the First Parish Cemetery in the center of Norwell with his wife Ellen and their children.

The 1903 map of Norwell shows 143 Pleasant owned by "Joseph W. Otis" (perhaps the grandson of the original owners?) and outlines the house with its ell, the barn, and the water tower—all in their present locations. The Society is very grateful to David DeGhetto for completing the restoration of these historically and architecturally significant buildings.

Joseph Foster Merritt, in his 1938 book A Narrative History of South Scituate-Norwell noted:

"While [Wildcat or Old Pond] is now largely grown up to woods and has some of the prettiest roadways in town it was in early times the home of many of the families prominent in the town and some of the largest farms were in this locality.

Here were the homesteads of the Clapp family... The Otises were always prominent residents here, Daniel and his son, John and Ephraim being among the later ones. John's son Joseph C., who died in 1931 was the last representative of the old families left in this locality. ...The site of the old Prince Otis Farm on Circuit Street has long since grown up to woods and few know where it is located."

The Norwell Historical Society hopes that everyone will attend this fascinating talk and tour, and learn more about the Otis family and the wonderful restoration of this historic gem.

## NHS Annual Meeting Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 2-4 p.m.

Please RSVP by October 11<sup>th</sup> via the internet at <u>WWW.NORWELLHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG</u> (and click on the "Events" tab) or leave a message on our answering machine at 781-659-1888.

Norwell Historical Society

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION DATE NAME		
TownS	TATE Zip	
TELEPHONE	E-mail	
<b>MEMBERSHIP</b> 3-Year Membership (\$35) Life Membership (\$350) Please make checks payable to the <i>Nor</i> <i>Historical Society</i> and mail to: NHS P.O. Box 693, Norwell, MA 02061		
<text></text>	craft n,	
	2:00 TOURS OF THE OTIS WATER TOWER 3:00 ANNUAL MEETING IN THE OTIS BARN 3:15 SPEAKER PRET WOODBURN, RESTORATION CARPENTER at 143 PLEASANT STREET, NORWELL	
uple of small buildings as well as an open field a pond for skating nearby. In 1954, the Grove sold to the Town of Norwell for \$1, and today the Grace Farrar Cole School is on the site.	Carpenter Pret Woodburn will discuss his recent restoration of the Otis water tower and barn on Pleasant Street. Also present will be Paula Marcoux, a food historian and author of Cooking With Fire, a how-to cook book on wood fire cooking techniques. (Books will be available for sale.)	
ociation was a baseball team that played at the s Hill Grove on High Street. Ridge Hill Grove had		

Limited close parking is available and the Otis barn is accessible to all. Tours of the upper portion of the tower are restricted.

Answer from page 4: The Union Athletic

(use the "Upcoming Events" tab) OR CALL 781-659-1888 TO LEAVE A MESSAGE



NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY P.O. Box 693 NORWELL, MASSACHUSETTS 02061 WWW.NORWELLHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG



## **RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## NORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS AND MEMORABILIA

#### A NARRATIVE OF SOUTH SCITUATE-NORWELL \$20

#### by Samuel H. Olson

This book chronicles the life and times of our town from 1845-1963 with a collection of articles previously published in The Norwell Mariner. Each chapter is its own story!

#### Shipbuilding on the North River

by L. Vernon Briggs

The definitive index of ships built on the North River and the shipyards that lined its shores was written in 1889 and reprinted in 1988. Lists interspersed with an occasional tale.

## **HISTORIC HOMESTEADS OF NORWELL**

ð15 Learn more about our stately houses and the people who lived in them. This book, well-illustrated with drawings, discusses architectural features and includes genealogical information.

#### **HENDERSON MAP**

\$3 Interesting hand-drawn map suitable for framing. Drawn by Anne Henderson and first issued in 1967, it is a favorite depiction of the location of historic homes.

## NORWELL 1903 MAP

\$25 This 16" X 20" reproduction of the 1903 Plymouth County Atlas map of Norwell is a high quality digital copy of the original hand-colored version. Suitable for framing.

## **NORWELL TILES**

\$10 These 6" X 6" white tiles depict various scenes: Kent House, Cushing Center, etc. Limited number available.

## THE ABCS OF NORWELL

#### by Gertrude Daneau

A coloring book perfect for children of all ages! This illustrated book can be used as a text for teaching budding historians, or as a quick guide to Norwell's many famous personalities and historical features.

**HISTORY OF SOUTH SCITUATE-NORWELL** 

by Joseph Foster Merritt

This history of the town to 1938 was republished in 1988. A unique narrative written by Norwell's Town Clerk, it is considered to be an invaluable account of Norwell prior to WWII.

## More Than Just a Cookbook

\$20

\$25

\$10

This book is full of time-tested favorite recipes submitted by locals. Beyond the gastronomic delights, we have included sketches, interesting narratives and accounts of historic events.

## THE WAY WE WERE

by Jeanne Garside

This book is a series of articles written for Norwell's Centennial Celebration in 1988. Illustrated with old photographs, it tells what times were like in 1888.

#### **JACOBS MILLS PAINTING REPRODUCTION** ð25

This 8" X 10" reproduction of the 1830s Jacobs Saw and Grist Mills painting is canvas-mounted on board and ready for framing. The original hangs in the Jacobs Farmhouse.

All the above items are available at the Society Library in the Middle School on Wednesdays during the school year (2-3:00 p.m), or you may call Wendy Bawabe at 781-659-1464, or you may request a publication using this form and enclosing a check (made payable to NHS). Mail to: NHS, P.O. Box 693, Norwell, MA 02061.

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