



# The Chronicler

Newsletter of the Hartland Historical Society, Inc.  
Gaylord House Museum, 141 Center Street, West Hartland

Mail to: P.O. Box 221, East Hartland, CT 06027—[hartlandhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:hartlandhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

[HartlandHistoricalSociety.com](http://HartlandHistoricalSociety.com)

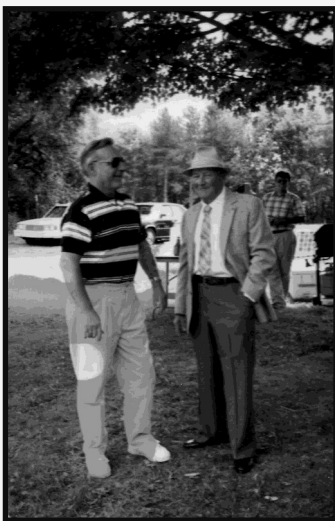
Spring Edition 2018

## Annual Membership Meeting and Presentation Voting in of Officers and Directors for 2 year terms First Church Presentation

**1PM - FIRST CHURCH, SUNDAY, MAY 20**

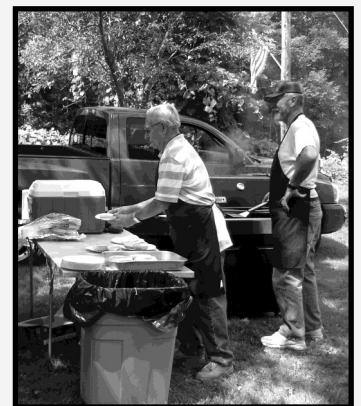
See flyer inside

*Historical Societies Sales Items will be available along with  
First Church commemorative ornament!*



### Remembering Paul Eseppi

Long-time community resident Paul Eseppi passed away on February 27, 2018. Born in Torrington in 1930, he moved to Hartland with his beloved wife Irene in 1953. From overseer and handyman to exhibitor and volunteer, Paul happily served the Hartland Historical Society for over 30 years. Prior to his right-hand assistance to best friend and Gaylord House Museum restoration manager Paul Crunden, Paul was a great neighborly helper to the Gaylord House's last inhabitant, Irene Shepard. Later he became the caretaker and overseer of the Museum and was known for his Civil War exhibits and his tireless service. HHS will miss him dearly and be forever grateful for his friendship, dedication and volunteerism. He will be honored at this year's Blueberry Picnic on Sunday, August 12, at the Gaylord House.



Photos: Annual HHS Blueberry Picnic celebrations where Paul was always involved. Left: Paul with Paul Crunden 1991 "Paul Crunden Day". Right: Paul with Rob Davis 2014 "25th Gaylord House Anniversary".

The Gaylord House Museum is open the first Sunday of each month, May-October, 2-4PM.

Interested in visiting—have family or friends visiting? Make an appointment:

[hartlandhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:hartlandhistoricalsociety@gmail.com) or call or text 860-309-8016.

# Town wide Celebration



## SUNDAY, MAY 20, 2018

Come and join First Church and the Hartland Historical Society in celebrating 250 years of history!

*Special Worship Service 10:00 am*



2 Hartland Boulevard  
East Hartland, CT

860-653-6495

[www.firstchurchinhartland.com](http://www.firstchurchinhartland.com)

[firstchurchinhartland@gmail.com](mailto:firstchurchinhartland@gmail.com)

### Events:

11:30 am Community Picnic  
at the Parish Hall  
(FREE hot dogs and hamburgs)



1:00 pm Presentation  
Program in the Church  
Followed by  
Historical Society's Annual  
Membership Meeting

*All welcome!*

*Live music and more!*

**Blueberry Picnic 2017 featured the Bushnell Family history with the spreading of their Hartland roots to the Western Reserve lands in Ohio. The genealogical tree of Alexander and Chloe Bushnell, along with many others, traveled West with the promise of better agricultural land and opportunities by which they could support themselves and even prosper. Here is the story of Hartland's Prince Taylor family and descendants with their contributions to the early years of Hartland and beyond.**

### **The Diaspora of Prince, Childs, Childs Jr. and Horace Taylor: Four Generations in Hartland. Part 1**

*By Jan Heald Robinson. My husband, Roger Robinson, and his family are descendants of our first Taylor arrivals in Hartland, Prince and Hannah (Childs) Taylor. We reside in Washington State (2018)*

This is the story of Prince Taylor and his two sons, Prince Junior and Childs, early residents in the founding days of Hartland, Connecticut. Over a span of sixty years, 1771-1830, the Taylor families played a role in the beginnings of the community and that of our country. Taylors called Hartland home after they had moved on to the Western Reserve, South India, then to Washington Territory.

### **Prince's Parents, Elisha and Sarah (Davis) Taylor**

If we look to the political and economic changes of the early years in Connecticut and the needs of families, we see the times reflected in the family of Prince Taylor of Hartland. Families were large. Prince was one of 10 children, including five brothers who grew to adulthood. His father, too, was one of eight. This high rate of population growth in the Colonies influenced land policies. As good lands became scarce for younger sons in Plymouth Colony, later Massachusetts Bay Colony, opportunity declined. The legislature opened new lands around Hartford, in the western and northern parts of Connecticut Colony. As noted by Benjamin Franklin's appraisal in 1751, availability and cheapness of land permitted settlers to own and farm their own land and led to high fertility relative to mortality. There were few direct subsidies granted for this natural increase, but a generous land policy provided favorable conditions for marriage and fertility.

Elisha and Sarah (both Taylor descendants) and their large flock, began the migration by moving to Falmouth from Yarmouth, Plymouth Colony, where both their families originated. They spent about 5 years in Falmouth. In 1735 they moved to Lebanon, Connecticut, having trekked through Rhode Island with several pauses for settlement. Elisha later deeded his land in Lebanon to his son John. He then moved to Mansfield a few decades later with his youngest son, Josiah, and bought property there in 1761. He quit-claimed the property to Josiah a year later in 1762. Sarah died in 1774 at age 77 and was buried at the Old Storrs Cemetery in Mansfield. No details have been found regarding Elisha's death. Elisha and Sarah's other sons scattered from Lebanon: Prince to Hartland, Lemuel to Canaan, and Stephen to Coventry.

**Prince Taylor and Hannah Childs:** Prince (1727-1798) was born in Falmouth, Massachusetts Bay, and was named after his paternal grandmother's family, Rebecca Prince. He married Hannah Childs (1718-1806) on December 16, 1747 when he was 20. Both died in Hartland. Prince was buried in the old cemetery by the West Hartland church. No headstone marks his resting place. Church records note Hannah's cause of death as "burnt."

Prince was renowned for his courage and knew no fear as shown in this story passed down from descendant Judge Lester Taylor. *One evening while visiting his lady love, Hannah Childs, the young men thought to have a little sport and see if they could frighten him. They dressed themselves in winding sheets to resemble ghosts and hid in the graveyard which he had to cross. When he came along they made sepulchral noises and followed him until he reached the highway when he picked up a cudgel and turned on them saying: 'If you are angels I have nothing to fear but if you are devils the sooner I get rid of you the better'. He chased them and they dropped their sheets and ran.*

After their marriage, Prince and Hannah settled in the Connecticut River center of Middle Haddam (changed to Chatham in 1767 and East Hampton in 1915), where their three children were born: Prince Jr. in 1751, Hannah in 1753 did not survive a year, and Childs in 1756. They settled in Hartland just before the Revolutionary War around 1771 when Prince was 44. This was no easy move at the time. The journey was long, the roads little more than Indian trails, and

the terrain rugged, with brush and forests to be cut. Provisions had to be made for the cattle and other livestock that they brought with them. Many families at Hartland had, like theirs, originated in Haddam and along the Connecticut River Valley.

**Prince Taylor, Junior** (1751-1828) married Lucy Adams (1755-1793) on 19 Oct 1773 in Hartland when he was 22. They raised seven children. After Lucy's death, Prince Jr. married Margery Brown Giddings (1764-1820) in 1795 in Hartland when he was age 45. Margery had a daughter from her first marriage. Prince Jr and Margery had eight more children. Prince Jr died, in 1828, at age 77.

**Childs Taylor** (1756-1829) moved with his family around 1771, at age 15 to Hartland, CT. Childs was tall, stout and of commanding bearing. In 1779 at age 23, he married Rhoda Bates in Hartland. She was from Middletown and a granddaughter of Col. Hinsdale, one of the original proprietors of Hinsdale, NH. Her parents were Capt. Oliver and Lois Drew Bates of West Hartland. He was a scholar and teacher by profession. He was elected a member of Connecticut Legislature serving in this capacity in the sessions of Oct 1808, May 1809, May 1817 and lastly Oct 1817.

Childs served with his future brother-in-law, Hinsdale Bates, during the Revolutionary War under command of General Washington. In 1775 in East Hartland, he first enlisted as a Private in the Continental Army for a year term under Major Theodore Woodbridge, Fourth Regiment, and Colonel Benjamin Hinman's 9th Company. He was at Fort Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and Montreal as part of the expedition(s) of Benedict Arnold and Richard Montgomery to Canada from the fall of 1775 to mid-1776. There was a Captain Sedgwick in his unit which may have influenced his son Childs Jr. to name his son Horace Sedgwick Taylor. Childs left Montreal in early January 1776 after hearing of Montgomery's defeat at Quebec City. He visited home, then joined the Southern Dept. of the Continental Army and fought at Trenton, Princeton, and Germantown. Childs enlisted again in June 1776. This term ended 14 May 1777; afterwards he was called out with the militia for three short tours, including two tours after being married in November 1779. He was an Orderly Sergeant and afterwards was commissioned as Lieutenant by General Washington. At some point in his military service, Childs had smallpox.

## **Church Records**

The foundation of towns was dependent on the establishment of churches, and they were formed wherever new towns were established in the westward migration. Hartland was incorporated as a town in 1761, at which time it belonged to Litchfield County. In 1762, the First Society was established; stakes were set for the old church and house to be built over them. In 1768, the Rev. Sterling Graves, the first minister in Hartland, was ordained in the open air on a knoll about a mile south of the present First Church in Hartland Congregational. The first meeting house was erected in 1770. Prince was admitted to communion of the East Hartland Church in 1777.

Land was granted for the Second Society in 1780. The signers to the West Hartland Church Confession (4 May 1780) and original charter members included Prince, Jr. and other family names which are intertwined with the Taylors for the next generations: Beach, Wilder, and Ensign. In the West Hartland Church records, Childs and Rhoda were admitted in 1782, the same time as the baptism of their children. At the time of Margery's marriage to Prince Jr. in 1795, she transferred from First Church. In 1805, Prince Jr. was voted to be on the church committee to attend to the state of the Church. Childs served the Second Church as Deacon for the years 1815-1829. We find in looking over the old Hartland church records that the names of these Taylors often appear. Of note, the first minister was the Rev. Nathaniel Gaylord, who settled there about 1782, serving the community for the next 59 years. The Home Missionary (January 1895 pg 460) reported that the lay of the ground is such as to afford no convenient spot where both sides of the town can meet for stated worship, and it would not be wise for any minister, in view of the severity of the winters and the condition of the roads, to engage to take proper care of both parishes.

## **Land Records**

From the West Hartland Key Map of early owners/property, we note that the homes of Prince, Prince Jr and Childs were close to the Center and around the Mill Street stone school house and the church. Childs and Prince Jr's children's homes were all nearby, as well.

In 1777, Childs bought land on what we know as Mill Street and likely built his house. In early 1800, Prince Jr occupied the home. Although there is no house now, it is distinctly marked. A house on the same lot was Childs's second residence from 1800-1829 where he died at age 73. The house was torn down by John Green in 1860, and he built the one now standing and owned by Renee Epstein.

In 1778, Prince bought property and house on Center Street. In 1795, Prince sold to his son, Prince Jr., who sold to Daniel Wadsworth in 1802. This is the oldest inhabited house in West Hartland and is now owned by Jason and Mary Ransom.

Several other properties were owned by the Taylors. Prince owned a house on Dish Mill Road (1802-1823) which was destroyed by fire in 1875 and now owned by the State. Childs's daughter, Rhoda, occupied a house on Hogback Road with her husband Theodore Clemmons as early as 1797. Although the house does not stand today, they raised their children there but had moved to Claridon, Ohio, prior to the 1830 census.

## **Beyond Hartland ... See Part 2 in the Fall 2018 Chronicler**

The families of Prince, Prince, Jr. and Childs lived nearly 60 years in Hartland; their loyal ties to community and family were strong. Upon Childs's death, his children all found their homes in the Western Reserve where their descendants are in force today. Prince Jr.'s children stayed in Connecticut and the New York area.

From the notes of earlier writers, farming was subsistence level in the mountains of Hartland. *'As the land, though high and healthy, is not favored in its soil, is largely covered with forests, and lacks facilities for travel and ready access to markets, the inhabitants for three generations have been disposed to move away, in hope of bettering their condition.'*

Leading the wave of Taylor family migration from Connecticut to the Western Reserve was Childs's second son, Horace. Horace and his family left Hartland in 1811 and was followed by his sisters Achsah Blakeslee in 1814 and Sophia in 1817. His brother Lester left in 1819. After Childs's death in 1829 at age 72, his widow, Rhoda (Bates), moved to Claridon, Ohio with their son Childs, Jr., age 48, and his entire family. Charter members of The First Congregational Church of Claridon (26 Dec 1827) included numerous Taylor and related families: Blakeslee, Newell, Hotchkiss, Bail, Tuttle, Kellogg, and Mastik. We should also know about Childs that though he never lived in Claridon, the Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter is named in his honor because so many families there are descended from him.

## **Interesting research found by the author:**

Relative to most European nations, the colonies provided more schooling for both males and females. There were variations in regard to who organized schools, religious and secular, and who paid for education, but colonial levels of literacy were, by world standards, quite high, particularly for women. By this time the Colony had compulsory education legislation and these were most often formed by Protestant churches. Even a century earlier, the literacy rate for adult men in New England is estimated to have been as high as 95%, more than twice the estimated literacy rate for men in England. American women had literacy rates higher than 60%. Nowhere in the world was literacy greater.

*This work has been edited by the Hartland Historical Society. Original transcript available upon request.*



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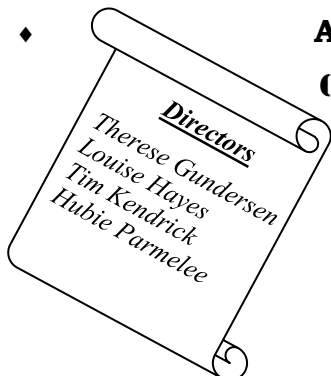
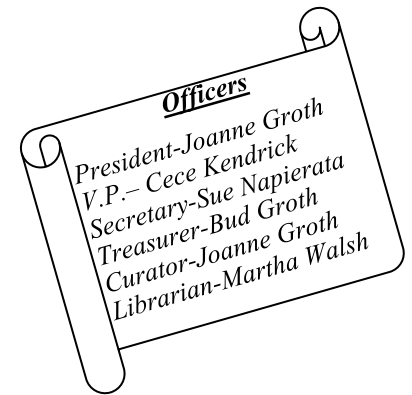
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**The Hartland Historical Society's** mission is to discover, procure and preserve whatever historical facts may be available relating to the civil, military, literary, cultural, and ecclesiastical history of the town of Hartland; and to investigate and preserve such traditions and knowledge as now exist only in the memory of persons. The Society will be responsible for sponsoring and exhibiting the collection of historical articles, pictures and other items relating to the town.

Hartland Resident  
 Postal Customer

**In This Issue**

- ◆ **Invite flyer to First Church 250th Anniversary, May 20th**
- ◆ **Historical Societies Annual Membership Meeting being held at First Church May 20, SUNDAY, 1PM**
- ◆ **Prince, Prince Jr. and Childs Taylor** They came to Hartland around 1771, stayed for 60 years but by the times of their deaths the family had migrated to Western Reserve Ohio, New York & other Connecticut towns.



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**Mark your 2018 Calendars**

- ◆ Spring Meeting May 20
- ◆ Memorial Day Parade May 28
- ◆ Booth a Carnival July 25-28
- ◆ Blueberry Picnic August 12
- ◆ Fall Meeting October 7
- ◆ Santa Breakfast December 8