



# Weston History Activity Book



**Dear Young Historian,**  
**Have fun exploring Weston's history! Learn about 8 historic Weston locations in this activity book. This book has coloring pages, scavenger hunts, a word search and so much more!**



Aidan Delgass - Co-author & illustrator

Abby Miles - Co-author & calligrapher

Joan Curran - Advisor

Samantha Kulish-Fargione - Advisor

## **Notes from the Advisors and Authors**

Weston is unique - a drive through its historical sites is like a real deal Disney ride.

These activity pages will help children learn about their town. The project is in collaboration with the Weston Historical Society. The locations were researched and activities were created by notable Westonites, Abby Miles, an athletic, literary, and artistic senior at Weston High School, and Aidan Delgass, Weston High School 2020 valedictorian, who tried out his drawing skills for this project with stunning results. They volunteered their enthusiasm, energy, talent, creativity, and not to mention their time, sometimes across time zones, to create this fun and educational journey for Weston's children. We all met, masked and distanced, and Zoomed during Covid isolation to produce this exciting product.

Weston was an adventure and safe haven for my family; it will always be our hometown. Coordinating this project with Samantha Kulish-Fargione, Executive Director of the Weston Historical Society is my way of saying thanks for the memories.

Please use these activity pages to appreciate Weston's history as you drive through these beautiful woods every day.

**Joan Curran - Weston Activity Book Co-Advisor**

## Notes from the Advisors and Authors

Joan Curran reached out to me in June 2020 with an idea to create a Weston history activity book for children and families. I loved the idea but thought it might be an overwhelming task for she and I to tackle on our own. Thankfully, Joan knew of two exceptional young Westonites, Abby Miles and Aidan Delgass, looking for ways to engage their creativity while being stuck at home during the pandemic. After our first meeting together, outside masked on the patio of the historical society, I knew we had the perfect team to tackle the project! Abby and Aidan ran with the idea and approached the project with enthusiasm, creativity, and integrity. The Weston Historical Society is extremely lucky and thankful to have been introduced to this young dynamic duo by Joan, who has such a love and appreciation for the town. Thank you Abby, Aidan, and Joan for helping the historical society educate and instill a love of Weston history in our town's children.

**Samantha Kulish-Fargione, Executive Director - Weston Historical Society  
Weston Activity Book Co-Advisor**

Researching and illustrating for this book put Weston in a new light, put words and stories to the sun-dappled greenery and weathered wood I have known my whole life in this town. I found that as I drove by each site, if I smiled at the buildings — shrugging with age, surrounded by their autumn finery — that they would smile back in turn. If this book can teach a child one thing, it is that we all tramp the same mossy ground as our forebears.

**Aidan Delgass - Co-Author and Illustrator**

When Joan reached out about working on a project with the Weston Historical Society, I was curious but hesitant. Yet, trapped in a world starting to reopen from quarantine, I was eager to learn about and explore sites in town. Watching this project come together and getting to work with Aidan, Samantha and Joan has been one of the greatest joys this past year. I have learned about Weston's history, and, in doing so, connected myself to the wonderful town I call home. My one hope is that the students who complete these pages will take the time to get outside and seek more discovery.

**Abby Miles - Co-Author and Calligrapher**

# WESTON LOCATIONS

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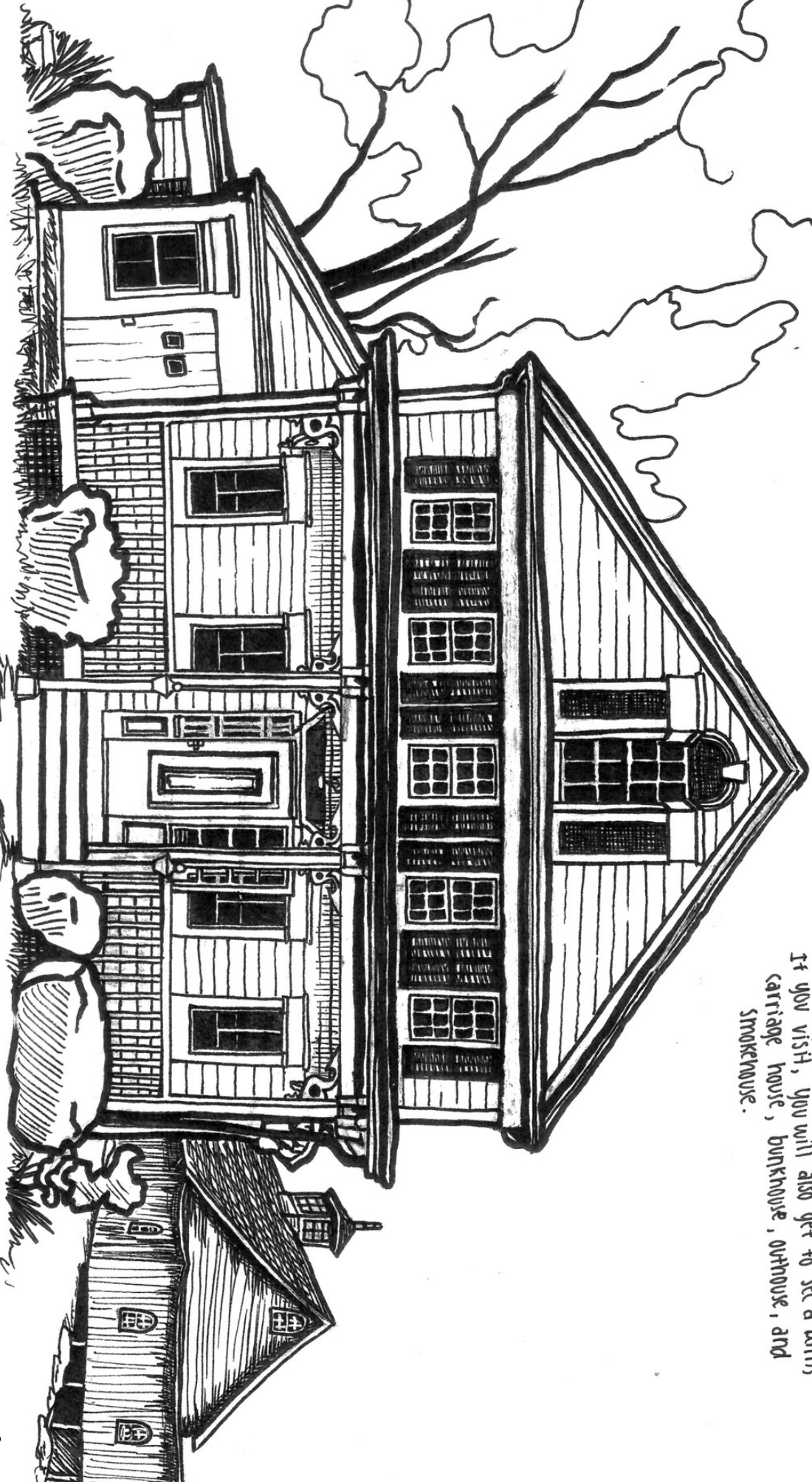
4. Coley Homestead
6. Devil's Den & Trout Brook Preserve
9. Emmanuel Cemetery
11. General Store and Post Office
13. Onion Barn
15. Valley Forge/Saugatuck Reservoir
17. Weston Toy Factory
19. Answer Key
20. Learn More History



Coley Homestead

104 Weston Road, with the Weston Historical Society.

The Coley Homestead was built by David Dimon Coley in 1941. Over 150 years ago, the Coley Homestead was a working farm. If you visit, you will also get to see a barn, carriage house, bunkhouse, outhouse, and smokehouse.



# Coley Homestead

## DRAW YOUR OWN FARM

Don't forget to include a:

garden, barn, fields, house,  
horses, silo, outhouse, chickens,  
chicken coop, cows, pig,  
tractor, and bale of hay.

## TAKE A WALK

Visit the Coley Homestead and Weston Historical Society. As you walk, see if you can:

- count the number of windows on the Coley House
- figure out which building is the tallest on the site
- count the number of stone walls
- find a leaf bigger than your hand

# Devil's Den Nature Preserve and Trout Brook Preserve

33 Pent Road

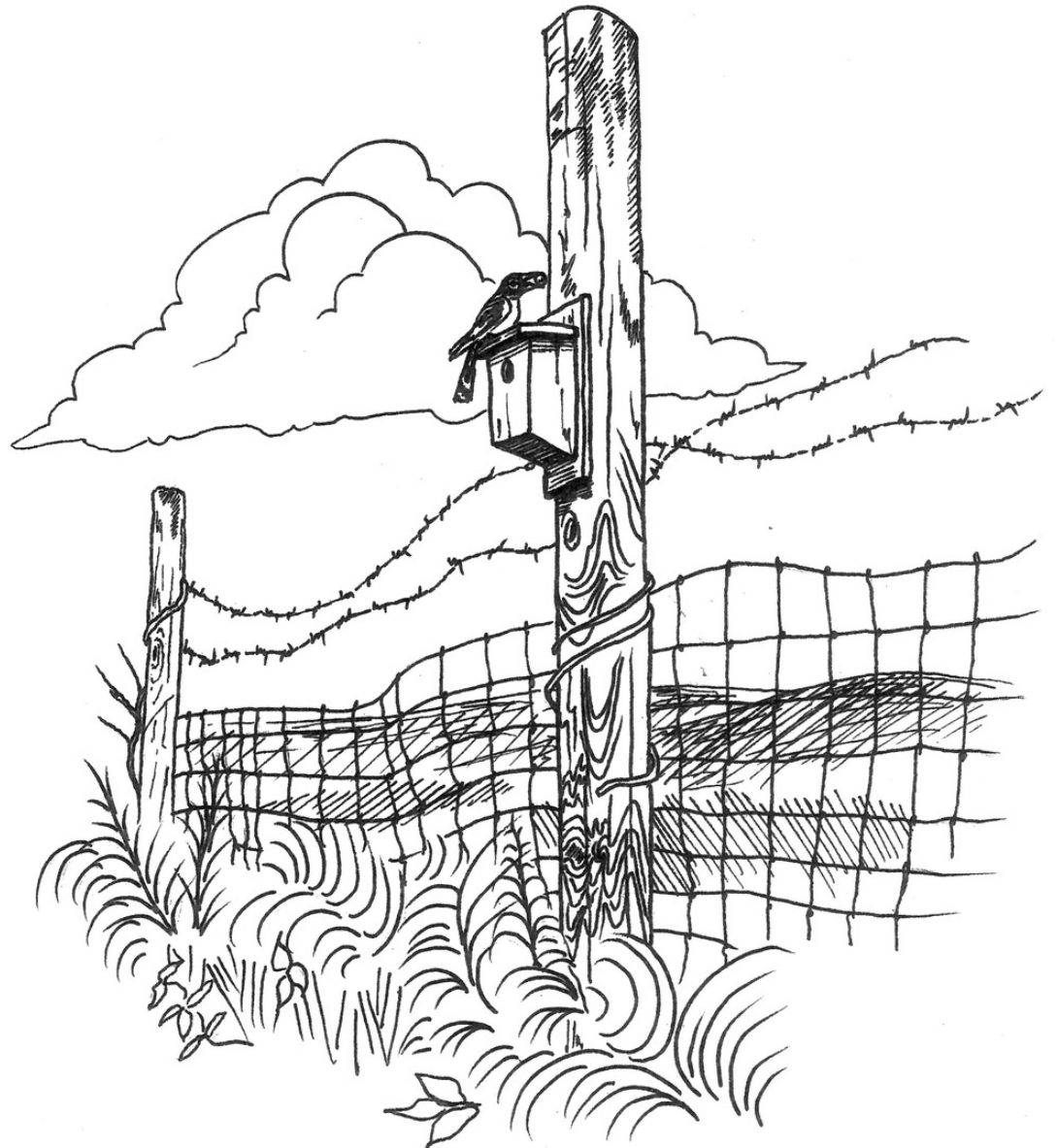
Bradley Road

The area that is now Devil's Den Nature Preserve was once inhabited by Algonquian-speaking indigenous people. Trout Brook Preserve has stone walls throughout the property that mark the boundaries of long ago farmlands and animal pens.



# Devil's Den Nature Preserve and Trout Brook Preserve

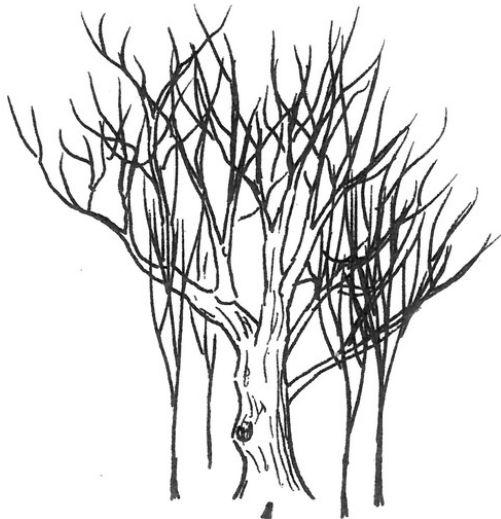
COLOR AND DOODLE ME: color in the fence and bird house below. Plus, add your own birds and continue the fence! How many different birds can you make?



# Devil's Den Nature Preserve and Trout Brook Valley Preserve



Long before people inhabited the land now known as Weston, during the time of the Ice Age, glaciers - giant, slow-flowing rivers of solid ice - carved away at an enormous mountain range. The glaciers picked up boulders and carried them long distances. Then the glaciers began to melt, leaving the huge stone chunks behind. As you walk the trails of these two preserves, look for these big boulders. They are standing all by themselves and are known as "glacial erratics".



Often when colonial farmers cleared the woods, they would leave certain trees standing to provide shade for livestock. Then, when farmland was abandoned, and trees regrew, these leftover trees continued growing and were taller and thicker than the surrounding woods. These are called "wolf trees". See how many you can spot as you go!



The stone walls you can see in these woods are the old borders erected by farmers long ago to show the boundaries of their property. See if you can find where some of these walls begin, end, and intersect!

# Emmanuel Church Cemetery

285 Lyons Plains Road

The cemetery is one of the oldest in town. Cemeteries are great places to learn about your town's history. Supreme Court Justice John Marshall Harlan II is buried in Emmanuel Cemetery.

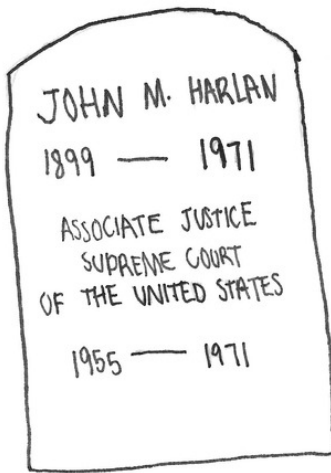




# Emmanuel Church Cemetery

## SCAVENGER HUNT

Hint: It looks like this!



Find Supreme Court Justice John Marshall Harlan II's gravestone

Find a gravestone with the last name Treadwell. The Treadwells were a prominent family in town and operated a mill along the river. There is a road named after them now.

Find a gravestone with the last name Davis, another prominent family in town, also with a road named after them.

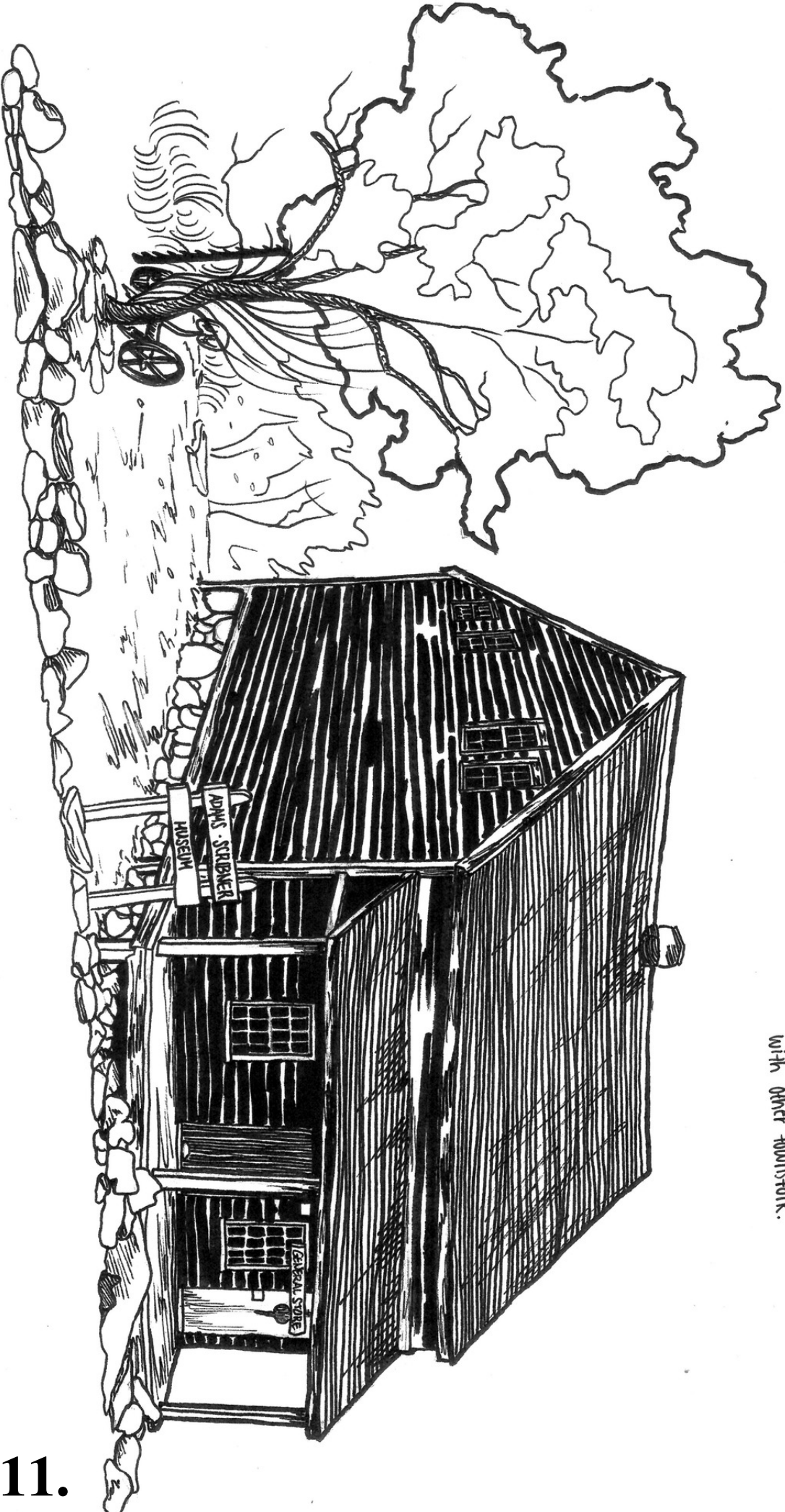
Find a gravestone with the last name Sturges, who were early residents of Weston.

Find a gravestone that has either your first, middle, or last name.



General Store and Post Office  
141 Newtown Turnpike

This building was originally built around 1780 as a small cabin. It became a general store and post office in the mid 1800s. The general store sold goods that could not be produced on the farm. Weston residents would come to shop, pick up their mail and socialize with other townsfolk.



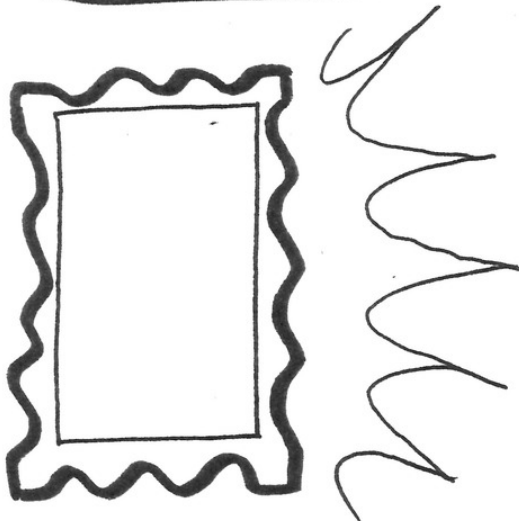
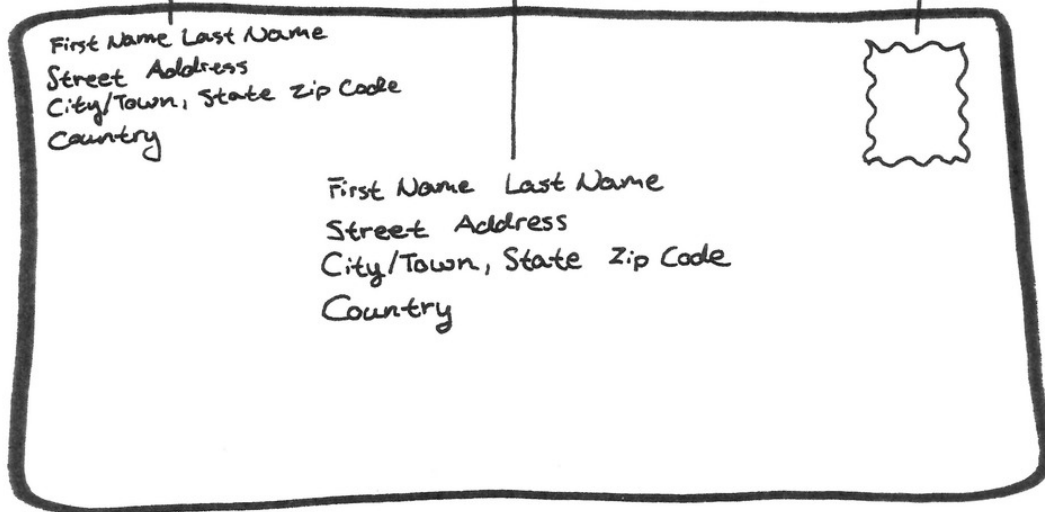
# General Store and Post Office

## ANATOMY OF AN ENVELOPE

Write your return address on the top left corner on the front of the envelope.

Write the address of the person you are writing to on the center of the front of the envelope.

Put your postage in the top right corner of the front of the envelope.

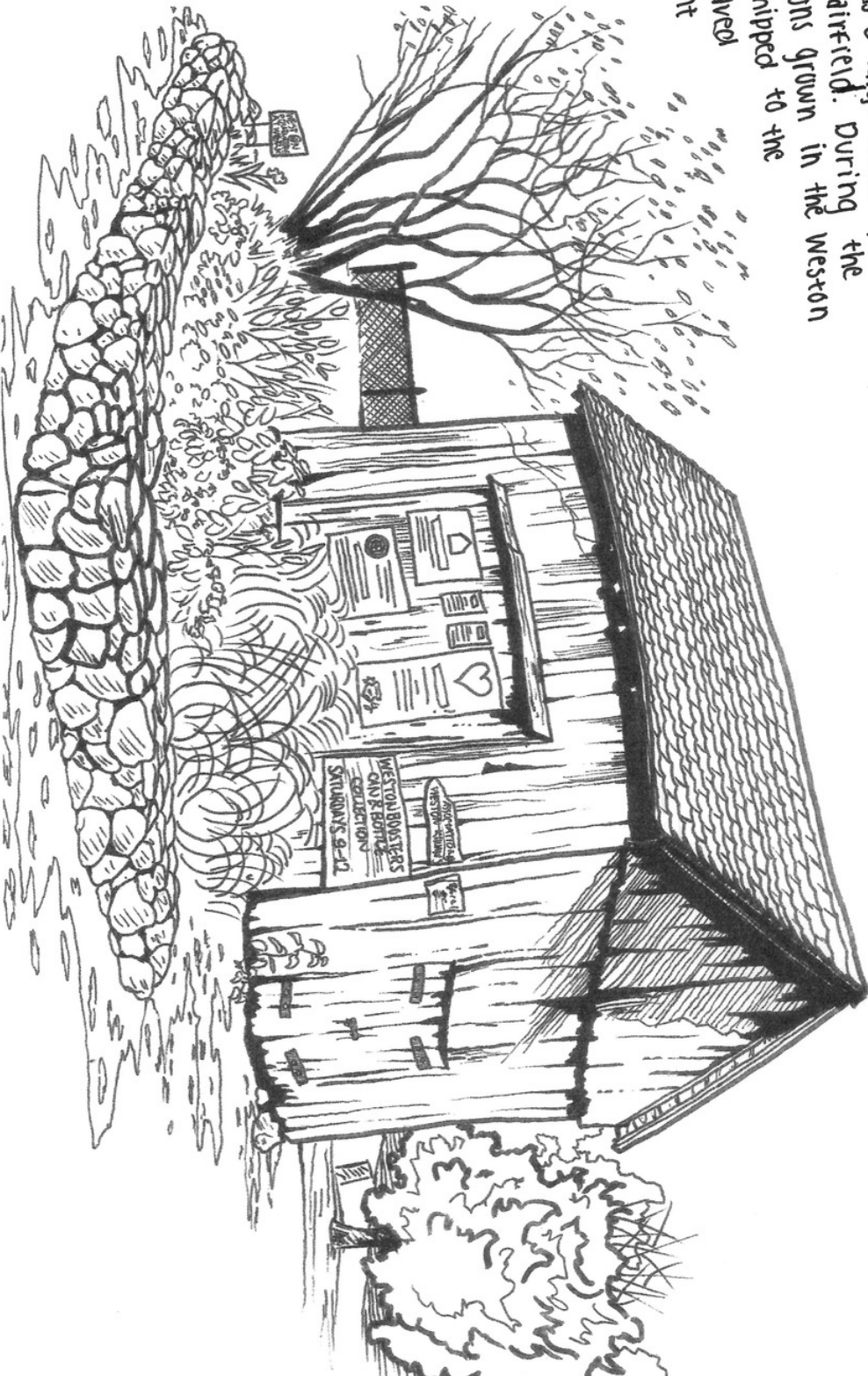


## POSTAGE PORTRAIT

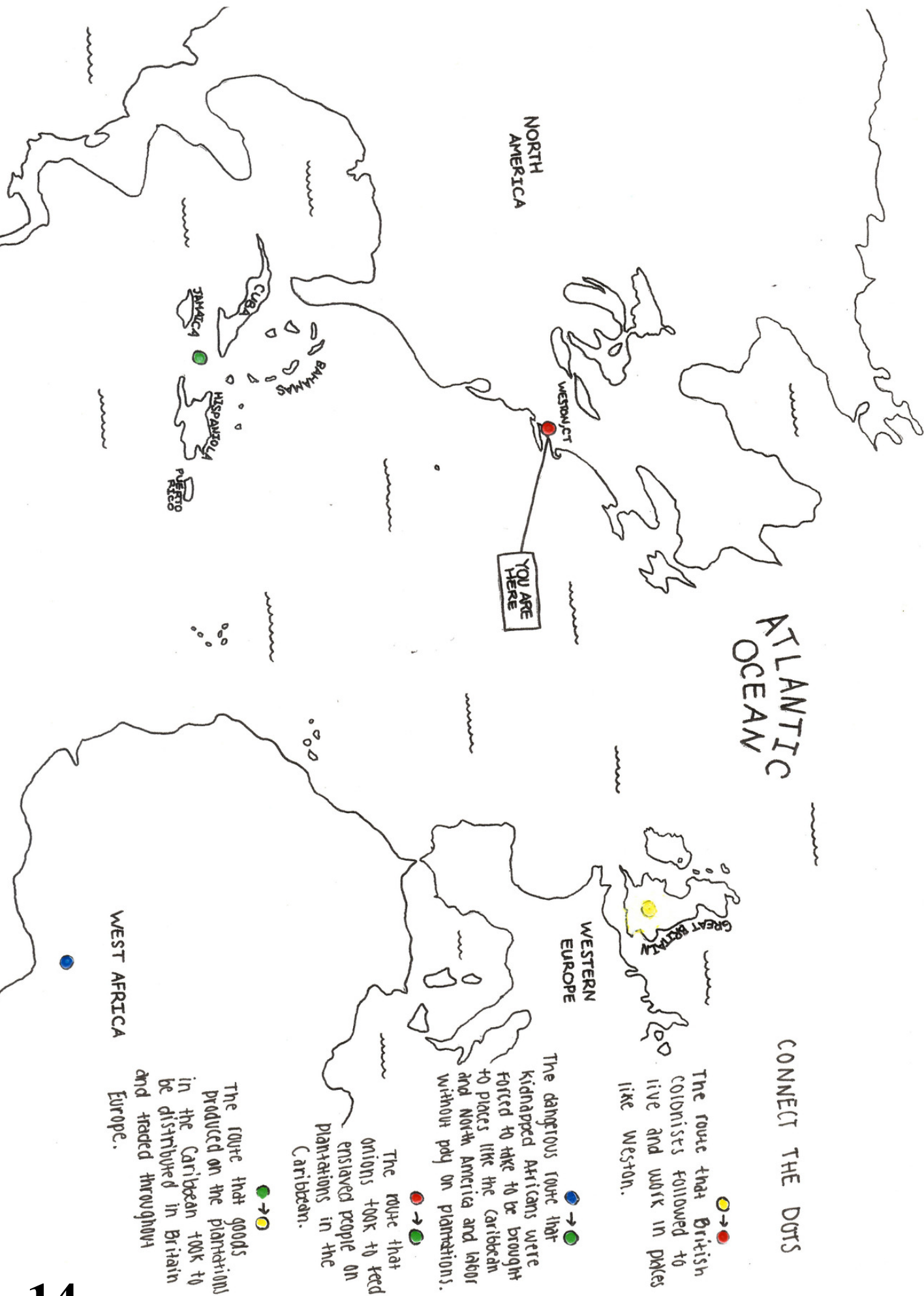
Official stamps often have specially commissioned designs of famous American symbols. Make your own design on the pretend stamp!

Onion Barn  
187 Weston Road

This onion barn was built around 1830 by Eiphalet Coley. Onion barns were used for the storage of onions after they had been harvested. Onion farming was a large industry in Weston, Southport and Fairfield. During the 1700s and early 1800s, onions grown in the Weston and Fairfield areas were shipped to the British Empire to feed enslaved people who had been brought by force from Africa and were laboring with no pay on plantations in the Caribbean.



Orian Barn



ATLANTIC OCEAN

CONNECT THE DOTS

NORTH AMERICA

WESTERN EUROPE

WEST AFRICA

YOU ARE HERE

WESTON CT

GREAT BRITAIN

CUBA  
JAMAICA  
HISPANIOLA  
PUERTO RICO  
BAHAMAS

The route that British colonists followed to live and work in places like Weston.

The dangerous route that kidnapped Africans were forced to take to be brought to places like the Caribbean and North America and labor without pay on plantations.

The route that onions took to feed enslaved people on plantations in the Caribbean.

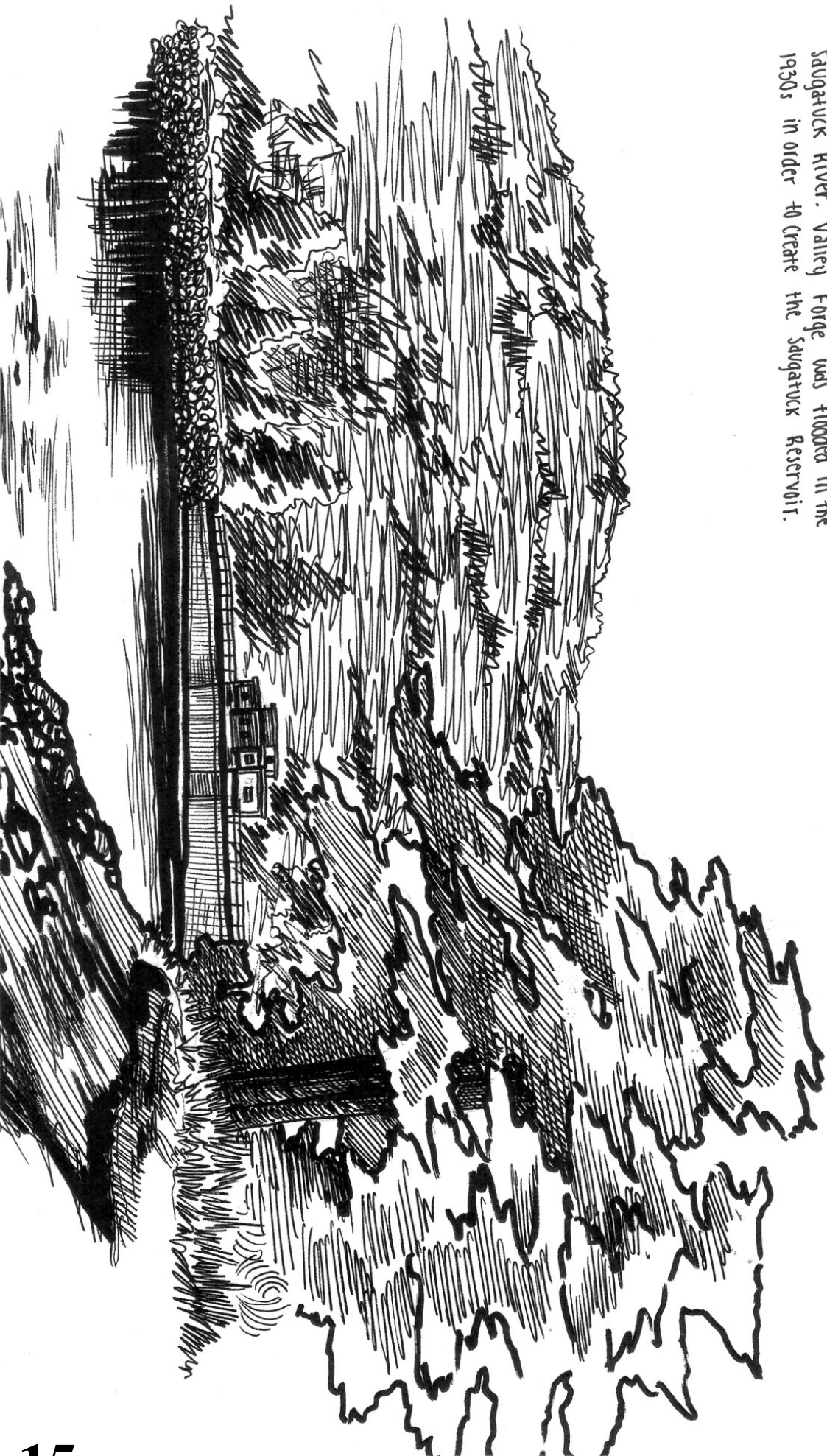
The route that goods produced on the plantations in the Caribbean took to be distributed in Britain and traded throughout Europe.



# Valley Forge Area

Valley Forge Road and the Saugatuck Reservoir

The village of Valley Forge was where the Saugatuck Reservoir is today. Valley Forge was once a thriving village, manufacturing steel, iron and grinding grains, by using the power of the Saugatuck River. Valley Forge was flooded in the 1930s in order to create the Saugatuck Reservoir.

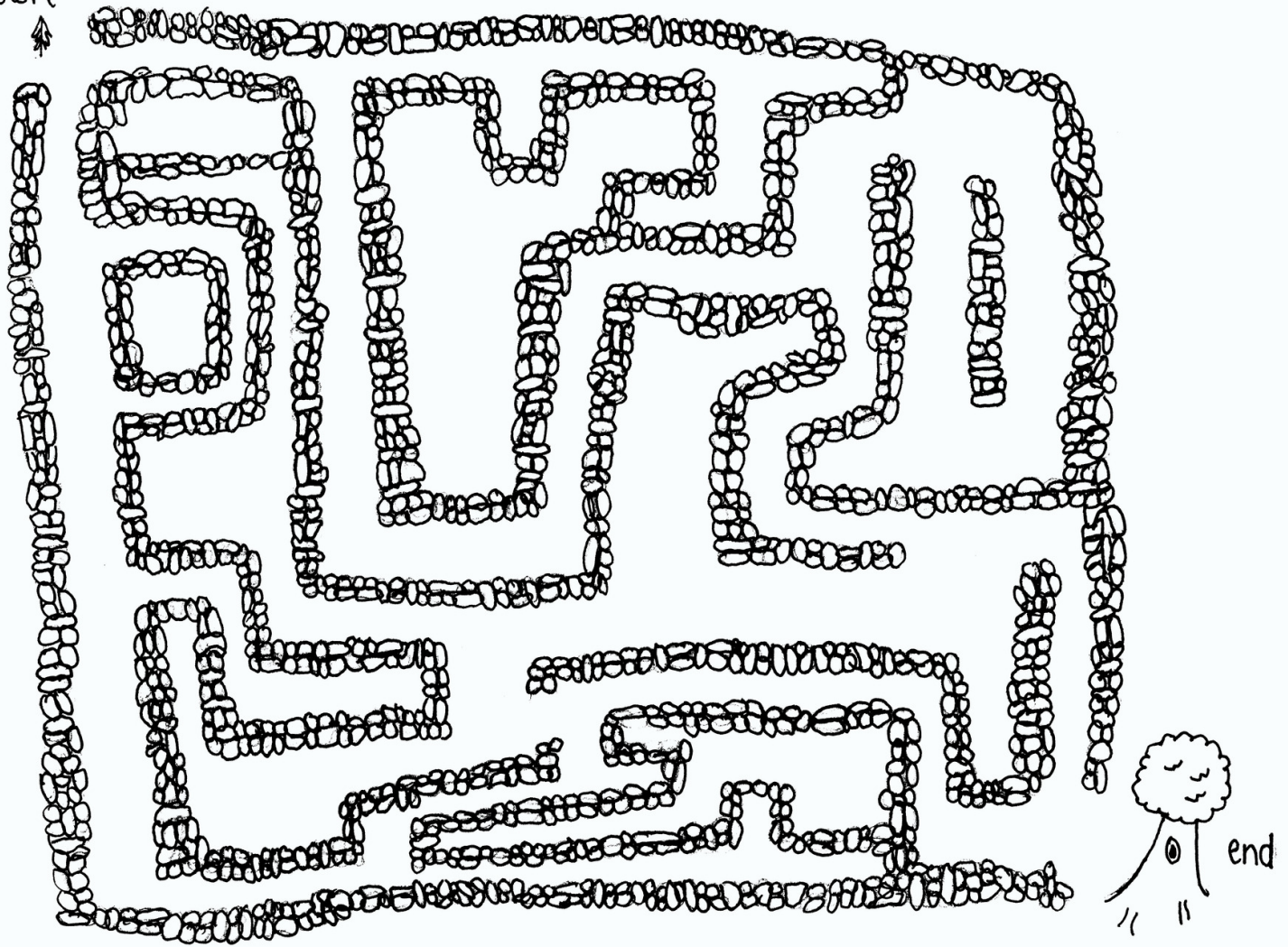




# Valley Forge Area

STONE WALL MAZE: Complete the maze to help the leaf get to its tree!

Start  
↑



NATURE WALK: Take a hike on a trail near the reservoir on Valley Forge Road. Try to find the biggest leaf or pinecone. Draw it here!

# Weston Toy Factory

The original building is gone. It stood at the intersection of Old Redding Road and Westport Road.

The Weston Toy Factory was started by Burton Merwin. Before Burton Merwin started making toys, the factory made hammers and was also a cider mill. Some of the most popular toys were the wind-up wooden rabbit and the boxers.





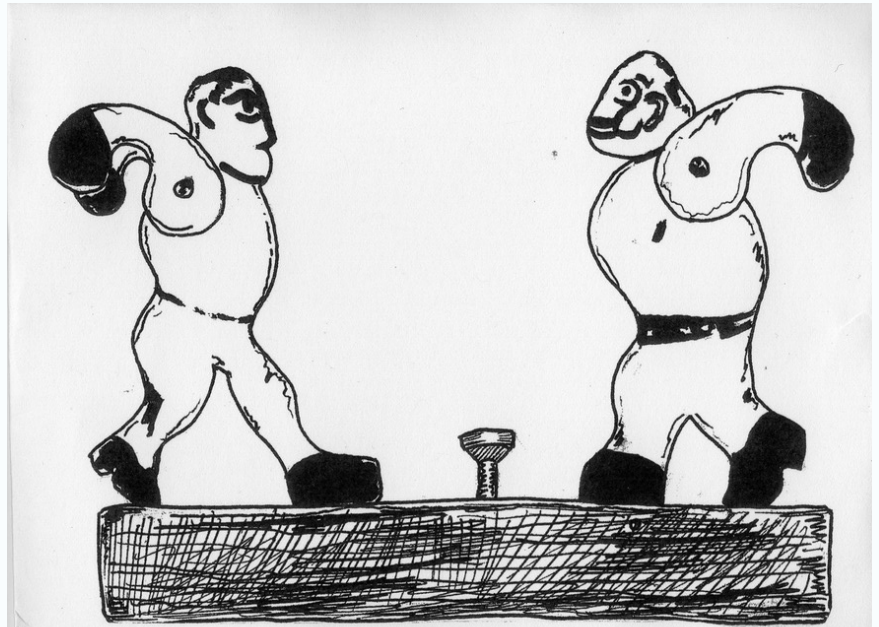
# Weston Toy Factory

## WORD UNSCRAMBLE

Unscramble these eight words about the toys, toy factory, and building materials.

- rsxboe \_\_\_\_\_
- aceracr \_\_\_\_\_
- lold \_\_\_\_\_
- oo wd \_\_\_\_\_
- ecid \_\_\_\_\_
- oo y y \_\_\_\_\_
- +oorb \_\_\_\_\_
- ekib \_\_\_\_\_

## COLOR ME



## DESIGN YOUR OWN TOY

Use the space below to create your own toy. Make sure that you label all the parts for the builder.

## WORD SEARCH

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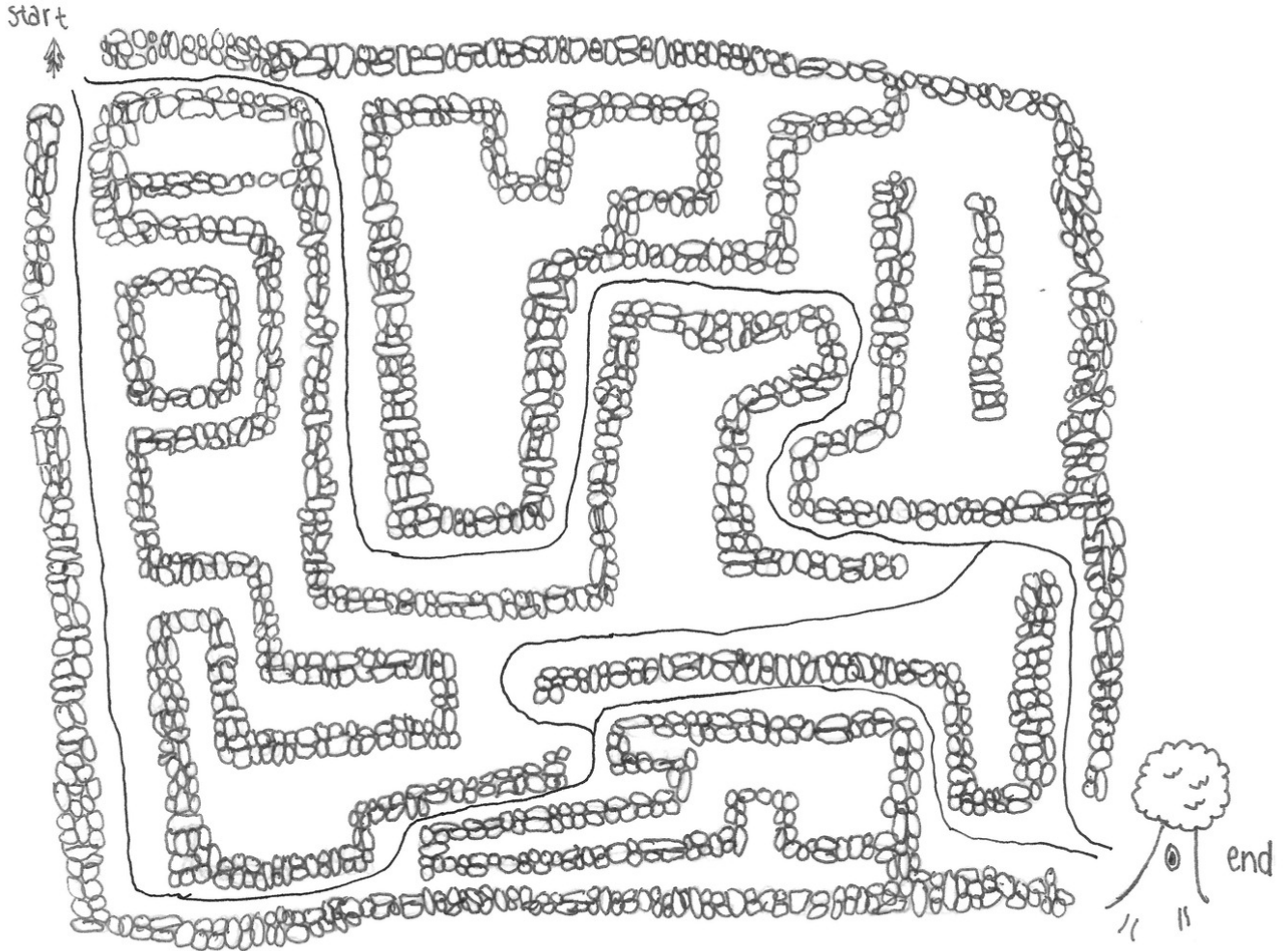
W E S T O N R O C K E T H L
A M L C K J Z Y P N M C A R
H M I Y Z X R W L F M N S C
C A O D H K A Y T D A M P S
B N L C A P B O O A V C E A
S U D L M N B T Y A B P T T
P E R O R O I O S A I W U O
I L E T R Z T Y A C C X C Y
N C D R O P L C C E Y T H H
N E D A C N U A I C C O C O
I M I I K Z M R D A L Y O R
N E N N E M I E E R E T R S
G T G A T W L V R K Z R N E
T E T O Y X L X A W Q A E C
O R O B O T R A I N I R A
P Y W O O D E N T O Y N Y R
    
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## WORD SEARCH LIST

- |                   |             |              |         |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|---------|
| Weston            | Rabbit      | toys         | Cider   |
| FACTORY           | Old Redding | train        | mill    |
| Aspetuck Corner   | car         | toy horse    | racecar |
| bicycle           | spaceship   | Spinning top |         |
| Emmanuel cemetery | Burton      | Merwin       |         |

# Answer Key

## MAZE ACTIVITY



## WORD UNSCRAMBLE

- rsxboe - boxers
- aceracr - racecar
- loid - doll
- ecid - dice
- ooyy - yoyo
- toorb - robot
- ekib - bike

## WORD SEARCH



# LEARN MORE HISTORY!

## Coley Homestead

David Dimon Coley was born in 1811, and married Mary Eliza Andrews in 1835. Mary's father owned a large portion of land, including the area where the Coley Homestead is now located. He sold the portion of his property where the Coley House was built to his son-in-law, David. After Mary's father passed away, the rest of the land was inherited by Mary and David. David built the Coley House in 1841, the same year his second son, James, was born. James died young, in 1870, but not before he married and had his own son, who was also named James. By the 1940s, there were still three generations of the Coley family living in the house, which had undergone minor changes to fit the style of each generation since it was built all that time ago.

The Coley's gave 3.7 acres of the property which included the Coley House, Coley Barn, Carriage House, a bunkhouse, outhouses and a smokehouse to the Weston Historical Society. You can visit the Weston Historical Society and the Coley Homestead property which is located at 104 Weston Road. There are interpretive signs outside the buildings to help you learn more about the Coley family and their farm. The Coley House and Coley Barn will re-open to the public soon.

## Devil's Den & Trout Brook Preserve

Devil's Den Nature Preserve is a beautiful example of how humans have shaped the landscape of Weston over time. Originally inhabited by Algonquian-speaking indigenous people, the area was then shaped by European colonists who harvested the forest to make lumber from the tree trunks and charcoal from the branches. Godfrey Pond can be found near the entrance of the preserve. It is where a stone dam was built to power a sawmill there.

Managed by the Aspetuck Land Trust, Trout Brook Valley Preserve also has stonewalls throughout the property that mark the boundaries of long ago farmlands and animal pens. What is now heavily forested land was then open space as all the trees were cut down for building homes and burning in fireplaces for fuel and warmth. If you hike into the preserve you will find a beautiful meadow and orchard, where swooping birds fill the sky. Members of the Aspetuck Land Trust can pick blueberries in the summer.

## Emmanuel Cemetery

The Emmanuel Cemetery is located directly behind Emmanuel Church. It is one of the oldest and most historic cemeteries in town. Although grave rubbing – the process of using lightweight paper and pencil to outline gravestones- is not advised due to the stones being so fragile, the Emmanuel Cemetery is a great place to learn about the history of our town and some of our early and more recent citizens. You can find some very famous families, as listed in the Scavenger Hunt. Many of these families now have roads named after them. You can visit the Emmanuel Cemetery at 285 Lyons Plain Road where you can also find a playground to visit once you're done looking at all of the gravestones!

## General Store & Post Office

This building was built around 1780 as a small cabin. Over the years, it was added on to and became a general store and post office. The general store sold goods that could not be produced on the farm. It was also a place for the people of Weston to meet and socialize. A second floor was added for the postmaster and his family to live while running the post office and general store. Now it is the Adams-Scribner Museum, where you can find historical letters and artifacts relating to Weston's history.

## Onion Barn

The Onion Barn might not look grand on the outside, but the inside has been home to a lot of Weston's history. The Onion Barn that stands today on Weston Road was built around 1830 by Eliphalet Coley. Even though few survive today, many farms in Weston during the 1700s and 1800s would have had onion barns which were used to store onions after they had been harvested. Onions were a cash crop in Weston as well as in Westport, Southport, and Fairfield. During the 1700s and early 1800s, onions were exported from local farms to the British Empire, specifically to feed enslaved people who had been brought by force from Africa and were laboring with no pay on plantations in the Caribbean. During the Civil War, onions from local farms were shipped down south to feed the Union army. The most popular variety of onion grown in Weston and the surrounding towns was the Southport Globe Onion.

Nowadays, the Onion Barn is a quaint place for collecting recycling and posting important local information, but the onions that gave the building its name link Weston to a much larger world.



## Valley Forge

Valley Forge is a beautiful road to drive along. On your drive you will see wonderful views of the Saugatuck Reservoir – a massive body of water that provides drinking water for the City of Bridgeport. What many people do not know is that 100 feet beneath the crystal blue water are the remains of the Valley Forge section of Weston. Valley Forge was once a thriving village, manufacturing steel and iron and grinding grains, by using the power of the Saugatuck River.

However, in the 1920s, the Bridgeport Hydraulic Company needed more water to supply the growing needs of Bridgeport and other surrounding communities. They wanted to build a dam across the Saugatuck River to flood the Valley Forge area and then create a reservoir. The residents of Valley Forge fought hard to prevent the flooding of their beautiful village, but the Bridgeport Hydraulic Company won. The residents of Valley Forge had to move out. Some homes were moved from the area however many buildings were destroyed.

In recent years, efforts to preserve land around Valley Forge have been successful. Led by Paul Newman, a famous actor and Westport resident, a group prevented the development of a large natural area. That area is now Trout Brook Valley Preserve, which spans parts of Weston, Easton and Redding. Although you can't see the remains of the village of Valley Forge, there are many stops along the road where you can look out over the water, take a hike on the Saugatuck Trail, or try to imagine what the village of Valley Forge might have looked like.

## Weston Toy Factory

Although today the only shops and commercial buildings are located in Weston Center, our town was once a bustling area of industry. We even had a Toy Factory, created by Burton Merwin. Before Merwin began to use the building to craft his own unique toys, the factory was a place to make hammers. It then became a mill where apples were turned into cider. A friend who saw Merwin's creativity and innovation convinced him to begin designing and building children's toys. Merwin created several popular designs, including a wooden rabbit, wooden horse drawn cart and the famous boxers. To decorate the toys, Merwin had the idea to put designs on rubber stamps, dip the stamps in ink and then press faces, shoes, and other features onto his creations. The factory ran successfully from the early 1900s until 1935.

The original building is gone but the Weston Toy Factory was located by the river near the dam at Aspetuck Corners. If you would like to drive by the site with your family, it is at the intersection of Old Redding Road and Westport Road.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This activity book would not have been possible without the help of the following people. The Weston Historical Society would like to thank them for their talent, time, dedication and hard work!

Aidan Delgass - Co-author & illustrator

Abby Miles - Co-author & calligrapher

Joan Curran - Advisor

Samantha Kulish-Fargione - Advisor

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WESTON  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

*Preserving our heritage for future generations*

Learn more at:

[www.WestonHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.WestonHistoricalSociety.org)