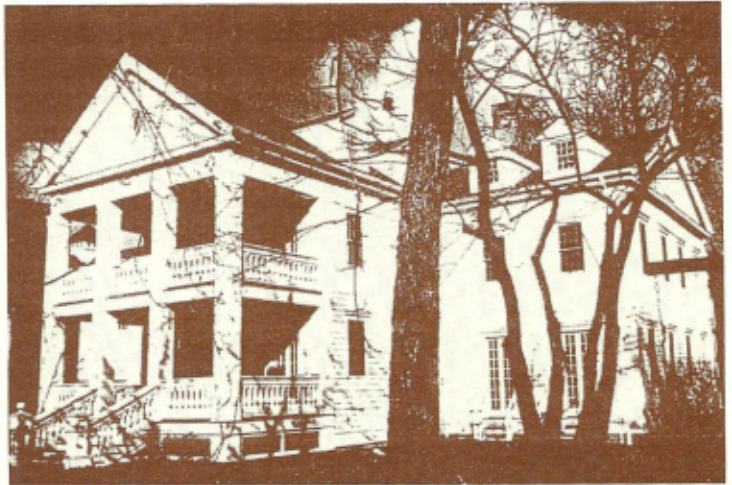


#32 Weston Road, cont.

matter); and that John Doe's claim to the land was justified only through their marriage by her ownership. As she was known by his name, it was logical (although frequently misleading) for her property to also be identified by his name.

Lynne goes on to say that following these conventions, the house at #32 Weston Road was attributed to the man who built it or caused it to be built. That man was Levi D. Coley. At the same time we should recognize the importance of the roles played by the two most important women in his life. The land upon which he



built his house a century and a half ago was owned by his mother, Mary H. Coley; and the woman for whom it was built was, of course, his wife Sarah M. Nichols Coley.

Lynne writes that the night of October 14, 1844 was the last night that young Sarah Maria Nichols spent in her childhood home on Good Hill Road. The following day she was married to a fellow Weston resident; her neighbor and life-long acquaintance, Levi D. Coley.

Sarah was born about 1826, the fifth daughter of Weston entrepreneur Ward Nichols and his wife Sally Hickock Nichols. Ward left Weston as a young boy to go to Bethel to learn the hatting trade. He was extremely successful in learning the business but in also wooing a hatter's daughter, Sally.

Ward returned to Weston where he set up his own hat shop. One of his uncles, Elihu, set the young couple up with a house and shop on Good Hill Rd. By 1820, the hat business was apparently lucrative enough for

Ward to redeem his uncle's mortgaged property, including a house, two barns, various other buildings and 50 acres of land. As his business prospered, he was able to refurbish his family's home in the latest and most elegant style. Young Sarah was raised in this world of wealth and prosperity and although her father's business had fallen on hard times by 1844, Levi D. Coley would undertake to build for her a new home that was as elegant, comfortable and welcoming as the one she was about to leave.



Mary H. Coley and her husband Levi Coley, both natives of Weston were living in Lansingburg, New York when Levi D. Coley was born

in 1818. It is not clear as to why they left Weston, but it may have been due to the opposition of their marriage, as they were cousins. Although not unheard of, it was, as now, discouraged Mary's father David Coley, Jr. died in 1819 leaving a considerable estate. A portion went to the heirs of Mary's deceased sister Rachel Coley Rowland. An even larger portion, including David's mill and over 400 acres of land, fell to