Definitions

Dogs **(1)** Mechanical devices for holding or gripping something. **(2)** An iron bar driven into a stone or timber to provide a means of lifting it. **(3)** An andiron.

Peavey – plural is peaveys. A cant hook having a sharply pointed end. (Named after Joseph Peavey, the inventor.)

Cant hook, a wooden lever with a movable iron hook near the lower end, used chiefly for grasping and canting, or turning over logs. Also called a cant dog.

"Georgian" In New England the term "Georgian" has come to be diversely applied by students of material culture to a symmetrical style of architecture, to the way in which household trash began to be buried in pits rather than strewn over the yard (ca. 1750).

Commonwealth A self-governing territory associated with the U. S.

Un-incorporated Not chartered as a self-governing region; lacking the tax, police and other powers conferred by the state on incorporated areas.

Unorganized Without definite boundaries.

Calendar reform calendar reform took place in 1752; gravestones of individuals who died, say, in 1776, who were born in 1735, would say "born on such-and-such a date in 1735 OS, and died in 1776 in the 41st year of his age."

Prior to 1752, each town determined the beginning of each new year. Some began March 1, but most chose March 25th, and called the days from January 1 through March 24th "mongrel time", and written as a fraction – Feb. 17, 1741/2, the upper fraction denoting the year beginning March 25th, the lower, the year beginning with Jan. 1st.

The year 1752 also had eleven days lopped off to make up for small incremental errors that had occurred over the decades due to faulty calculations in the previous calendar.

Carding wool Sheep were sheared when the shadbush was in bloom. After cleaning thoroughly and dying, the wool was ready for carding – a constant evening occupation. The hand cards were light, handled boards of convenient size, on which was firmly fixed a piece of leather stuck full of fine wire teeth. These were usually the product of the farmer's leisure time during long winter evenings.

Lichens Three types of lichens are common on stones in New England.

Foliose lichen has a three-dimensional, leaf-like structure.

Crustose lichen tends to be so embedded in the rock that it looks as if it had been painted on. Because crustose lichens grow at the rate of one millimeter per year or less, they are of some use in dating a stone wall. A crustose lichen which measures five centimeters across has been growing for about 25 years. One that is 10 centimeters (4 inches) across is about 50 years old.

Fructicose lichens have erect, soldier-like plant bodies.

Inch An inch is sometimes divided into 3 barley corns, or 12 lines; a hair's breadth is 1/48 of an inch.

Gunter's chain is 7.92 inches, equal to 1 link; 100 links = 4 rods, or 22 yards.

Weights & measures a stone is 14 pounds, a tod is 28 pounds.

Geographical & nautical measure: 1° of a great circle of the earth = 69.77 statute miles.

Highways Federal turnpikes were authorized in 1791. First in Connecticut was the Norwich to New London in 1791, the Waterbury River Turnpike was chartered in 1801, and surrendered its charter in 1850. Present-day US Rt. 44 was referred to as a turnpike in Colebrook Town Records dated Sept. 24 1798. Connecticut began numbering its highways in 1932.

Original highway specifications (1760) defined main roads as being those going from north to south and being 165 feet wide; connecting highways ran east-west and were 66 feet wide. In 1796 the east-west roads were reduced to 49.5 feet wide. (This was the right-of-way, not the actual highway.) In 1931 the actual traveled portion of roads was 12 feet wide; in 1932 this statistic was increased to 16 feet wide. In Colebrook, the first town road was paved in 1936.

Cloth measurement: 1 nail = 2 ¼ inches = 1/16 of a yard; 1 quarter = 4 nails; 5 quarters = 1 ell (English).

Shoemaker's: No. 1 is 4 ½ inches in length, and every succeeding number is 1/3 of an inch. There are 28 divisions, in two series of numbers, in other words, from 1 to 13, and from 1 to 15.

Miscellaneous: 1 palm = 3 inches; 1 hand = 4 inches; 1 span = 9 inches.

Land measure: 30 ¼ sq. yards = 1 sq. rod; 40 sq. rods = 1 sq. rood; 4 sq, roods or 10 sq. chains each = 1 acre; 4,840 sq. yards = 1 acre; 43,560 sq. ft. = 1 acre; 21,780 sq. ft. = ½ acre; 640 acres = 1 sq. mile.

Paper: 24 sheets = 1 quire; 20 quires = 1 ream or 480 sheets.

Miscellaneous: 1 caldron = 36 bushels or 57.25 cubic feet. 1 perch of stone = 24.75 cubic feet.

Hundred weight = 100 lbs. in the United States, 112 lbs. in England. The abbreviation for hundred weight is "cwt", also called "quintal".

Hay: 10 cubic yards of meadow hay weighs 1 ton. When the hay is taken out of large or old stacks, 8 or 9 yards will make 1 ton. 11 to 12 cubic yards of clover, when dry, weighs 1 ton.

Horse mill In a horse mill, a horse moves at the rate of 3 feet per second. The diameter of the track should not be less than 25 feet.

Water-generated horsepower 1 horsepower = 33,000 foot-pounds per minute; 1 horsepower = 550 foot-pounds per second; 1 gallon of water contains 231 cubic inches, or 0.1337 cubic feet; 1 cubic foot of water contains 1,728 cubic inches, or approximately 7.481 gallons. Water weighs 8.337 pounds per gallon, or approximately 62.43 pounds per cubic foot.

Man traveling A man travels without a load, on level ground, during an 8 ½ hour day, at the rate of 3.7 mph, or 31 ¼ miles per day. He can carry 111 lbs. 11 miles in one day.

Laths Laths are 1 ¼ - 1 ½ inches by 4 feet, set ¼ inches apart. A bundle contains 100 laths.

Brown mortar (under plaster) 1/3 Thompson lime, 2/3 sand, small quantity of hair. [This they obtained from a tannery. All I have ever known to be used was cow hair.]

Miscellaneous: 23 cubic feet of sand, or 18 cubic feet of earth, or 27 cubic feet of clay = 1 ton.

18 cubic feet of gravel or earth, before digging, make 27 cubic feet when dug.

Gunpowder Ingredients for gunpowder (proportions): saltpeter 78.; charcoal 12.; sulphur 10. Charcoal used for the manufacture of gunpowder was made differently from conventional charcoal. If for gunpowder, alder, willow and buckthorn was preferred, otherwise beech, oak, maple or ash predominated.

Diameter of sieve holes for rifle powder: .025 inches to .035 inches.

Dimensions of powder barrels: length: 20.5 inches; diameter of interior at head: 14 inches; middle (bilge) 16 inches; thickness of staves and heads: .5 inches; weight: 25 lbs.

Preservation of food As we know it, preservation of food began in 1811 in England when tin cans were first used. Polar exploration, which held avid public interest, used them during the first 1/3 of the 19th century. Sci, Amer., Sept. 1996, p. 182

Folk medicine (From the inside cover of Rockwell's "Acts and Laws of Connecticut, 1769)

Camp Distemper: Take the bark of sumac [they spelled it "shoemake"] roots that bears berries, low mallow, common plantain and mullen – equal quantity. Boil in milk and water – sweeten with melases. [I believe what is meant by low mallow is one of the mallows, of which there are about 16 different kinds. The plant naturally contains aspirin and the root contains about 25% starch and 25% mucilage (which traditionally formed a favorite domestic remedy for colds and sore throats. [Description taken from the 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica, vol. 17, p. 492.]

Distemper Any term using this word probably meant a viral infection causing excessive mucus formation, loss of appetite, vomiting and diarrhea.

Wrought iron is slag-bearing, malleable iron containing so little carbon (0.30% or less) that it does not harden greatly when cooled suddenly.

Cast iron generally contains more than 2.2 % carbon and as such is not malleable at any temperature. Specifically, it is cast iron in the form of castings other than pigs, or re-melted cast iron suitable for such castings as distinguished from pig iron.

Pig iron The molten cast iron as it issues from the blast furnace, or the pigs into which it is cast. So named because of the shape of the form dug in the sand floor at the base of the blast furnace. One long straight trend (the sow) had several perpendicular smaller side trenches (the pigs) because it was reminiscent of a sow lying down nursing her young ones.

The early sand-cast pigs were weighed differently from everything else around the furnace; (gross tons of 2240 pounds each) being 2268 lbs. The extra 28 lbs. being the allowance for adhering sand.

Steel is iron which is malleable and is either cast into an initially malleable mass or is capable of hardening greatly by sudden cooling. Normal, or carbon steel contains between 0.3 and 2.2% of carbon, enough to make it harden greatly when cooled suddenly, but not enough to prevent it from being usefully malleable when hot.

Alloy steels and cast irons are those which owe their properties to one or more elements other than carbon.

Ingot steel is slagless steel with less than 0.30% carbon.

Weld steel is slag-bearing iron, malleable at least at some temperature and containing more than 0.30% of carbon.

Direct method Ore is worked in such a way as to produce iron or steel and a finished, marketable commodity is the end result.

Indirect method A blast furnace product is taken to a second facility such as a finery forge, where it is altered into a marketable product.

Bloomery forge An example of the direct method, used to smelt iron before the development of the blast furnace. Chunks of ore were heated until a small mass of pasty iron was formed. Then

it was hammered and worked to remove the slag. The end product was wrought iron, known as merchant bar.

Blast furnace is an enclosed furnace of sufficient height that a fire fed by fuel from the top and forced air from the bottom could raise the internal temperature high enough to melt the iron ore from its matrix, thus producing liquid iron of very high carbon content, which was then cast into pigs.

Reverberatory furnace A furnace or kiln in which fuel is not in direct contact with the metal being heated, but rather furnishes a flame, which plays over the metal, especially by being reflected downward from the sloping roof.

Finery forge This type of forge contained a simple reverberatory furnace in which the pigs from the blast furnace were re-heated and worked to burn out the carbon and the impurities and produced wrought iron.

Fusion point In a blast furnace, fusion point for pure iron is 2,786°F, at which point it begins to absorb carbon, thus lowering its melting point to 2,200°F.

Meiler This is the correct term for what we usually refer to as a "charcoal pit"; it contains 30 cords of wood.

Consort signifies that the husband was living at the time of his wife's death.

Relict always means widow.

Yeoman is a farmer who cultivates his own land.

Tythingman From the second generation on, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, these special town officers were responsible for inspecting families. A statute in 1675 ordered that each Tythingman "shall take charge of ten or twelve families of his neighborhood and diligently inspect them." This office did not exist in Anglican Virginia or Quaker Pennsylvania, but it is not a New England innovation. Tythingmen had long existed as parish functionaries in East Anglia and other parts of England.

Colebrook still elected Tythingmen at least as late as 1862.

Champion A Puritan word for flat, open land without trees or hills.

Help an English word brought over in the 17th century meaning servants or even slaves.

Scaffold In 1846, this referred to a hay mow.

Cord of wood A cord of wood, although occupying 128 cubic feet on average, contains about 80 cubic feet of solid wood. Depending on the species and moisture content, it weighs from 1 to 2 tons.

Stove efficiency A modern airtight stove has a conversion efficiency of 50 – 60%, a standard box stove 25%, and an open fireplace less than 10%.