

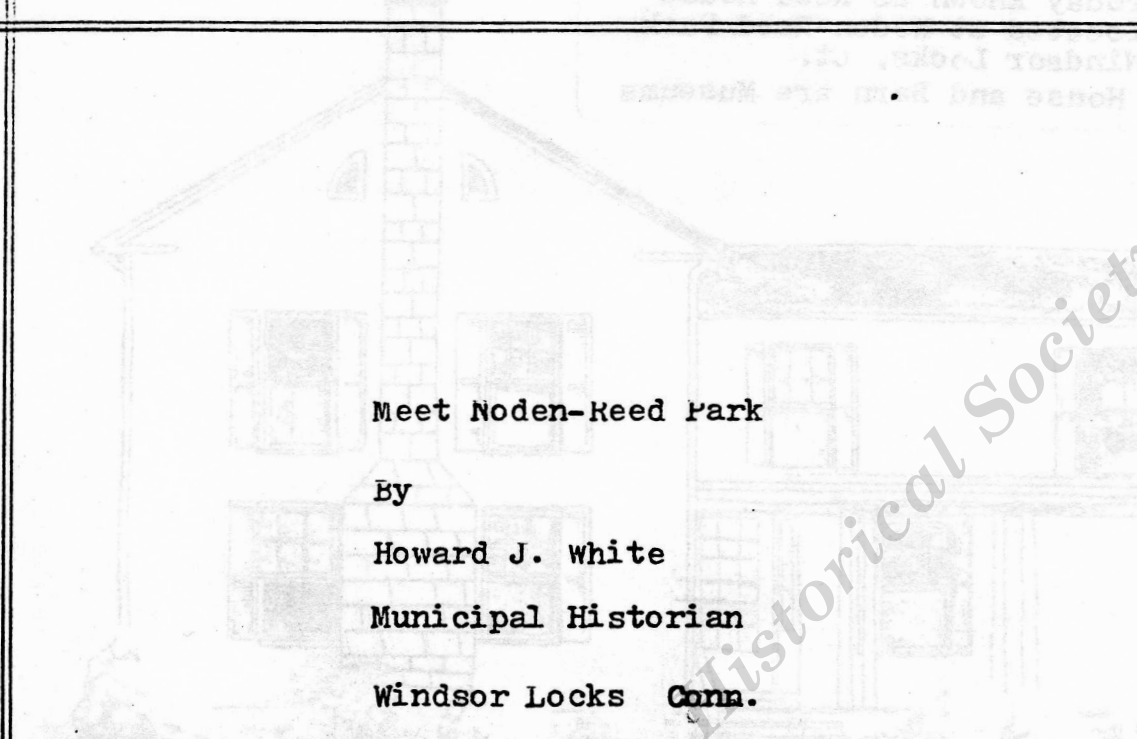
Meet
Noden-Reed
Park
58 West St.
Windsor Locks, Ct.



The first decorated Christmas tree in New England was on this property in Hendrick Roddmore's cabin in 1777

The location of the cabin was, according to records; 25 rods north of Spring Street and 90 rods west of West Street or $412\frac{1}{2}$ feet north of Spring Street and 1485 feet west of West Street.

This is only one of the many interesting facts you will find in this publication regarding this farm.



Meet Noden-Reed Park

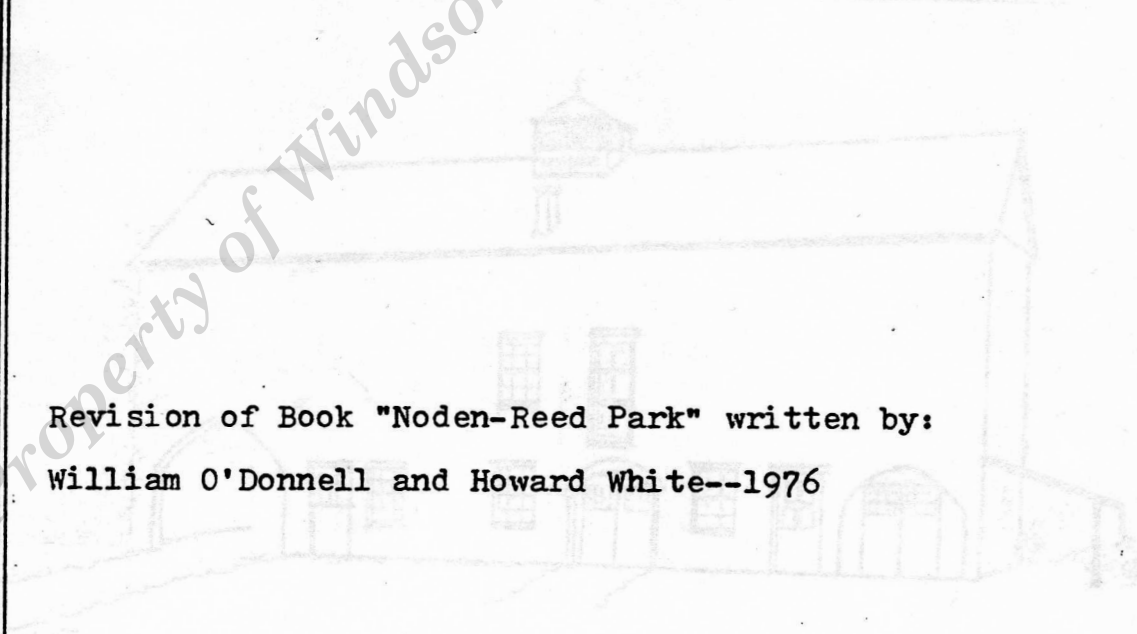
By

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Windsor Locks Conn.

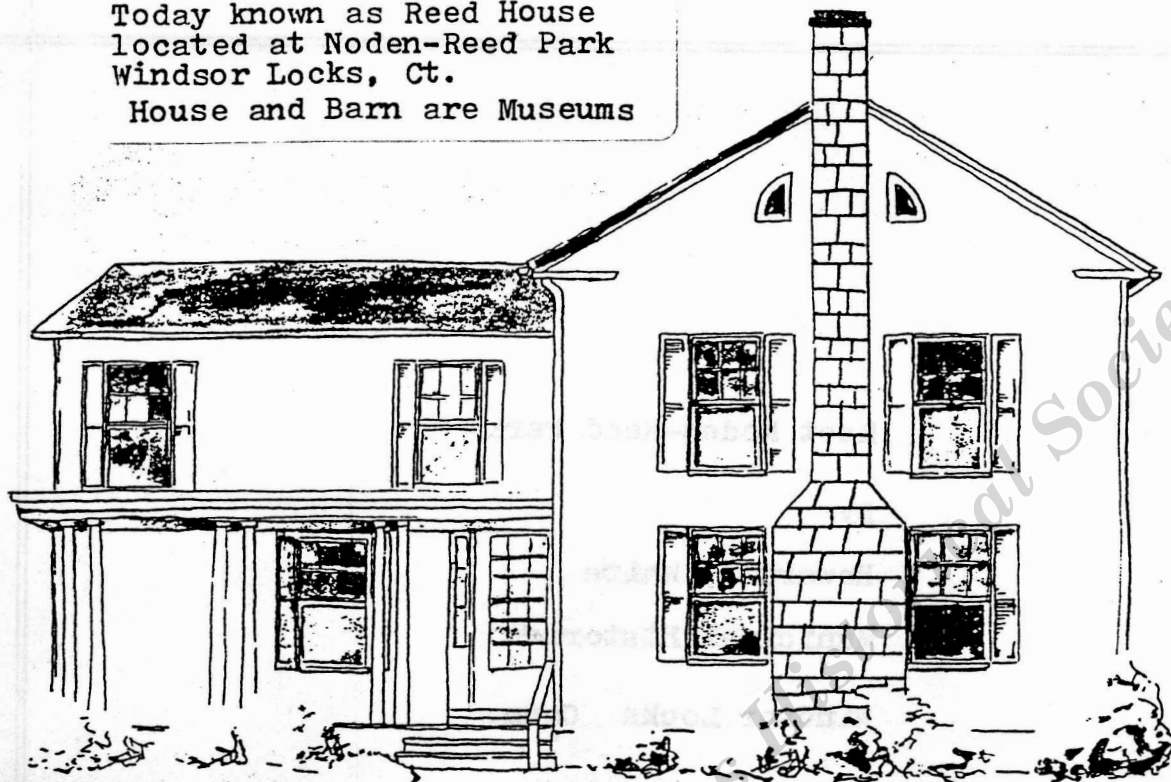
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Revision of Book "Noden-Reed Park" written by:

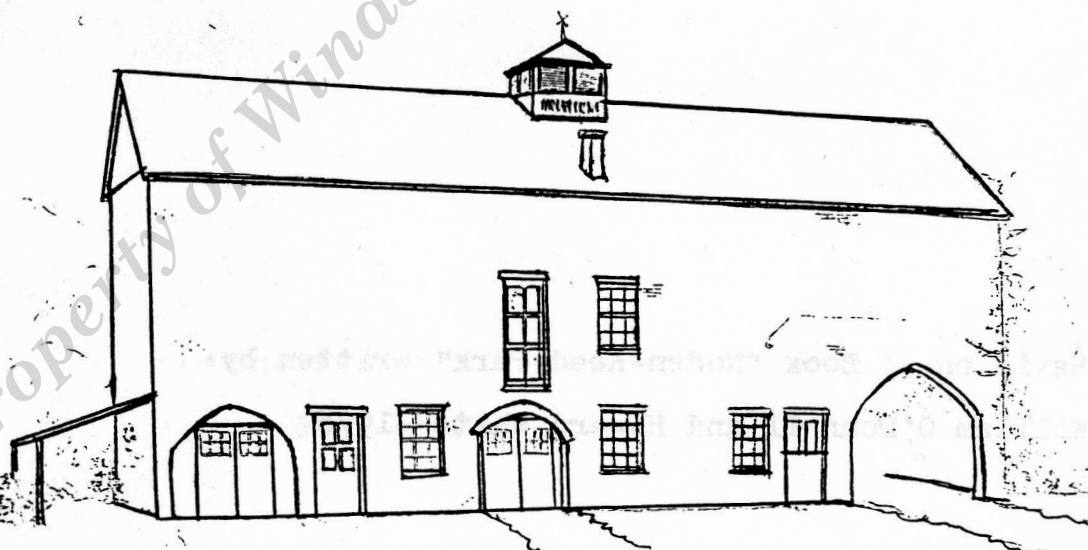
William O'Donnell and Howard White--1976

David Pinney House-1840
Today known as Reed House
located at Noden-Reed Park
Windsor Locks, Ct.
House and Barn are Museums



The Reed House

T.M.



David Pinney Brick Barn,
one of the few brick barns
in New England-build 1826
Located at Noden-Reed Park
Windsor Locks, Ct.

The Reed Barn

T.M.

MEET NODEN - REED PARK

Would you believe that there are people in our town who ask the following questions.

Where is Noden-Reed Park?

Who was the Reed family?

Why is the property so important?

Why is it called "Noden-Reed Park?"

Where are the Noden-Reed Museums?

In this article I shall attempt to make aware to the readers the importance of the property and some background about the families that resided on the farm, over the past 232 years, starting with December 25, 1759 and concluding with the year 1974.

Suppose we trace the ownership of the farm. It consisted of five lots. Samuel Denslow, on Dec. 25, 1759, purchased four lots on the second tier, now West Street, then called North Windsor, section of Pine Meadow, section of Windsor. The entire parcel was 90 acres. Four of the lots were purchased from: Josiah 3rd, Aaron and Moses Phelps. Samuel bought the fifth lot from Noah Griswold, dated Feb. 29, 1760. These five lots were made up of his "house lot" in 1762. Samuel's family owned the property until 1785, when it passed into the hands of Martin Pinney, Samuel Denslow's son-in-law. At the time of ownership, there were two other structures on the property, one be-

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ing a cabin built by Samuel Denslow for his hired man, Hendrick Roddmore, a Hessian soldier, who was captured in Bennington, Vermont during the American Revolution. As you well know, the British Army during that period was made up of many hundreds of Hessian Soldiers. Samuel hired Hendrick because of his excellent knowledge of farming. According to records and Jabez Hayden, the cabin was located on the southeast section of the farm; about 90 rods west of West Street and 25 rods north of Spring St. Roddmore lived on the farm from 1777 until 1790, at which time he moved to the village of Windsor. It is believed that Hendrick Roddmore had the first decorated Christmas tree in New England in his cabin. As you know the Hessians celebrated Christmas as a high holiday hundreds of years before the English. There were Christmas trees in the home of the Penn-Dutch in Pennsylvania as early as 1744.

(NOTE-The first Christmas tree, to be seen in England was during the time of Queen Victoria, when her consort, Prince Albert had one in the Windsor Castle. We must remember that Prince Albert was German.

There is a little interesting story about Hendrick and his wife. It seems that he and his wife were not getting along too well, so he tried to hang himself. Also I understand he tried to sell her, which did not work. He

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was not successful in the attempt to hang himself, because a person cut him down. Did he thank the man, of course not, he was very angry with him, because the rope that Hendrick used was new.

Samuel Denslow, our subject, was the great-grandson of Henry Denslow, the first settler in Pine Meadow, now Windsor Locks. He was born April 24, 1733 in Windsor and died sometime after 1782, exact year is not known.

Mr. Denslow had a very interesting life. He was elected a Surveyor of Highways in a Town Meeting in 1766 and again in 1768. In May of 1773 the Session of the General Assembly of Connecticut, appointed him Ensign of the 2nd Company of the Town of Windsor. In May 1776, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. In 1782, prior to his death; he was a Lieutenant of the 5th Company commanded by Capt. Johnathon Ellsworth in the 1st Regt. of the Connecticut Militia.

Our friend was on a committee in May 1777, to supply necessaries to the families of all soldiers who should enlist before May 9th and was on a similar committee in December of 1777. Large bounties were offered to those who would enlist and those from any cause were not liable for military duty, to be taxed heavily to pay expenses incurred.

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On Feb. 26, 1781, a contract was drawn between Samuel Denslow and one Oliver Ellsworth, calling for the construction of the Oliver Ellsworth homestead, which is presently located on Palisado Avenue, Route 159, Windsor, Connecticut and is a museum under the direction of the Daughters of the American Revolution. It is interesting to note that Mr. Ellsworth was the third Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. He was the son of David and Jemima (Leavitt) Ellsworth, Oliver's mother was a half-sister of Samuel Denslow's wife, Hannah Leavitt Denslow.

Samuel and Hannah Denslow had seven children, Elihu, who was a victim of the American Revolution. He died in a camp in New York, the other children were; Samuel, Leavitt, Lovica, Alphas, Hannah and Thaddeus. As stated before Elihu died in the service of his country. He was taken ill with "Camp Fever". His father learned of his son's illness and drove to the camp in New York, bringing medical supplies that the camp could not afford. Even with this and his father's loving care, the boy died on Sept. 9, 1776. Elihu's father felt certain that his son could have been saved, if it had been possible to bring him home so that he could be attended by Dr. Hezekiah Chaffee. Two other young men from West Street died in that war; Samuel Wing and Ensign Coye.

The Denslow family lived on the farm until 1785 and that year Martin Pinney took over the farm and in 1826

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David Pinney built the brick barn and later in 1840 built the present house, taking the place of the original family home. However, there is very little of the 1840 house remaining. Over the years the interior was completely changed; a second floor was added over the kitchen, with a back stairway from the second floor to the kitchen. An open stairway from the living room to the second floor, a fireplace in the living room, a completely new porch on the front of the house.

In 1865 Samuel McAuley bought the farm. It was owned by Samuel, Samuel Jr., and Benton McAuley, in that order. The McAuleys operated the farm, as well as having a slaughter house. They operated a grocery store and meat market, raised their own pork and beef. According to the Williams family, who resided on the farm from 1900 until 1904, there was a smoke-house on the property, somewhere between the present brick barn and the house. One of the McAuley children was born in the house in the southeast bedroom. Another family that lived on the farm was the McCutchen family.

Christmas seemed to be an important day in the transfer of property, with regard to this farm. Samuel Denslow purchased the property on Dec. 25, 1759 and Leroy Sadler and Chester Reed purchased it, in partnership, on Christmas Eve, December 24, 1919. Following the death of Mr. Sadler

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the farm then became known as the Reed Farm, remaining as such until the death of Gladys Reed in 1973. The death of Miss Reed ended a span of 21r years that this property was an operating farm.

Perhaps you might like to learn something about the Reed family? Their father, Captain Joseph Reed, was employed in the textile industry. Their mother, Hannah Noden, was a member of the prominent Noden family. Joseph and Hannah had ten children; Mary, who died in infancy; Thomas, who worked for the Horton Company, Calvin, who drowned in the local river, he was about 13 years of age, Edyth and Hazel, both were employed by the Windsor Locks Jorunal; Olive, who was the housekeeper, and who kept the family together following the death of their mother. Olive was a sort of "mother" to the family, even though they were all grown men an women at the time of their mother's death; Joseph operated the farm until his death. Joe did this with the help of the brothers and sisters, as well as the local neighborhood "kids". Following Joe's death, John Driscoll was hired to operate the farm and be sort of oversee things in general, because none of the family were at home during the day. Darcy, who was a boiler inspector of an insurance company, was killed while crossing the street in one of our Connecticut shore towns. Chester was employed for many years by the Dexter Co. He was a lover of animals, that was the

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reason he had so many different animals on the farm; horses, cows, chickens, pigeons, ducks, geese, banty chicks, peacocks, ponies, yes, even a burro. There's animals were not "run of the mill" animals, but each was a special breed. There were also dogs, which they called house or barn dogs. The barn dogs were of the large breed, such as St. Bernards, or Newfoundlands.

Chester had a "little hideaway" on the property. I refer to a small cabin that was on the east shore of the pond that was located at the west end of the farm. Many people will recall that place very well. (NOTE-I have heard that some people say that was the cabin the Hessian Soldier had when he worked on the farm in 1777. NO WAY).

This cabin originally belonged to the Boy Scouts of Troop 84 of Windsor Locks and was located on the Birge property off Suffield Street, in an area that is known today as Circle and Middle Drive. Yes, that area was all woodland in those days. Lack of interest, time and vandalism took its toll on the building. Finally Chester purchased it and moved it to a location on the shore of the Reed Pond. He made a nice little building out of it and used it as a small cottage. The interior was of pine panel wall with a large fireplace and small kitchen. There was a porch the entire length of the cabin. At the foot of

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the dam was a little fish pond with a waterwheel. It was only a few thousand feet from the house, but it was like walking into another world. I am certain many people in the area will remember what a beautiful restful spot it was and the numerous enjoyable cookouts that took place at Chester Reed's cabin.

Gladys was the last surviving member of the family. She was employed by the Hartford Times for many years. It was she who willed the property to the town of Windsor Locks to be known as Noden-Reed Park. The reason for the name Noden, was because that was her mother's maiden name.

The women enjoyed working on the farm after spending a day at their places of regular employment. The Reed sisters and their brother Thomas were very proud of their beautiful flower gardens. One can see what beautiful gardens there were on the grounds by just looking in the photo album in the Alice Coffin-Mae Egan Library of the Noden-Reed Museum. Pictures of the tobacco harvest can also be seen in one of the many photo albums in the same library. We have Mrs. Rose Driscoll to thank for the pictures and our first curator for mounting them in the albums for permanent keeping.

Now let's talk about the buildings. The barn is one of the few all brick barns in New England and was erected

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in 1826 by David Pinney. It is unique in that for one thing, the arches are erected without a keystone. Another is the fancy brickwork along the roof line.

Also the builder was farsighted enough to erect the building on two ground levels, as well as insuring the stability of it "forever" by placing tie rods throughout the building both east and west as well as north and south, depending not entirely on the framework structure of the barn. The tie rods in the structure of the barn will keep the building from moving and help to prevent the walls from cracking. People in those days wasted nothing when building a structure. If they could use lumber and timbers from another structure that was being taken down, they most certainly would do so. This can be seen in both the barn and the house. True there is a certain amount of graffiti on the brick walls and doors of the barn, but unlike today, it is mostly the initials of young people who worked on the farm over the years. Some date back as far as 1874. Since the Windsor Locks Historical Society took over the property, the barn has been developed into a Farmers' Museum.

It might also be of interest to our readers, that the last team of horses on this farm spent their final days at Old Sturbridge Village.

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At this point, I wish to make it known to my readers that the Farmers' Museum was made possible by the sincere efforts of two very well known gentlemen in our community, Mr. Paul H. O'Donnell and Mrs. Charles "Chuck" Lincoln, without the assistance of these two men, we would not have the Farmers' Museum that we have today at Noden-Reed Park.

Now we will go on to discuss the present house.

Architecturally, it is a typical New England farmhouse. It is not strictly Colonial, Victorian, Federal or Georgian. Most farmers during that time could have cared less as to the period of design of their house. They were more interested in a practical and useful design. Most of the farmhouses of that era were sort of rectangle, box type, with plenty of attic space. Some of the houses had ells and outbuildings attached. The design of the Noden-Reed house was most common in the 19th century. The house originally had about 8 rooms, five rooms on the first floor, three bedrooms and a bath on the second floor. There was a hallway from the front door, between the parlor and the diningroom that led to a door that opened onto the north lawn. There was no fireplace in the parlor, it was added when the Redds moved into the house in the 1920's. They also added the second floor over the kitchen. The porch was also added. The interior was gutted at which time the two rooms across the front on the first floor became one

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and is today the Denslow Parlor.

The cellar wall under the main house are brownstone and under the south wing are concrete blocks. We must not forget the "mud" room. This room is just what the name implies, a place where people put their boots, rubbers and other bad weather clothing, before entering the kitchen. Also the "mud" room was inclined to be a "catch-all". Some claim it was a summer-kitchen, but the appearance of it today shows no evidence of it ever being anymore than what it was intended, a "mud" room, infact that is exactly what it was used for when the Reeds moved into the house.

Recently the all brick fireplace and mantel in the parlor was boxed in and the wood given a grained effect. It is beautiful and relates to a period of the Victorian era, not usually found in our local farmhouses of working farm families. Now the house consists of 9 rooms. One the first floor is a kitchen, dining room, small den, half-bath and parlor. The second floor has five bedrooms, which are now exhibit rooms. The den was Chester's "little room". It served as his office and bedroom in his final years.

One thing about the 1840 houses, there were plenty of windows to let in plenty of light and brighten up the rooms. If you were to go into the attic, you would see the boards that enclose the frame of building are of various widths and lengths, yes, even some of the boards are beveled.

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edges. Even the roof boards are of various widths and lengths, signifying that they most certainly came from some other building, here again proving the frugality of the New England farmer.

What is interesting about the yard? Many of the ever-green trees have been planted in recent years in the lower backyard and have a very definite purpose. One commemorates the first Christmas Tree in New England, that was on the farm in Hendrick Roddmore's cabin. Another honors the visiting of a group of exchange students from Cologne, Germany. Next to this particular tree is buried a capsule containing the names of the students. This tree was donated by Paul H. O. Donnell. Hopefully the remainder of these trees that were planted after each Christmas Open House will be properly marked, signifying a definite purpose. The Oak tree in the front yard is a descendant of the famous Charter Oak. Each community in Connecticut received one of these seedlings at the time of the American Revolutionary War Bicentennial in 1976.

At the conclusion of the American Revolutionary War Bicentennial, a capsule was buried on the property directly in front of the barn. This took place on July 4, 1976, to be unearthed on the 200 Anniversary of the Incorporation of Windsor Locks, which will be May 30, 2054. Many interesting items are in the capsule, which is a full sized

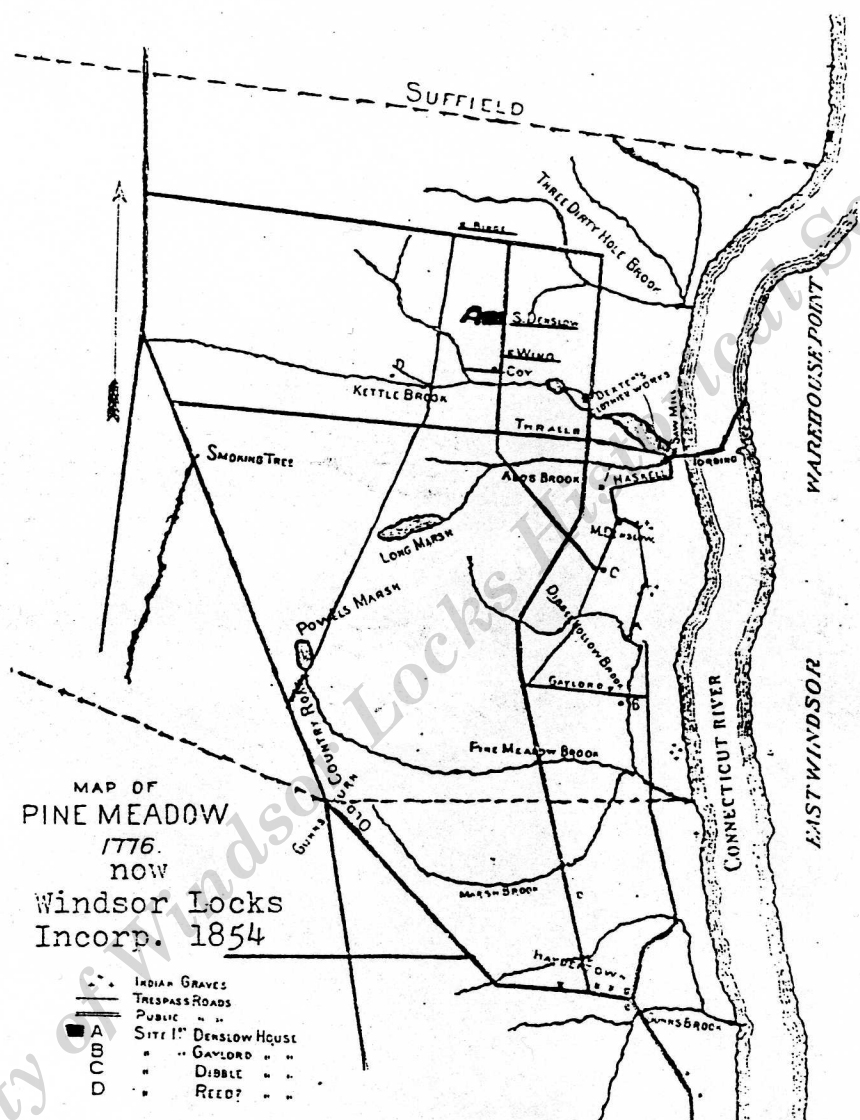
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burial vault.

I think you will agree that, after reading this booklet, there is a place of importance in the history of our town for the Noden_reed Park.

Why not make a point to visit the museums on the park grounds during their open season, or especially during the Christmas Open House, which is held each year for two weekends in December. See the many photographs relating to the heritage of the town, among them being paintings of Gladys Reed and her father, Capt. Joseph Reed, done by local artists. Also there are painting of members of the Denslow family, as well as paintings by Clark Denslow and a print of a paint by Henry C. Denslow, father of Clark Denslow, direct descendants of Henry Denslow, our first settler.

There are also items that belong to Mary Webb, great granddaughter of Capt. Martin Denslow, of the Revolutionary War. You will see many beautiful gowns, furniture relating to families in our community, a gun manufactured in Windsor Locks during the Civil War, that is still in working order. In the barn you will see an excellent collection of farm tools from the various farms in the area. It is well worth a visit to the Noden-Reed Museums to learn about the history and heritage of this area.



MAP OF
PINE MEADOW
1776.
now
Windsor Locks
Incorp. 1854

- INDIAN GRAVES
- TRESPASS ROADS
- PUBLIC " "
- SITE "A" DENSLOW HOUSE
- " B " GAYLORD " "
- △ " C " DIBBLE " "
- " D " REED? " "

On this 1776 Map of Pine Meadow, now Windsor Locks, shows the present location of the Denslow Farm, now Noden-Reed Park.