

# Glimpses into the Past

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January 2008 Vol. 2 No.1

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**BOOK:** The Story of Three Towns

**OBITUARY:** James E. Barnes

**WEBSITE:** [www.lighthousehub.com](http://www.lighthousehub.com)

**GENEALOGY:** The Barber Family

**DO YOU KNOW:** about an offer from

**SPOTLIGHT:** War of 1812 soldiers

New York Public Library

### BARBER'S POINT LIGHTHOUSE



Westport's only lighthouse was built in 1873. It has an octagonal tower which is 36 feet high. During its operation, the light was visible for 15 miles. It is the only lighthouse between Crown Point and Split Rock. It is built of stone and is now a private residence, part of which was added in 1950. The driveway to this building is accessible via Camp Dudley Road to Barber's Lane. It was the policy of the Lighthouse Board to appoint disabled veterans as keepers of the light. The first lighthouse keeper at Barber's Point was James E. Barnes, a soldier who lost a leg at Petersburg. The light no longer shines. It was extinguished in 1935.

### WESTPORT'S FIRST FAMILY

According to Caroline Halstead Royce in her book *Bessboro: A History of Westport, Essex County, New York*, Major Hezekiah Barber traveled all the way from Harrington, Litchfield County, Connecticut in 1785 and worked at clearing the land. He went back to Connecticut and returned the next year with his brother-in-law Levi Frisbie. They worked together cutting wood and building a log cabin. In the spring of 1787, Barber's wife, Huldah, sister of Levi Frisbie, came from Connecticut, on horseback, carrying her first baby in her arms.

At that time, Westport was part of Washington County. In 1788, Clinton County was formed and included what is now Essex, Clinton and part of Franklin counties. It was divided into 4 towns, the southern most was Crown Point (which included what is now Westport). In 1798 the Town of Elizabethtown was formed out of the town of Crown Point. At that meeting, Hezekiah Barber was named a "Fence Viewer". Then from 1803-1805, Barber was the Supervisor of the Town of Elizabethtown.

He died in 1810 and is buried in the Barber Cemetery which is located at 19 Ferry Landing Way.

## OBITUARY

### SUDDEN DEATH OF A VETERAN

James E. Barnes, a resident of Westport, died suddenly on Thursday night of last week after retiring, while visiting his sister, Mrs. S. C. Gibbs, at Fort Ann. Heart disease is supposed to have been the cause of death. He was a veteran [of the Civil War] and lost a leg in the service, having been one of three Jims who each lost a leg by the explosion of the same shell. He was for many years keeper of the lighthouse at Barber's Point, and was well known on both sides of Lake Champlain. His remains were taken to Westport for burial last Saturday. He leaves a wife and one daughter, Mrs. Geo.H. Furness of Malone.

Mr. Barnes was a member of company A Seventy-seventh regiment, New York State Volunteers. This company was raised in Essex County in 1861, by Capt. Arnold Barnes, only a few days ago attended the annual reunion at Gloversville of the veterans of the regiment, was known to his comrades as "one of the three-legged Jims," the other two being the late James Allen of Westport and James Lawrence, now of Nebraska. While lying in a rifle pit in front of Petersburg, VA., in June 1864, a rebel shell made a visit to the three Jims, who were close to-

gether. The shell shattered the left limb of each, and the flying earth and debris almost buried Capt. George H. Gillis and H.L. Rowland, of Saratoga Springs, who were only a few feet away. After having their wounds dressed, the wounded Jims were sent to a Washington hospital, where the "three one-legged Jims" attracted no small amount of attention.

The Essex County Republican September 25, 1890

### WESTPORT WAR OF 1812 SOLDIERS

Daniel Wright  
Luman Wadhams  
David B. McNeil  
Asa Aikens  
William Guy Hunter  
Platt Rogers Halstead  
Sylvanus Lobdell  
Boughton Lobdell  
John Lobdell  
Nathaniel Hinkley  
Thomas Hinkley  
Joel Finney  
Elijah Storrs  
George Andrews  
Samuel Felt  
Levi Frisbie  
Jesse Braman  
John Greeley, Jr  
Vine Bingham  
Diadorus Holcomb  
Nathan DeLano  
Jason Dunster

Malcolm Barnes was a captain in 1800, and Major in 1806.  
For Major in 1808, and Capt. in 1810 and 1812. He was in the war.

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Wright & Barnes were captured in 1800, and Major in 1806.  
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war.

## BOOKS

### A STORY OF THREE TOWNS

When researching the history of Westport, one should not overlook the above named book written by Morris F. Glenn. The book tells of the early days of Westport, Willsboro, and Essex. Its focus is not the residents of the towns, but mainly the iron industries which were located in each of these towns. The Westport section of this book details the Sisco Furnace, Split Rock Mountain and the Iron Mine on Split Rock Mountain. This is one of the few resources I have found with information on Jacksonville. Unfortunately, this book is out of print and copies of it are hard to find.

### DO YOU KNOW.....?

As a resident of New York State, you are entitled to receive a free library card to the New York Public Library. Obtaining one of these is easy when you go to [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org) After completing the online application, you will receive a card in the mail within just a few days.

This card will enable you to access many online databases, On-line for kids (books read aloud....and much more), the NYPL digital library; encyclopedia; New York State newspapers.....a delightful site for both adults and children to explore. Send for your card!

## WEBSITE

If you are interested in learning more information about lighthouses, do visit this website:

[www.lighthousehub.com](http://www.lighthousehub.com) . You can view pictures and information about lighthouses all over the country. There is an interesting picture of the Crown Point lighthouse taken when the lighthouse keeper's house was attached to the lighthouse. You also will find pictures of other Lake Champlain lighthouses: the Split Rock lighthouse in Essex ; the one at Cumberland Head and the one at Point Au Rouche as well as 4 on the Vermont shore of the lake.

### LIGHTHOUSE FOR SALE AT WESTPORT

from the Ticonderoga Sentinel April 2 1936

"If you don't mind Shrill of Foghorn, Jangle of Bells and a Few Restrictions, Here's the Home You're Looking For FOR SALE--Lighthouse on Barber Point Light Station Reservation, Westport, NY.including a two-story stone dwelling, frame barn and shed. Hot and cold water, all improvements. No reasonable offer refused. Apply Joseph T. Yates, Superintendent of Lighthouses, St. George, Staten Island. If you don't mind the shrill cacophony of a fog horn; the jangle of bells on a stormy night; the piercing beam of a beacon--then, this is positively a real bargain. If you like the sea, the solitude of the Adirondacks on the west shore of Lake Champlain where you can watch the ships and doomed ice fishing shanties go by--then you ought to submit your bid to the Government. The deadline is April 30. The highest bidder will get the lighthouse. Don't let us railroad you into this, however. There are restrictions. You will not be allowed to grow a tree or erect a structure that will obstruct the visibility of the light from any point on the broad expanse of Lake Champlain. For alas, right close by the old lighthouse, there stands a modern beam projector which works scientifically; the lights go on a half hour before sundown and go off a half hour after sunrise. The old one has outlived its usefulness."