William Jones Weeks was an unusually active, intelligent leader who exerted a considerable influence in the community. A graduate of Yaphank district school, academies at Southampton, Bellport, Miller’s Place, and Yale College, with honors, he was a strong advocate of physical exercise and sports. While at Yale, he purchased a Whitehall boat and enlisted his friends to help him row back and forth across the Sound. In so doing, he introduced aquatic sports to the college and was the effective founder of the “Yale Navy”. Later alumni reunion journals cited him as the “honored Captain of the Pioneer Boat Club.” On a two week vacation from classes, he walked 140 miles to Boston in the snow carrying a 12 lb. suitcase. He walked back too, and it was a six day round trip. One of his inventions, a “student lamp”, is on exhibit in the university museum.

In 1848, William married Mary Croswell, of Gilboa, New York, and proceeded to build their home in Yaphank. Whether or not he was influenced by the publication, in the same year, of Orson Fowler’s book “A Home for All or a New, Cheap Convenient, and Superior Mode of Building”, we cannot be certain. We do know that both Fowler and Wm Weeks were far ahead of their time in many ways, including their advocacy of clean air, exercise, and diet. William wrote in his diary (Nov. 23, 1849) “Mary, Susy & I take up our abode in our new house, much pleased, though the house is unfinished. I am designing to finish it myself during the winter ensuing.” Mary Croswell Weeks was the daughter of Archibald and Hannah Winslow Paige Croswell, of Gilboa, Schoharie Co., NY, and a descendent of Kenelm Winslow, who emigrated from England on the second voyage of the Mayflower. Kenelm was a brother of Massachusetts governor Edward Winslow. Mary shared her husband’s interests in natural history and was said to have been knowledgeable about native flora. She also bore 12 children!

Orson Fowler also recommended octagonal churches, so that preachers might more readily “impress an audience”, the facing pews might facilitate the congregations’ “interchange of friendly and benignant feelings” (Note: the latest
thing in liturgics today!), and “to accommodate those who attend church ... to ‘see and be seen’” (Note: not an imperative of Holy Scripture or Catholic tradition!). If our founding family had followed Fowler in this, St. Andrew’s would have been in the forefront of the modern liturgical movement. We can give thanks for their restraint! Of course, the octagon design was fairly common as part of church spires, and continues as the basic shape of baptismal fonts. The steeple of St. John’s Church, Cold Spring, with a square base like that of St. Andrew’s, was surmounted a few years later with what their vestry notes calls “... the octagon, the Cross and Spire...”. The spire was built to guide ships into the harbor, which responsibility St. Andrew’s didn’t have. As far as baptismal fonts are concerned, in the middle ages the number eight symbolized immortality, and baptism means regeneration to eternal life.

A naturalist, with special interests in botany, and a beekeeper, William’s achievements included several articles in scientific journals, e.g. Scientific American, May, 1860, and, like his father, he successfully experimented with the growing of cranberries and other crops unusual to Long Island. From a local newspaper, Sept. 21, 1878, “Mr. J. Weeks is picking his cranberries. Years ago he conceived the idea of turning low, swampy land to account, and while the wiseacres declared it nonsense and whispered together, Mr. Weeks pushed his enterprise, and today produces the best cranberries in the county.” Weeks Pond, south of the church, is part of the bog which they created and named “Cranberry Lake”. The state filled in most of the “lake” for the Long Island Expressway.

In the fall of 1851, William recorded in his diary a trip to Maine where he consulted with an experienced beekeeper, and ordered the construction of 100 hive kits which were delivered and assembled the following spring. He evidently already had other colonies, for he was giving honey as a gift to a newcomer on the first of April, 1852. In light of William’s fascination with octagonal architecture, we wonder whether or not he kept some of his honey bees in Stewarton hives. Originating from Ayrshire, Scotland, the eight sided hives were popular in the latter half of the nineteenth century, required the skills of a cabinet maker, and were sometimes kept under a roof. The elongated frame building, located behind the octagon house, and still standing during the 1980’s, might have been a beekeeping storage shed. The same building may have been used later by daughter “Hallie” for her taxidermy craft, which she learned from her father. The area just behind and on the north side served as a dump. Just north of that were found leather remnants of the shoemaking craft.

From his diary Sunday, November 15, 1857: “Morning frosty - air chilly - I went to the church about 9 o’clock and made a fire. Mother had her Sunday School - I attended church. Mary staid (sic) home with the children, who had colds. Mr. Sterling was present.”

As a civil engineer and surveyor, in 1859-60 William laid out the first definitive line between Oyster Bay and Huntington Towns, which subsequently became the Nassau-Suffolk line. After the great fire of 1862, he surveyed and mapped a large part of Brookhaven Town.
A MODEL PUBLIC SERVANT

In the face of considerable local opposition, William was able to bring about the building of a new school in 1856. The school, like his own home, was of octagonal design and was built during the decade following Fowler’s work and its first revised edition in 1853. It is worth noting that Fowler was interested in more than optimal architectural forms for a school; he advocated good ventilation and heated flooring as being conducive to health and learning.

The octagon school later served as a firehouse and a miniature copy of the building stands on the property of the Yaphank Fire Department. It is a symbol of the determination of our local “Renaissance man”, who insisted on a decent school for the children of Yaphank. The building served as a school from 1856 to 1927 and, in the 1990’s, still remembered by a few who attended. One resident remembered misbehaving as a child and hiding from her father under the steps of the school. A notation on the back of a Howell family photograph of the octagon school refers to it as the “Butter Churn”, and others continued to call it the “Hat Box”.

William Weeks was Superintendent of Schools for Brookhaven Town as well as a member of the local school committee, an officer of the Suffolk County Agricultural Society, and also the County Superintendent of the Poor, presiding over the building of the first alms house in 1871, and becoming its first superintendent. According to historian Beecher Homan, William slept in the empty new building for several nights to protect against fire or other loss. He and Mary lived in the county home throughout 1872 to make sure that it would be managed honestly and effectively. Other offices he held included Justice of the Peace and Excise Commissioner. Early accounts attribute to him the choice of the name Yaphank when the railroad came through and the post office was established. Yamphanke was an Indian name meaning, according to some accounts, the bank of a river and was first suggested in 1846 by Nathaniel S. Prime, author of an early history of Long Island.

A newspaper clipping from an unidentified paper verifies what all his descendants remember hearing regarding his ice skating feats when past the age of 70. It reads: “William J. Weeks, of Yaphank, L.I., has not yet received a reply to his sweeping challenge defying any seventy-year-old man to skate him for fame or money. His challenge was accepted last year by another aged skater of Suffolk County who raced Weeks for several miles. Weeks, however, won the race
with ease. The old skater is as active as a man of seventy years. He walks about Suffolk county daily and covers a score or more of miles a day. He is a genial man and fond of outdoor amusement. His present challenge states that he is willing to skate any man over seventy years old from 10 to 500 miles. He will give his opponent a handicap of ten miles in every hundred.” No takers! By all accounts, he was a very disciplined man, walking regularly, and drinking nothing but water throughout his life.

There stand today monuments to the forward looking vision, godly altruism and civic responsibility of William J. Weeks. The Suffolk County Infirmary, then known as the Almshouse, remains an important institution in Yaphank. The first building, was constructed because of his initiative in 1870 and managed by him for the first three years. That structure was replaced by another in 1935, and by a third in the late 1990’s. The county farm was an integral part of his plan for a self sufficient community, and some of those buildings stand today. Other Yaphank buildings which remind us of William J. Weeks are the modern elementary school, successor to his 1854 octagon school, and the new post office which carries the name he first suggested for this historic community.

We have a number of letters written by William in addition to access to ten of the diaries he kept over a twenty year period from 1851-71. The originals are preserved in the Jamaica library, and microfilm copies in the Middle Island Public Library.

The following three letters were published, with notes by Fr. Chapin, in the Long Island Forum, Winter, 1999. The first is a description of the proceedings of a wedding by a young man with a delightful sense of humor, tinged with a bit of scorn for some of the participants. We learn that the bridegroom’s name was John, but his bride remained nameless, probably a sign that William held her in low esteem. The names Parker, Howell, Terry, Hammond, Mills & Homan were all Millville names. The parson may have been nameless, but his behavior did not escape scrutiny.

THE WEDDING

Addressed to: Mrs. James H. Weeks
Care of Weeks & Co.
46 Wall Street, New York

Posted from: Fire Place, NY 27 December

Millville, Christmas, 1844
9 O’C. A.M.

My dear Mother,
I presume you would be pleased to hear of all that has taken place during your absence, but more particularly of the grand proceedings of last evening, all of which I shall not doubt relate to your satisfaction, if my pen don’t fail me.

The evening was well selected, it would be difficult to describe a finer one, in fact it was clear, comfortable and bright, the full moon shining. Charlotte went up in the morning, carrying all necessary articles, such as spoons, plates, etc. On our way there last evening, we took in Miss Parker, Miss E. Howell and Miss Terry. We reached there about six, but the parson had not yet arrived. I was
informed soon after I entered, that I was desired to act as groomsman. Of course, I could not refuse though never having served in such a capacity before, (I presume I was substituted for Mr. Chase who was absent) so I was ushered behind the scenes, that is, with the bride & bridegroom, maids, etc., Miss Hammond, Miss Mills & Edmund Homan. By the By, Miss Mills & I were the candle bearers & consequently we were to take the lead. This requires some nerve and a steady hand. We practiced our parts & presently the parson was announced, the door was thrown open & in we marched, two by two, & after several evolutions, formed six abreast, flanked with the torch bearers on either side, and the parson in front.

A noble sight and a noble couple, I mean on the average, for John you know is as much above the ordinary standard as his fair spouse is below. In this position the ceremony was performed, after which a prayer by the parson, then the bride & bridegroom received the congratulations of their friends. This was followed by conversation on all sides & presently it was suggested to have a little singing, upon which the parson struck up, “When I can read my title clear”, which was sung with much spirit by all who could join. After a moment’s pause, refreshments succeeded. Franklin & Charlotte were the waiters.

First came the plates, then the substantives to fill them, bread & butter, beef, cheese, etc.-tea. Next followed the more common kinds of cake, a number of varieties of each of these. The parson, thinking it his last chance, helped himself liberally. Tea in the mean time freely circulating, the last cake had not yet vanished, when in came richer varieties, sponge, etc., & these were succeeded by the bride’s cake, surrounded by more than 150 motto’s of all colors, - the parson, though alarmed at first, now began to take things more coolly. The bride cut her slice of cake & was followed in turn by the others, then everyone commenced to chew carefully for the ring, of which they had been forewarned. After some false alarms, it was the fortune of the solitary grinder of Nat Homan, to hit upon it, but then it came near to being lost to the assembly by partly slipping down his throat. After some struggles he produced it & it was passed around for general inspection. This sport being over & a few motto’s circulated & interchanged. Plates were handed about in anticipation of almonds, raisins & apples, which terminated the flood of edibles. This through, the parson scaped & all the old plays were introduced, not forgetting the laughable one of “Queen Dick’s dead.”

[Note: The parson, who “scaped” from the reception, was probably the pastor of the Middle Island Presbyterian Church. “Queen Dick” (sometimes referred to as “King Dick”, or “Tumbledown Dick”) refers scornfully to Richard Cromwell (1626-1712) who briefly and unsuccessfully succeeded his father, Oliver Cromwell, as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth in Sept. 1658]

We left at 11 O’clock, but the party had not broken up. On the whole it was a very snug wedding. The room was crowded. Mr. & Mrs. Tuttle & daughters were there. Mr. & Mrs. Reeve from Riverhead, & all the Millville beauties. The bride looked well & Charlotte very nice. The bride was much pleased with your presents, which were very acceptable. Father, though annoyed with a headache at the beginning of the evening, seemed to enjoy himself very much, was apparently one of the youngest & afforded much amusement.

But in conclusion, a word on other matters. Chatherine goes on very well & is
trying to have everything in good order for your return. Father requests me to say that perhaps he will wish me to go to Oyster Bay & Cold Spring next week, thence I shall go to New York, & if you are ready you can return with me. Aunt Ellen was intending to go to C.S. yesterday, but did not & has given up the idea for the present. Father sends his love & we both wish you a Merry Christmas.

Your aff. Son, (s) W.J. Weeks

His 1847 letter, published as “In Praise of Long Island”, was written to his future father-in-law, Archibald Croswell of Gilboa, Schoharie County, extolling the virtues of Long Island for agricultural development:

PRAISING LONG ISLAND

Yaphank. Sept. 1st, 47

To A. Croswell, Esq.

Dear Sir,

It was an unexpected pleasure to me to find at the office this morning a letter from you, for I did not deem the late favor on my part worthy of such consideration on yours - it was enough for me to think that you would be gratified in perusing the article therein contained. It is no doubt a matter of inquiry among many persons why so large a portion of Long Island has remained to this day in a wild & uncultivated state, & why emigrants from Europe have not discovered its advantages and settled upon it. To the one, I might reply, that the sides of the Island seemed to the first settlers to promise greater facilities for living than the interior. They could derive a partial subsistence directly from water, which at the same time, afforded materials for enriching the soil in the shape of shells, seaweed & “bony fish”, and also served as a medium of communication with other places.

To the other inquiry, it may be said, that the tide if immigration has ever been setting westward; in this direction all eyes have been directed, for, who could imagine, that in the vicinity of a great metropolis, there existed an extensive tract of land, capable of being rendered highly productive, and which had not yet been entered upon by man. Though surrounding portions had been cultivated for some two hundred years, and besides, while it could be purchased equally as cheap as western lands, the climate was preferable & with the same labor a more ampler remuneration could be realized.

These facts, however, I presume have never reached the ears of the immigrant or, if they have, they must have seemed to him incredible; but if this central portion of the Island (with the exception of tracts within the vicinity of streams) has remained unknown, because inaccessible, the period has now arrived, when its resources are to be developed. The attention of scientific men has been directed towards it, & they are now, since a Rail Road has been opened through it, examining it with an eye to its future. The Road intersects, in its course, almost every variety of soil & nearly all I believe can be rendered productive, for I am inclined to think with you, that there is hardly any soil, however barren in appearance, that may not be reclaimed and rendered fertile. Indeed, much of this land, which has been esteemed worthless for tillage, bears upon its surface pure evidence of its capability, by its producing shrubs & forest trees in its efforts to clothe itself with verdure. That it is for the most part level & free from stones are also important considerations, for the trees and their roots having once been
removed, the labor of tilling is comparatively light.  

But there seem to be some very important requisites in the profitable cultivation of our soil, viz. manures, or fertilizing agents; the want of these is sensibly felt & though their application occasions the chief labor of farming, yet with their assistance, the land responds most nobly. We must confess, upon reflection, that the cultivation of the soil is but the means, not the end of living. Whatever then will cause the greatest return, with the least expense of time and labor; whatever will give to the well-disposed part of mankind (& well disposed perhaps the whole may be rendered by a proper education) more leisure for the exercise of their higher faculties, must seem to the philanthropist, the main objects of all improvements in agriculture.

I have lately become possessed of a theory, drawn from the experience and observation of others & probably from my own, which, if it can be reduced to practice, would seem to further the objects - above proposed. I have been told, that upon the Island, wheat had been grown on the same ground for successive years, without diminution of quantity or deterioration of soil, while the only assistance rendered, was an annual crop of green clover; the clover was sown, as usual, among the wheat in the fall. It was plowed under, previous to sowing, for the next harvest. This was certainly an economical method of renovating the soil.

But still better, we learn that in France the growth and luxuriance of the vine has been greatly promoted, by depositing about its own roots, its own leaves and cuttings. The forest trees are nourished & increase in size & still the soil beneath them is not exhausted. The locust tree grows rapidly, but the earth around it is enriched by the annual fall of its leaves. Has nature furnished this wonderful provision to some plants & denied it to others? Suppose we should restore directly to the earth, the leaves, the stalk, & the cob of our Indian corn, would not their decay afford sufficient nourishment to a crop of the same, either the next year or the year after that, since too, we now admit that plants derive some of the elements of nutrition from the atmosphere? I am inclined to believe that this theory with perhaps some modifications, may be successful in practice. There are other topics to which I might allude, but perhaps, I have already said enough to convince you of my inexperience.

Please remember me to Mrs. Croswell.

Very respectfully yours,

(s) W. J. Weeks

OUR TREASURE IS IN HEAVEN

The last surviving letter from William Jones Weeks to Archibald Croswell is a tender, moving and heartbreaking account of the death of William and Mary’s first child, Susan Maria. Apparently, 23 month old “Little Susy” caught cold in mid-November and, with the help of 19th century medical practice, and perhaps a drafty unfinished house, developed pneumonia. If the reader detects a note of blame directed toward those around him, including his wife, it could be taken as a normal reaction of a distraught parent; he did not exempt himself from a share of responsibility. The letter is written from the depths of a young father’s heart, yet reflects the deeply held faith which was to sustain this family through the deaths of three more children. “Little Susy” was buried on St. Andrew’s Day, November 30, 1850. Three years later, her grandparents built St. Andrew’s Church.
in her memory.

Yaphank. Nov. 29th 1850

Dear Father,

This is a dark day with us, stormy without and desolate within. Little did I think when a few weeks since I joyfully announced to you that a little one [Note: Archibald] had been added to our number, that my next communication would be that one had gone from us; alas! many hearts are bleeding at what I am about to relate to you. Our dear little Susy is no more; nothing of her remains to us but her cold and lifeless body; at 3 o’clock this morning she slept to wake no more on earth.

A week ago last Wednesday she was bright and playful and during the forenoon I took her into the field with me for a short time, but she was not sufficiently clad to resist the chilling atmosphere and probably at that time took the cold of which she finally died. Her system too had been perhaps disordered and prepared for this by some improper and untimely indulgences in food of which I had remarked to Mary. These seemed to be some manifest causes. On Thursday, I perceived she had a cold in her head, nose much stopped, but as she seemed lively we did not pay much attention to it, thinking that fasting with some warm baths would soon relieve her. That day and the two remaining ones of the week I was from home surveying, and though at evening, when I returned she seemed to be cheerful, I perceived her breath offensive & at night her breathing laborious.

On Sunday she was playful & thus were we deceived while the disease was all the while progressing. On Monday I went away again and the poor little thing was neglected for Mary was busy, & the oft repeated call of “Take ‘udan, Ma, take ‘udan”, was heard but not heeded, and there was no father to call upon. Monday evening we tried to give her a steam bath but without much success, and then I said to Mary I did not think the child could live, but scarce believing my own words, on Tuesday, my parents (who had been absent since the Wednesday first mentioned) returned and I went for Doctor Miller, whom I brought back with me & he made scarcely any inquiries & seemed so indifferent that we did not deem the child in much danger. He left a dose of senna [Note: a cathartic] & some drops to be taken every two hours & we followed his directions but the poor little body, weakened from fasting for several days (for she had no appetite) sank at once under the exhibition of the medicine & on Wednesday he called again & with the same indifference left some more senna & with directions to continue the drops. He was asked to come again on Thursday, but did not. I think he must have perceived that she was beyond his remedies, but did not mention it.
On Thursday afternoon we discontinued the Doctor’s prescriptions & tried some simple remedies as last resorts & we persevered till the shadows of evening had gathered about us, but her breathing became more laborious & it was evident we could not save her, yet she was sensible all the time. As she obtained no relief, instead of “take ‘udan”, she repeated “‘udan to bed, bed”; here I supported her a long time and I did not think she would ever speak again. About ten, we gave up our exertions in her behalf and laid her down to die. Sometime after I raised her up and while supporting her, she repeated between each breath, for many times, “Take ‘udan, take”, stretching out her little hands and looking upwards, but this call was not to us, it was to the angels to come and take her, as she ceased these calls, she raised herself upright, supported by me, and held out her arms, with eyes directed upwards, then laid down & never rose or spoke audibly again, though once or twice, near the last, she murmured, “take ‘udan”. 

Death struggled hard to lose the silver cord of life, which was so firmly knotted about her, but he at length succeeded & at 3 o’clock her laborious breathings ceased and were succeeded by a few short and quick ones, and with the last her little spirit glided away, a sob or two & the inanimate body alone remained & such was the last end of your little granddaughter. O what a sad stroke for us, an afflicting lesson, beaten into us with an iron rod.

It is now useless to speculate upon what might have been done or what precautions taken. It was God’s will. He blinded us that we might not see her danger, and only opened our eyes, when it was too late for human efforts to avail anything. It was right for her to be taken, we see many reasons now, why it was well for her to remain with us no longer. She was too innocent & free a spirit to dwell with us; generous little being & without malice. We trust that this our treasure is in heaven and there may our hearts be also. Otherwise we are well, though greatly grieved. Our house seems so lonely & silent without the sound of those little feet & that pleasant little voice, but Archie remains. He is a fine, good boy, never has been rocked and is no trouble. He is the only one who smiles while others weep. Love to all.

Your afflicted children,

Wm & Mary.

Saturday, 12 1/2 N. - The funeral takes place at 3 this afternoon. My uncle has just returned from the city with the coffin. Susy looks so natural, that she seems sleeping. Please preserve this letter.

Wm

“Almighty and merciful Father, who dost grant to children an abundant entrance into thy kingdom; grant us grace so to conform our lives to their innocency and perfect faith, that at length, united with them, we may stand in thy presence in fulness of joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”
I will cry unto God with my voice;  
even unto God will I cry with my voice, and he shall hearken unto me.  
In the time of my trouble I sought the Lord:  
I stretched forth my hands unto him, and ceased not in the night season;  
my soul refused comfort.  
I have considered the days of old,  
and the years that are past.  
Will the Lord absent himself forever?  
and will he be no more entreated?  
Is his mercy clean gone forever?  
and is his promise come utterly to an end for evermore?  
Hath God forgotten to be gracious?  
and will he shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure?  
And I said, It is mine own infirmity;  
but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most Highest.  
I will remember the works of the Lord,  
and call to mind thy wonders of old time.  
Thy way, O God, is holy:  
who is so great a God as our God?  
Thou art the God that doeth wonders.  
and hast declared thy power among the peoples.  
From Psalm 77

LIFE IS SO FRAGILE
Among the books found in Ben Hawkins’ library was his grandfather William’s medical book, which prescribed cold baths for a child with fever. Also, the octagon was not finished before Little Susy died, so it is possible that the house was cold and drafty. The only wood stove at that time was in the large kitchen. William’s notes tell us that their fifth child, “Willie”, born in May of 1855, fell ill with dysentery at 16 months and died ten days later. The sixth child, Harry, lived less than eight months, dying of, in William’s own words, “croup or influenza of chest and bowels, and improper medical treatment”.

A FEW HARD WORDS
Most of the correspondence we have of later years deals with clergy problems; they are worth reading if only for the tone and skill with which they were composed, but also for the fact that they shed light on the management problems of
a small church with limited resources. The diaries of William (1851-1870) record the progress in the building of St. Andrew’s Church during the years 1853-1854. When completed, the first service of Morning Prayer was conducted on July 2, 1854, followed a few weeks later by the first celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The Rev’d Mr. Gardiner served as priest-in-charge for just one year. Two subsequent priests from St. Paul’s, Patchogue also had short-lived tenures, followed by the ten year service of William Weeks as Lay Reader-in-Charge. One of the documents we have is an 1853 subscription list, in James Weeks’ hand, for the purpose of raising sufficient funds for the purchase of pews and other interior appointments. Some of his letters and copies of letters relate to family matters and conflicts over clergy appointments and stipends.

Yaphank, May 10, 1880

Rev’d W. P. Brush

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 8th inst. is recd. - If you can explain the purport of the following sentence which occurs in your letter, I may be disposed to answer your inquiries. - Viz. “If a secular organization cannot prosper by dishonesty, how much less shall a religious.”

Respectfully yours,

(s) W. J. Weeks

Mr. W. J. Weeks

Yaphank, L.I.

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 10th recd. It is possible that I may have misunderstood the Treas. of the Yaphank Ch when he informed me that he would not pay certain portions of my salary. I sincerely trust that it may be so. I can only say I understood it so at the time & the impression has never been corrected and I was considerably hurt by it, especially by the Spirit which was manifested. Far be it for me to utter an unjust or unkind word. At the same time I feel that right is right & wrongs no man. If the Ch was not able to pay, I would willingly have given my services for nothing. I suppose it is a part of the discipline of a clergyman to pocket all such insults & rebuffs & say nothing about it. I have usually done so. But I felt in this instance that I was justified in protesting mildly against it though for my own peace of mind. I would greatly have preferred never to have had occasion. If I was wrong in my impression & conviction, I of course sincerely regret I have said anything on the subject.

Yours Respy,

(s) W. P. Brush

Rev’d W. P. Brush

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 12th inst. has been recd. - I infer from your letter that you are under some erroneous impressions, of which, the principal one is that you were engaged here at a stipulated annual salary. No one was settled here, nor were we sure who would officiate from Sunday to Sunday. Within the year, from May 1st 1879 to May 1st 1880 . besides Mr. Cook and yourself we have had eight other persons to officiate in St. Andrew’s Church. Upon 19 Sundays - with the
exception of Mr. Pearson - I have paid to each one $2. for the occasion, the same
per diem allowance which was given you. - When you officiated elsewhere than
here it was natural to suppose that you received some compensation from the
parish in which you held service. - It was singular if you did not. - However,
without further discussion, as you think you ought to be paid for the Sundays
when Mr. Cook was here and you were elsewhere, I shall herewith enclose eight
dollars - the receipt of which, please acknowledge.

Respectfully yours,
(s) W. J. Weeks

Mr. W. J. Weeks

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 18th recd. I can readily conceive of your interpretation of the
matter as you present it, but as I am no longer a lay reader, & as my appoint-
ment was by the Bishop last Nov. for 6 mos. at Brookhaven & Yaphank, they
were for that period of time under my charge. I invited Mr. Cook to exchange
with me & administer Communion, as I shall do for other clergymen now. I
certainly ought not to forfeit my right to my salary by so doing. However I
rejoice the matter has been adjusted & thank you for your prompt attention.
There is one other point now I will mention & that is the parish ought to be
represented in the Journal. The report is all ready save the treasurer’s report &
I understand some improvement has been made in the Ch property. If you will
send me the items the coming week, I can get them in, in time to be printed.

Yours truly,
(s) W. P. Brush

The cemetery deed to Lot No. 4, issued to Edward Dew (for $20.-) by William
Weeks on January 28, 1895, is the only cemetery document to survive, the map
and other records having been lost some time ago.

We have some letters written by William to family members which show the
gentle side of his nature. On January 29th 1891, he wrote to his daughter Laura
describing the party Clara hosted the previous evening at “The Lilacs”. Mr.
Smith from Stony Brook played the violin for the dancing, and the festivities
continued until 1:00 a.m. Refreshments included crullers, cream and other cakes,
with lemonade. He signed his letter “Your affectionate father.”