REMINISCENCES

OF

MEN AND THINGS IN NORTHFIELD

AS I KNEW THEM FROM

1812 TO 1825.

NOTE.

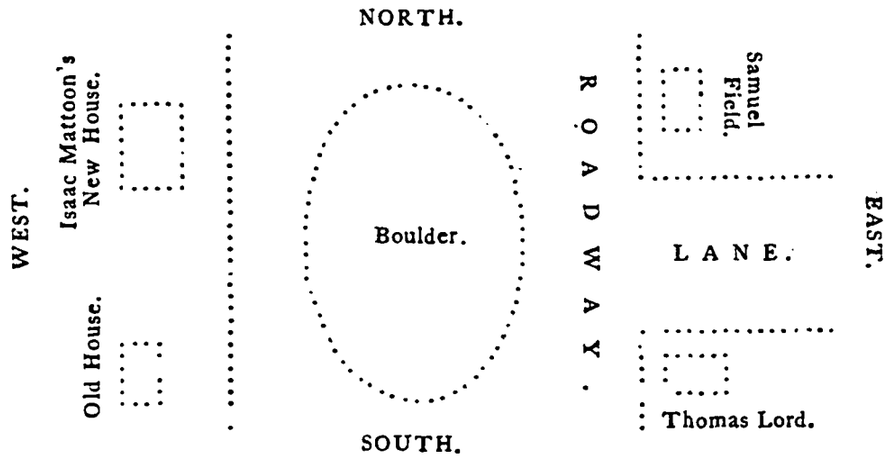
These reminiscences, of small import, are suggested by the recently published *History of Northfield*, and the references are to the pages of that work. After an absence of half a century from the scenes here depicted, it is possible that memory may sometimes be at fault. The completeness of the author's findings would seem to have left very little he could well have added to his work, and it might be regarded as supererogatory to attempt to supplement it. Therefore lest it should be thought that I have aimed to perfect his book, I take occasion to say that these pages are designed for gossip only, of what passed under my own juvenile observation, and lacking the dignity of history, I trust they will fail to elicit criticism of any kind.

J. M.

REMINISCENCES.

Council Rock, p. 23.

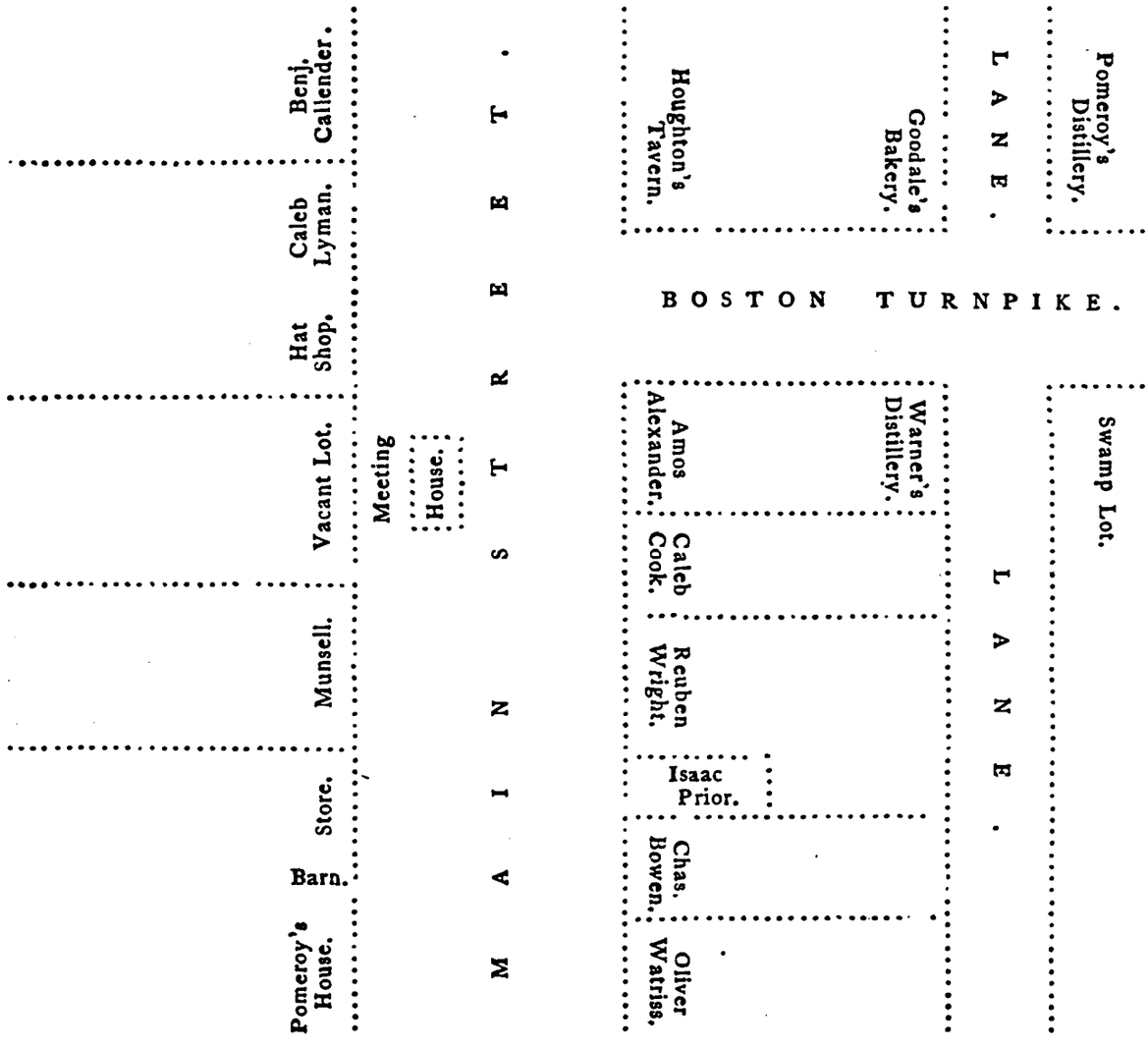
It seems to me that this was a huge boulder. A subscription was raised to blast it out of the way, but the principal expense probably fell upon Thomas Lord, whose house was on the south corner of the lane opposite to it. Phinehas Field, whose house stood at the other



end of the lane, fronting it, declined to participate in the cost of the enterprise, alleging as a reason, that he had lived all his life-time in peace and neighborly sympathy with the rock, and therefore declined to have any quarrel with it! Its removal was a labor of many days, under the superintendence of Mr. Lord, and the stone was used to build the wall on his lot, just below, still standing there in 1872, but I observed that the frosts of half a century had thrown portions of it down. The removal of the rock was not thoroughly done, as may be seen by the hump in the roadway; but what remained of it was covered up with soil, and the first person who drove over it was Richard Goodale, the baker, who in acknowledgment of the honor, sent us, from Pomeroy's store, a bottle of Northfield gin, to commemorate the completion of the work, and his exploit. The town then had three distilleries, and domestic *Bourbon* was twenty-five cents a gallon, and much of it was consumed *in loco*. I was one of the *artificers* on the great work of removing the rock, it being my principal station to engineer a *three cattle team*, consisting of a pair of oxen and a horse, in drawing the fragments of the blast on a *stone boat!*

Great Swamp, p. 22.

The turnpike to Boston ran through a portion of this swamp. On the south side of the turnpike it was wooded in my young days, without a fence along the road, and the tradition among the boys was that it had bottomless depths, so that none of us ever ventured into it, although we were familiar with every other place. No one would now suspect that there had ever been such a quagmire there. It was rescued from waste by the enterprise of William Pomeroy, who converted it into a productive mowing lot, and one fourth of July was celebrated by him in getting in twenty-four loads of hay from that field, in which this reminiscent assisted by *raking after cart*, as it was termed. Pomeroy's distillery was nearly opposite, on the north side of the turnpike, where great numbers of cattle were fed, and it was into the lofts over the stalls in those sheds that the hay was pitched and stored. Not a vestige of the distillery or the stables now remains to mark the spot of their location. A rough diagram is given to show the location and its surroundings.



The Belden Inscription, p. 24.

The rock on which the inscription is engraved, is said to be of correct proportions, but my memory would place the inscription farther north, and would give the rock less comparative dimensions. The house seen in the back-ground was owned and occupied by Elihu Phelps, the cooper, whose shop was east of it, on the margin of Webster's pond, and fronting upon it, and his distillery was for a while east of that, I think. His first wife was a daughter of William Belcher. After her death he married again; and having failed in business, he emigrated to Troy, N. Y., where he died by suicide.

Tobacco, p. 47.

An important article of cultivation and export has grown up within half a century, requiring a special class of buildings, and taking the place of less productive crops. What has become of *plug*, and *ladies twist*, and *pig tail*, and other fancy styles of tobacco, in all that time, I have not learned. Time was, when some farmers raised a dwarfish plant, for their own consumption only, by smoking. The fumes from their pipes much resembled what one might expect to get from burning skunk's cabbage leaves. Some time after the second distillery was built by Ebenezer Warner, at the foot of Amos Alexander's home lot, the barn formerly belonging to Caleb Cook (now the site of the town hall very nearly), was removed, and the spot was planted with tobacco, by a distiller named Bullen. The fatness of the soil produced a rank growth of the plant, such as had not before been seen in the town. This may have been remotely the origin of the present lucrative pursuit, so productive of wealth in a town depending upon the pursuit of agriculture.

The Janes Lot, p. 104.

The descendants of William Janes still occupy the home lot of their ancestor, as laid down on the diagram, including that of Ralph Hutchinson, although the boundaries were in time somewhat changed. The lines in the diagram are not precisely in place, perhaps. Frederick Janes, a lineal descendant of William, and an ordained preacher, was present at the bicentennial anniversary in 1872.

The South Ferry, p. 147.

This ferry to Bennett's meadow, was placed where a rocky promontory on the west side of the river projected into the stream and formed an eddy below. In time of freshet this eddy was of great use, for when the boat was carried below the landing, by the great force of the increased volume of water, the eddy brought it back. As long as I knew the ferry, it was managed by three Tiffany brothers, with a skiff and a scow. The Hon. Samuel C. Allen lived beyond the ferry, on the road to Bernardston.

Thomas Power, p. 24.

Thomas Power resided but a short time in Northfield, having his office in the north-east second story room of Pomeroy's store. There was a feud between Pomeroy and Nevers. After Power left town, Horatio G. Newcomb was a resident of the house formerly occupied by Charles Bowen, and had Pomeroy's law business. Power went to Boston, where he was for many years clerk of the Municipal court, and becoming paralytic late in life, he resided in South Framingham some years before his death, which took place about 1870. He did not aid in the work of setting out the trees, but is believed to have been mainly instrumental in promoting the improvement, if not the originator of the enterprise. As a matter of course John Nevers opposed it by his influence and example, threatening to shoot any one that should attempt to plant trees in front of his house. It was also unpopular with the artillery company, as the trees obstructed their evolutions with drag-ropes.

There were at this time three fine trees in front of Pomeroy's store; and others in front of the house of Caleb Lyman, under which the artillery were accustomed to parade. These are now all gone. The Lombardy poplars, also, once so common and favorite, are no longer seen anywhere. I have seen wolves, and other wild animals, taken by hunters, hung upon the lower limbs of one of the elms in front of Pomeroy's store. Not unfrequently a species of wild cat, a fox, or some smaller animal, was exhibited in the same manner, and occasionally a bear was shot and brought in for exhibition as a trophy.

Beer and Cider, p. 162.

Beer had ceased to be made, as well as malt. A domestic article, known as spruce beer, was the substitute. But every householder

in the fall, stocked his cellar, as a matter of course, with a certain number of barrels of cider, as habitually as with a requisite number of bushels of potatoes.

John Barrett, p. 174.

In my time Barrett had a small office on the south corner of his lot, fronting on the street. There was also a small building near the Doak house, which is supposed to have been built by Barrett, in which James Merriam lived, who had sold his business to Bancroft, and seemed to be not only poor, but past the time of labor, either by reason of age or infirmity. Daniel Lyman informed me that the Doak house was built by Barrett, for Benjamin Callender, his relative, who came to Northfield in the fall of 1797, and opened a store in a small building not far from the house. The store mentioned as built "a few rods down the hill," may have been built afterwards. It was occupied by Doak during all the time of my recollection. When Obadiah Dickenson left this house said to have been built for Callender, Doak took possession of it and made extensive repairs and improvements, but subsequently failed and fled to Canada, where he died.

Blacksmith Shops, p. 159.

The blacksmith shops using water power, were those of Ezekiel Webster and Richard Watriss. Webster also had a separate building on the north side of the stream, which was used as a furnace and trip-hammer, or forge. Watriss also had a shop on the street near his house. Besides these Benjamin Darling and Amos Alexander carried on blacksmithing. The only fires that occurred in my time, were the shops of Webster and Alexander—the former being burnt down, and the latter only partially damaged. It was still standing on the north side of the turnpike when I last saw it in 1873, but was closed. Elijah Alexander had a shop in the upper village. None of these shops were in use in 1873, and Watriss's I think had disappeared.

Candle Wood, p. 161.

This was known as fat wood, or pine knot, but very few families used it, except very poor ones out of the village. Candles were made in the families, either by dipping, or running in moulds.

Grain, p. 161.

But little wheat was raised, rye and corn furnishing principally the bread of the people. The mill of Xenophon Janes, on the lower brook, and of Ezekiel Webster on the upper one, prepared these products for home use. The upper stream, or Mill brook, was diverted from its course at a point where the eastern lane crossed the turnpike, a short distance above what was called Belden's swamp, and an artificial pond scooped out to furnish a reservoir for a mill power, where Strobridge ground provender for Pomeroy's distillery, when the water was returned to the natural bed of the stream.

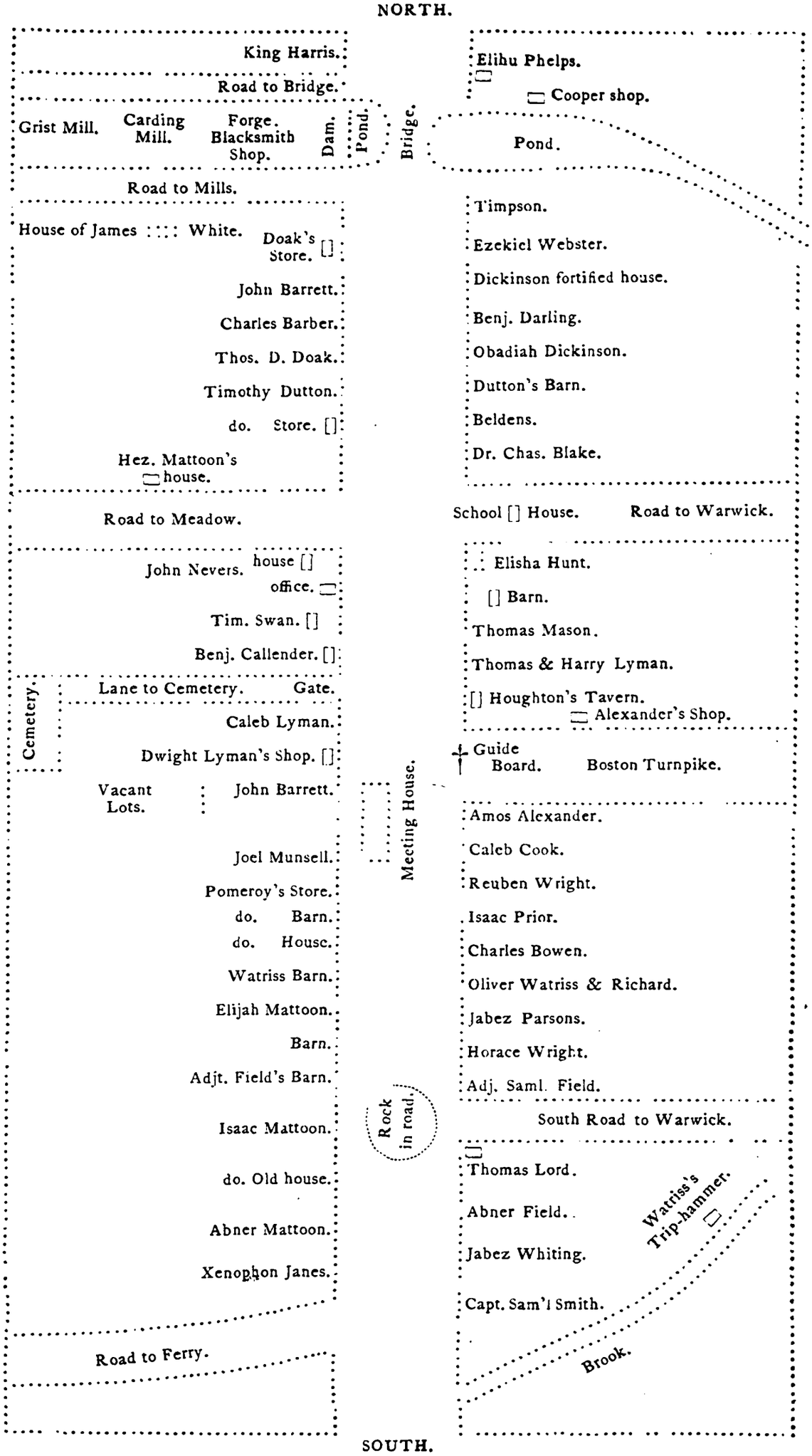
Loom Irons, p. 161.

Most of the farm houses had a weaving house attached, and the women of the family wove more or less of the cloth worn by either sex. Some of the families availed themselves of the carding mill of Mr. James White, on Mill brook, to prepare their wool for the spinning wheel, and for dressing the woolen cloth that came from the family loom, which was also dyed by him, when not colored at home. The question arises, whether the dye tub is still an article of household furniture, and if any one still knows how to *set up a blue dye!* Among others, who came to school in good and tidy home made dresses, wholly the product of their own household, it may be said, I think I may mention Tryphena Dutton and Mary Mattoon. The first labor-saving machine, next to the carding and clothing machinery of Mr. White (for some house wives abandoning the hand cards, sent their wool to the machine), was a spinning jenny set up in Mr. White's mill, and was a wonder to the spinners by the old process.

Shoemakers, p. 162.

The principal shoemakers of my day were also the tanners and curriers, Jabez Whiting and Jabez Parsons. Caleb Cook also had a shop, and wrought upon his own bench. Calvin Doolittle, a descendant of the parson, was a peripatetic cordwainer, going with his bench and tools into private families, and remaining till the winter stock was made up. The summer wear was less expensive, some well-to-do farmers and their sons going barefooted to the fields.

1820. *Diagram of Street to face* p. 166.



The Lower Street, p. 166.

The diagram given of the lots and their occupants in 1714, suggests the names of the residents on those lots about a hundred years later, which I have given from memory. The rock that stood in the middle of the street should be placed about half its length farther south than in the History at this page.

Asahel Cheney, p. 175.

The clocks of Cheney were often spoken of in my recollection, but he had disappeared, and I only remember to have seen his clocks, which were furnished with tall cases at fifty dollars each, and intended to be ornamental as well as useful. Neither do I remember of a distillery on the river bank, but do seem to have seen a distillery in which Phelps was concerned, on the east of his cooper shop, facing Webster's pond. His house is seen in the engraving facing page 14. There were two other distilleries in the town at that time on opposite corners of the turnpike, as shown in the rude drawing referring to page 22; one of them owned by William Pomeroy and the other by Ebenezer Warner, all of which have passed away, and no clue to them remains. These distilleries produced a new and ready market for considerable quantities of rye, and many cattle were fattened on the lees of the mash, and driven to the Boston market.

Ebenezer Bancroft, p. 176.

He was a tall spare man, who carried economy to the last excess. In his walk he had a sort of spring-halt. His lot was a small one thickly strewn with boulders that cropped out, of various sizes. He blasted them out, and put the fragments into a stone wall around the premises—a very sensible improvement. Finding that powder could be procured a trifle cheaper in Winchester, he selected the smallest eggs out of the product of his hens, and took them several miles to avail himself of a saving costing more time than the advantage gained. When Stephen Williams came into the town from Warwick to compete with him, he was compelled to improve the style of his wares to meet the competition. Bancroft succeeded to Merriam.

Col. Belcher, p. 180.

It was in this house, now, 1875, occupied by Col. Jonathan Belcher, that I was born, on the 14th day of April, 1808. Col.

Belcher is the only house-holder left, of all that occupied the houses in that village when I left it in 1825, fifty years ago. Caleb Cook married Mabel Mattoon, and purchased the house and lot with her money. The house was originally of but one story, to which another was added by Col. Belcher when he purchased it. The houses have been very generally improved, and with two or three exceptions the same edifices have a better appearance than they did fifty years ago.

Amos Alexander, p. 181.

It was after his failure in an enterprise for furnishing the southern states with plows, that he undertook to keep a tavern. He carried on blacksmithing, but I do not recollect to have seen him work at it himself. His shop stood on the north side of the turnpike a few rods from the street corner, adjoining Houghton's garden. It was standing but closed in 1873. It was in this shop that Daniel Lyman forged the iron work of his shoe pegging machine. A speculation was undertaken by Alexander of manufacturing small plows for the southern market. A considerable portion of the wood work was made by my father — I think to the number of 300. They were taken down the river to Hartford in the boat of Isaac Prior, and were shipped from that port. The enterprise was a failure. Other manufacturers were engaged in the business, and the market was glutted. The irons were knocked off and sold for old iron. Alexander occupied the house still standing on the south corner of the turnpike, built by Dr. Medad Pomeroy. I believe he afterwards removed to Winchester where his brother carried on the business of blacksmithing.

Rev. Benjamin Doolittle, p. 274.

Rev. Jonathan Ashley preached the sermon on the death of Rev. Benjamin Doolittle, 11th Jan., 1748. The sermon was printed at Boston, 8vo, pp. 26.

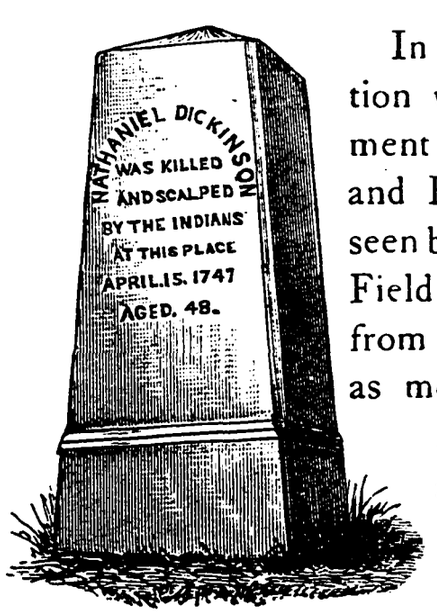
Church Officers, p. 314.

The deacon's seat indicated in the diagram was occupied by Ezekiel Webster. Xenophon Janes was organist and choirmaster. A common tune was China, a domestic production, composed by Mr. Timothy Swan. See p. 552.

Janes's Mill, pp. 7, 499.

Jacob Moody had charge of this mill for so many years that it was usually spoken of as Moody's mill, till finally Deacon Janes took charge of it himself. An extraordinary freshet carried out the dam and ruined the mill, leaving it a wreck which it was dangerous to enter as it was undermined. I well remember seeing on a shelf a book belonging to the Social Library which Deacon Janes was in the course of reading before the catastrophe took place. The entrance to the mill was on the west side of the stream. When rebuilt the entrance was on the east side, nearer Moody's house, a road having been newly opened, passing down to the Farms, avoiding a hill and a sandy road beyond. The old road passed a fulling mill, on the southerly branch of the stream that joined Miller's brook, whence the two streams passed to the river through the meadow.

The Dickinson Monument, p. 251.

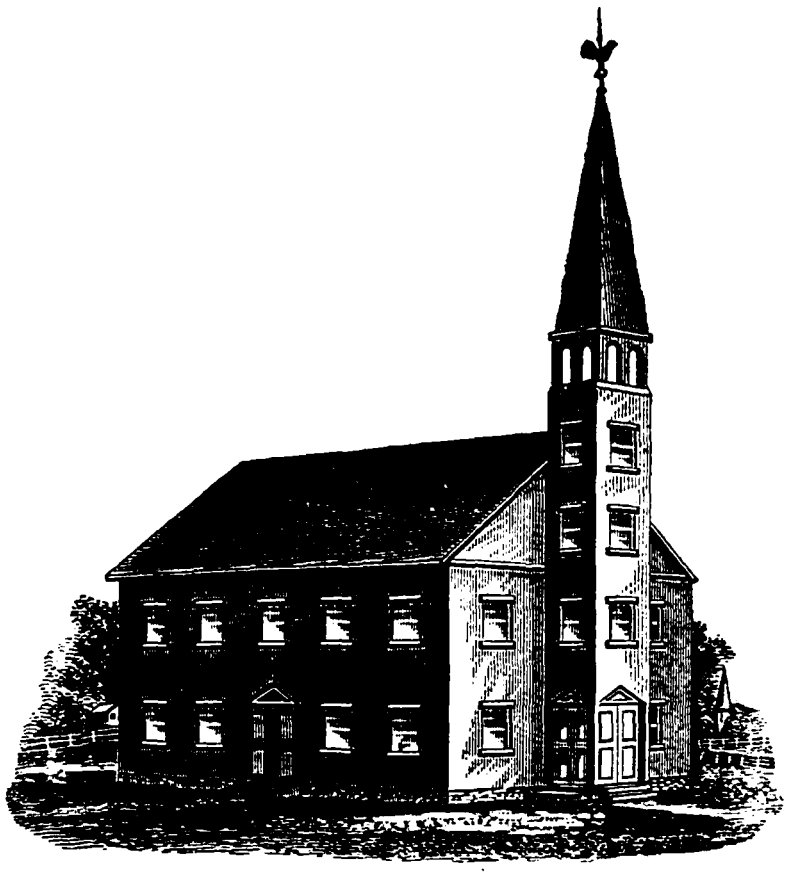


In September, 1872, a two century celebration was held in the town, when a new monument was erected to the memory of Dickinson and Burt, or rather to Dickinson, as may be seen by the inscription in the engraving. Phinehas Field (the son of the Phinehas who refrained from quarrelling with the rock in the roadway, as mentioned in the reference to p. 23), who now lived in East Charlemont, made the address on the occasion, and descendants of Nathaniel Dickinson, who were at the charge of renewing the monument, were present on the occasion. Polly, the grand-daughter of Nathaniel, daughter of Benoni, and who married Horace Holton, was present, at the age of ninety-one.

The Old Meeting House, p. 313.

A prominent object to the eye of the traveler was the old meeting house, standing in the high-way, and surmounted by a gilded rooster. It was traditional among the boys, that when the brazen fowl heard the ejaculation of the barnyard chanticleer, he crowed also! It may

satisfy incredulity to mention, in passing, that the veracity of this tradition remains unquestioned. Tradition also records, that when the frame of the edifice was raised, the customary ceremony of drinking (instead of pouring a libation) in a kneeling position upon the belfrydeck, was performed by Benjamin Wright. The pews were square boxes, built high, and having balusters, topped by a rail. To accommodate the occupants while standing in prayer, the seats were made to turn up on hinges, in sections, to enable the worshipers to lean against the wall or upon the railing. When the pastor pronounced the amen, straightway there arose a great uproar, produced by letting down the seats, as though they were firing a salute, which much resembled, as nearly as the sounds can be reduced to words, *clitter-clatter*, BUMP! WHACK! BANG! So accustomed was the audience to the salute, that the confusion produced seemed to pass unnoticed, except when some urchin gave unusual emphasis to the report.



The Interior, p. 314.

Church-goers accustomed to well warmed houses, will marvel how the people endured the frigid temperature of winter on Sundays, with no other heating apparatus than a few foot-stoves brought by the women. Yet I well remember when there was no other than the artificial heat produced by these stoves, and the animal heat given off by the audience. Some of the audience came in sleighs a distance of five or six miles on inclement days. At length a project was conceived of introducing a stove. A subscription paper was circulated to defray the expense. One person objected to give any aid unless a mode was devised for cooling the house in summer! In time a box stove was placed in the aisle fronting the pulpit, and supplied with wood. If it was any better than a device for cooling the house

in summer, the occupants of wall pews could hardly have perceived it. A pipe was carried around under the galleries, and the smoke discharged through the western wall. In the capacity of sexton's assistant I prepared the wood and made the fires.

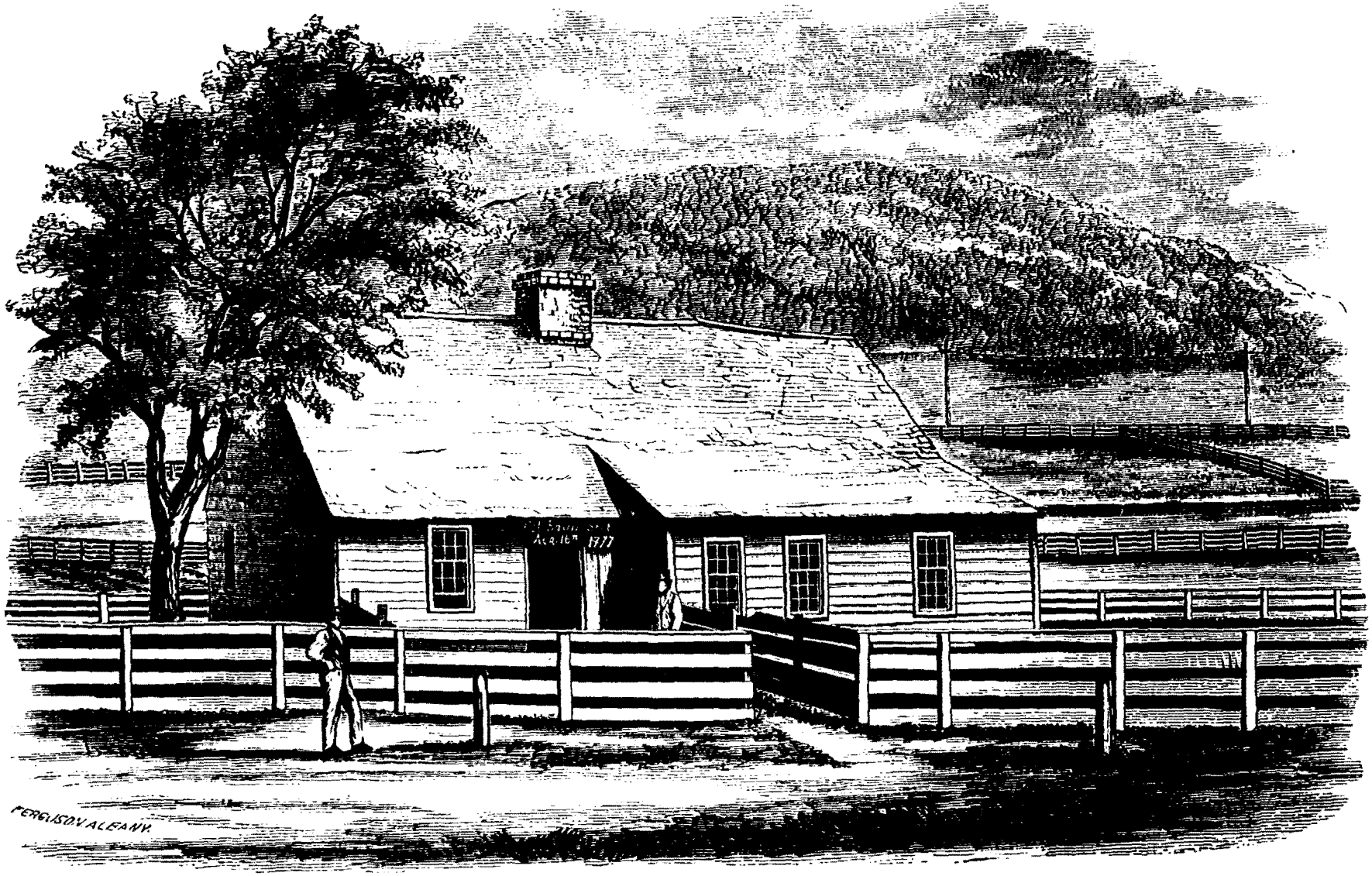
Exploit of Lieut. Moses D. Field, pp. 330, 444.

For an account of the expedition of Col. Baum, and his death, see *Memoirs of Gen. Riedesel*, vol. 1, pp. 128, 129; and an engraving of the house where he died, is here inserted.

Deposition of Elihu Lyman, pp. 323, 487.

July 13, 1818. I Elihu Lyman, of Greenfield in the county of Franklin and commonwealth of Massachusetts, certify that in the spring of the year 1775, I lived in Northfield, in said county, and was what was called a *minute man.* Immediately after the battle of Lexington, upon the alarm being given, I went with others to the neighborhood of Boston, and there joined a company commanded by a Captain Smith, and I was a lieutenant in his company. On the 17th of June, our company being then quartered at Cambridge, after the firing began on Breeds hill, which was then called Bunkers hill, we were ordered to march as a reinforcement to the scene of action. Our company arrived on the right of the troops engaged, about the time the British had gained possession of the redoubt on the hill, and the Americans had begun to retire. We joined the retreating party, which moved slowly and in tolerably good order, and fired on the retreat until we left the hill, which I believe was more than thirty minutes. I well remember that Gen. Israel Putnam was present, directing our retreat, constantly riding backward and forward, from right to left, along the lines, between us and the British. He appeared *cool and deliberate*, and frequently speaking to the men. He continued with us until we were out of the reach of small arms. I now perfectly remember that I then expected every moment to see Putnam shot from his horse. I knew General Putnam personally, and was in the army with him before the revolution, in the French war, and about five years in the revolutionary war.

ELIHU LYMAN.



The House in which Gen. Baum died.

Burgoyne's Men, p. 331.

There were six or eight of these men living in the town in my time, each of whom drew ninety-six dollars a year pension from the government. Pinks had gone to Greenfield, where I became well acquainted with him, his son being the printer under whom I went to learn my trade. He told me that he was out on a *lark* with a party of other young tailors when a press-gang surprised and swooped them up, and they never more saw their homes. He was a temperate and agreeable man. But some of the others were thirsty veterans. They placed their pension papers with one of the store-keepers, Pomeroy, Callender or Doak, and drew pretty much the whole amount in liquor and tobacco. McCarty was a Scotchman, and always boastful of British prowess. Being mellow and noisy one day in Pomeroy's store, he was repeatedly told by Pomeroy to desist, finally in a tone unmistakable in its intention to be obeyed. "Damn the Pomeroys," said he; "the British would cut them all to pieces."

Noxious Animals, p. 333.

In my boyhood it was no uncommon thing for hunters to bring into the village bears, wild cats, wolves, foxes. Native wild animals of smaller size were plenty and of greater variety. These infested the mountains east of the village, as well as most other places. Young foxes and rabbits and squirrels were caught and tamed by the boys. The rattle-snake's den on the gulf road was well known, and seems to have been still in existence in 1875, when it was invaded and broken up. A great variety of snakes, large and small, were met with every where.

One year the farmers working in the meadow west of the village heard an unusual noise in the swamp running along under the meadow hill, which at times resembled the sound made by driving down a stake with an axe; at others the working of a pump. For a time the cause remained invisible, but was finally found to proceed from a long-legged and long-necked bird, which none remembered to have seen before. But it revived the memory of Mr. Richard Watriss, the veracious oracle of all traditional lore, who related that many years before, a similar event occurred, when the people were so much alarmed that they were assembled upon the brow of the hill

by the pastor to unite in religious services for the purpose of exorcising the mysterious and invisible visitor. The tradition mentioned by Mr. Watriss being unrecorded, we have no corroborative evidence of its verity. Of this later visitor, various conjectures were afloat concerning it, and among others it was apprehended that an alligator had found its way into the swamp in a time of high water, and for a season we lesser citizens refrained from visiting that locality. When it was discovered to be a bird, it was called the *stake driver*. Before the season was over its progeny became numerous.

The William Field Lot, p. 169.

There was a house standing on the south corner of this lot about the time Field owned it, which had been tenanted by Obadiah Dickinson, afterwards by Elihu Phelps, and finally by Hunt and Cafrey, bakers. Hunt was an enterprising man, who founded New City on the Montague canal. He removed the house, taking it away in pieces, and set it up there. The house that Field lived in, was removed from Timothy Dutton's lot, when Dutton built a new house. It was much injured by the removal. It afterwards underwent a transformation by being cut in two and transported to the south Warwick road, where it is said to be still standing in two parts.

Munsell's Plows, p. 170.

These predecessors of the iron plow now in use, were usually of very rude construction. They are occasionally preserved in museums as relics of antiquity. The plows made by Munsell were an ingenious and common sense improvement, in the construction of the shire and moldboard. The old irons were nearly perpendicular; and I remember how much difficulty he had to induce the smiths to throw back the top, giving them a more graceful curve for entering the ground with less strain upon the team, and also to afford opportunity for a better form to the moldboard for turning a handsome furrow. His wheels also were models of good and durable workmanship.

The Cemetery, p. 339.

The cemetery seems to have been enlarged by extending its area to the south since I left it in 1825. It used to abound with winter-greens and a vine that produced edible berries, and was *exuberant* of

striped snakes. The most ancient monuments were illegible as long ago as I knew them, from atmospheric wear upon the frail substance of which they were composed. The most notable monuments for a long time were those of Parsons Doolittle and Hubbard, and of Samuel Hunt, and more recently of Ezekiel Webster Jr., which was erected by his college class.

The Aqueduct, p. 348.

This was brought from a stream on the east mountain, that contributed to Mill brook, where we found any number of small fry. The water was brought a distance of about two miles, in wooden logs, having a bore of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 inches. These logs having decayed, were renewed; and such of us boys as were ambitious of earning a little money, were encouraged to dig the trenches along the north side of the turnpike roadway, in very heavy and wet soil. Parson Mason had the principal charge of the work, and when the trench was filled again we were entitled to our pay. The line was measured off by Mr. Mason, in three-foot paces, and it was thought his stride was a long one, as it reduced our measurement. At any rate, a good deal of hard toil was given for a very small amount of money, and it was questioned among us whether he had a *right* to take such long steps!

Rev. Thomas Mason, p. 350.

Mr. Mason bore away from Harvard the reputation of having been the greatest wrestler that had ever entered its halls. Charles Prentiss, the wit of the class of 1795, in a will written on his departure from college life, addresses him as follows:

> "*Item* Tom Mason, College Lion,
> Who'd ne'er spend cash enough to buy one,
> The Boanerges of a pun,
> A man of science and of fun,
> That quite uncommon witty elf,
> Who darts his bolts and shoots himself,
> Who oft' has bled beneath my jokes,
> I give my old tobacco box."

In *College Words and Customs*, p. 498–99, written by BENJ. H. HALL Esq. of Troy, a graduate of Harvard at a later day, the following allusion is made to Mr. Mason:

"The fame which he had acquired while in college for bodily strength and skill in wrestling, did not desert him after he left. While settled as a minister in Northfield, a party of young men from Vermont challenged the young men of that town to a bout at wrestling. The challenge was accepted, and on a given day the two parties assembled at Northfield. After several rounds, when it began to appear that the Vermonters were gaining the advantage, a proposal was made by some one who had heard of Mr. Mason's exploits, that he should be requested to take part in the contest. It had now grown late, and the minister, who usually retired early, had already betaken himself to bed. Being informed of the request of the wrestlers, for a long time he refused to go, alleging as reasons, his ministerial capacity, the force of example, &c. Finding these excuses of no avail, he finally arose, dressed himself, and repaired to the scene of action. Shouts greeted him on his arrival, and he found himself on the wrestling field, as he had stood years before at Cambridge. The champion of the Vermonters came forward, flushed with his former victories. After playing around him for some time, Mr. Mason finally threw him. Having by this time collected his ideas of the game, when another antagonist appeared, tripping up his heels with perfect ease, he suddenly twitched him off his centre, and laid him on his back. Victory was declared for Northfield, and the good minister was borne home in triumph."

Caleb Lyman, p. 352.

The winters were sufficiently severe then as now. Yet the early riser would sometimes find Mr. Caleb Lyman standing on the steps of his south door, in his shirt-sleeves, with his arms folded, apparently enjoying contemplation and the morning air. Or a little later, having donned his coat and advanced to the margin of the roadway, he would take a position commanding a view up and down the street, and of the Boston turnpike in front, as though performing a duty in virtue of his office of deputy sheriff, in surveillance of the moral conduct of a town where no crime nor disturbance was ever committed, and where such serene quietness reigned, that scarce a human being or an animal appeared to the view. Then mounting his ancient horse, of a color which was jocosely denominated as *pumpkin-and-milk*, he would proceed with a speed peculiar to that animal. No horse was ever seen to go through the motions of a trot and get over less ground with the same amount of perpendicular motion.

The Case in Fact, p. 353.

A memorable man was Edward Houghton, who kept the only tavern in the village. He was remarkable for his corpulence and the bulk of the coffin in which he was buried. In those frugal times, when travelers came with provender for their horses, and brought their own provisions, merely paying 12½ cents for lodging, and perhaps nothing for stabling their teams, four-pence-ha'-penny was a notable sum, and by many carefully husbanded. Therefore the difference between six cents federal currency and the Spanish coin in general circulation passing for 6¼ cents and known in common parlance as four-pence-ha'-penny, was often matter of controversy between Mr. Houghton and his guests who had invested in a glass of toddy. Nothing could disturb the equanimity of his temper more surely than to offer him an American coin by making change for which he would lose his quarter of a cent, making a difference of four cents in the dollar. He would enter into an explanation how the change should be made to his satisfaction, beginning with "*The case in fact is this, and the point lies here*"—whence he came to be called *Case in Fact* by his neighbors.

Deacon Janes, p. 354.

Deacon Xenophon Janes lived in the last house at the south-west end of the street. His barn yard fronted on the street south of his house, and standing in a hollow without drainage, was often in a state of muck. There being no floor to the stable his horses never had a dry bed in wet weather, but seemed to be forced to stand all night. He used to make up husking parties in the fall, to which the boys were attracted by the stories he used to entertain us with. These huskings were held at night on the barn floor by candle-light, and the cider mug was handed round at the intervals after the close of a weird tale of Indian craft and cruelty, or of slip-shod ghosts and fairies. These often had such an effect upon the juvenile mind that on breaking up it was fearful to go home alone in the stillness of night when every thing animate and inanimate seemed to be wrapt in slumber, except perchance an Indian or a ghost might be lurking behind a tree or a corner, till safely housed and the door quickly bolted, we laid down to dream of all sorts of goblins. In all respects except care for the comfort of his horses, he was a good and just man as well as I can remember.

The Great Bridge, p. 355.

The road to this bridge ran down on the north side of Mill brook. The toll house was still standing when I last saw it in 1872. The bridge was a wooden structure, and not substantially built. I do not remember that it was damaged by ice, but it was not regarded as perfectly safe for heavily laden vehicles, when one day a person who had recently come into the town, whose name was Newell (see p. 506), attempted to cross with a wagon load of hard wood plank drawn by a yoke of oxen. He had entered but a few feet on the bridge, and intending to fall behind his wagon, he whipped up his team and stood for the load to pass, when they all fell through and he was killed. The oxen fell partly in the water and escaped, although the force of the fall broke the yoke. The bridge was taken down the following winter (when the river was frozen over), and sold for firewood. A ferry was established there, the scow propelled by poles and an oar in the stern, as long as I knew it.

The Artillery, p. 355.

This town had been so many years an outpost against the French and Indians, and in later times, the terror inspired by the British and Indians in the war of the revolution, in a measure revived by repeated threats of invasion, was still so vivid, that mothers had not ceased to caution their wayward children against danger in that direction, by telling them, as a restraint, that the British, or Indians, would get them. It is true that all danger of surprise had long since ceased to threaten, but war with France or England was occasionally imminent. And at length it came. To ward and defend us in time of peril, we had the artillery company, whose broad chapeaux and blue uniforms faced with red, inspired entire confidence in its ability to repel invasion; but superadded to these were two field pieces and side arms. This company was first commanded by Josiah Dwight Lyman, the hatter, and were uniformly rendezvoused before his house for parade, beneath the fine old elms that stood there. The parades of this company were notable events, with the boys, and its sham-fights terrific. Its career was one of pleasantness and peace, gay and festive, until there came a requisition from the governor to rendezvous at Boston, to aid in defending that port against the British invasion. After a marshaling of forces for some time, during which one or

more absented themselves mysteriously, and others procured substitutes, the company was made up, and one Sunday marched down the turnpike under the lieutenant, Charles Bowen; the captain, Elijah Mattoon, not appearing. After a lapse of two months, we had the spectacle of their return, innocent of blood, but somewhat tarnished in military trappings by the wear and tear of camp duty. If the damage was compensated by proficiency acquired in military tactics, it was unappreciated. On their return, their progress from the foot of the mountain to the village was marked by a display of recently acquired evolutions designed to strike the spectators gathered to receive them, with a pang of awe and admiration.

River Navigation, p. 356.

The commerce of the town by water was carried on by a single craft, conducted by Isaac Prior. His boat, or scow, having a single mast, and in calm, as well as in adverse winds, propelled by side oars and setting-poles, plied to and from Hartford during the season of navigation, taking down all kinds of produce, and returning laden with such commodities as were consumed in country places.

Besides this conveyance, one Fay, of Warwick, made periodical trips to Boston with a four-horse team, bringing merchandise for the stores. There was no communication with Boston but by private conveyances. In the winter Reuben Wright, and some other farmers, sent down an occasional sled-load of dressed hogs, and fattened cattle were driven down from the distilleries. Droves of hogs, sheep, and even turkeys occasionally passed through from other towns.

Guy, p. 357.

It is thought that Deacon Dutton obtained his slave in Connecticut, about 1797. There was a tradition that he exchanged a horse for him. He came from Guinea, and bore upon his cheeks perpendicular marks of the branding iron, it was always said, instead of the tattoo, by which he might be identified in event of an escape. He was the only slave I knew in the town, although there was a tradition that Polly Swan, who made gingerbread for the juveniles before the bakery was established by Prescott, had been a slave. The *iron* of slavery did not enter the soul of Guy in the Dutton family. His privileges and freedom were leniently abridged. He was often averse

to work, and when chase was made after him he was known to prove the fastest runner. "I guess you need not come any farther" he said, turning upon his pursuer; "you can't catch me." The anecdotes told of him were thought to be *cute*, but lose force and pungency under the pen.

Muster Roll, p. 357.

My father made preparation to accompany the artillery to Boston, but it gave my mother so much grief, that he procured a substitute for a bonus of forty dollars and the pay allowed by the government. His substitute was William Hall, who took the base drum!

Ancient Costume.

The costume of the preceding century had been generally abandoned; but an occasional cocked hat and pair of breeches remained for show. One patriarch wore the Sunday coat of his grand-father; for in those frugal times, just coming to a close, it was not unusual for a holiday suit to be handed down through two or three generations. The queue was still occasionally worn. I think Adjutant Field, and possibly the Rev. Thomas Mason, still sported that adornment, as did also Samuel Stearns.

Old Cole.

Should Old Cole go unrecorded? An itinerant who for many years wandered on foot up and down the river towns, in squalid attire, barefooted, and one leg of his pantaloons rolled up to his knee, said to have been crossed in love, of course. When interrogated whither he was going his uniform reply was, "Two or three hundred miles up and down the river." His travels must have ceased a half a century ago. Another *notability* was Levi Darling, who carried on his neck an enormous wen.

Matrimonial Notices.

The newspapers of Boston, Greenfield and Springfield were sparingly taken; the vehicle of the most interesting intelligence, however, was the meeting house door, upon which all matrimonial intentions were posted three weeks before consummation, having been previously announced from the clerk's desk, by Mr. Ezekiel Webster.

Not unfrequently the quidnuncs and gossips were defrauded of the delectation which this usage imparted, by the parties taking a truant jaunt to Vernon, where, at another Gretna Green, Dr. Washburn performed the ceremony of tying the noose for a fee, to the infinite surprise of every one sometimes, when adroitly managed.

Thanksgiving.

Saturday night was observed as a part of Sunday. At sundown all labor and amusement ceased, and preparation for Sunday commenced to be made. Quite as punctually did it cease at sunset on Sunday. Then, on the Sunday preceding Thanksgiving day, Mr. Thomas Mason having read from the pulpit, in manner solemn and dignified, the broadside containing the governor's edict, no sooner did the evening shades prevail, than the slaughter of ducks and diddles began. The bustle of preparation increased from day to day, until the pantry could hold no more. All manner of pies, and mountains of edibles of all sorts, were accumulated, provisioning the family for months oncoming. On Thursday the edict for public stuffing began to be carried out in earnest, and was continued incessantly for two days, when it ceased from sheer repletion.

The Tornado, p. 11.

Toward sunset on Sunday the 9th of September, 1821, after a very warm day, there occurred a violent whirlwind on the mountain, south of east, which was observable from the valley below. It was first noticed from our window as a singular dark and spiral cloud, appearing suddenly upon the mountain, moving eastwardly, and soon passing out of sight. The first house it struck was that of one Garland, which it demolished to the lower floor. The family, with great presence of mind, escaping quickly to the cellar, were but slightly harmed. It took up a horse and carried him a considerable distance, and a swine was carried into the woods. The family of Nathaniel Stratton saw it coming in the direction of his house, but it took a more northerly course, and swept his barn into the air. The house and barn of Chapin Holden were also destroyed. Large boulders were wrested out of their beds, and heavy logs carried away. Its track for several miles in Warwick was a scene of desolation, and of the most marvelous power of a whirlwind. Five dwelling houses

and thirteen barns were destroyed, and two persons lost their lives. The track through the forest was marked by a prostration of the largest trees, thrown down in all positions, and forming a pathway of two or three rods in width, as though some huge instrument had passed through the wilderness felling every thing beneath its stroke. The house of one Hurd was taken off at the foot of the rafters, and himself dangerously injured in the endeavor to close the door and hold it from being blown in. His barn was entirely blown away. His corn was completely torn off at the roots, and the trees of his orchard blown flat down to the ground. A number of persons from Northfield village and the vicinity volunteered to go and put up another barn for him. I took the opportunity to go with them, and view the scene, following the track of the tornado a couple of miles. The people of Warwick, in which most of the damage was done, raised four hundred dollars for the benefit of the sufferers. It was the most remarkable physical event that had ever occurred in that locality, to disturb its Elysian quietness and repose.

Timothy Swan, pp. 171, 356, 552.

Mr. Swan was supposed to have had well-to-do relatives and friends who contributed to his comfort in his infirmity. His children were widely dispersed, so that himself and wife occupied the house pretty much alone. He seldom went to church, perhaps partly on account of the pastor's sarcasms, or the raillery of Mr. Mason may have had its origin in some diversity of habits and opinions. When in church, for some reason which he gave but which I have forgotten though I remember to have heard it, he used to sit with his hat on: He was indeed a fine looking old gentleman, as mentioned on page 552, and he and Bowen and Capt. Elisha Hunt, a citizen decayed financially, used to spend days in trolling hymns in Bowen's store, when there was a lull in trade. The tradition respecting the origin of China is said to be entirely erroneous, by his nephew Daniel Lyman. By the same authority I learn that Tom and Harry Lyman were not his nephews, nor indeed relatives. His business was with his nephew, Josiah Dwight Lyman, whose hat shop he conducted some time. Mr. Swan surrounded his house with three rows of Lombardy poplars, which were favorite trees throughout the country in the early part of the century. There was a row of them in front of Houghton's tavern, and when their tops were clipt because their foliage was

thought to be redundant, an angry man was Swan. He was then a clerk for Bowen, who had a country store in a wing of the tavern, after Houghton's death. He said the house looked like the devil in a gale of wind. I well remember the camlet cloak. That style of garment was introduced into the village by the legislators one winter when they returned from Boston, among whom was Mr. Mason himself. It had a broad cape coming down to the hands.

Sophia Webster, p. 562.

She kept the school for some time, and I think died in Troy, N. Y. She was occasionally relieved in the school by her younger sister Rebecca. Williams removed with his wife to Hoosic, where I saw her about 1870. Williams was then dead, and I heard of her death soon after. Her brother Ezekiel, a promising student, became blind, and so continued during my remembrance of him. His monument is one of the most conspicuous ones in the cemetery for its elegance