

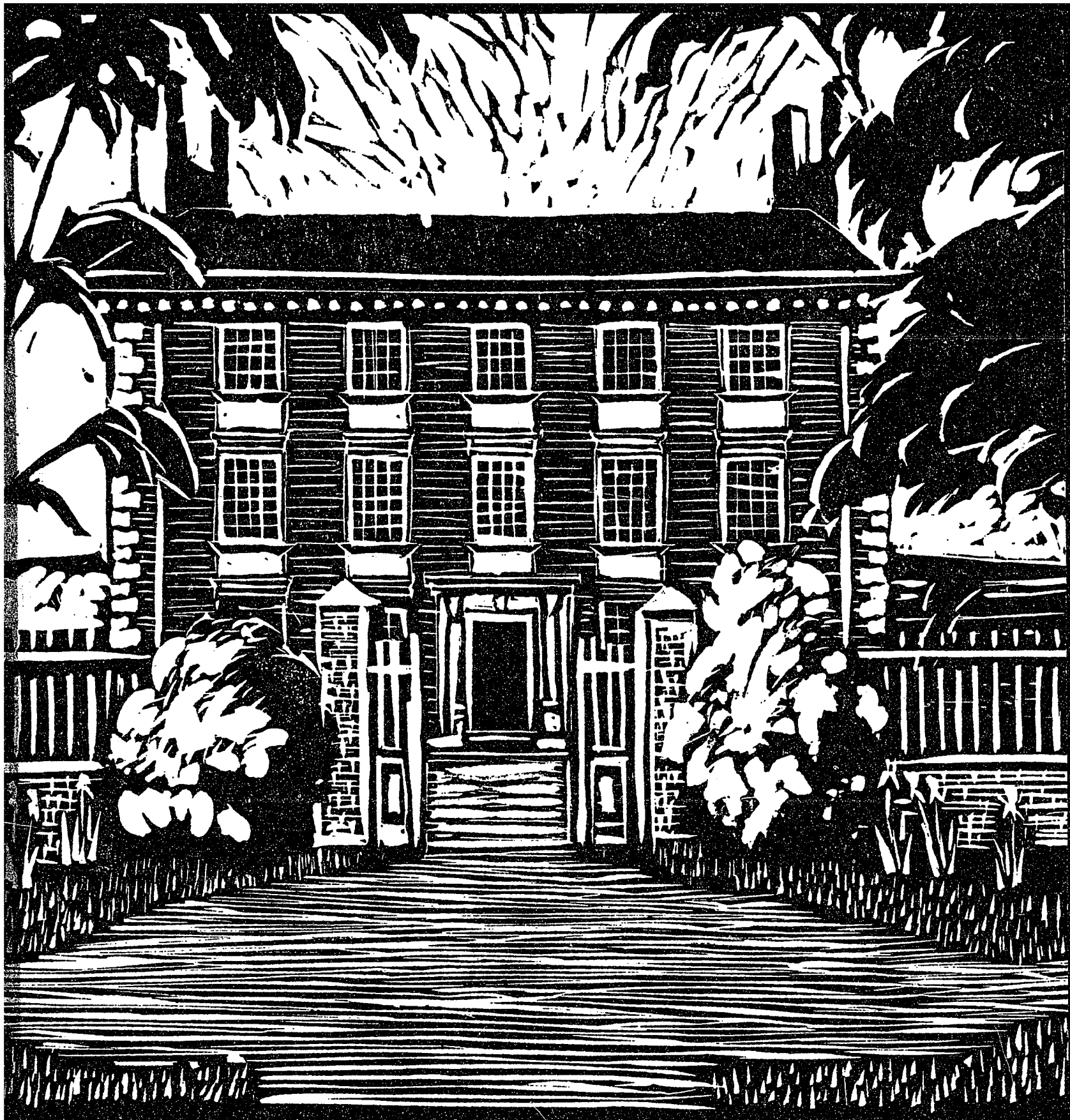
# ROUND ABOUT OLD MEDFORD

## *Historical Guide-Book*

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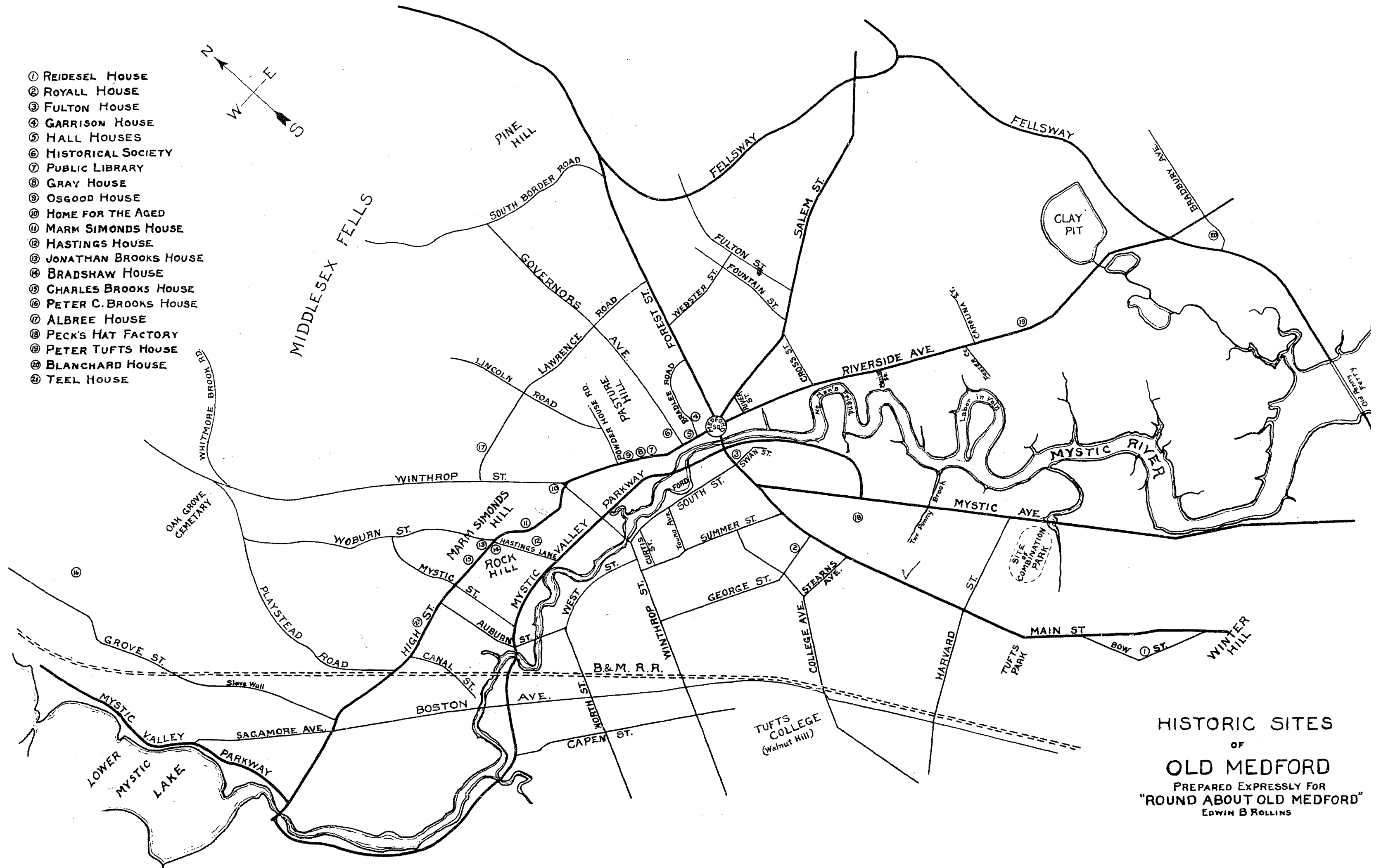




# Round About Old Medford



- ① REIDSEEL HOUSE
- ② ROYALL HOUSE
- ③ FULTON HOUSE
- ④ GARRISON HOUSE
- ⑤ HALL HOUSES
- ⑥ HISTORICAL SOCIETY
- ⑦ PUBLIC LIBRARY
- ⑧ GRAY HOUSE
- ⑨ OSGOOD HOUSE
- ⑩ HOME FOR THE AGED
- ⑪ MARM SIMONDS HOUSE
- ⑫ HASTINGS HOUSE
- ⑬ JONATHAN BROOKS HOUSE
- ⑭ BRADSHAW HOUSE
- ⑮ CHARLES BROOKS HOUSE
- ⑯ PETER C. BROOKS HOUSE
- ⑰ ALBREE HOUSE
- ⑱ PECK'S HAT FACTORY
- ⑲ PETER TUFTS HOUSE
- ⑳ BLANCHARD HOUSE
- ㉑ TEEL HOUSE



HISTORIC SITES  
OF  
OLD MEDFORD  
PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR  
"ROUND ABOUT OLD MEDFORD"  
EDWIN B. ROLLINS



## HISTORICAL GUIDE-BOOK OF MEDFORD.

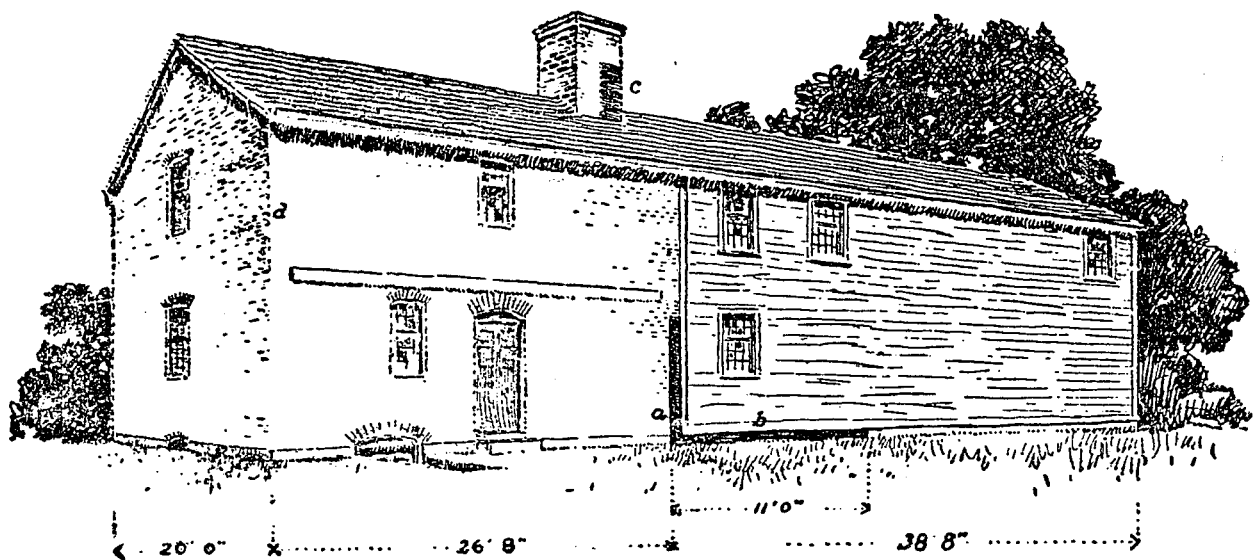
### INTRODUCTION.

**T**HIS historical guide-book has been written with the idea of making available to the residents of our city the history and traditions that exist on the streets along which they pass every day.

It is also written for the strangers who may visit our city and wish to see the most interesting shrines of the old times. This book may be too full to meet the needs of a casual visitor. It is therefore suggested that any who wish to view the most significant historic shrines of Medford should visit the following: The Royall House (page 6); the Cradock or Peter Tufts House (page 34), small admission charged when open; the Medford Historical Society Rooms (page 9), no admission fee, open from September to June on Monday afternoons; the old burying ground on Salem Street (page 17); the Medford Public Library (page 10). The following houses are not open to the public but are interesting and should be seen from the outside: The three Hall houses, including the Andrew Hall House where Paul Revere made his first stop, near Medford Square, on High Street (page 9); the Garrison House (page 9); the Blanchard House in Wellington (page 35); the Osgood House, or Unitarian Parsonage (page 11); the Jonathan Brooks House, corner of Woburn and High Street (page 13); the Teel House, High Street, West Medford (page 14); and the Lawrence Armory (page 10). Tufts College has some fine buildings and a wonderful view.

Historical markers designate the site of Washington's visit to John Brooks (page 11); and to Sarah Bradlee Fulton (page 7); the home of Nanepashemit on Rock Hill (Mystic River Boulevard) (page 12); the site of the

old ford (page 29); the first and second meeting-houses (pages 13 and 12), between Winthrop and Woburn on High Street; the first schoolhouse (page 12); the site of Governor Brooks' home (Medford Savings Bank) (page 9); the Admiral Vernon Tavern, Main Street (page 7); and the camp of the New Hampshire troops on Forest Street (page 20).



Slave Quarters of Royall House.





Old Square "Medford"



## HISTORICAL GUIDE-BOOK OF MEDFORD.

This Guide-book has been compiled by Mrs. Coolidge, with Miss Helen T. Wild giving valuable help in the way of verification of dates, etc., and with some assistance from other members.

### THE OLDEST ROUTE IN MEDFORD.

*From the Somerville line along Main Street to Medford Square and up High Street to the Arlington line.*

THE Indians probably blazed the first trails in Medford, and the foremost one was that from Charlestown Neck to the great fishing weirs at the source of the Mystic River. This Indian trail, which for the first few years of the settlement used the ford near the rear of the Armory, became in time the main route from Boston to New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts, as the Cradock Bridge, built in 1636, was for many years the only bridge across the Mystic. This is also the route by which Paul Revere traversed the little hamlet of about one thousand villagers on the night before the battle of Lexington in 1775.

From the top of Winter Hill, on the right spreads an extended view of the winding river and the cities that have settled in its valley.

On the left, on Bow Street, just a stone's throw away from Main Street, is an old house where, during the winter of 1777-8, was quartered the Baroness Reidesel, who had followed her Hessian husband to war. After the defeat of Burgoyne at Saratoga the British and Hessian forces were sent to Boston to wait for transportation over the ocean. Many of the Hessians were quartered on Walnut (now College) Hill, and received kind treatment, mingled with very human jeers, from the Medford people.

On the right were once two well-known trotting parks, Combination and Mystic. They are practically buried

today and only the names of some of the streets — Willis, Bonner, Golden, and Trott — still bear witness to famous proprietors and turfmen of their day.

On the left were claypits. Tufts Park marks the site of one. Indeed, geologists maintain that all Medford, with the exception of its hills, must have once been part of a great lake in which these deposits of clay were laid down. The making of bricks was one of the important colonial industries of Medford.

Harvard Street, on the left, was the old route to Cambridge, and originally ran through the private grounds of Isaac Royall, the wealthiest colonial resident of Medford. The fine coach of Colonel Royall and the teams of oxen and horses which sought to go to Boston without crossing at Charlestown Ferry must have turned up this street and passed through Cambridge and Dorchester to Boston Neck. The surrounding country was at one time so heavily wooded that Governor Winthrop once lost his way and had to spend a night in the forest within a mile from his own door.

Stearns Avenue, on the left, led to the home of George L. Stearns on College Avenue, a prominent abolitionist who here once entertained John Brown and ran one station of the underground railway. Here, too, he had as guests such prominent men as Ole Bull and Emerson. The house has been torn down and near its site is the magnificent new Cousens Gymnasium of Tufts College. The willows on College Avenue came from sprouts set out in 1864.

At the corner of Main and George Streets, behind the fine little park bought by the city to set off its most famous and beautiful house, is the old **Royall House**. This fine old mansion, with the only slave quarters existing in New England, is an amalgamation of several houses. Probably Governor Winthrop, to whom the court granted in 1631 most of Medford south of the river, had here his farmhouse, though his homestead was in Somerville, in another part of the Ten Hill Farm. The

walls of this six-room house were later enclosed in a more pretentious summer mansion built by Colonel Lidgett, father-in-law of Lieutenant-Governor Usher of New Hampshire, and these walls were again enclosed in the reconstructed mansion which Isaac Royall built in 1732, when, coming from Antigua with thirty slaves or more, he made his home near the Mystic. From the beautiful hand-carved parlors his daughter Penelope went as bride to the Vassall House in Cambridge, and after his son, Isaac the second, became master, he too married from the hospitable old house his daughter Elizabeth, bride to Sir William Pepperell, and Mary, wife of the wealthy merchant Erwin of Boston. By principle a patriot, Royall became, by the accident of time and family, a Tory, was quarantined in Boston with Howe and sailed away to England, to die there of smallpox while he waited hopefully news that he might return home. It is said that the house was threatened with burning by the enraged people of Medford, but that General Stark saved it by taking it over as his headquarters through the siege of Boston. From the windows of the attic stairway Mollie Stark watched the smoke of burning Charlestown at the battle of Bunker Hill and saw the British evacuate Boston. The house has been preserved by the Royall House Association and is the foremost object of historic interest in Medford.

At Summer Street the Middlesex Canal formerly crossed Main Street. South Street was originally Fish House Lane and led to the ford. At the corner of Main and Swan Streets was the **Admiral Vernon Tavern** (1720–1850) where the New Hampshire troops elected John Stark their colonel in 1775. The Blanchard House or Tavern (1752–1833) stood where the present parkway crosses Main Street, and it was in this vicinity that the wounded soldiers were brought after the battle of Bunker Hill to be nursed by the patriotic women of Medford. Foremost among these was Medford's heroine, **Sarah Bradlee Fulton**, who lived in a house almost opposite.

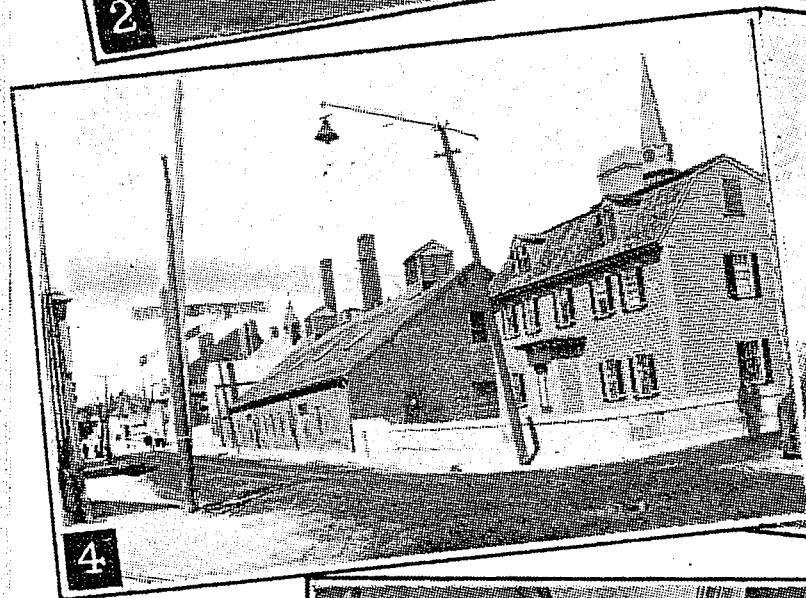
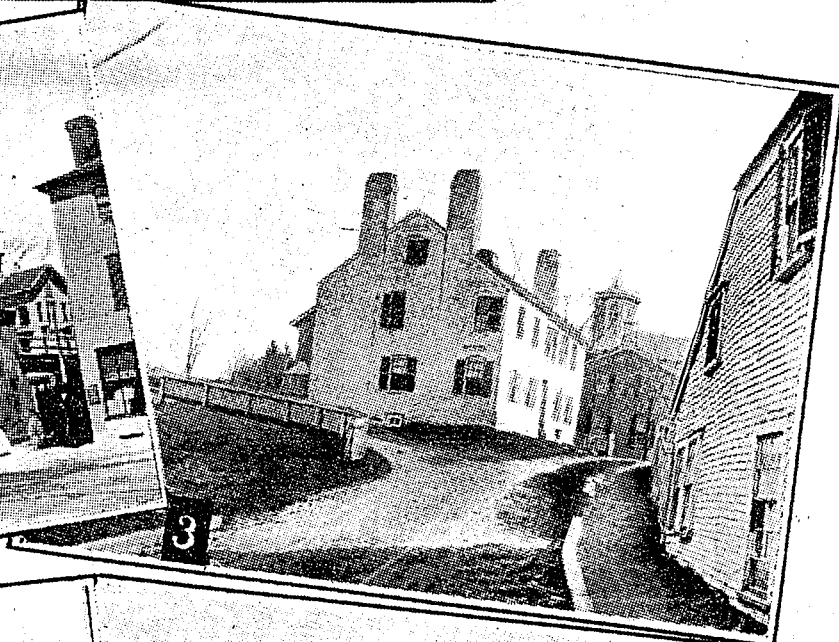
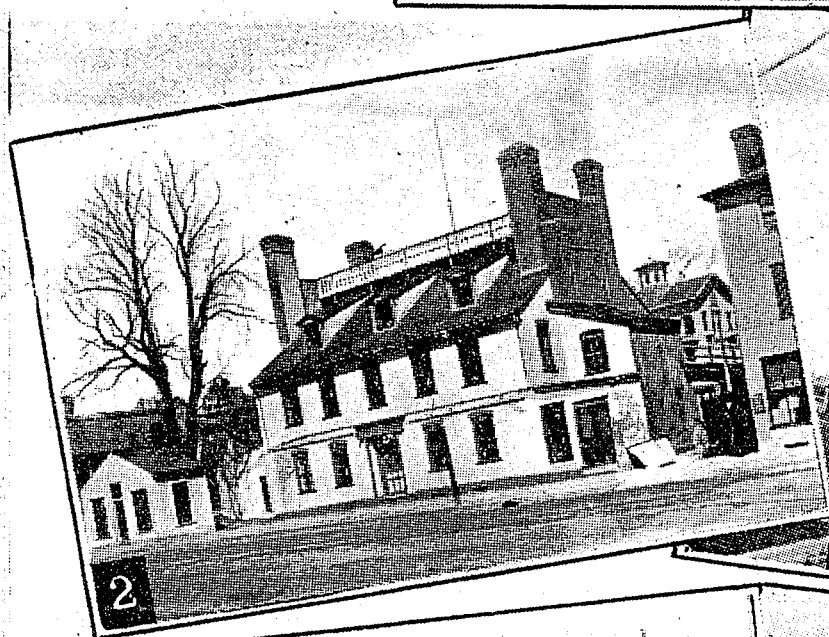
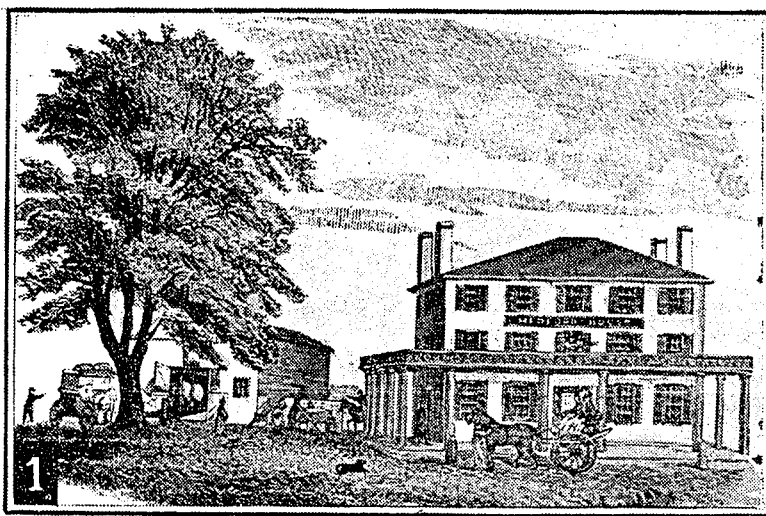
The site of her home is marked. Here, too, she entertained George Washington, who came to thank her for her services to the patriot cause.

On what is now the corner of Riverside Avenue and Main Street stood a third tavern, the Royall Oak (1720–1786). It bore a swinging sign with a crown upon it, and on the return from Lexington the minutemen, enraged at the sight of a crown, so the tradition runs, shot at the emblem of royalty. The sign with its bullet hole is still in the Royall House.

**Cradock Bridge**, built about 1636 or 1638, was for years the key to the north. In colonial days there was a landing for boats at the northwest corner, and Medford Square became an important center for barter. The small West India ships and the sloops or lighters that carried local produce, rum and bricks down the river to Boston and the Indies found in Medford Square a distributing center for the outlying towns. In ship-building days (1805) the bridge was changed to a draw, and so large were the ocean-going ships built in the yards on the upper side of the bridge that they were sometimes caught in the draw and all traffic had to be detoured by Arlington or the new Malden bridge.

In the square were originally the town pump, and the fine old house of Dr. Simon Tufts, built in 1709, and the **Town Hall**. The early civic life of the community centered about the meeting-house up High Street, which served for church and state together, but in 1824, when the selectmen called the annual town meeting they were refused the use of the meeting-house by the parish and were finally forced to build a hall of their own, in 1834. It is significant that the town hall of Medford sprang from a quarrel, for there has been nothing but dissension about it since the hall of 1834 was razed, about 1913, and a new one planned. The site was finally sold as being too congested for a modern public building, and today the city still occupies temporary offices on the second floor of the building on its first site.





1—Former Medford House, Main Street.  
 2—Former Seccomb House, Medford Square.    3—Garrison House.  
 4—Former Sprague House and famous Distillery.    5—Tufts (Cradock) House.  
 6—Magoun House, later Public Library, Stairway (left); Royall House Stairway (right).





As one turns left on High Street he sees the three banks of Medford, one of which, the Savings Bank, bears an inscription to the effect that it marks the site of the **home of Gov. John Brooks**, seven times governor of Massachusetts. Here he entertained President Monroe July 3, 1817, and Lafayette. Behind this bank, on Bradlee Road, is the old **Garrison House**, the home of Maj. Jonathan Wade, built about 1685.

Beyond, on the right of High Street, are the **three Hall houses**, landmarks of the city. The first has a boulder before it commemorating the fact that it was at this door that Paul Revere thundered as he made his first halt on his memorable trip. The house was then occupied by Capt. Isaac Hall. It was built by Andrew Hall in 1703.

There were, at the end of the eighteenth century, five houses here in a row, all occupied by the Hall family, four of them brothers, and three of the brothers married to three sisters. The one with brick ends, next to that of Isaac Hall, was rebuilt by Ebenezer Hall, grandson of the original Andrew, in 1783, the original house being much older. The third was built by Benjamin Hall, Jr., about 1785, and in the day of his son, Dudley Hall, was the scene of a banquet given by its owner and General Brooks to Lafayette. In what is now the path of Governors Avenue stood the house of Benjamin Hall, Sr., afterwards that of Dr. Swan. This old house with its gambrel roof has been moved to Mystic Avenue, where it still stands. The fifth Hall house stood where the telephone building now stands and was the home of Richard Hall. On the other side of the road, next the river, were their tanneries, and their business acumen made Medford a trading center. Later, a shipyard succeeded the tanyard.

On Governors Avenue today stands the building of the **Medford Historical Society**, built in 1916, with an excellent collection of Indian and Civil War and ship-building relics and a fine library. To geologists the

avenue is notable by reason of a vein of diabase which runs in a great dyke through the city, and by its crumbling causes frequent landslides. The hill, called Pasture Hill, once sloped to the river, with a sandy beach along which ran the "varge way," or road.

The **Armory** was the gift to the city of Gen. Samuel C. Lawrence, its first mayor, and houses a large collection of rare and valuable prints and pictures. The Lawrence Light Guard was organized in 1854 as Company E, Fifth Regiment, and has a noteworthy record of service. On April 18, 1861, in response to Lincoln's first call for volunteers, Daniel Lawrence covered almost the identical route of Paul Revere and gave the captains of the regiment marching orders under his brother, Col. Samuel C. Lawrence. The same Lawrence Light Guard maintained the military reputation of the city in its service in the Spanish and World Wars.

On the right is a boulder with a bas-relief representing the march of **Medford's fifty-nine minutemen**, under Capt. Isaac Hall, to Lexington. Behind it is the Children's Library, given the city by Mrs. Samuel C. Lawrence in memory of her husband.

Just adjacent is the **Medford Public Library**, built as a mansion house by Medford's first great ship-builder, Thatcher Magoun, and presented by his son, Thatcher Magoun, to the city as a library in 1875. The library was built about 1835, when Mr. Magoun retired from his ship-building to this fine home, which was said to have been built to suggest a ship. The library has many valuable books, autographed letters of George Washington, and portraits of the two Magouns and of General Brooks. The rounded front walls are about one and one-half feet thick. Daniel Webster called here once, some time before 1852.

On the left side the road from the ford and varge way climbed to the street, which was possibly called High Street for this reason. St. Joseph's Church, on the left, was built about 1900. The home for the nuns

next it was once the manor house of Thatcher Magoun the second, and had beautiful trees and terraced gardens.

The handsome house on the right next the library was built by Samuel Gray about 1803. It was said to be a copy of a colonial house in Salem, constructed by a Salem builder, assisted by carpenters from the ship-yards. It was occupied at one time by William Gray, the famous Boston ship merchant, and at another by Charles S. Sargent, the famous botanist, so intimately associated with the Arnold Arboretum.

Next on the right is the brick-stucco house of John Angier. His wife, Abby Adams, was the favorite niece of John Quincy Adams, who visited her here and planted on the grounds a Scotch laburnum and an English oak, brought as small cuttings from Europe. The house was for years the home of Mr. Eleazer Boynton.

At the corner of Powderhouse Road is the **parsonage** of the First Parish, Unitarian, built by Parson Osgood in 1785. Parson Osgood was minister of the parish from 1774 to 1822, and his diary, kept throughout the course of his ministry and still in the Medford Public Library, covers the Revolution and notes the **visit of Washington** to the town in October, 1789.

This visit was made to General Brooks—his personal friend, who served throughout the Revolution at his side—during Washington's tour of the states as President. General Brooks lived at that time in the eastern half of an old house standing to the left of the church. The house on the site has an historical marker.

The church is itself the fifth of the First Parish in Medford and the third on this site. It owns valuable silver, now in the Art Museum in Boston, and many fine old books. Behind the church stood the third school-house in town, built of brick, 1795–1846.

On the left stands the Christian Science Church, converted from the James W. Tufts mansion, and next it the Grace Episcopal Church, one of the first churches designed by Richardson, builder of Trinity Church, Bos-

ton. It was largely the gift of Mrs. Gorham Brooks in 1868. On the same site once stood a fashionable girls' school.

Winthrop Square had formerly the home of Parson Turell, from which he could see the spire of the second meeting-house down the road to his right. Across Winthrop Street is the Medford Home for the Aged, for many years the Swan homestead. Part of the building dates back to 1689.

As we go up High Street we see on the left the sites of the **first schoolhouse** in Medford, built in 1734, twenty by twenty-four feet, and the **second church**, built in 1727, fifty-two by thirty-eight feet and thirty-three feet high, close beside the brook. The brook itself, now covered on the right-hand side of the road with a new road, was called Meeting-house Brook and was almost in the center of the town. It had two milldams on its upper course.

The small white house set in from the road on the right is on the site of the old Willis Tavern (1692), where a teamster might pause before the hard uphill climb over what bore the name of Marm Simonds Hill, on account of a school kept by two Misses Simonds in 1823 in the little yellow house still standing on the right. It is said that they charged twelve cents a week for tuition.

Across the road from Marm Simonds' old yellow house, still fronted with lilacs, is the fine old yellow house of Edmund T. Hastings, merchant, built in 1840 for his summer home. The house still holds its fine setting of meadow and hill, though the heights of Rock Hill in behind it have been partitioned off into small modern house lots. The house is still owned and occupied by a member of the family.

Rock Hill was famous in early days as an Indian outlook, for there the Sachem **Nanepashemit** had a small wigwam from which he could look out over the Mystic and detect the coming of enemies. On the broad meadows below the Hastings House once were erected annually

the fishing stages of the Indians, who came from all around to fish during the annual spring rush of alewives up stream.

On the right of Marm Simonds Hill stands another old house, called once the Hillman House, which marks the site of the **first meeting-house** in Medford. A sign reads as follows:—

**SITE OF THE FIRST MEETING-HOUSE IN MEDFORD**

1696-1726

30 feet long, 27 feet wide and 16 feet high

Rev. Benjamin Woodbridge, First Minister

Behind the house is a circular stone once used as a step for the little church. With this first church on the hill and the second near the brook, the name of Meeting-house Brook has a double significance.

Woburn Street at the right was the old road to Woburn, probably following an Indian trail. Winthrop Street did not then exist. At the corner of Woburn and High stands the fine old **Jonathan Brooks** homestead. The little ell in the rear was the original house and was probably built about 1692; the main building is later in date. The house was standing when Paul Revere rode by, and one tradition in the family has it that John Hancock slept in the upper chamber after his escape from Lexington.

The house on the opposite corner is as old and perhaps older, as it was probably the residence of one of the first deacons of the church, John Bradshaw. Here the grandfather of John Hancock doubtless spent his Sabbaths in this house of great oaken beams when he came out to supply the pulpit before a regularly ordained minister was chosen. Inside the old chimney is still a door where hams might be hung to be smoked from the generous fire below. It is believed that this was built by Jeduthah Richardson.

Down Hastings Lane the heavy ox carts and country wagons plodded from Woburn and the back country to the landing on the river at the end of the lane. There the river lighters picked up the farm produce and floated it down the river on the ebb tide to Boston, along with Medford bricks and rum.

The old white house with brick ends on the right at the brow of the hill, occupied by Dr. Lincoln, was occupied by Medford's first historian, Rev. Charles Brooks, who in addition was a great student of the school system and had much to do in introducing the Prussian graded school idea upon the little red schoolhouse basis of New England. On Mystic Street, a few rods to the right, stands the house built by John Pierpont, a pastor of the first parish and ancestor of John Pierpont Morgan.

The streets of West Medford, especially Mystic and Allston, owe much to the generosity of Edmund T. Hastings and Samuel Teel, Jr., for the planting of the beautiful elms which still arch over their traffic. Two fine modern schools, the Brooks and the Lewis Hobbs Junior High, stand on the left, and beyond them the Congregational Church. The old **Teel homestead**, on land bought by the original Teel of the Brookses in 1775, is still a landmark for West Medford in its fine outlines and grace of finish.

Canal Street, further on to the left, dating back to 1680, is the street that led to the locks of the Middlesex Canal in West Medford. Here there was also a generous tavern for canal boat men. The Middlesex Canal has left its impress in almost every city along its route by one street named Canal. On the right of Canal is a large house built in 1812 for the town's almshouse; it was remodelled in 1854 into Mystic Mansion of Mystic Hall Seminary, a fashionable school for girls.

The West Medford Railroad Station brings to our attention the fact that the Boston and Lowell Railroad was the first in New England to carry passengers, and that the first train ran from Lowell to Boston June 24,

1835. The road was built with painstaking care, with granite walls underlying the rails on the right track from Boston to Lowell, and with granite ties throughout. The granite did not wear out, but the rolling-stock did, and it became necessary to take up all the granite ties and replace them with wood. The long granite walls under the roadbed, however, are still in place. The road was not chartered by the legislature until after a stiff opposition from the Middlesex Canal proprietors, who maintained the "passengers are now carried at all hours as rapidly and safely as they are anywhere in the world." This speed was four miles an hour.

The railroad station itself was built at a time when an attempt was made to separate West Medford from the rest of the city and call it Brooks. Many of the stones of the building were contributed by individuals, and geological specimens of many kinds may be found in its walls, as well as a rude bust that suggests Washington.

This part of the town was formerly all owned by the Brooks family and many beautiful acres are still in its possession. Grove Street, on the right, formerly called the Road Through the Woods, was one of the oldest roads in the town. It originally was continued to the river, where there were a road to Cambridge and a corn mill on the Mystic.

Sagamore Avenue should be followed to the Indian monument there erected to **Sagamore John**. Sagamore Avenue itself was the direct line of the Middlesex Canal, but this region was formerly a prosperous Indian village. The story of Mourt, who gave the account of a Pilgrim trading exploration to the north, has always been interpreted as referring to a stockaded village at about this point. The land near the well-known fish weirs at the mouth of the lake was held in high value by the Indians, and early deeds retain the rights of the Squa Sachem, who succeeded her husband, Nanepashemit, as ruler over the tribe in Medford, to the ownership of these valuable rights. Francis Brooks, in excavations near

this site in 1882, discovered Indian bones, buried mostly in sitting posture, and arrowheads are still unearthed by the plow on the old Brooks estate.

The beautiful Mystic Valley Parkway swings out a little further to the right and runs along the lakes over land once followed by the Middlesex Canal and other land donated by the Brooks family. About a mile farther on this road is preserved a section of the bed of the Middlesex Canal.

The Merrimac River, geologists declare, once flowed through these lakes, but the glacial age threw athwart its path a great dam which forced the river to turn its present right angle to the sea. Today they are the center of skating, boating and swimming, and are a joy of beauty, now as doubtless in the days of the Indians, whose name Missituck seems to have meant great river and great lake.

With the bridge over the Mystic which forms the division between Medford and Arlington this route ends. This was called of old the Weir Bridge, being the place where the Indians and the colonists who succeeded them trapped the migrant alewives and other fish. They were not only foodstuff, but fertilizer, and in colonial days a source of barter. Occasionally even today fish straggle up the river when the dam is open at Cradock Bridge, but their chief memorial is in the name of Alewife Brook.

#### SALEM STREET.

**S**ALEM Street was one of the first streets of Medford, known as the Salem Path. It has suffered more at the hands of time than the other old streets of Medford. Seventy years ago it was shaded by magnificent elms, now all gone.

At the right, almost opposite the Medford Theatre, was once the "great barn," doubtless the center of Cradock's early enterprise. Where his house was is still the contention of Medford historians. Doubtless nearby was



the enclosure which was to be stocked with deer to make of Matthew Cradock's home a gentleman's estate.

On the left, on the site of the theatre, was a famous bakery of Medford, where were made the hard Medford crackers which traveled around the world in Medford ships together with Medford rum. At the corner of Ashland Street stood the home of Lydia Maria Child, a famous authoress in her day, friend of prominent authors and abolitionists.

Next River Street, once known as Dead Man's Alley, is the **old burying ground**. This is the oldest cemetery in Medford and here lie many of those who fought at Lexington, their graves marked. In the center is the monument to Governor Brooks, and near it the boulder of New Hampshire granite marking the final resting place of the New Hampshire minutemen who came from their homes to fight beside their comrades of Massachusetts.

Near the wall on the right is the grave of Sarah Bradlee Fulton, Medford's most famous woman, who carried a message for Washington into beleaguered Boston, walking in and out of Charlestown, rowing across the river and back, and coming to her home before day broke. Washington visited her at her home on Main Street in recognition of her heroism. There are many interesting stones in the old burying ground and inscriptions on family tombs. The stone marking the tomb of Dr. Simon Tufts on the right of the entrance is especially interesting as a comment on Medford enterprise. The first Simon, who taught Governor Brooks the profession of medicine, was family physician and friend of Isaac Royall. One of his sons died at Surinam, another at the Cape of Good Hope.

Medford Common formerly was crossed by Gravelly Brook, one of the most troublesome of Medford to the city engineer, and a bridge was early built across it at Salem Street. The brook has, however, disappeared beneath the common, and the road which formerly led from the No Man's Friend landing has been altered to Cross

Street on the right. This street leads to the second of Medford's cemeteries, the Cross Street. Here lie buried many ship-building mechanics who were laid to rest within hearing of the

“Sound of hammers, blow on blow,  
Knocking away the shores and spurs.”

At the corner of Fountain Street was formerly the old Fountain House, one of Medford's oldest taverns.

Fulton Street was the continuation of the road from No Man's Friend landing to the wood-lots of the town of Charlestown. Many loads of wood must have been hauled behind slow-plodding oxen down this road to the landing at the river.

The little white house on the left is said to have been built by Peter Tufts of the Cradock House on Riverside Avenue for his son.

In 1840 there were only two houses between Hadley Place and Malden line, and on the other side not more than half a dozen between the Fountain House and Malden. As late as 1870 there were swamps on each side of the street between Otis and Spring Street, and the children used to run “around the bend” because it was so lonesome. A drainage system reclaimed this land, which is now thickly populated.

#### THE MIDDLESEX CANAL.

THE Middlesex Canal had its route through Medford from 1803 to 1852, when the charter of the corporation was surrendered. The days of the canal, which closely paralleled those of ship-building, were some of the most picturesque of Medford. Horses dragged passenger boats along the canal at four miles an hour, and teams of oxen trudged along with loads of lumber for the ship-yards at about two miles an hour.

The canal entered Medford from Somerville close to the river, separated only so far from its course that a teamster on the turnpike could with one of his long whips touch the water of the river on the one side and the water

of the canal on the other. Mystic Avenue in those days was a turnpike, opened in 1803 and a toll road until 1867, and apparently profitable, though the encroachments of the river made constant repairs necessary.

From this close proximity to the river at the Somerville line the canal swung westward toward Main Street, passing behind what is now the Hancock School (where there are still traces of it) close to a little red brick building off Hancock Court once famous as Peck's hat factory, where they made the old-fashioned beaver hats. Daniel Webster is said to have bought hats made in this shop, but the coming of the new silk hats put the factory out of business. One branch of the canal ran behind Teel's factory to the river. At Summer Street the canal crossed Main Street under a bridge and ran along Summer, near the course of West Street and across the marshes toward Boston Avenue. Here at almost the exact site of the present Boston Avenue bridge it crossed the river on an aqueduct. There was a lock close beside, and a tavern for the boatmen.

From Boston Avenue the canal swung down the present Sagamore Avenue, over-arched in the old days by a charming granite bridge. It then ran near the Mystic Lakes, parallel to the Boston and Maine Railroad, whose competition ultimately was the cause of its death.

The best idea of its construction can be obtained on the boulevard just beyond the Medford line, where the old course has been saved. A boulder marks the site, and a walk to the end of the path shows the granite blocks upon which was built the aqueduct that carried the canal to the further Winchester shore.

#### FOREST STREET.

**F**OREST Street was a turnpike road to Andover and was opened in 1805. It runs roughly parallel to the old Fulton Street route to Stoneham, and for that or some other reason was not very profitable. It was offered for sale in 1828, and as no buyers appeared it became a public road in 1831. It is said that often herds

of sheep or cows were driven down the pike into Medford Square.

On the left is the Medford High School, with the Vocational School at its southern end. The original central building was opened in 1897 and was considered a rank extravagance in size. The brown sandstone trimmings were given by General Lawrence, and the pictures and statuary have been the gifts of alumni and graduating classes. In front of the school is a war memorial for the soldiers and sailors of Medford in the World War.

On the right side, at the corner of Webster Street, is a marker recently placed in honor of the New Hampshire soldiers who in 1775 came down from their neighboring colony to fight beside the minutemen of Massachusetts. They were quartered in the fields here, which were then open meadows, bordered by the ubiquitous claypits of Medford. From this camp they marched to Bunker Hill, and many of them were borne back to the camp dead or wounded. Nursed by Sarah Bradlee Fulton and the Medford women, some wounded recovered, but some forty-five were buried together on the north side of the present Water Street, whence their bones were removed to the old Salem Street Cemetery.

Forest Street is a fine street, beautifully arched with elms, many of them planted by Mr. Turell Tufts. At its end it runs into Roosevelt Circle, named in honor of "T. R.," and thence joins the Fellsway on the way to Stoneham and Andover. At the left, up Border Road, rises Pine Hill, from which a fine view can be obtained. This portion of the Fells was once the property of Elizur Wright, who had the vision to foresee the value to the state of the great recreational tract of forest. Through his initiative, largely, the land was finally secured by the state and these acres were his own contribution to the cause. This is one of the best approaches to the Fells. About half a mile on the left of the Fellsway is a rock formation called the Old Man of the Fells.

## THE WOBURN ROADS.

*Woburn Street from High, to Winthrop Street, to Symmes Corner in Winchester, and Grove Street to High.*

ONE of the oldest roads of Medford, after Main, High and Salem, was probably the high road to Woburn. Today Winthrop Street is the easier route, but this road was not constructed until about the middle of the nineteenth century on land purchased by the town for the purpose, so that the street was long called Purchase Street. The nearest route to Woburn from the square before that day was up Marm Simonds Hill and past the "great rock on Osborne rode," along the winding road that still tells in its name the story of its purpose.

At the corner of High and Woburn, on the right, used to stand the home of J. Wyman, who drove the stage coach to and fro from Medford to Boston in the early days of the nineteenth century. His house has long since followed his stage. Only his name is left at Wyman Street.

Beyond Wyman Street, on the left, was built the first schoolhouse in the west end of the town in 1829, at a cost of \$385.00. Within three years, however, this schoolhouse went further west to Canal Street, near the Medford Almshouse. There, in its impressive proportions of eighteen by twenty-four feet, it stood for some forty years until the famous tornado of August 22, 1851, swept it across the brook, mowing down a great chestnut tree as with a scythe, and left the children who were to attend school three days later without a school. Fortunately, a new school was under way at the corner of Brooks and Irving Streets.

Almost opposite this school was for years the Sarah Fuller School for the deaf, where younger children first began the study of lip reading. The school was incorporated later with the Horace Mann School in Boston, and the building has been remodelled as a private residence. A little colony of Cape Cod cottages and houses on old models would almost seem to reproduce the olden

days of Medford, but there are no houses standing on this road now that are not new development, with the exception of the Smith Farm, now a part of the riding school.

Playstead Road was laid out by the Brooks family that the western portion of the town might have a more direct and accessible road to the cemetery.

Oak Grove Cemetery was opened in 1853. The town had outgrown the old Salem-street Burying Ground and the later one at Cross Street, and the development of Mount Auburn had inspired in Medford the desire for a naturally beautiful and remote resting place for their dead. Additional land has been purchased which extends the cemetery down into the lower land at the south. There are monuments erected here to the soldiers and sailors of the war of 1861 and a large monument to the heroes of the Spanish War. In honor of the veterans of the world war is a great flagpole, at whose base on every Memorial Day are exercises similar to those at the Civil War and the Spanish War shrines.

At the cemetery, Woburn Street is merged in Winthrop Street. At the right, almost at the junction of the roads, is the Whitmore Brook entrance to the Middlesex Fells. Whitmore Brook is now but a rill, but at one time there was a saw mill across its course just where the Fells road cuts its way through a little hill, which was the mill-dam. Whoever has the curiosity to proceed up the Fells road and push through the little openings to the left into an open pasture will find a strange freak of nature, a small cedar tree rooted and growing on the top of a bare rock. The tree is estimated to be four hundred years old.

Winthrop Street was also the route selected for another purpose. In 1847 the Medford Branch Railroad was surveyed and partly graded for an extension to Stoneham, passing by Sugar Loaf Hill and what is now the City Infirmary. Its route may still be traced in various places, and many mistake the bed of water that lies beside

the raised roadbed for the Middlesex Canal. The line was never extended to Medford Square and the work was suddenly stopped.

Shortly beyond the cemetery we pass into Winchester, though all this land was part of Medford until 1850, when the court granted it to the new town of Winchester. As this land until 1754 belonged to Charlestown it has been part of three townships. Part of this Winthrop Street section of Winchester may be said to be again returning to Medford jurisdiction, for the hilltops of soft earth have been removed bodily to fill in the approach to the new bridge across the Mystic at Harvard Street.

At Symmes Corner once stood the birthplace of Gov. John Brooks, who though born in what was at the time Charlestown, is accounted Medford's most prominent citizen. The house has been torn down, but a short account of General Brooks is given here as an introduction to the Brooks estates on Grove Street. The original Thomas Brooks of Concord bought an enormous freehold from the heirs of Cradock in 1660, and for almost three centuries much of this estate has remained in the Brooks family. John Brooks, seven times governor of Massachusetts and close friend and comrade of Washington, is the most famous of the family. A shaft marks his grave in the old Salem Street Cemetery. He studied medicine in Medford under Dr. Simon Tufts, marched from Reading, where he was then practicing, to Lexington, went from the birth of his first child, June 16, 1775, to Bunker Hill, and thereafter followed the fortunes of Washington throughout the war. His portrait is in the Boston Art Museum and a copy is in the Medford Public Library.

From Symmes Corner to High Street, West Medford, runs Grove Street, which has sometimes been considered a private road for the Brooks estates, as all the Medford members of the family resided along its sides or at its terminals at Symmes Corner or High Street. Grove Street, however, was an old highway to Woburn, being

known as the Road Through the Woods. Grove Street may be said to be by far the most beautiful road in Medford, with its glimpses of the flashing Mystic Lakes on the one side and the beautifully varied Brooks estates on the other. The land is strongly marked by glacial action, and has several pothole lakes of glacial origin, including Brooks Pond, called Slow Pond on the old records, which Mr. Shepherd Brooks converted from a temporary pond of the spring into the beautiful permanent pond of the all year round.

From the same Thomas Brooks who bought the original domain, on a collateral line through Caleb, who lived at High Street, near Grove, through Samuel and his son Samuel, came Edward, another Brooks of Revolutionary fame. The second Samuel lived in a home on our left as we come from Winchester, behind the old white wall still standing, built by Pomp, a slave, about 1765 from bricks of his own make. Opposite this house, on the other side of the road, lived his son Edward, a minister, of rather too liberal views for the day. When the church bells rang the alarm for Lexington, Edward was at home without a parish and he proceeded at once to the battle, wearing his fullbottomed wig and carrying a musket. His son, Peter C. Brooks, could see from the housetop the sunlight glancing on the British bayonets on the Menotomy (Arlington) road. How many men the Reverend Edward killed is not known, but he brought home as prisoner a British officer, Lieutenant Gould of the King's Own, wounded in the heel at Concord Bridge, who remained with his family as guest and prisoner until his parole.

Abigail Brooks, the wife of the minister, was hospitable to her own patriots as well, for after the battle of Lexington, as the weary soldiers strayed back home from the battle, she served them under the elm tree at her gate with chocolate in a great iron pot. Edward served afterwards as chaplain on the frigate Hancock, was captured and suffered such hardships that he returned a broken



man, to die shortly after and leave his wife to bring up their four children. She was descended herself from John Cotton, the famous Puritan divine, and among her descendants were Phillips Brooks and his brothers. Her son, Peter C. Brooks, walking in and out of Boston every day to business, was one of the early builders of the insurance business and accumulated one of the greatest fortunes of the day. He built a mansion on the right of the road in 1802, with a most beautiful garden, an artificial pond and magnificent trees. Through his estate, under a graceful arched bridge, passed the Middlesex Canal. History tells us that July 3, 1817, Peter C. Brooks entertained President James Monroe with "an elegant collation" in his grounds here. This estate, however, was sold to a real estate company in 1912 and the present development is on the grounds.

Two great-grandsons of Edward Brooks, Peter Chardon and Shepherd, built the two stately residences that now crown the two hills above Brooks (Slow) Pond.

Through the generosity of Mrs. Shepherd Brooks, the present owner of half the estate, the grounds are to be given for a bird sanctuary and thus preserved in their present beautiful form.

On the hilltop where is the gray stone home of Peter C. Brooks was once (it is believed from Mourt's Relation) the wigwam of Nanepashemit, the Indian sachem, where in 1619 he was killed by his enemies from Maine, the Tarrentines. Below the house, on the shores of the pond, the Pageant of the Mystic was enacted in 1930 as the city's celebration of the three hundredth year of its existence. The old gray farmhouse on the other side of the road, as well as part of the foundations of the houses, was built from granite taken from the aqueduct of the Middlesex Canal over to the Winchester shore. This was destroyed when, in about 1865, an ice-jam, forced against the aqueduct, so raised the waters of Bacon's Pond that cellars of homes in Winchester were flooded, and the aqueduct was blown up with dynamite.

## MIDDLESEX FELLS.

THE Middlesex Fells is a park reservation of over two thousand acres. It has rocks near the Ramshhead Tower that are some of the oldest in New England, and its hills are strewn with boulders that mark the glacial age, while the handwriting of the ice is traced on the top of Pine Hill. But apart from any geological interest it is a most delightful playground for the multitude.

In the seventeenth century it was part of Charlestown, and was used for woodlots, and in the nineteenth century many trees were still hauled from its depths for use in the ship-yards. There were also quarries, especially one on the side of Pine Hill, from which much of the granite was hauled for reinforcing the river wall at the northwest of Cradock Bridge. A very fine gravel, made from the Medford granite or diabase, was extensively used for garden paths and sidewalks, and is widely known as "Pasture Hill gravel."

The earliest exploration of the Fells was made by Governor Winthrop who, on February 7, 1632, crossing the ford at Mystic, traveled to the northeast until he came to "a very great pond, having in the midst an island of about one acre . . . and the pond had divers small rocks standing up here and there in it, which they therefore called Spot Pond."

From Pine Hill, southwesterly, there are scattered traces of a settlement once made by Scotch-Irish who about 1719 settled in this quarter and built their homes and strong stonewalls about their bounds. These have long since gone, and for years all this wooded section was divided into woodlots of various Medford families.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century Elizur Wright, nationally known for his pioneer work with insurance, started a movement to have this whole woodland territory preserved to the state. This was finally done in 1894.

Maps of the trails and paths including the location of the Silver Mine, Bears' Den and other sites of interest

may be obtained from the Metropolitan Park Police at the station on the Fellsway.

Easy access to the whole district may be had from the Fellsway and from South Border Road, by those in automobiles, and for pedestrians by Lawrence Road from Winthrop Street or Governors Avenue.

A right of way off Lincoln Road leads to the site of an old sawmill, whose dam is still to be seen. Whitmore Brook Road from Winthrop Street leads to the site of another dam.

It is sometimes the regret of assessors that so much of the territory of Medford is in parks which yield no revenue. The pleasure-seekers of Medford and the nature lovers have no such regrets as to the Middlesex Fells.

#### TUFTS COLLEGE.

**C**OLLEGE Hill, once called Walnut Hill on account of its crown of walnut trees, has a history that runs beyond that of the college which now makes it the most prominent hill in Medford. On this hill, geologically a drumlin, were quartered during the winter of 1777-8 the Hessian troops sent to Boston after their defeat under Burgoyne at Saratoga to wait for ships to convoy them home. But ships were scarce in those days and perhaps the colonists were none too anxious to free these captives of theirs who, though bound by parole themselves, might release, on their return, new forces for the fighting strength of the British army.

At all events, the Hessians spent on the exposed summit of Walnut Hill a very cold winter. To keep their campfires going they burned all the walnuts that had given the hill its name. The Baroness Reidesel, who had accompanied to this new world her husband, the commander of the Hessians, was fortunate enough to have a roof over her head in the old house on Bow Street. Romance says that she concealed the colors of the Germans among her baggage and brought them safe from the battlefield.

The rank and file of the army, however, endured much hardship in makeshift lodgings throughout the winter, and bore withal the taunt of "lobsterbacks" from the people of the community.

In spite of hardships, some of the Hessians elected to remain in this new country, even after ships had been procured to deport the troops. One of them, Thomas Huffmaster, lived in his adopted town, surviving years of war and change only to be killed by the famous tornado that swept through West Medford August 23, 1851.

After the time of the Hessians the hill became part of the farm of Charles Tufts of Somerville, a descendant of that Peter Tufts who built the so-called Cradock House on Riverside Avenue. This far-sighted man saw in the hill a place whereon to "set a light," and this he accomplished by his gift of the land in 1851 to the Universalist Church, which was then seeking the best available site for a college.

Today the buildings and grounds of Tufts College are among the outstanding sights of Medford. Around old Ballou Hall in the center, built in 1853, have sprung up the various dormitories and Goddard Chapel with its tower and chimes. Barnum Museum was given by the famous P. T. Barnum, and contains the stuffed hide of Jumbo, the largest elephant in captivity, whose size added a word to the English vocabulary. The library was the gift of Carnegie.

Beside the college rises a reservoir, built as part of the Mystic Water Works. A promenade around it commands a far view of the cities, river valley and Middlesex Fells. A steady succession of new dormitories and other buildings, the addition of Cousens Gymnasium and the imposing stairway on the east, have enriched year by year the bare hilltop donated by Charles Tufts some eighty years ago.

## MEDFORD HILLSIDE.

**M**OST of the development south of the Mystic and between Main and Auburn Streets is of recent growth, but the whole section has an interesting story. In 1637 this was part of a wide tract belonging to the town of Charlestown and was divided into rights of pasturage. A large committee was chosen to make equitable division, or in the old wording, "to stint the common," or to determine the number of cow commons that one hundred and thirteen inhabitants should have, reserving definite acres for the "milch cows, working cattle, goats and calves." In 1685 Medford, next the river, was divided into three and a half acres for each cow, and "rangeways" were laid out for easy access to these pastures. One rangeway was not preserved, but two still exist today in Winthrop and North Streets. When this part of Medford was added to the town from the precincts of Charlestown the town had to pay Charlestown for the firewood, as there was still quite a forest standing. Later there were claypits and brickyards over much of the area.

At the foot of Capen Street were found Indian remains, and an old map of 1685 shows wigwams of Sagamore John pitched by Alewife Brook. Here, too, is the place where Governor Winthrop is believed to have spent a night in the forest when, in a rain, he crept into an Indian wigwam for shelter, but barricaded it against an Indian squaw who wished to share its protection with him. Doubtless Puritan propriety was satisfied.

South Street is the most interesting historically. The eastern end was called Fish House Lane and led to the ford. At the end of Walnut Street were the shipyards of James Ford where twenty-nine ships were launched. At Curtis Street Paul Curtis established a yard in 1839 with twenty-seven ships to his credit, and on the other side of Winthrop Bridge (built in 1857 and rebuilt in 1925) was the yard of Stetson, with thirty-two ships between 1833 and 1835. In 1833 another yard was started

at Auburn Street near the present railroad tracks where fifty-three ships were built, and across the river, at the foot of Hastings Lane, was a yard for the building of lighters. Along South Street still stand the dignified and substantial homes of ship builders and workers.

Summer Street was built largely on the towpath of the Middlesex Canal. Touro Avenue was named after a wealthy and influential Hebrew. The real development of the rest of the hillside came about 1872, when Josiah Quincy formed an association called the Quincy Associates to encourage the acquisition of homes of moderate cost, in a method somewhat similar to our coöperative banks of today.

One building at the foot of Capen Street often excites curiosity. It is the brick building once used for the Charlestown water works in connection with the water supply from Upper Mystic. The dam was built in 1863 between the upper and lower ponds for the Charlestown water supply, and the reservoir at Tufts was part of the system.

#### LAWRENCE ROAD.

**T**HIS very recent roadway runs in its western course over land once belonging to the Lawrence estate, and in past years some of the loveliest acres of Medford. The land was largely glacial, with many kames or little hills. Today the road touches on the Lawrence Memorial Hospital, an exceptionally fine modern hospital, provided through the generosity of Daniel C. Lawrence and his son Rosewell B. Lawrence. On the north side of the road is an old yellow colonial building, once owned by John Albree, who had a milldam near by. It later became the home of Nathaniel Hall and his wife Joanna Brooks, daughter of the Revolutionary minister, Edward Brooks. Their grandson was Francis Parkman, the famous historian, who in 1831 for four years came to live on his grandfather's farm. He roamed throughout the woodland, now our Middlesex Fells, and from it doubt-

less gained that knowledge of wild life that forms the background of his studies of Indian and pioneer history.

From Lincoln Road a right of way leads into the Fells and along a path to the old milldam once owned by Jonathan Wade (owner and builder of the Garrison House on Bradlee Road). Meeting-house Brook still flows in a charming stream through the low valley where once was the pond, and the bank of gravel that formed the dam and the runway are still visible.

From the end of Lincoln Road, or any of the roads to the north, access may be had to the Fells and their delightful walks and drives. The Lawrence or Ramshead Observatory is about a mile from this point and commands a superb view of the surrounding country.

Lawrence Road has a special fame during the Christmas season from the lavish display of lights made by the people along its course.

#### RIVERSIDE AVENUE TO WELLINGTON.

*Over Wellington Bridge and back by way of Mystic Avenue to Main Street.*

RIVERSIDE Avenue was formerly called Ship Street, and rightly so, as this road was the way to the great shipyards which gave Medford much of her reputation. For many years the road was in two parts. One, Distill House Lane, led from the square to the four distilleries which also made the name of Medford as widely known as her ships. The other half ran originally from Salem Street across the common, somewhat near Cross Street of today, and joined Ship Street, thence running to Wellington as "the way to Blanchard's." Distill House Lane was opened as a part of Ship Street in 1746.

Conveniently enough to the four taverns in the square were the distilleries of Medford, on both sides of Ship Street. The most famous was that set in operation by Andrew Hall about 1735; the site was chosen because

a copious spring gushed forth at that spot. The Riverside Theatre stands on the site, and when it was built the spring was still so powerful that the opening of the theatre had to be delayed while a new conduit was made to drain the spring into the river. The open wharf room on the south side of the river and the long stretches of piles driven into the bank, tell a story of the past when schooners from the West Indies brought in molasses to the distilleries and lighters bore barrels down the river for export of Old Medford Rum.

On the left bank of the river, by Miles' wood-working plant, was once a tide-mill. Hence loads of sawdust and wood chips were sent to Boston to be used in packing ice at the Tudor Wharf for export to southern climes. The millpond has been filled in and the picturesque occupation is gone.

The Mystic River, by reason of its curves and clear channel, made it possible to establish the largest number of shipyards in the shortest distance. There were ten shipyards in all in Medford, four below the bridge and six above. The first deep bend of the river at the right on Riverside Avenue had the picturesque name of No Man's Friend, on account of the difficulty of navigating these wide curves with a sail-boat. Here was a public landing, used in the early days by the town of Charlestown for access to their wood lands. Medford, it must be remembered, ran as far as the "Rocks," and Charlestown owned the forests beyond, so the barges and lighters from Charlestown came down the river and were loaded here with wood brought down via the present Fulton Street to the landing. Today the Toppan boat works and the Baltzer boat works nearer the square carry on the tradition of the old Medford ship-building. The yards at No Man's Friend were established in 1804 by Calvin Turner and were later occupied by Lapham, one of Magoun's apprentices. Here were built some sixty ships.

Across the river, near the present city stables, were



the yards of James Curtis, established in 1839, where were built seventy-eight ships.

At the next bend of the river, off Marine Street, was the shipyard of Thatcher Magoun where, beginning in 1803, he built one hundred and ninety-three ships. The story runs that as he stood on Winter Hill he saw a ship lying at anchor at the Medford wharves, and coming down to Medford made inquiries as to the river and the possibility of floating large ships. He was assisted in his choice of location by the accessibility of wood from the forests and by the Middlesex Canal, which, opened the next year, made it possible to bring down much lumber from the New Hampshire forests. A branch canal, in fact, led directly to the Medford shipyards. About this curve of the river were clustered in Magoun's time the various buildings of a shipyard, the counting-house—offices, perhaps we would call them today—his own residence, now gone, at the eastern corner of Park Street, and next that the homes of ship carpenters and joiners.

Riverside Avenue has many substantial dignified old houses that reflect the pride and honesty of that age of ship-building. They were the homes of owners of the business or of energetic workmen whose workmanship was famous on the seven seas in its day. The integrity of their work survives in their homes and in the names of streets — Lapham, Thatcher, Magoun, Cudworth and Sprague — which still echo their memories. The picturesque old Cape Cod cottage once owned by Sawyer, one of the chief iron workers for the shipyards, still stands near Carolina Street.

On the right Foster's Court led to the great "oxbow" curve of the river called "Labor in Vain" — a curve so maddening to honest lightermen and captains of schooners seaward bound that in 1761 a cut was made across the neck of the curve. From that day the river has elected to flow through the cut, and the great bend has slowly filled up with sand. On the western side even a canoe can hardly pass today at low water, but the eastern side has now a bath-house, recently erected by the

Metropolitan District Commission, and here, where one hundred and thirty-three ships were launched, the children of the city play in peace. This yard was opened in 1817 by Sprague and James, followed by Foster and Taylor. The last ship built on the Mystic was launched here in 1873. Ship launchings were the occasion of great celebrations throughout the town. Sometimes boats were floated on the full tide at dead of night, but more often it was a daylight fête, with all the children dismissed from school to attend.

The house of Capt. Joshua Foster, last of the ship builders, is still to be seen at the right, just beyond, but it is in sad ruin. Houses used for boarding men at work on the ships stood at the end of Maverick Street and on Foster's Court.

On the left the old **Cradock or Peter Tufts House** has been more fortunate. Believed for many years to be the house originally built for Matthew Cradock, it was advertised as the oldest house in America. Strong evidence today seems to prove that Cradock's house was probably nearer the square, where his great barn stood, near what is now the Medford Theatre, and that the present house was built by Peter Tufts in 1668.

Sceptics are not wanting today who uphold the Cradock tradition. Matthew Cradock was the generous patron and founder of Medford, though he never came to this country, but Peter Tufts was also a man of consequence, Medford's first representative to the Great and General Court. The construction of the house is notable. The ends of the great S irons which join the massive beams on the inside may be seen on the ends of the house, and inside is an immense rounded fire-place. The interior, however, has been restored and does not present the original appearance. The building is now owned by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

Beyond, on both sides, were the great claypits, which for two centuries were actively worked. On the right is the new engine house, and in the marshy swamp beyond may still be seen stumps of trees, which geologists

tell us are proof that the land here is slowly subsiding, as trees will not grow in water.

Another old house, its age disguised by recent additions, is on the left, home of one of the fifty-nine minute-men who went to Lexington.

Across the boulevard and up the hill we come to Wellington. On Bradbury Avenue is an old house with long sloping roof once called the **Blanchard House**, later known as the Wellington Farm House, which is probably the oldest house in Medford. On April 1, 1634, the General Court granted to Rev. John Wilson of Boston two hundred acres, "being a promontory into the marshes," later called Wilson's Point. Mr. Wilson, in 1650, sold his farm to Thomas Blanchard of Braintree. He died in 1654 and his farm was divided between his sons George and Nathaniel. August 27, 1657, Nathaniel Blanchard sold to his brother Samuel ten acres known as "flax grounds, on which said Samuel is now building a house." This is the present Wellington Farm House. In 1756 the Blanchards sold all their holdings to Jabez Bradbury.

In 1819 the Bradbury heirs sold the land to the brothers James and Isaac Wellington of Lexington, who married sisters, Susanna and Mary Jacobs, and in this old house brought up their families from a common purse—nine children in all. The house is still occupied by descendants of Isaac Wellington.

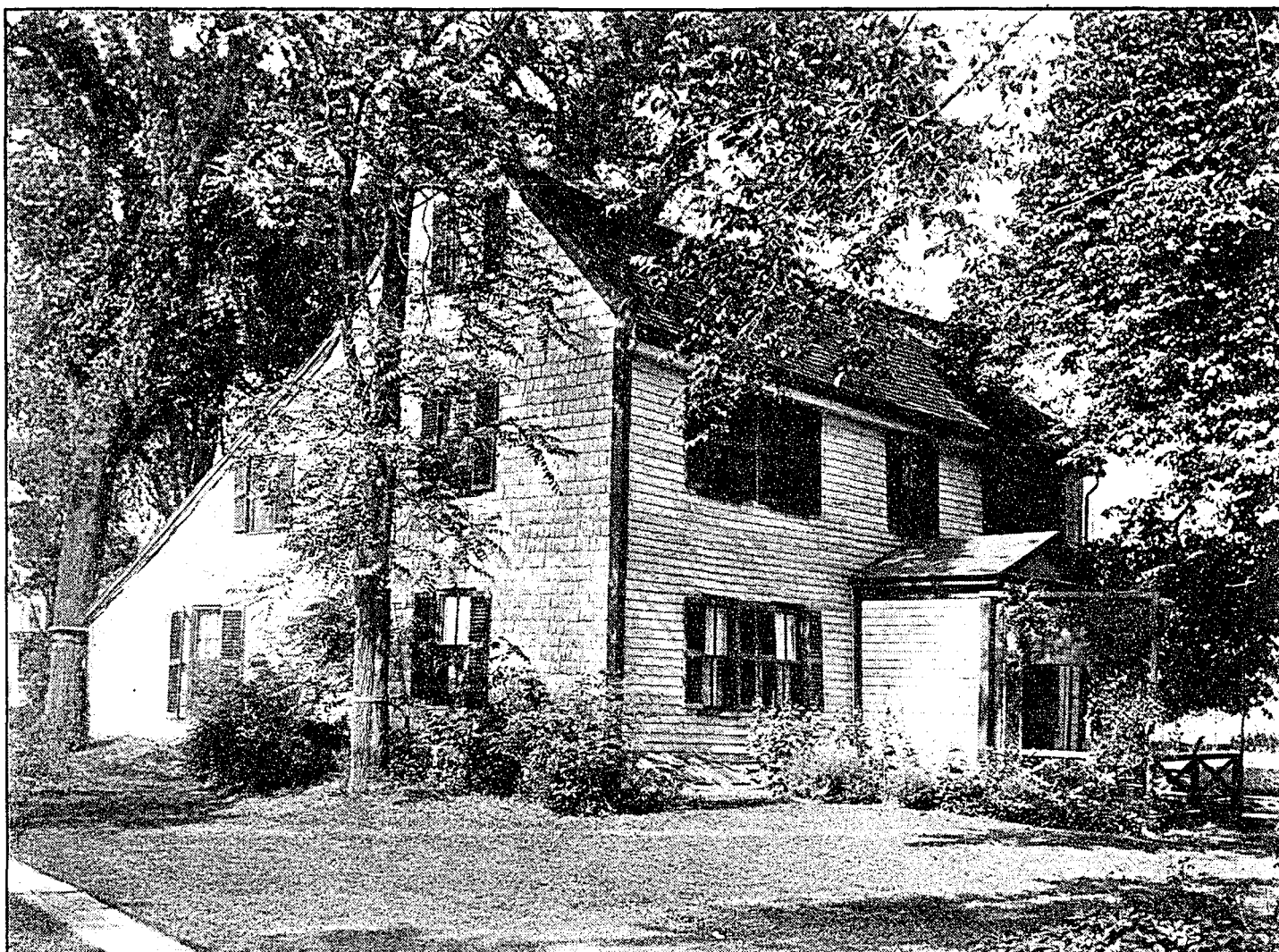
Passing down the hill to the Fellsway, we go across the bridge once greatly opposed by the people of Medford, who saw in it an obstruction to ships and diversion of traffic from Medford Square (an object devoutly desired at the present time). This was built, however, to replace Penny Ferry in 1787. Washington passed over it in 1789. This bridge has been twice rebuilt and is now being enlarged.

Turning beyond the bridge to the right we are in Somerville, not far from the site of the country house of Governor Winthrop, and near what is believed to be the

site of the first boat built by him in the colonies, *The Blessing of the Bay*, July 4, 1631. It is probable, though, that earlier boats were built by Cradock's men. At the coal wharf in Somerville, where the Middlesex Canal once entered the town, ran the turnpike to Boston from Medford. This road, now called Mystic Avenue, was opened as a pike in 1803, with a toll house on the Somerville side, but the road was never very profitable and became a public highway in 1866. On the right may still be seen the salt marshes, and even now men sometimes pile up the salt hay in the fall; but the rest of this avenue is in a transition stage too often unsightly in our old communities. By one who looks with care across the river the curves of Labor in Vain may be detected, not far from the new bridge now under construction. Two brooks, almost lost in the rubbish, cross the road, Winter and Twopenny, the latter once so generous that Isaac Royall had on it a private landing for his plantation.

Along both Riverside Avenue and Mystic Avenue the splendid tradition of Medford in ship-building rises vividly before our imaginations. We see the winding river, blue amid its clean salt marshes; the ship-yards dominated by the great hulls of clipper ships; the wharves alive with smaller coastwise boats. The din of the hammers, the ring of iron and the creaking of ox-carts hauling lumber echo in our ears. We can almost smell the tar boiling in the great kettles ready for calking seams, or the aroma of hot molasses rising from the distilleries hard by. Those days are gone, together with the long hours of the ship carpenters, who rose with the sun and ate at a communal dining table with apprentices on one side and the skilled workmen on the other.

The locks at Cradock Bridge control the tides of the upper river, and trim little motor boats have displaced the lighters, the early traffic carriers of the eighteenth century. But the seal of the city of Medford still bears a ship on the stocks, and to the eye of one who reads the past, newly launched clipper ships are still sailing down the river to the sea.



BLANCHARD HOUSE, WELLINGTON, 1657.





## A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF MEDFORD AS A TOWN.

- 1619. Death of the Sachem Nanepashemit at the hands of the Tarrentines.
- 1621. Probable exploration of Medford by Miles Standish and Winslow.
- 1628 or 1629. Early settlement probably made by Cradock's men.
- 1630. Authoritative settlement by some of the men sent by the Massachusetts Bay Company under Governor Winthrop to found a colony.
- 1630, June 17. Winthrop's exploration of the Mystic for five miles.
- 1636. Building of Cradock Bridge.
- 1657. Building of Blanchard House in Wellington.
- 1668. Building of Peter Tufts (Cradock) House.
- 1689. First representative, Peter Tufts, sent to General Court.
- 1696. First meetinghouse built near "Oborne Rode" (27 x 24 feet).
- 1732. Purchase of estate of Lieutenant Governor Usher by Isaac Royall.
- 1734. Building of first schoolhouse, 20 x 24, near Meetinghouse Brook.
- 1754. A large grant of land ceded from Charlestown to Medford, comprising present land south of river and most of North Medford and the Fells.
- 1755. A quota sent by Medford to French and Indian war, forming part of the troops removing Acadians. Some of the latter settled in Medford.
- 1775, April 19. First stop on his ride made by Paul Revere at home of Captain Isaac Hall. Fifty-nine minutemen marched to Concord.
- 1777-8. Quartering of British troops, defeated at Saratoga, on Walnut Hill.
- 1785. Formation of Medford Amicable Fire Association.
- 1787. Construction of Wellington or Malden Bridge at Penny Ferry.
- 1789. Visit of President Washington to General John Brooks.
- 1797. Establishment of first post office.
- 1803-1852. Operation of Middlesex Canal through Medford.
- 1803. Foundation of shipyard industry by Thatcher Magoun. Last ship launched by Joshua Foster at the foot of Foster's Court in 1873. Ten shipyards in all and 567 ships built.
- 1825. Establishment of Medford Social Library.
- 1833. Building of Town Hall at the corner of Main and High Streets.
- 1835. Opening of first high school.
- 1835, June 24. First passenger train run from Lowell to Boston.
- 1854. Opening of Tufts College under Hosea Ballou.
- 1861. Marching orders issued to Company E, Lawrence Light Guard, by Daniel Lawrence for Col. Samuel C. Lawrence.
- 1870. Medford's first public water supply from Spot Pond.
- 1875. Presentation of home of Thatcher Magoun to town for a library.
- 1878. Introduction of telephone in Medford.
- 1892. Medford receives her charter as a city.





## STATISTICS OF MEDFORD, 1934.

Extent of city, north and south, about 4 miles; east and west, about  $4\frac{1}{10}$  miles.

Area of city,  $8\frac{627}{1000}$  miles, or 5,521 acres.

Population, 1934, 60,199.

3 cemeteries: Old Revolutionary Cemetery on Salem Street, 38,480 square feet; Cross Street (Old Shipbuilders') Cemetery, 49,651 square feet; Oak Grove Cemetery,  $48\frac{538}{1000}$  acres.

16 parks and playgrounds.

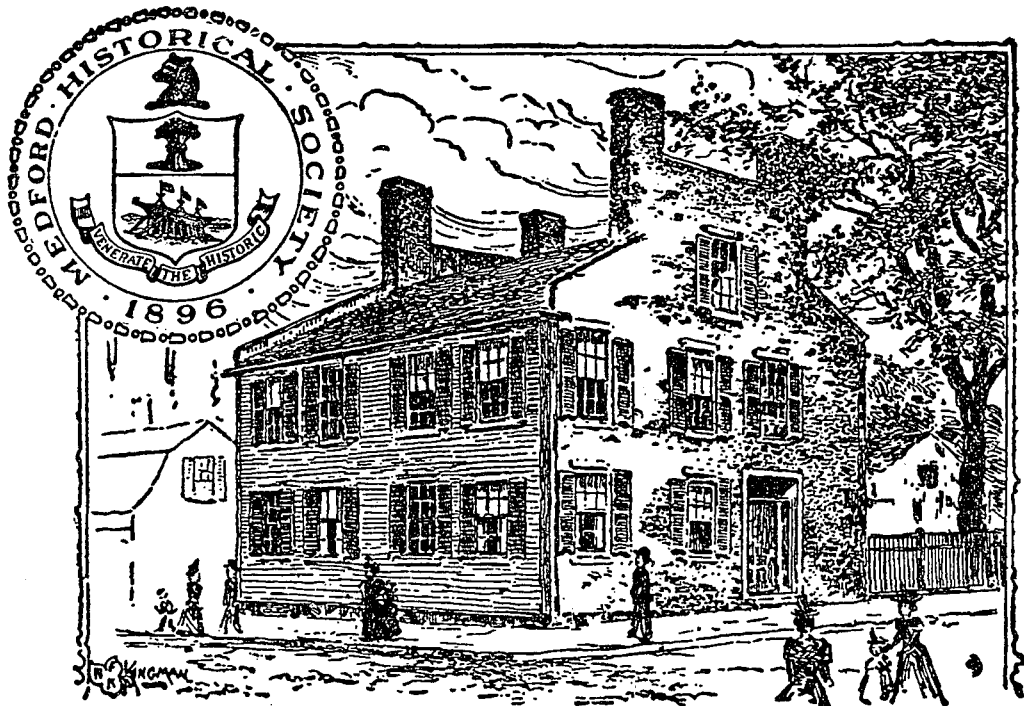
Mystic Valley Parkway (including boulevard),  $38\frac{6}{10}$  acres; Middlesex Fells, 1057 acres; Fellsway and Fellsway West, about 59 acres.

20 Elementary schools, 3 Junior High schools, Senior High school, and approximately 12,571 pupils in 1934-35.

6 fire stations with 8 fire companies, two-platoon system.

Total taxable property, real estate and personal, approximately \$81,337,300.

Main Public Library for adults, Juvenile Library, 9 agencies and Branch Libraries, with approximate distribution for 1933 of 500,000 volumes.



First Home of Medford Historical Society.  
Lydia Maria Child House, Salem Street.

