THE SHOE INDUSTRY OF WEYMOUTH

COMPILED BY

BATES TORREY

President Weymouth Historical Society

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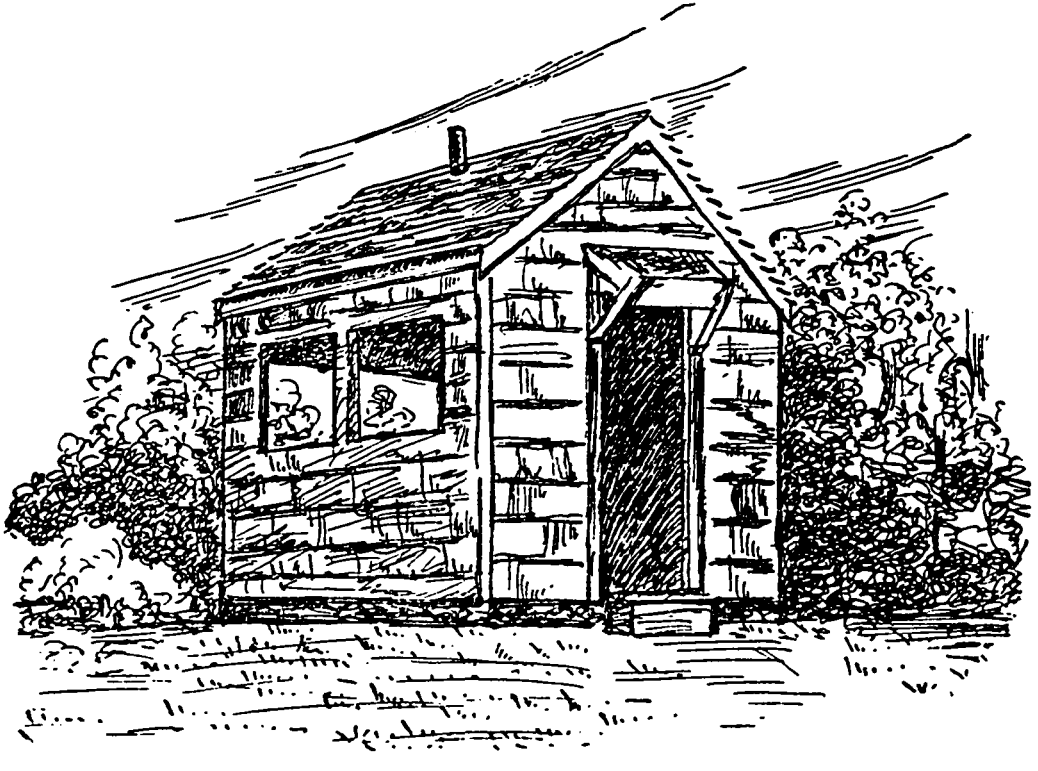
CONTENTS



CRUDE TEN-FOOTER

INTRODUCTION

The pioneering companies which landed upon the shores of Wessagusset, afterwards to become Weymouth, came mostly to trade with the natives. Sometimes they fished in the bays and shoals off New England, and came ashore to cure their catch, but our particular ancestors first came to barter with the Indians, and then others followed who had learned of a good place to settle.

At all events, there was cultivated quite naturally the instinct for commercial intercourse, and out of phlegmatic Englishmen there developed the resourceful Yankee—the trader *par excellence!* In order to supply the resident merchant with wares manufacturers had to be born, and related industries followed. Preference and suitability often rule in such cases, and here in Weymouth, by some twist of fortune, the making of shoes took the lead.

Through all the stages of this industry development was made from the primitive art of the traveling cobbler, from the product of the small shop in many a dooryard, from the gang-work of cooperative effort and use of the simplest agencies—up to the large factories equipped with efficient machinery, to the mammoth hives of systematized manpower, financed to the limit of adequacy, and productive beyond the requirements of a nation.

Weymouth has witnessed such a transformation in all its details; her shoe industry has been the sign-manual of essential bread-winning; to fix upon the records while memories are good the story of this the basic occupation of the town is, in the estimation of some, quite as important as to celebrate civic virtue or exploit genealogical pride.

CAPT. NATHANIEL SHAW
(1769-1832)

GENERAL COMMENT

The town of Weymouth has always been associated with the making of shoes, beginning with the "hanging of an able-bodied cobbler" for the crime of stealing corn from the Indians in 1622-3.* The presence of a shoemaker in the Thomas Weston company, in a body of men avowedly traders, gave the distinctive bread-winning occupation of the town an early start, which has never abated its momentum for more than 300 years.

It has to be admitted that the forward movement was not great during those earlier years when agriculture was an easier employment for untrained settlers, but the same urge to leave the farm may have gradually become operative as is so often the case today

The modern era of shoemaking began between 1860 and 1875, about the point of beginning of the machinery phase of the industry, and no formal history of the subsequent period has been written.** By far the most conspicuous changes and improvements have come within the last fifty years, and in the recollection of living men; so that the opportunity is ripe to now fix in permanent form absolute knowledge on the subject, before the facts fade into tradition, like that pervading most of the time before the industry became mechanized, and the practices of big business had been applied.

Such uninterrupted pursuit of an occupation, as intimated, must necessarily have produced interesting results, even though the description of its development is confined to a limited area. The labor of a large proportion of the

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*Thomas Morton, in his "New English Canaan," hinted that in the Wessagusset hanging a bed-ridden weaver was substituted at the eleventh hour for the able-bodied cobbler; showing a preference in the perpetuation of an industry.

**"The Organization of the Boot & Shoe Industry in Mass. before 1875," a thesis by Blanche E. Hazard, deals exhaustively with early phases, referring often to Randolph and vicinity.

inhabitants of Weymouth* was ably devoted to this end, and examples of their skill penetrated almost every section of the country; for as colonization developed the output of boots and shoes kept pace with the demand.

Nowadays "shoes" is the generic term, though formerly the word "boots" was oftener used, a designation for the long-leg style made for men, and the high-top for women. As recently as the Civil War period long-leg boots were in vogue; but special styles were made for particular localities, the New Orleans trade differing from the Californian, and Weymouth did a large business with both of these places. The intermediate and home markets required boots quite unlike those suited to the distant sections named.

The tanning of hides, to convert them into leather, has always been an adjunct to the shoe industry, and has been carried on in Weymouth coincidently with the same, the ancient vat-process and the use of tree-bark preceding the methods of today.

Of course, in those days of pioneering, the shoemaker had to be a member of about every expedition to these shores; but any community lacking that necessary adjunct to local craftsmanship must needs depend on the resources of another settlement, and out of that need developed the itinerant shoemaker. That was the first stage of colonial shoemaking, and was undoubtedly the earliest manifestation of the art in Weymouth.

Not a little of contemporary interest must have hovered around the wanderings of that gentry (the perambulations of Appleseed John being a parallel instance later), and the lighter touches of pioneering lost a reflection of romantic gypsying when the travelling cobbler passed from the picture.

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*In 1820, 369 out of a population of 2407 made shoes, and reckoning six to a family shows the preponderance of the trade.

In *"Hawkers & Walkers"* one may read that "in the primitive days, when the head of the house was a Jack-of-all-trades, the father or the elder brother made and repaired the family shoes. . . . Shoemakers went from house to house (and) in this stage of the industry the householder supplied leather obtained from the local tannery, the 'findings' and often the work-bench; the itinerant cobbler carried only his tools. . . . People would 'date-up' ahead of time, and often the price for his work was determined, though he was commonly partly paid in board and lodging. Generally these journeymen 'farmed' in spring and summer, and cobbled for the neighborhood in winter."

"So, working that the world might walk,
They brought, in shadowy review,
Their dreams and leather, tools and talk,—
Those bygone brethren of the shoe."

Much of local gossip, and outside information now furnished by newspapers, was brought to the door by this curious character on his annual pilgrimage. Very likely the skin of the family cow had been treated in the community tanning-vat, and a "side" of passable leather was hanging in the shed, waiting for the day when footwear for "the whole tribe" was to be fashioned.

And what did this disciple of St. Crispin carry in his pack? Probably the "8 necessary tools." A hammer, of course, an awl, sharp knives, pincers, a piece of smooth bone, lapstone stirrup, waxed-end for sewing, a few lasts with pads for changing the size, and—well, the requisite gadgets for plying his trade, not forgetting the leather apron!

Upon arrival he installed himself in the kitchen, set the deftest boy to whittling pegs, took sundry rough measurements of human feet, and cheerily cut and pounded all day long, relieving the monotony of labor with gossip from outside enlivened by quip and jest. If literature were invoked to herald his coming, it might not be "The Song of the Shirt," but a rune which in the folklore of the period recited the tale of the itinerant cobbler.

Perchance the man of the house, snooping around, acquired some insight upon these operations, and later essayed to make a shoe himself. By steps and degrees the native industry of Weymouth was evolved. Setting up a structure wherein to pursue this avocation on a more agreeable basis to the housewife, who desired the kitchen for herself, was the next natural progression. Therefore the little shop began to be the appurtenance of many a homestead, either attached to the residence like a shed or in the yard, convenient to home and highway; thus the ten-footer figuring as the index of an industry as markedly as did the suspended horse-shoe another service in kind.

The transition from the ten-footer to the group effort in a slightly larger shop (it cannot be called a factory yet)

may have been more of a departure, and required careful planning. One of the steps has been demonstrated in Weymouth, and illustrated quite a novelty in the history of shoemaking, having been powerfully significant of the progression now under consideration. The report of its existence comes from Mr. Waldo Turner, who, though himself a carpenter, seems possessed of unusual observation for a man of 80 years.

"Among the contemporaries of Mr. Marshall C. Dizer was one Eben Poole, who in about the year 1845 was occupying a two-story building near Weymouth Center, using the upper floor for cutting, fitting, and the like; but was 'letting pews' as the expression went, on the ground floor for individual shoemakers.

"These pews were small compartments of the room, each with a window, and separated from each other by partitions three feet or so high, within which space as many as three persons could be seated on the low benches common to the period and where each workman conveniently made his own lot of shoes."

"Some of the men who rented these 'pews' were—Jacob N. Bates, Charles Henry Pratt, Simon Dempsey, and Henry R. Tirrell."

This proves to be something of a revelation in the shoe industry, indicative of that movement from individual to collective effort which at some time took place. The author has heard of no such similar progression, though changes in the methods of attack, if we may use that expression, were probably being made in different localities—and ways.

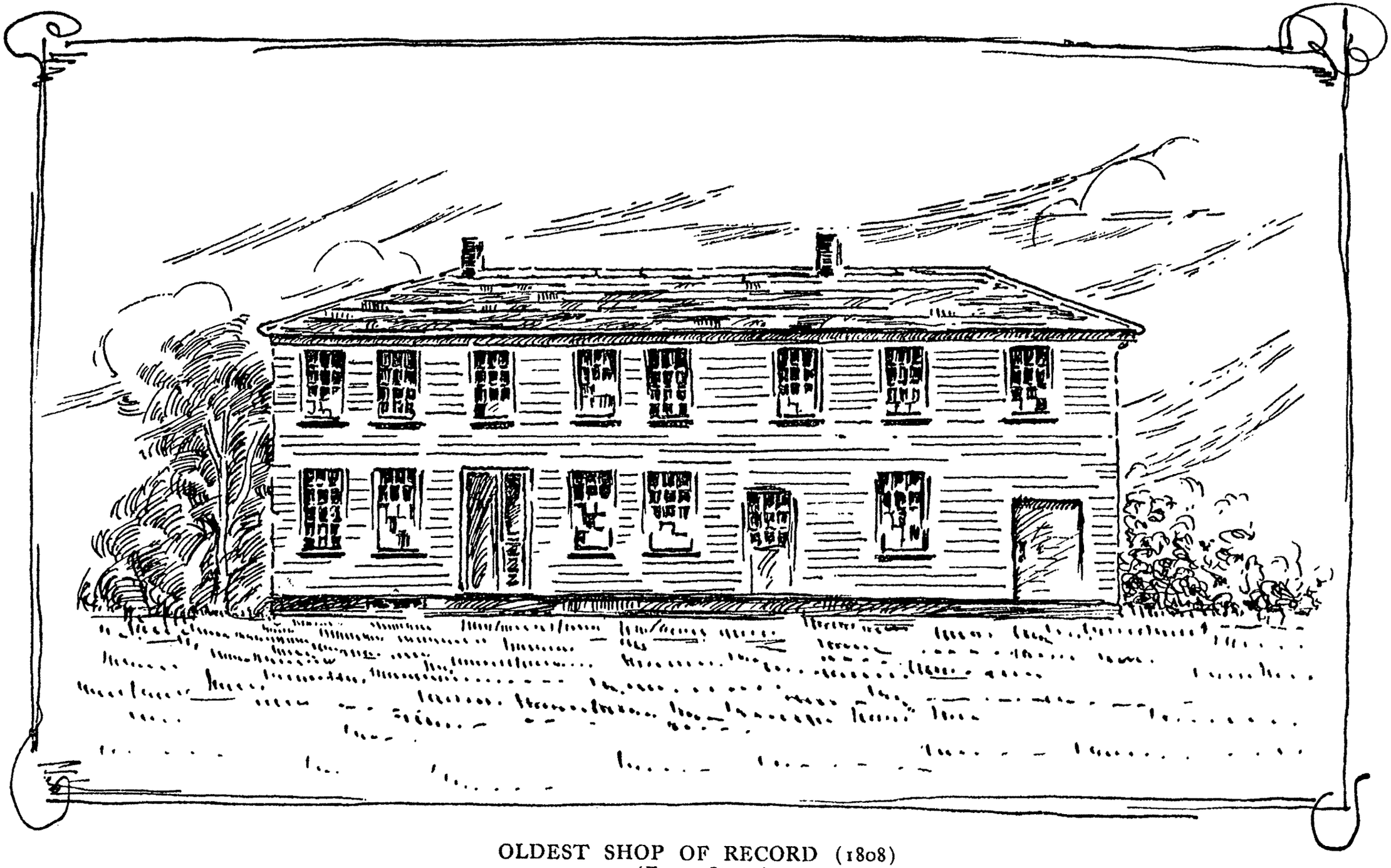
While the first century, and very likely the second, brought no considerable advance in procedure, the number of those engaged increased until it reached the proportions we have already mentioned, and then at the dawn of 1800 another phase of the industry came into being—the factory stage!

Before proceeding further on this line let a few paragraphs of reminiscence give reality to the picture. "My grandfather (Henry B. Reed speaking) was a shoemaker with a little shop appurtenant to his residence, and abutting on that historic highway called the New Bedford Turnpike.

In those days a shed for a wagon, wood or farming tools, was the connecting link between house and shop, the latter often being the extremity of an ell flush with the sidewalk; a curious notion of building so that the worker could be conveniently reached from the road, and he in turn be able to see all the 'passing.' My earliest memory is that of peeping through the window into this little shop and seeing the low bench and the kit, but at that time (the 1860s) grandfather had begun to work in his son's factory. My own father had told me of his experience when seven years of age, in 1835, hammering on soles before and after school in that same shop.

"Such an edifice or annex was not the scene of the initial processes of the shoe industry, but more devoted to the bottoming stage, and incidentally it proved to be a cosy place for chance visitors from the neighborhood, who happened in to discuss current events at a time when newspapers were not so plenty as nowadays. There was commonly a box to sit upon (for the caller), and a cast-iron cylinder stove fed with leather chips to furnish heat in cool weather. The work-bench was characteristic—posturing on four short wooden legs, with a hollowed out seat at one end provided with a leather bottom. At the right of the sitting workman there w'd be some square compartments checkered off for the reception of pegs, nails, or tools, while an upright cabinet of drawers at the extreme end held many needful things." The latter was the adjunct of a rather complete bench, for many examples consisted of only a plank with legs, without even the comfortable seat, and with a few crudely separated places for tools and supplies.

In olden times the shoemaker was a "cordwainer;" old records contain that word quite frequently. *Cordwain* was a sort of Spanish leather made of goatskin or split horsehide, and was used throughout Europe during the Middle Ages (1450-90) for the boots of the wealthy. The term, therefore, got into our Colonial parlance, even as recently as the beginning of the 19th century, and many a resident of Weymouth has been so described in books of record or old wills and deeds.



OLDEST SHOP OF RECORD (1808)
(Front Street)

In order to trace the growth of the shoe industry in Weymouth it will be necessary to connect it with the men who gave it birth and impulse through the centuries. Unfortunately the 17th and 18th may have to be rather sketchily treated, for the reason that few records exist. What we know has been communicated from person to person, and tradition enters largely into the recital. We believe that this industry was the principal one; else how would it be that so great a proportion of citizens were engaged in shoe making at the beginning of the 19th century. While the account of colonial doings in this respect must be casual, and many of the connecting links have to be established by inference, we can in early 1800 find many facts, and from then on prepare a fairly continuous sketch.

Certain names stand out in strong relief* and many are prominent, but it should not be taken amiss if all deserving it are not mentioned in these pages.

James Tirrell, senior, (1768-1815) built the shoe shop (not called a factory in those times) about 1808 which stood on Front St. not far this side of the Reed Cemetery. Though a comparatively young man when he died, he left five sons and two daughters. His widow married cornet Ezra Reed, who already had a large family.

The shop referred to was on land which was part of the original Gideon Tirrell homestead,** and about 300 feet from the house. It would seem to be a rather small structure in these days, being about 25 ft. x 35 ft. and only two storys high. The work done here was the cutting, treeing and dressing, the rest of the process being performed outside in homes and ten-footer shops. The footwear then made was mostly men's brogans, a few long-leg boots and some slippers, cut from heavy kip skins, or the finer ones from calf skins.

James Tirrell's five sons, Kingman, James, Minot, Wilson and Albert, were all manufacturers of boots, and also important leather dealers. Kingman went to New Orleans

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*The first factory for shoemaking in the South Parish was built by James Tirrell, son of Gideon, and for 125 years nine Tirrells made shoes in Weymouth without interruption.

**Others say the original homestead was on Middle St., now West, near the lane leading to the mills, now Mill St.

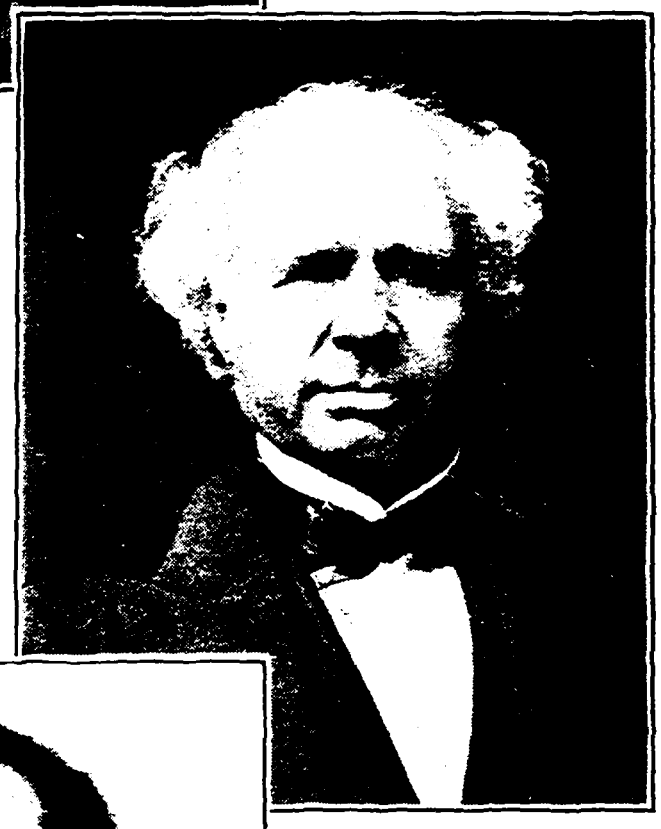
about 1815-18, soon after Louisiana was ceded to the United States, taking a partner there and establishing a wholesale jobbing house for the sale of shoes to planters, the product of the Weymouth shop.

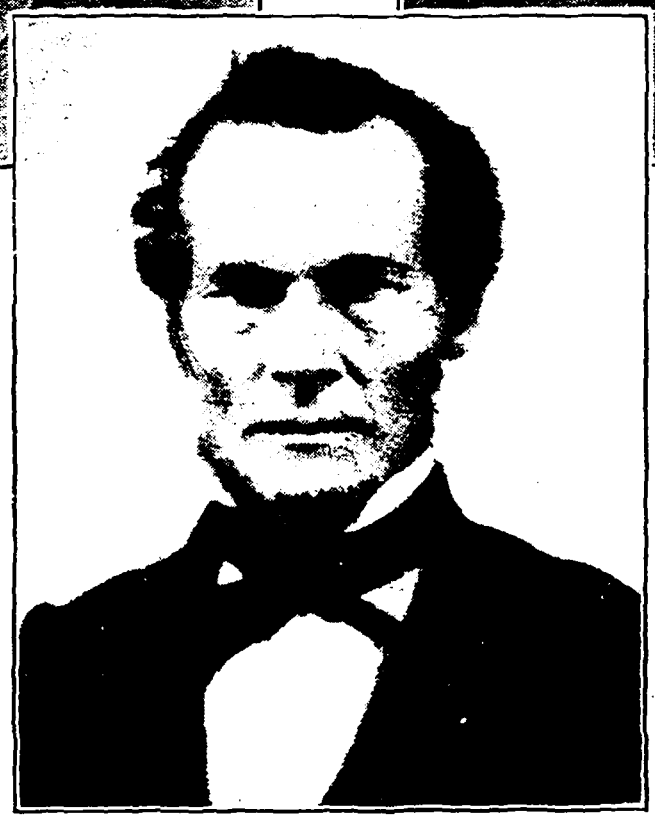
James Tirrell Jr. made shoes for a time in the same shop that his father had built, which at some period was enlarged, as is plainly indicated in the illustration. The business was subsequently moved to the center of South Weymouth, where he with his brothers Minot, Wilson and Albert, benefiting by the experience of Kingman, prosecuted a successful New Orleans trade. Later the Tirrell brothers established a sole leather business in Boston under the style of J. & A. Tirrell, owning several tanneries in New York state,* and producing some of the finest hemlock tanned leather shipped into Boston.

After the death of James Tirrell the business was continued by his sons James and Alfred until the early 1880s, though previous to this Alfred had been a member of the firm of Tirrell & Bates. From 1833 to 1860 Wilson, the younger brother, also manufactured shoes in the shop near the homestead, and it was then the addition was made to about 75 ft. long. He catered to the New Orleans trade, and his jobbing-house there was in charge of his brother-in-law Winslow Blanchard; but about 1861-2 he sold out to Winslow and Christopher, both of South Weymouth, and they continued there a good many years; and although Winslow erected a handsome Mansard roof dwelling on Pleasant St. in 1859, only the family lived there, he remaining devoted to his business in the Southern city, where his oldest son died of yellow fever.

Wilson Tirrell of Brockton furnishes also the following: "The footwear made consisted of high grade boots and shoes, pegged, nailed and hand-sewed; the uppers were cut upstairs in the shop, and some of the fitting was done there, the lower floor being used for treatment of sole-leather, treeing and packing. There was a grocery store at one end. A part of the fitting (stitching) and all the making (bottoming) was done outside in practically the same manner as in earlier days, no great improvements having been ac-

*At Tayburg and Florence, not far from Rome.





JAMES TIRRELL SR.

ALBERT TIRRELL MINOT TIRRELL

WILSON TIRRELL SR.

complished in shoemaking up to 1837-50. . . . From 1800 to 1837 lasts were made by hand from pine wood blocks, the shoemaker often whittling out his own lasts, only one of a size being used, which served for both right and left; shoes thus being interchangeable. There were no detached blocks, for ease of removing the last from the shoe, and a change of width was achieved by adding one or more thicknesses of leather to the top.

In 1808 all shoes were forwarded to Boston in saddle-bags on horseback, and when consigned to New Orleans were repacked in casks or hogsheads for easy handling on shipboard, and then the hogsheads were used to ship molasses back to Boston. Wooden boxes for packing shoes did not come into use until 1837-50. . . . The writer found in the attic of grandfather Wilson Tirrell, after his death, old bills for brogans which he bought from Henry Wilson of Natick, who was later vice-president of the United States, and his price was from 75 to 85 cents per pair. Those shoes were resold to the New Orleans customers."

After Wilson Tirrell Sr. retired on account of unsettled conditions in the South, antedating the Civil War, Wilson Jr. (born 1832) began the manufacture of men's boots and shoes for the New Orleans market, about 1856 establishing a jobbing-house there, and supplying goods made in the same old shop, as did his father, uncles and grandfather before him. . . . He continued in business until about 1867, and was the last Tirrell to manufacture in the old Front St. shop, which was then used for various purposes until destroyed by fire about 1920. He had a family of three sons and four daughters, the eldest sons Wilson and Warren born July 20, 1858, following in the shoe industry." We will leave the record of that family for the present.

The Reed boys, Quincy, Harvey, John and Alvin, sons of Ezra who married the widow of James Tirrell Sr., as above related, proceeded to identify themselves with the shoe industry of Weymouth; and it is a matter of record that Quincy at age 16, and Harvey at 18, began a wholesale shoe business in 1809 at 130 Broad St., Boston. Mr. Quincy L. Reed, son of Quincy, always claimed that this concern of H. & Q. Reed was the first to deal exclusively in boots, and so they were entitled to be called founders

of the wholesale business in that commodity in Boston and New England.

At that period Weymouth manufactured all grades of men's footwear from high split leather brogans to fine calf boots, and although H. & Q. Reed sold only Weymouth products they had a sufficient line to satisfy all demands. They were successful, and when they came of age it is reported that these youngsters paid their father $4,000. and had $10,000. left as capital; a remarkable showing when it is considered that they began with but little more than their father's assurance that the boys were all right and would pay their bills.

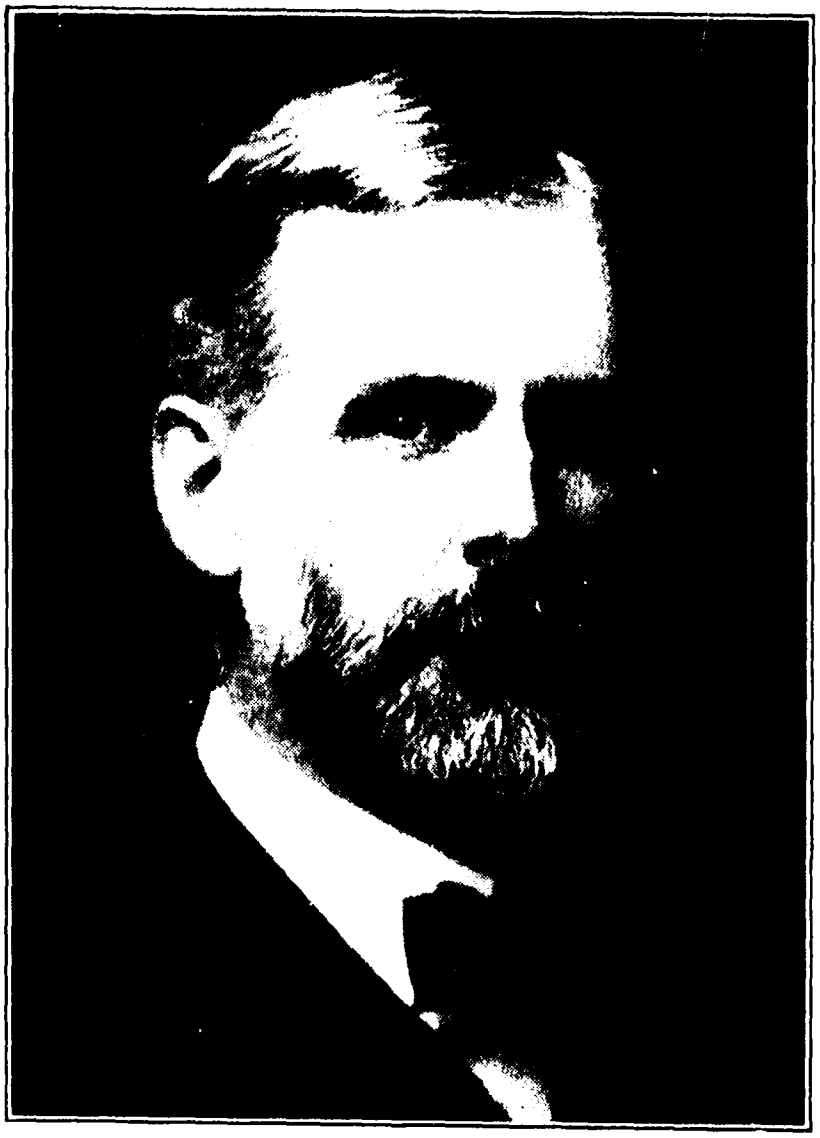
Father Ezra had a factory near his residence and sold his output through his sons. There were no railroads in those days, and this firm introduced ox-teams on the turnpike to Boston, displacing saddle-bag conveyance of the earlier period. Of course there was transportation by water, and New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Charleston were market ports for this Weymouth concern, as well as Cuba.

The Reeds also did a handsome business as jobbers in the South and the West Indies. Of course these adventures by Weymouth men were not invariably successful, but in the long run a good deal of money was made and brought home to this town.

"In 1883, in San Francisco (H. B. Reed speaking) and New Orleans, I looked in upon the stores formerly occupied by the Weymouth firms, and was surprised at their small size; and on my return I asked Mr. Quincy Reed how it was possible to make so much money in such limited quarters? Mr. Reed replied, 'I will tell you what I have seen, and you can judge for yourself. In New Orleans I have seen hides taken in exchange for shoes weighed on a small platform scale, when more hides were on the floor than on the scale, and allowance made at some cents per pound. Shipped North and tanned, these hides brought a big price as sole leather.'

"Then again, in Civil War time goods shipped around Cape Horn rapidly increased in value with the rise in the price of gold. Of course, in dull times, and 'times' were almost continually dull after the War, a well-to-do manu-

QUINCY REED (1793-1886)



HENRY B. REED

(First jobber (1809) and last manfr. of '70s)

facturer would buy leather for cash at his own price, make up a lot of shoes, and store them in barns of the neighborhood. He could set his own price for labor, and compel the shoemaker to accept his pay through the store which was commonly connected with the factory.

When times became good he unloaded these goods at a big profit, for the question of style had not entered into the situation, and basement bargains undreamed of. And it was comparatively easy to start manufacturing on a moderate capital, with no expensive machinery to buy. The would-be manufacturer could probably perform all the operations on a shoe, his family assisting, and outside help was available on a promise to pay when goods were sold. He would pay cash for a small stock of leather, until his credit was established, and immediately go ahead. With a few dozen pairs ready they would be shipped in to H. & Q. Reed, for example, on consignment, and if returns netted a fair day's wage for him and his dependents, and kept his credit for leather good, he was content.

And yet this system was really a form of slavery from which most manufacturers failed to deliver themselves; but at that it was some improvement over the status of a common shoemaker, when repeated 'docks' and payments through the store reduced him to actual slavery, from which financial failure could never release him. No wonder the poor craftsman took to drink, but the trouble with that statement is that shoemakers were not the only ones to so indulge."

However, the cost of living in early 1800 was in many respects low. A housebook of Cotton Tufts, dated 1810, exhibits suggestive information regarding food and articles of household use:—eggs twelve cents a dozen, rum twenty cents a quart; but imported goods were high, and sugar quite a luxury compared with today, being twenty-five cents a pound. There is a notation of 14 lbs of "best brown" sugar bought in 1813 for $3., and 7 lbs of white (1814) for $1.33; butter 20 cts a pound; cheese ten cts per pound; a gallon of molasses .63; and 1½ pints of lamp oil .33. Then we may note 3 pairs of yellow nankeens $2.34; 14 yds bed-ticking $8.12, 3 yds of coating and trimmings $6.55, and 2 yds calico (1813) .84. Elijah Bates in ac-

count with James Tirrell & Co., 1836, according to an old bill, was paying eleven cents a pound for sugar, twenty-five cents for butter, fifty cents for a gallon of molasses, but rather high prices for shirting, flannel, and cotton cloth. Shoemaking supplies, though, (appropriate to this inquiry), were eleven cents for a quart of pegs, four awls eight cents, and nails eleven cents a pound. On the other hand, for making 10 pairs of boots—$4.70; ten pairs of brogues (?) $3.20; ten pairs of shoes—$3.00, these being receipts to the workman the same year.

According to *Barber's Statistics* Weymouth in 1837 had a population of 3,387, of which about 1300 were engaged in shoemaking. That year 242,000 pairs of shoes were made and 70,000 of boots, at a value of about $428,000.

In 1861 there were twenty-one shoe shops in South Weymouth alone, and there were at least forty, great and small, in the entire town. That would seem to indicate the status of the shoe industry during a period of twenty-five years previous to 1875; but fifty years later the actual number of factories had dwindled noticeably, although it is fair to state that the probable output of the fewer present day shops would greatly surpass that of the time of less machinery and simpler methods.

Coincident with the shoe industry and its promoters there have been men who, in correlative lines, have contributed of their brain and brawn to achieve results. Some of those were at the head of accessory operation indispensable to the main idea, while others were formen, managers of departments, and representatives in the field; some of the latter, while comparatively unheard of, made their proper and valued impress.

We shall write of the Humphreys who conducted a tannery off Middle St. near Whitman's Pond; of Douglas Easton who by his unique personality and versatile ability occupied an important niche in the Dizer factory; of the Reeds who made tacks, as also did one of the Merritts, at a period when South Weymouth used more copper nails for California trade boots than all other shoe towns in the commonwealth; of the inventive talent of the Merritts, which

deserves a few paragraphs further on; of the Shermans who manufactured lasts, and later boxes and cartons; of the Powers, father and son, who were skillful shoe machine repairers before the innovation of duplicate parts; of George H. Bicknell who made counters, originating the idea of scarfing them from the strip of sole-leather and thus saving about a sixth of the leather and half the skiving, and so revolutionizing the counter business, and in due course becoming a pioneer in the cut-sole branch; of Lysander Heald who devoted himself exclusively to making heels to be supplied to the big shops.

Many others of that ilk could be enumerated, operating in all parts of Weymouth, and rounding out the efficiency of its shoe industry system.

Assuredly the most important adjunct to shoemaking is the last, and much can be told about its development; but it was an accessory that did not lend itself easily to a location in the big shop, and so had to be generally conducted as an outside branch.

The very primitive last of the itinerant shoemaker has been alluded to. Even as "late as 1880* most women's shoes were made on absolutely straight lasts, there being no difference between right and left shoes, so that the necessity for breaking in a new pair of shoes was not easily undertaken by either sex. There were but two widths to a size, the last itself being used in producing what was known as a 'slim' shoe. When it was necessary to make a 'fat' or 'stout' shoe the shoemaker placed over the cone (instep) of the last a carefully prepared pad of leather, which was built into the shoe in order to secure additional displacement."

An important improvement was made just prior to 1852 (says Mr. Johnson) namely the "block" last, which superseded the use of instep-leathers referred to above. This latter was a wizard device with which the manipulator of skill could work wonders in shoemaking; for if he desired to have the shoe "slim" he would push it not so far toward the toe, but if he wished to make the shoe "full" the contrary would be the treatment, and sometimes a wedge

*Says D. N. Johnson in his "Sketches of Lynn," a source of much of our information on this subject.

would be driven in besides. Resourceful workmen had several instep-leathers for all emergncies.

What was called the "Kimball" last was introduced about 1848, and this was the first really scientific one for making ladies' shoes. Each set of these lasts had sliding blocks which fitted into grooves, each block being marked "slim," "medium" or "full," as the need might be; and they were also graded for width. Later there were lasts with the blocks sawed out from the top, similar to those of the present day.

However, we are happy to record the fact that one Alonzo Lewis of Lynn, "in a directory which he published, presented a diagram indicating how lasts could be made to conform to the anatomy of the human foot," and Johnson reported that "at the present time (1880) the best English, French and American shoes have substantially adopted the plan suggested by Lewis."

Within the memory of men now living there must be the recollection of the advertisement of the so-called Plummer Pattern Last, with its skeleton outline of the bones of the foot, indicating a saner trend in the science of last making. Lasts have commonly been made outside the shoe factory proper, and usually repairs and changes would be best achieved by an expert, and yet the writer has in mind how Mr. Theron V. Shaw, coming weekly to his South Weymouth shop, would don a little apron and spend most of his day "tinkering" upon lasts, thus showing a keen appreciation of the basic requirement for good shoe making.

In Weymouth Cyrus Sherman and his son Percy conducted the last business in their edifice on Mill River, not far from the tack mill and needle shop of the Merritts. The product of the Sherman lathes was distributed far and wide, showing that it must have been satisfactory to customers. Reuben Loud & Son made boxes close by, making extensive inroads upon all the pine groves of the vicinity; for wooden receptacles for packing cases of shoes had not then been superseded by cartons of various sorts.

At first the colonists probably wore the footgear brought over from England, and the buskin of early days, a kind of half-boot, looks as if it were a development from the Indian

moccasin; but really the buskin was of ancient origin, and worn by the Greeks and possibly earlier.

As far as Weymouth figures, the primitive footwear was boots and brogans, represented by the ordinary long-leg boot and the one or two-hole tied brogan. If there existed a crude slipper or sandal, we have failed to find a record of it. The kip-leather boot was sided up by hand, and fastened to the sole with wooden pegs. The brogan, consisting simply of a vamp and quarter, was similarly pegged.

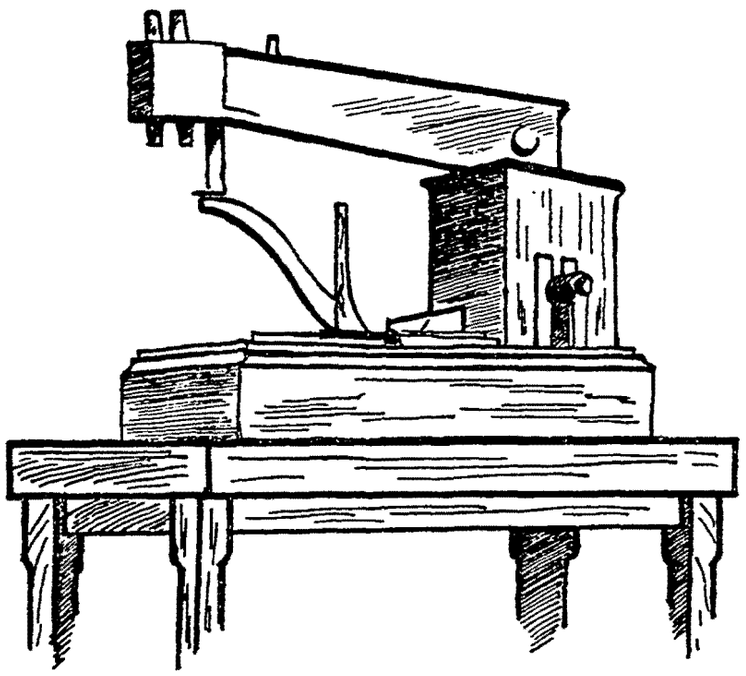
During the years from 1845 to 1873-5 there was considerable change in the methods of manufacturing; the machinery phase foreshadowed by the invention of the sewing-machine developed rapidly. Previous to this time the technique and tools employed had been in vogue several hundred years.

Some of the machines evolved were: Sewing machines for stitching the uppers, waxed thread machines for stitching uppers and counters, the fair-stitch machine to imitate a hand effect on the edge of soles, hand power rolling machine, foot-power pegging machine, hand skiving machines for upper and sole leather, hand edge-planes and irons for making edges, and the last turning machine.

The premier invention, however, was the McKay Machine, so called, which was originally conceived (it is said) by Edward French of South Weymouth, an ingenious mechanic in one of the mills. French and Lyman Blake of South Abington married sisters, daughters of John Hollis, living in a house on Union St. owned by Warren Shaw, who had a shoe-shop near by. Blake had a hand in the invention, too, and later Col. Donald McKay became interested when further technical and financial help was much needed. The beginning was made about 1858, and machines perfected in 1862, when the device was given impetus by the Civil War which developed the need of cheap footwear with a better bottom fastener than wooden pegs. The Southern marches were destructive of shoes, and hand-sewed work was too costly to capture army contracts. A royalty of five cents per pair for use of the McKay was demanded of the manufacturer, who also had to guarantee to the government contractor the durable quality of his product.

A significant sentence in one of Blake's patent papers is this: "Prior to my invention no machine existed for sewing soles to boots and shoes." The first test of the wooden model of the machine was made in the Warren Shaw shop, a modest place but one that was made to loom large in shoe-making history.

Other machines of the period were nailing, eyelet, and treeing, all run by either foot or hand power. There was little steam power in the shoe industry until 1868-75.



MODEL OF McKAY MACHINE

Weymouth was always noted for making shoes of a high grade; indeed, in the classification current "Weymouth Grade" was a designation understood by the trade.

For example, a description given by Mr. Wilson Tirrell of goods made during the 1860s may be indicative of the sort of shoes manufactured, in pegged, nailed or hand-sewed.

"The uppers were cut in the shop but sent out to the neighborhood and more distant homes, where seams were sewed by hand with linen thread by use of hog bristle-ends, through holes punched with an awl. The work was held in a clamp to keep it in place for the sewing. The tops were bound on with galloon leather binding, w'ch was stitched to the top and the lining by hand; the counter was also often stitched to the upper by hand with a waxed linen thread.

When so treated the boots were returned to the shop, to be sent out again with the sole leather, innersoles, heels, (in the rough) to shoemakers who worked in the small 10 x 10 shops. Here one or more men made the whole bottom of the shoe, the soles and innersoles and heels sometimes not being roughly cut in squares, but the whole side of leather given to the shoemaker, an average side being sufficient for 12 pairs of shoes.

It is a curious fact that on account of the stock being put up so roughly there was a chance for the economical shoemaker to save, by pounding out the leather on a lapstone and stretching with pincers, from one to two pairs of soles from the leather given him for 12 pairs. This saving was called "cabbaged" stock, and was put one side for private use, or sold to traders for a good price. It was considered all right for a man to keep any stock he could save from that given out to him.

These shoemakers worked on low-down individual 3½ ft. benches, with a seat, a place for tools, and a drawer beneath the seat to hold stock. Their tools consisted of a lapstone upon which to pound and harden the leather, a hammer, awl, a handknife to trim edges, skive off the flesh side of leather, etc., a strap and stirrup to hold the shoe on the knee while manipulating the same. Up to 1815 a great many pegs were made by hand, and thread was made from home-raised and home-spun hemp."

"Shoes were at first lasted with pegs instead of tacks. Edges were trimmed by a hand knife, and scoured smooth with a sandstone, before sandpaper came into use. The edge was then finished by applying paste or gum and blackball, and then rubbed with a hard-wood edge rub-stick."

"From 1800 to 1837 lasts were made by hand from pine wood blocks, the shoemaker often fashioning his own, and only one of a size was used for both right and left feet. And the same last served for all widths, the only change being achieved by adding one or more thicknesses of leather to the top; there were no detachable blocks on the home-made last to aid in removal from the shoe.

"The bottomed shoes were returned to the central shop for further treatment; sometimes, in case of poor work, the

shoemaker was fined. In the big shop boots were treed; that is, gum tragacanth was applied to the upper leather, which was rubbed hard enough with mutton tallow to produce a polish. Then they were dressed with a coat of shellac ammonia, and stiff and slick were ready for shipment; by means of saddle-bags, hogsheads or casks in 1800 and thereabout, or in wooden boxes after 1837-50, cartons not appearing until about the latter date."

In close association with this basic industry of Weymouth there seems to have been periodic "dull times," or "panics," as they have been more commonly called, occurring at varying distances apart, but usually following some war. And when it is remembered that this country has been involved in war, of greater or less magnitude, at intervals of about fifty years, the prevalence of business depressions has been almost discouraging.

Another theory is that the "panic" has been the consequence of loose methods of commercial conduct, and in the shoe industry much of its severity might have been obviated by wiser financing. Be that as it may, the fact is undeniable that the prosperity of shoe industry centers has been recurrently menaced by this ogre of the business world, and the progress of civilization seems not to have mitigated the danger.

Almost in the recollection of living men there have been the panics of 1837, 1857, 1873, 1893, 1907, and the one beginning 1929-30, which the whole world is suffering from. If we concede that in each panic there was a preceding year or so of dull times, and that the effects of the panic lasted a year or two, then it may be realized that in nearly half of a manufacturer's scope of operation he would be losing money. And allowing that he made a profit in the other half, the average shoe manufacturer would come out about even—which is exactlv what has happened.

In 1879 there was a panic which particularly affected the shoe trade, but as this is not a treatise on "panics" they are only incidentally mentioned to stress the perils that Weymouth has passed through in its shoemaking cycles. Doubtless our people experienced the same difficulties in 1837 as did those of another locality. For instance, one writer has

said: "The banking system of this period was probably one of the most vicious of modern times. The overthrow of the United States Bank in 1836, and the collapse of the Pennsylvania Bank, designed to take the place of the old institution which had run since Washington's administration, gave rise to the 'pet bank' system, under which each State created as many mills for making paper money as the supposed wants of business seemed to demand . . . The paper money of the Eastern and Middle States generally passed current at par within the States where issued, but was looked upon with suspicion when it strayed far from home . . . The shoemakers of Lynn now living (1880) well remember when the boss gave them a New York bill . . . They will also remember the healthy exercise they took running around to find someone to take it off their hands without a discount."

The foregoing may partially explain the unsettled conditions before the establishment of a national currency with a gold backing. We can also appreciate the business courage of our fathers. They certainly maintained an industry in parlous times!

The tanning of skins into leather had to precede shoemaking, of course, and Weymouth had a small quota of men engaged in this occupation.

Perhaps the largest tannery was that of William & Thomas Humphrey, operating in the '70s and probably earlier and later than that.* The old-fashioned bark processes prevailed, and considerable business was transacted by this concern. The plant stood off from Middle St. about opposite what is now a portion of Whitman's Pond but we fancy that in the earlier time the Pond did not extend so far; the presence of tree stumps at low water would seem to indicate that area was a forest, and by the same token the site of the Humphrey tannery was probably more favorable than it looks today.

Another tannery was in the old "Bark House" which was located not far from where the Swamp River crosses Pleasant St. The low land east of the road was formerly dammed, and water power provided for several industries, a very an-

*Started by Thomas in early '40s; later the sons Thomas H. and William were taken into the business. Their products had a great reputation.

cient one being a smelter for bog ore of the town. The Bark House tannery came subsequently and consisted of a building 50 or 60 feet long, by 30 feet wide, in which John and Luther Dyer carried on quite a business for many years. Subsequently the edifice was utilized (1856) for the "fitting" of boots by J. Newton Dyer, and still later it became a shoe shop operated by Henry and William Dyer.

The M. C. Dizer factory had a tannery appendage, presided over by the resourceful Douglas Easton, which contributed to the completeness of the whole plant.

"About 1875-80 the Knights of Labor (started 1869) began to make its appearance in Weymouth, succeeding the Knights of St. Crispin (Wilson Tirrell speaking), and other shoe towns, resulting in numerous strikes and lockouts, also causing continual increases in wages. By 1898-9 the Knights had merged into the Boot & Shoe Workers' Union, or the latter had taken their place, carrying with it an agreement for arbitration; the manufacturers agreeing to hire only workmen belonging to the Union, and the latter agreeing to arbitrate differences which might occur. One arbitrator was to be appointed by the manufacturer, a second by the Union; the third to be nominated by agreement of the other two. The Massachusetts State Board of Arbitration was established in 1886, the arbitrators being appointed by the Governor, the third member usually being a lawyer.

"The result of arbitration was a split, the workers demanding higher pay than they expected to get, and the State Board granting a price about half way between the pay demanded and the previous wage. Within a year another increase would be demanded, and another decision rendered in favor of the Union, resulting in a continual increase each year up to 1926. This had the effect of driving boot and shoe manufacturers away from the district, as did the Knights of Labor drive that business out of Weymouth in 1880-95.

"The writer, having engaged in hundreds of cases as an arbitrator, for over twenty years, still believes true arbitration to be one of the best, and perhaps the only way to settle differences. He does not believe that the way it has worked out has helped to keep the shoe business in this district."

The annals of New England are decorated with the names of efficient and ofttimes distinguished men who developed business in a territory that thenceforward became notable for a particular industry. Such has been the case in Weymouth with respect to the Shoe Industry, and much could be related of men whose commercial probity and vision inspired the production of a commodity which embodied a high standard of excellence. This is true of all sections of the town; there was not much difference in the human factor; all developments began in a small way, and grew by slow degrees; there was nothing sensational about it. Expedients kept pace with the demands for improvement, for the New Englander was ever resourceful.

Conservative modes, for the most part, characterized footwear of the second and third century in Weymouth; crazy and unhygienic styles had not been dreamed of; utility was the watchword. At the same time, the increased needs of a wider and more enlightened market encouraged a broader grasp and application of instrumentalities. Though the primitive shop could and did supply the home demand and that of adjacent communities, even before the Civil War Weymouth was negotiating a shoe trade across the continent when communication was crude and difficult, and with the farthest South when goods had to be transported by water. Therefore it is logical to believe that the men who fathered, financed and featured such widespread control of a product had to be unusual men that stood out from the mass, and that they became leaders in local affairs is a reasonable corollary.

In this survey there has been described a typical class of men. As an example of "survival of the fittest" the man of integrity as well as ability was bound to prosper. In the earlier days of the industry conservative methods more commonly prevailed, but if a man had the vision and the courage to expand his endeavors, thereby providing the leading bread-winning occupation for his community, by virtue of such precedence and leadership he fairly earned the more prominent place among his fellows. And yet the democracy of the time was such that no great social elevation attended particular initiative in business; the "shoe boss" circulated among his neighbors as one of them; no friction developed

in labor relations, rather the reverse, and the social status of the worker at the bench was as high as that of the superintendent or foreman.

Nathaniel Shaw of South Weymouth not only promoted and conducted a busy shoe factory, around which a village had grown because its inhabitants worked in the shop, but he figured conspicuously in general affairs, assisted in town government, planted trees to beautify the landscape, was prominent in church polity, and at the same time found opportunity to play the violin and foster as many of the fine arts as comported with the period. One thing led to another, the people and the business grew in industrial statue; the village prospered because of sympathy and appreciation, manual labor was honorable, gifts of ability were properly estimated; but underneath it all was the Shoe Industry constituting the basic support of the hamlet, and carried on obedient to an open-minded policy that brought comfort and happiness in civic, domestic and industrial life.

But passing from the leader to the rank and file, note a phase of the industry that is worthy of comment. It was written of old: "In many a garret and basement cordwaining teams can be seen at their work, and often while one of their number reads from a book or pamphlet his companions ply their vocation . . . No class of mechanics are more quietly disposed, or give less trouble to their employers, or are possessed of a larger fund of information, or grasp the leading questions of the day more readily than the shoemakers. It was Benjamin Franklin who bestowed upon these sons of toil the distinguished title, "garret philosophers," in consideration of their achievements in learning gained during hours of labor, their work being of that character which does not require any great amount of either mental or physical strain; and thus the worker may study himself or listen to reading by others."

Bringing this intimation nearer home, Charles Francis Adams once declared that when the Civil War burst forth the men of Weymouth seemed to be better posted on national affairs than the men of Quincy, for the reason, perhaps, that the latter worked amid the noises of the granite quarry

where conversation was difficult. And visualizing a cobbler's shop when a gossipy visitor happens in, these words are graphic: "When the discussion waxed warm one of these defenders of some cherished doctrine might be seen enforcing his argument with hammer poised in an imposing manner, or slowly descending upon the shoe held on his knee . . . in fact, it is of record that more men have risen to eminence from the 'seat' of the shoemaker than from the ranks of any other class of mechanics, except that of the printer."

Now, having given a somewhat discursive survey of characteristic phases of the shoe industry as prosecuted in Weymouth as a whole, we may pass to its development in those sections of the town that have been particularly devoted to shoemaking, and attempt to describe progress of the business and occupation, at the same time picturing leading manufacturers and some of their shops and factories, for better understanding of the scope of their efforts.

ERASTUS NASH
(Pinx. 1868)

WEYMOUTH LANDING
("FORE RIVER")

Gilbert Nash, a native son, very naturally said: "The beginnings of this trade (the shoe business) were at Weymouth Landing, spreading thence to the north and south villages, reaching latest of all the east, which now (1883) surpasses the others in the magnitude of its business in this line."

This may have been true to a degree, though an almost spontaneous birth and growth of the occupation seemed to be indicated in the earliest 1800s. On the other hand, many forbears, presumably skilled in the art, were alive in the late 1700s, and the favorable docks, with four packets sailing Fore River, makes it reasonable that the "Landing" gave the first considerable impulse to the shoe industry in Weymouth.

However, it is also probable that the making of boots there did not attain much volume until 1820 to '30, and by that time it had acquired headway in other sections; though it must have been a generation before it became necessary to employ a baggage-wagon for shipments, driven by Linfield, Bourke, or the Cushings, to say nothing of some North and South Weymouth four-horse Jehus.

Edmund S. Hunt, in his "Reminiscences" has given a delightful sentimental and personal touch to the industry, having been a brief shoemaker himself. Of course, the Hunt family comes in for particular prominence, but their doings were typical of the situation; and after the invitation in his preface, we do not hesitate to lift a few facts from his prolific pages. Front St. was decidedly on the map for shoemaking; Adoram Clapp lived there in the '30s, and later did a large shoe business with his sons on Mount Pleasant. Opposite him lived Dea. Ebenezer Hunt Richards, shoemaker and then a manufacturer. There was an old shop next above the school-yard on the same street occupied by Major Elias

Hunt, and later bv Elias Richards. Frederick Cushing lived in the brick-basement house by the burying ground, and was one of the old-fashioned shoemakers working in a shop opposite the house, and afterwards he had a cobbling-shop in Boston. Elias Hunt was first in business with his brothers Eben and William.

Eben Hunt manufactured in the old shop previously occupied by Deacon Zichri Nash (1770-1882) who married the widow of Samuel Arnold (1824). At the corner of Summer and Front Sts. was the home of Zachary Bates (1792-1881), a shoemaker full of stories and a favorite at chowder parties. David Hunt bought this house, and he had a big shoe business for those times, but later met reverses. Charles P. Hunt and John E. Hunt manufactured boots in what was previously the Atherton Hunt shop.

From 1830 to '40 the "times" seemed to have been no improvement over the years before; people earned little money and lived economically; land was plenty and the dependable support, and by making boots in a small way citizens made money enough to buy what could not be raised. Of the Panic of 1837 Mr. Hunt wrote: "I think there has been nothing since equal to those days of poverty. There was nothing for workmen to do, and they passed their time pitching quoits by the roadside."

In 1840 the manufacturers made all hand-sewed boots; the volume of business was only a few thousand dollars a year; there was little cash trade, mostly six and eight months' credit. The manufacturers always went to Boston on Saturdays to transact their business, putting up at Wilde's on Elm St., where as good a dinner (with wine) as could be had was served for "two an' thrippence ha'penny" ($.37½). At the end of 1840 Richard E. Loud began to manufacture, Stephen W. Nash, Ebenezer Kingman, George Nash and Nathaniel Blanchard & Co. made a few cases a week; but as it was all hand-work, everybody kept pretty busy. The old factory of Atherton N. Hunt was typical, having been previously used by the Cowings as a grocery, then raised one story and the old corn-barn in front added, begging the title of "Lighthouse" which was given it. With all his arbitrary ways Mr. Hunt was liked by his workmen—Elijah Arnold, who cut soleleather, Jacob Remington, who

came from Abington, crimped all the uppers, Prince E. Nash treed the boots. Mr. Hunt stood at a bench at the end of the counter and transed out* uppers from the calfskins; his son Atherton "cut in," and with others made the counters (?)** which were given to the fitters who were women of the village. When fitted, and tied up in dozens, the boots were given out to the boot-makers, and most of them lived in Braintree. Not a machine was used in the shop, and Saturday was always a holiday; the boss had gone to town.

In 1850, '51 and '52, shoe manufacturing was on the increase; Adoram Clapp and Elias Richards were on Washington St., Darius Smith moved into the old "Lighthouse," R. E. & C. Loud had expanded, Stephen Nash had taken on his brother Erastus and manufactured under the style S. W. & E. Nash. W. H. Chipman and Thomas Colson were on Summer St., and the California market was making things livelier; the sewing machine had also arrived.

In 1851 E. S. Hunt himself was making a few cases in the old shop by the burying ground, but becoming tired of the business sold out to Asa Hunt, and that was his valedictory to shoemaking. As the panic of 1857 was not so far ahead, perhaps this was a wise move.

The author is likewise indebted to Edward W. Hunt, Esq. for the substance of the following:

It is common tradition that boots were made at Weymouth Landing for home consumption in the early part of 1800. The same is doubtless true of long before that period.

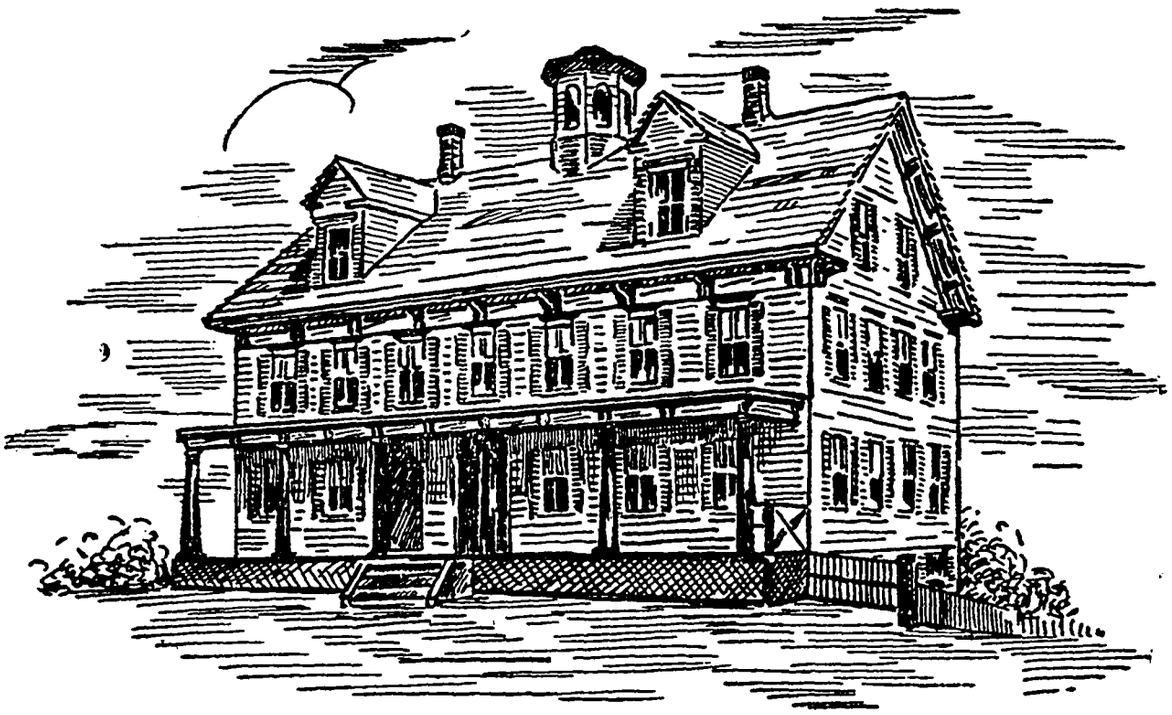
But the first record is of 1825, when Ebenezer Hunt and Major Elias Hunt did a manufacturing business of about $6,000. a year. Among those later were—Elias Richards, Russell & Buckman, A. Prince Nash, Chapin Thayer, Richard L. Hunt & Co., F. E. & A. H. Cook, George E. Porter, M. C. Nash & Co., Augustus T. Cushing, all on Front St. Then we may note Atherton Hunt, David Sterling, Charles P. Hunt & Co. on Sterling St. Then David Hunt, Henry Hunt, William H. Bond, on Summer St.; and Auburn Sterling, Cook, Sterling & Co. off Summer St.; then S. W. & E. Nash at corner of Summer and Federal, and

*Sometimes this is spoken of as "Trounced out."

**Probably he meant "quarters" to be sewed to vamps.

Atherton W. Tilden, Otis Smith, and James A. Pray, Stetson St.; William H. Clapp & Co., Norfolk St., and John W. Hart, Hart Ave.

James A. Pray was the last to make the long-leg boots about ten years ago (1922), and William A. Hall, of the William H. Clapp concern, together with Mr. Pray, are the only survivors of a long line of shoe manufacturers. S. W. & E. Nash made mostly for the California trade, boots that were literally shipped 'round th' Horn, and in good times turned out 20 to 30 cases a day. They were financed in some degree by jobbers and the old Union Bank, and had to pay rather high rates. Their factory, which was built about 1857, is still standing.



S. W. & E. NASH FACTORY
(Cor. Summer and Federal Sts.)

David Hunt went to Boston to live in the early '50s, starting a wholesale business in boots and shoes, but was burned out in 1872; and it is a strange fact that a badly charred piece of one of his bills was blown back to his father's farm on that memorable Sunday morning of the Great Fire.

John W. Hart afterwards built a large factory on Hunt St., now occupied by Pray & Kelley, paper box manufacturers, an industry that has become important in the shoe

business since cartons have superseded pine boxes. Hart, Clapp & Co., and Cook, Sterling were the only men that made shoes to any extent.

Deacon Ebenezer Hunt (grandfather of Edmund S.) was prominent in organizing the Union church, the edifice for which was floated down from Boston in 1812; he was a farmer during the summer, and manufactured boots and shoes in winter. Henry Hunt had but a small business, and one day left his shop—never to return. There were also mysteries in those days! Most of the men who enlisted for the Civil War from the Landing were shoemakers.

Most of the boots were bottomed outside by gangs in Weymouth, Braintree and Abington, composed sometimes of only two workmen, sometimes five or more, and they were a happy and carefree gentry (when rum and hard cider was obtainable) and always found time to "gun" or fish or steal away to a clambake!

The panics (called Depressions today) of 1837, 1856 and 1873 imposed a severe test for the business man, and great hardship for the workingman, but they went through bravely—*without any dole!*

In 1872 Albion and William Hall formed a copartnership under the style of A. Hall & Son, for the manufacture of boots and shoes in Weymouth. And Harry English, commenting on the event, said:

"This partnership first brought Will Hall to my notice. My dad also crimped many cases for this firm, and the younger member often made extra trips with special pairs of boots to our shop near the Caleb Stetson estate in Braintree. Many years afterward when I was engaging in the art of "trouncing" and turning, Will, a bit older and more sophisticated, occupied the post of superintendent with A. W. Clapp on Mount Pleasant.

The Commercial Bulletin survey (1875) makes reference also to "Landing" manufacturers:

HENRY HUNT

The most of the goods turned out at the boot and shoe factory of Henry Hunt at Weymouth are sold in New Eng-

land, though sales are made to some extent in the West. The goods of this house embrace sewed and cable wired work, and are so firmly established in popular favor that 25 men are employed, manufacturing 20 cases per week.

J. W. HART AND COMPANY

The boots and shoes manufactured by J. W. Hart and Company of Weymouth are adapted especially to the New England and Southern trade, and the 36 cases per week which the 40 hands now employed are turning out are eagerly taken in those sections. The factory at Weymouth is 24x32 feet and three stories high. The Boston office is at 48 Hanover street.

D. SMITH AND COMPANY

Although doing nothing but custom work for the New England retail trade, they have all they can do with the 17 hands at the boot factory of D. Smith and Company, Weymouth. In their well furnished factory, which is 43x30 feet and three stories high eight or ten cases of goods are made per week.

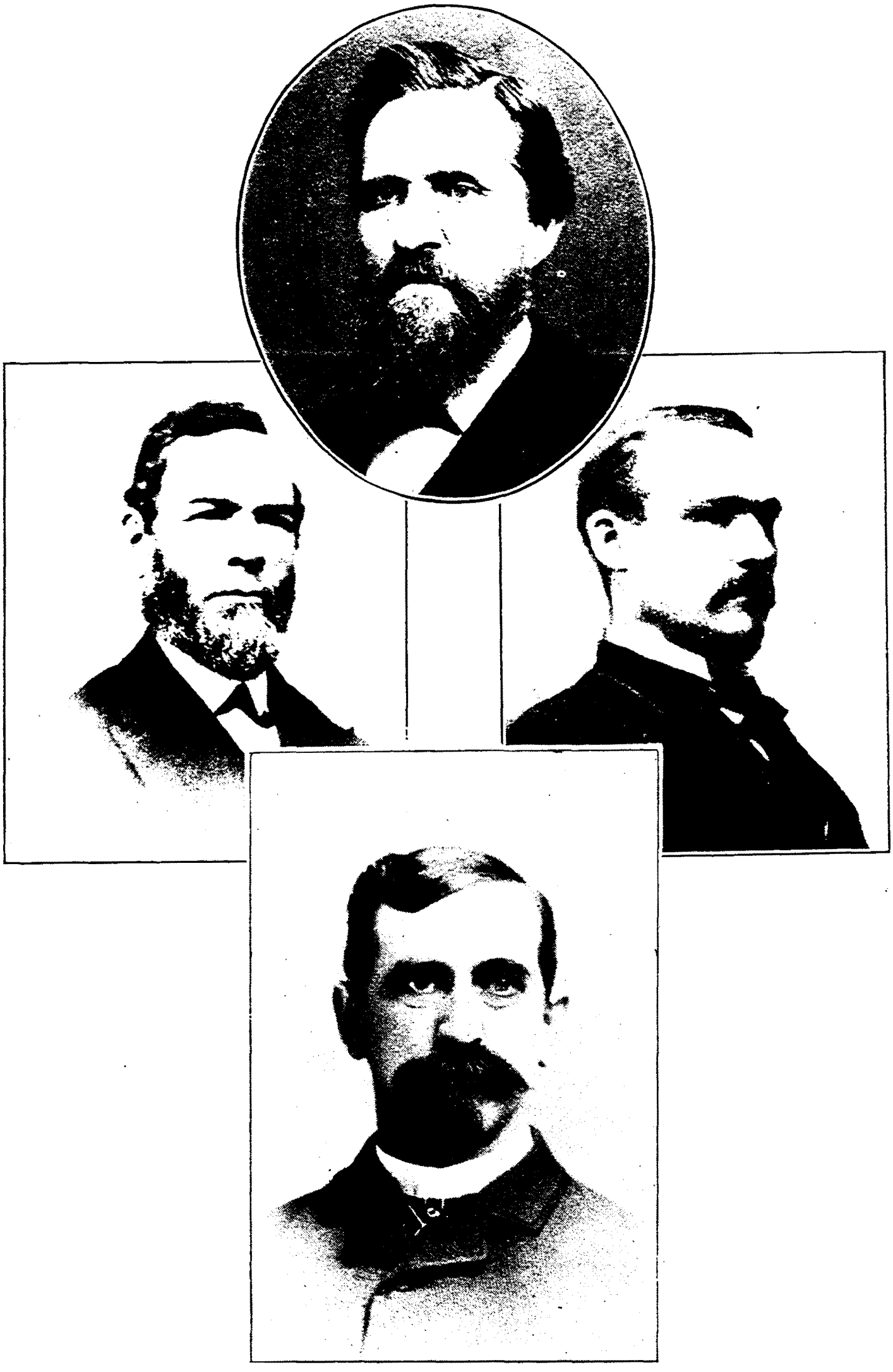
F. E. and A. H. Cook of Weymouth report that orders are coming in in good supply for their men's and boys' fine calf boots. The goods are both sewed and pegged, and are very popular in New England and the Middle States. Twenty-five hands are now employed, and 25 or 30 cases turned out per week.

A. H. STERLING

At the boot factory of A. H. Sterling, the work done is exclusively on orders. The 600 cases of sewed and pegged work which are turned out per year are taken by the New England trade.

A. A. LINTON

The different boot and shoe factories at Weymouth are supplied with boots at the rate of eight cases per day by A. A. Linton. Mr. Linton now employs 15 hands.



STEPHEN W. NASH

CHAPIN THAYER

JOHN W. HART

AUGUSTUS W. CLAPP

WILLIAM H. BOND

They are having all they can do on orders at the establishment of William H. Bond, manufacturer of men's, boys', and youths' calf boots, both sewed and pegged, at Weymouth. Thirty-six hands are now employed and the same number of cases are turned out per week, principally for the New England trade, though sales are also made in the West. The factory, which is 25x30 and three stories high, is now at work on full time.

CHARLES H. THAYER AND COMPANY

They are hard at work on orders at the establishment of Charles H. Thayer and Company, manufacturers of men's fine calf boots and shoes, both sewed and pegged, 48 Hanover street, Boston. The factory of the firm is situated at Weymouth, and they are now turning out 1000 cases of goods per year for the New England trade. The establishment runs on orders exclusively and 30 men can hardly keep pace with the demand.

S. W. AND E. NASH

Orders from as far West as California are very frequent at the establishment of S. W. and E. Nash, No. 60 High street, Boston. The factory of the firm, which is at Weymouth, is 35x55 and three stories high, giving employment to 150 hands. One hundred and twenty-five cases of goods, embracing sewed, pegged and cable screwed work are turned out per week for the New England, Southern and Western trade."

Albion Hall manufactured right over the Smelt Brook, but put out work to shoemakers in Braintree, and it is pertinent to mention the equipment in 1870-80 of some of those gang-shops in respect of machines. The McKay Machine had arrived; also Standard Screw (run by a Baxter engine), a buffing machine, heel-stoner, moulding machine for outersoles and insoles, Fair Stitch machine ("New England") and a pegging machine (the "Varney"). These were actual machines in one of those shops.

Other concerns were George Porter, A. W. Clapp on Mount Pleasant (a Whittemore company was there later); Francis Tilden, making slippers as recently as the early 1900s; Prince Thayer, long before that on Front St., and doubtless quite a few others we have been unable to locate.

Making no excuse for reiteration (see Prov. XXIV - 6) when good copy confronts the vision, we submit the following:

"Harking back to the old system of boot and shoe making I knew, of course, the manufacturers whose business centered on small shops. This was before the day of consolidating a boot and shoe business under one roof, and the method pursued by my father, E. Atherton Hunt, was typical.

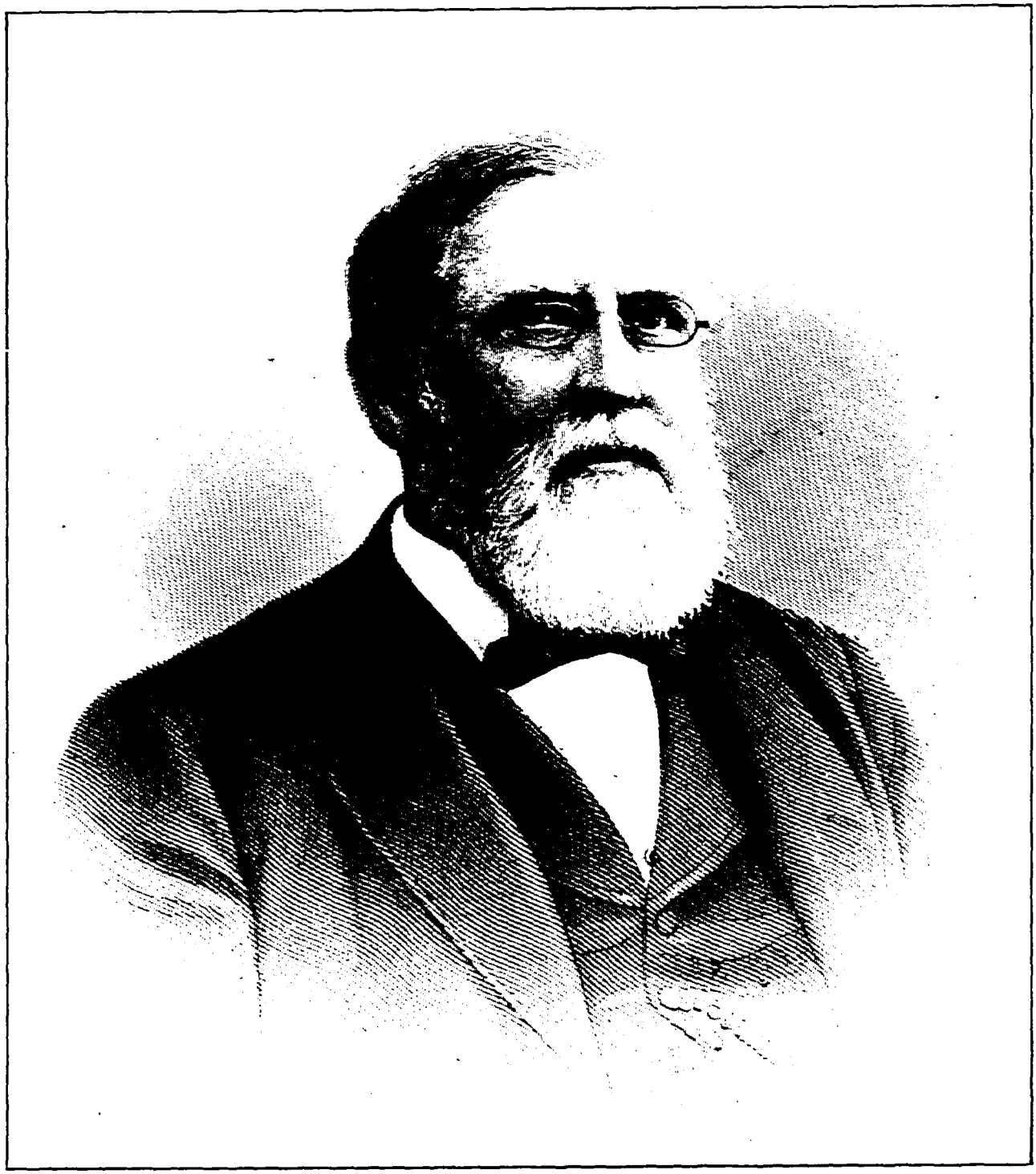
"Leather was cut in the shop, as well as the sole leather. Shoe uppers were stitched in the shop, but boot uppers were sent out to a fitting-shop, such as William Wallace conducted. The materials were then sent, according to case numbers, to a making establishment where the lasting was done and soles put on. The goods then came back to the shop where they were finished, treed, and packed for shipping. Making establishments were scattered over the countryside, and I have taken a load of boots and shoes as far as South Hanson.

"My grandfather, Atherton N. Hunt, and my father were associated in business for many years, and my father continued manufacturing nearly 25 years after the old gentleman died in '65. Richard A. Hunt, a younger brother of my grandfather, who outlived my father many years, conducted a similar shop at the corner of Front and Broad Sts. Charles P. and John E. Hunt had a shop on what is now Sterling St., a short distance in from Front St. George E. Porter, and later Augustus T. Cushing run a shop on Front St. opposite the Episcopal church.

"The power period superseded these old shops, and there finally remained in the business S. W. & E. Nash, John W. Hart, whose factory was on Hunt St., Augustus W. Clapp, afterwards Newhall, Hall & White, on Tremont St., and Atherton Tilden on Stetson St.

"My father for many years made a specialty of heavy, expensive boots with ornamental tops, which went largely to the Middle West, particularly Michigan; there they were known in the trade as 'lumbermen's'. While these goods were heavy, they were made of the finest of materials and exquisitely finished. Richard Hunt also manufactured similar boots of distinctive designs; they later made shoes of fine quality, but C. P. and John E. Hunt went into shoes earlier than the others, and turned out a very high grade. All of these concerns were ultimately put out of business by the consolidations effected in shops such as Dizer's, Canterbury's, Carroll's, Edwin Clapp's, and Fogg, Shaw & Thayer, the Torreys and some others.

"Weymouth boots and shoes were famous throughout the Middle West, and the name *Weymouth* meant quality. Years afterward my brother, Francis A. Hunt, while traveling through Michigan as a shoe salesman encountered a tradesman there who said: 'That Weymouth (he pronounced it Weemoth) must be a great place for boots and shoes. Are all the people there shoemakers?' "



ELIAS S. BEALS
(1814-1897)

NORTH WEYMOUTH

("OLD SPAIN")

In 1883 Mr. Gilbert Nash, making a condensed survey of Weymouth,* wrote: "For nearly 200 years Weymouth was eminently an agricultural community . . . 100 years ago a much larger proportion of its area was under cultivation than at present . . . Its dairies were celebrated throughout the State. With the introduction of manufactures a new condition was called into existence, and the young men instead of following the occupation of their fathers began to learn trades; the town gradually changed from agriculture to manufactures."

The fact that making boots became the principal industry at about the beginning of the third century gives this presentation of the subject a definite start.

Apropos of the present (1932) excessive imposition of taxes, it may be consoling to know that in Civil War time a manufacturer of shoes was obliged to have a license so to do.

We have before us an Internal Revenue LICENSE, dated Oct. 1, 1863, issued by the State (?) of Mass., over the signature of its Collector of the 2d District, granting permission to JAMES TORREY "to carry on the business or occupation of Manufacturer."

The fee of Five Dollars was required "conformably to the provisions of an act entitled—An act to provide internal revenue to support the government and to pay interest on the public debt" etc.

We are indebted to Mr. Herbert A. Newton for the following: "At the period of my earliest recollection, which was just previous to the Civil War (I was born in 1851) the shoe "manufacturers" in North Weymouth were Lemuel Torrey, James Torrey, E. S. Beals, Henry Newton, Alexis Torrey, A. R. Moulton and Caleb S. Cleverly.

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*This appearing in "History of Norfolk County" (1884); his similar "Sketch of Weymouth," being the first town history, was issued a year later.

"Later on came Bicknell & Holbrook, John E. Stoddard, George H. Pratt, Warren Dyer, and perhaps a few other small firms. My father, (Henry Newton) made a large quantity of shoes for the U. S. Navy, and had a contract with the Navy Dept. for several years. During the War he did a considerable business in this line; the "factory system" (or phase) was not yet born, and business was still done in the old way; i. e. the upper and sole leather was cut, and the uppers "fitted" in the home shop, then sent out to workmen at their dwellings. Many of them worked in a room at home, but in most cases two or more worked together in one of those little shops that stood in yards.

During the War shoemakers were scarce, and I remember my father had one or two teams all the time carrying out and bringing in the work from Quincy, Braintree, Randolph, and several towns on the South Shore.

The old "Shop" was a busy place in those days. There were no sewing machines for bottoming, and all that work was done by hand. There were sewing machines to fit the uppers, but they were a very new invention; I have heard E. S. Beals say that he had the first ones ever used in Weymouth, and that was only a few years previous to the time of which I am writing.

They had "hard times" in those early days as well as now, and I must tell you of an experience of my father's which I have often heard him relate. About 1837, when he had just started in business, "times" were pretty "hard;" money was very scarce, and it was almost impossible to sell any shoes through the regular channels. He had made up quite a quantity of shoes, and he conceived the idea of going on the road himself. So he loaded up a wagon with shoes and drove towards the Cape, to New Bedford, etc. trying to sell his goods at all the stores *en route*. If he could not get money for his shoes he would take anything they had, and he said that when he got home he had sold the shoes, but in return therefor he had a big load of butter, cheese, potatoes, corn —and a little money!

There was at one time a sort of shoe made at North Weymouth, of which there were very few made elsewhere; namely, a buffalo-lined shoe (or perhaps bootee) of a peculiar character. James Torrey and Alexis Torrey manu-

ALEXIS TORREY
(1828-1915)

factured large quantities of them, being heavy and buckled tight around the ankle, and lined with buffalo hide with the fur inside next to the foot.

These buffalo hides were Indian tanned and came from the Western plains where buffalo were then plenty. They must have been pretty heavy to wear, but those were the days when people wore some clothes; the men heavy woolen underwear, with a fur cap and ear lappets, and a big fur muffler around the throat; the women wore a dozen or fifteen "petticoats," and all wore home-knit woolen stockings, most of which were knit by "Grandma."

I think very few manufacturers made this style shoe except the Torreys. This was about 1866-8. I have often wished I could see some of the "fine" shoes of those days alongside the elegant goods that issue from the Clapp or Stetson factories of the present. The best comparison I think of is that the modern shoe is like the trim and white-sailed yacht that cruises up and down the River, while the old patterns resembled more the scows which the Weymouth Iron Co. employed to take their coal and pig iron from their wharf at Eastern Neck to the mill at East Weymouth.

A somewhat curious custom prevailed in many of the shoe shops then: At 10 A. M. all hands would quit for about half an hour for "lunch." Of course, as nearly all worked by the hour, there was quite a loss of time for the proprietor—which would hardly go in these high pressure days.

I have heard a story about Mr. Caleb Cleverly, which may or may not be true, but from acquaintance with the man I am afraid there is a grain of truth in it. Mr. Cleverly, like some others, made a very cheap line of goods which were sold at auction in Boston. The custom was to take in a load of shoes, show them in the auction house and get as large an advance as possible. With most of those houses that was about all he ever did get.

At one time a buyer complained that Cleverly's shoes were "deaconed;" that is, the case was packed with the best shoes on top. Cleverly of course denied the allegation, and the next time he went in he packed one or two cases with the best shoes at the bottom, so that when he showed the first case with the best at the top they looked all right. There-

upon Cleverly said, "Now look at this case and you will find them all alike." Then he carelessly selected another case to open, and the inspector remarked, "Say, you are opening that case at the bottom." "So I am," said Mr. Cleverly, "but it don't make any difference; they are just as good at the bottom; look and see if they are not." Well, in that particular instance they were.

The shoemakers who labored in those little shops enjoyed life, even though they worked long hours for very little pay. There was no Union to dictate how they should conduct themselves, and I wonder if they were not, on the whole, happier than their factory successors. Nevertheless, I fancy that none of us would want to reverse the calendar sixty years!"

Another list of North Weymouth manufacturers contains the names of E. E. Dyer, on Sea St., corner of North; J. A. Holbrook, Newton St.; J. E. Stoddard & Co., Lovell St.; J. H. & F. H. Torrey, North St.; E. R. Bates, Commercial St.; G. H. Pratt, North St.; Warren Dyer, Athens, corner of Sea St.; Augustus Beals, Sea St.; William French, North St. Some "repeats" maybe, but the location is given.

Elias Smith Beals was born in Weymouth in 1814, descended in a direct line from John Beal, who came to America in 1638 from Hingham parish, county of Norfolk, England. Lazarus of the fifth generation was Elias Beals' ancestor, a physician of Hingham, Mass., and his son of the same name moved over to Weymouth, established a brick-masonry business, prospered, and incidentally brought the subject of this brief sketch into the world.

Elias S., having taken advantage of the common schools, learned shoemaking at eighteen and worked in many of the branches. In 1838 he took some boots and shoes from various Weymouth manufacturers and sailed for Savannah, Ga., and sold his goods to advantage in that city and in Charleston, S. C. That was his first business exploit, and it gave him not a little local prestige.

After this Southern trip he began manufacturing in a small way, adding on a store of general merchandise as was the custom, and later built a factory at Torrey's Corners

JOHN H. HOLBROOK

JAMES H. TORREY JOHN E. STODDARD

FRANK H. TORREY

where he continued to operate until 1849, when he engaged in the prevailing New Orleans trade for two years. Returning to Weymouth he built a larger factory, and thus became regularly established as a manufacturer of standing.

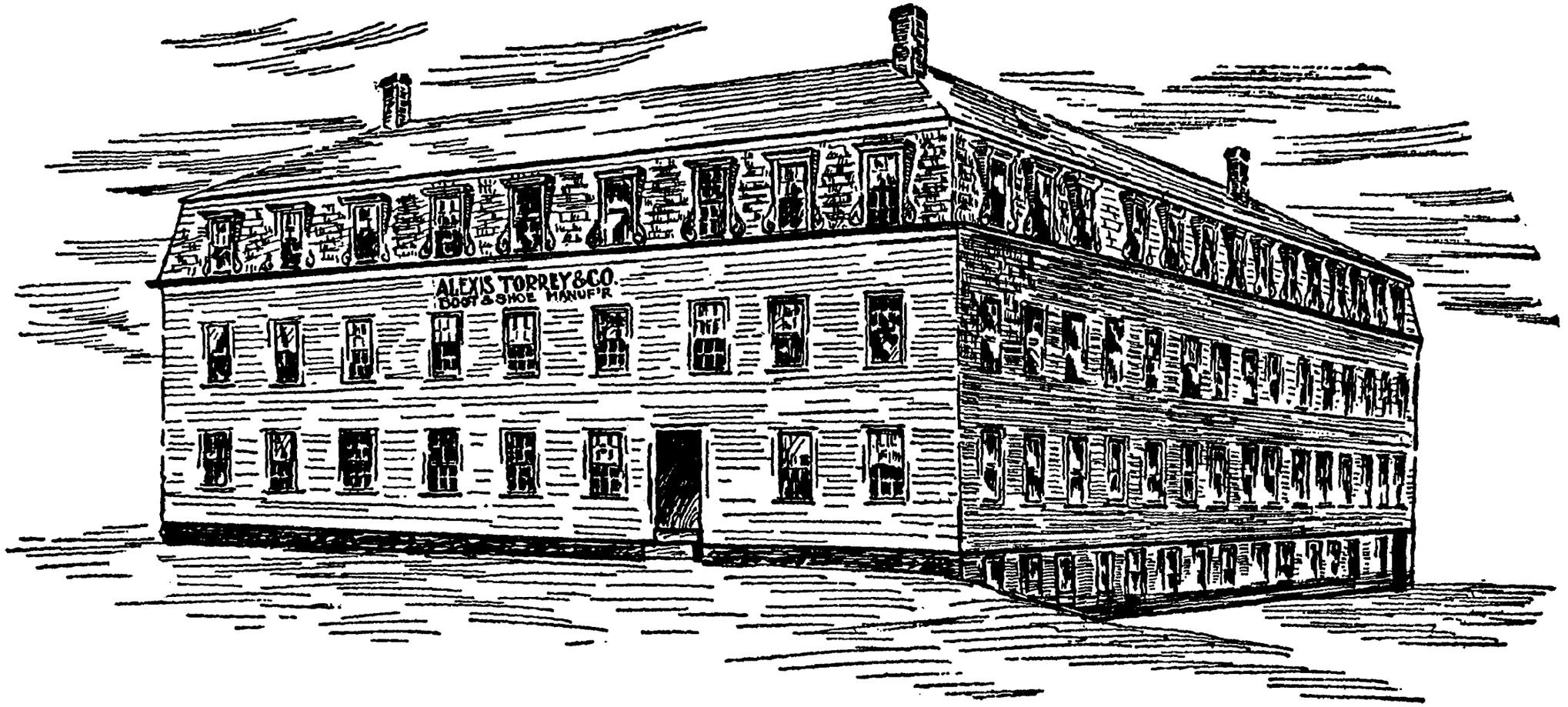
Having by intercourse familiarized himself with the peculiar requirements of the Southern market, he made a specialty of catering to that trade. He studied the tastes of patrons, kept abreast of the times—if anything, a little in the lead in matters of style. As an instance of his enterprise he bought the first sewing machine used in North Weymouth, and took pains to note its value over hand work, discovering that two machines the first year of their use saved him a thousand dollars in increased production with diminished expense. The Civil War compelled him to give up manufacturing.

In this village they used to line long-leg boots with buffalo hide with the fur (?) on, a warm arrangement for the feet. When the hides came into town many of them were decorated with porcupine quills, and painted in gaudy fashion, leading to the inference that some Indian camp had been looted at this period between 1875-80.

George and Edwin Sampson made pegged slippers in a little old-fashioned shop at the rear of their dwelling for a winter occupation, farming in the summer; though Edwin was prone to navigate the River in a small boat that he owned. The Sampson shop was an inviting loafing-place to our informant when a mere kid.

In the 1870s the manufacturers in North Weymouth doing a prosperous business were—Alexis & J. H. Torrey, Bicknell & Holbrook at Bicknell Sq., Warren Dyer, familiarly known as "Boss Dyer," George Henry Pratt, John E. Stoddard, Augustus Beals.

Before this there had been Elias Beals, and afterwards J. H. & F. H. Torrey. Lemuel Torrey also figured as a manufacturer at some early time, and when Horatio Davis, who swept the shop, was grumbling that he "didn't see what good it was to sweep the floor so often," Lemuel exploded with—"You darned fool, don't you wipe your nose when



THE ALEXIS TORREY FACTORY
(Bridge Street)

necessary?" Lemuel and James Henry were brothers of Alexis, but Lemuel flocked by himself in shomaking. H. A. Moulton (called "Had" sometimes) manufactured earlier than the 70s.

In 1868 Elias Beals' son Frank started shoe manufacturing in the West, and after two years his father and Alexis Torrey took a partnership interest. In 1877 Mr. Beals' youngest son James L. became a member of the firm, styled Beals, Torrey & Co., and they did a half-million business which the young men built up by their own efforts. The father in later life distinguished himself in local and even national affairs, living 88 years of remarkable usefulness and distinction.

Elnathan Bates, in company with Edmund Humphrey, started the shoe business about 1850; but soon dissolved the partnership, and Mr. Bates continued until 1885. As Rufus Bates, a son, remarked, "The record of shoemaking by one concern in that period would be typical of all," and with that—further details are withheld.

Warren Dyer, familiarly known as "Boss Dyer," figured as a shoe manufacturer in this section; H. A. Moulton & Co., Bicknell & Holbrook, at what is now Bicknell Sq., John F. Stoddard, Bridge St., Alexis Torrey, Bridge and North Sts., succeeded by J. H. & F. H. Torrey, then Torrey, Curtis & Tirrell; George H. Pratt, North St., Lemuel Torrey* on North St. in the old days, and the Alden, Walker & Wilde Co. in quite recent years, who removed to East Weymouth. Augustus Beals operated on Sea St., and probably a host of others not readily accounted for in the lapse of years. Suffice it to say that "Old Spain" acquitted itself honorably and well in the prosecution of a basic industry in Weymouth.

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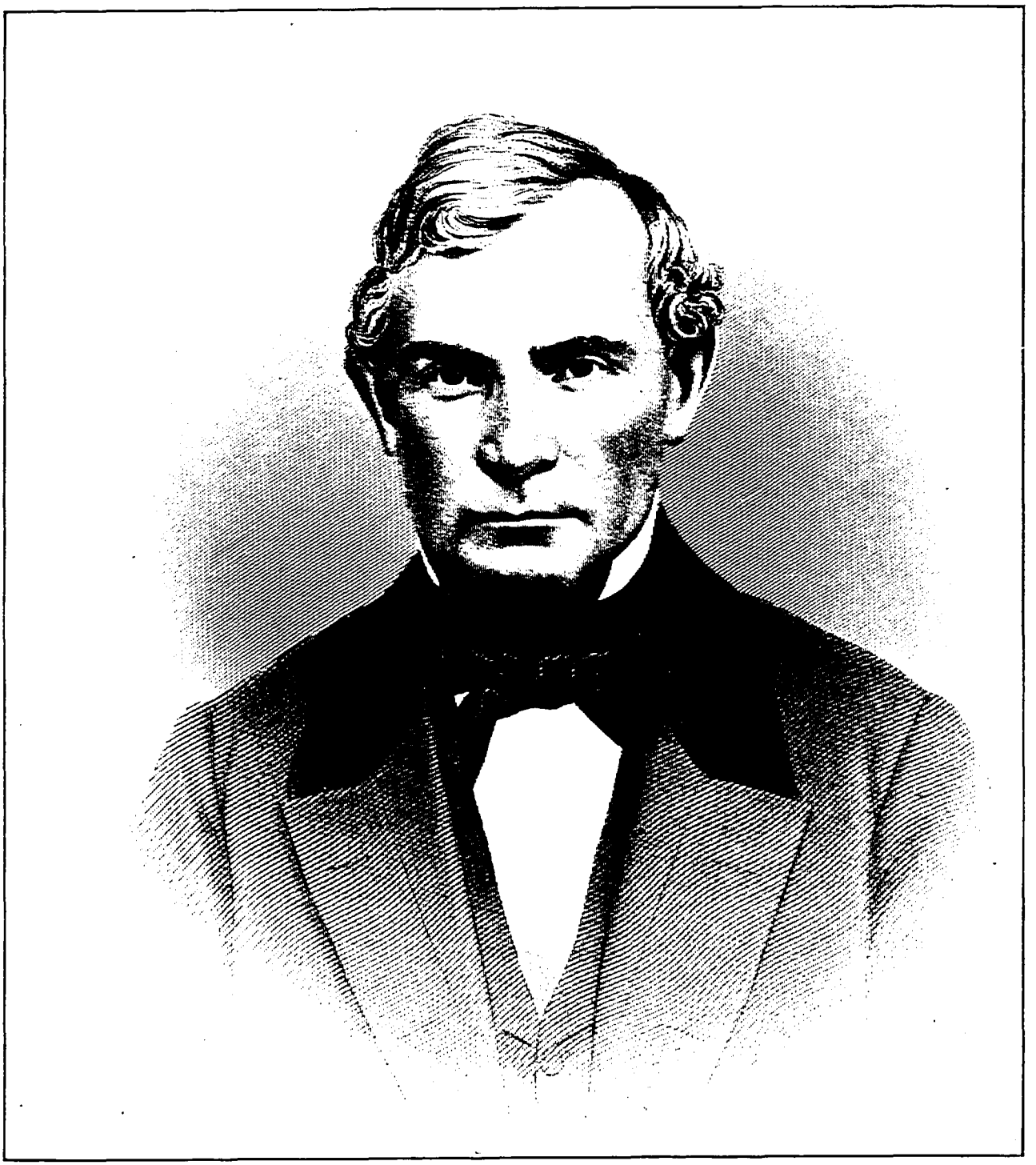
*James Torrey (son of James 6) was born 1811, and about 1835 began manufacturing boots in a small way; about 1865 took his nephew Lemuel into partnership, which continued until 1872, when Deacon James retired—after 40 years as a manufacturer.

Note: In the '80s J. H. & F. H. Torrey, with John A. Cushman and John Bullivant as partners, were carrying on quite an extensive and profitable cut-sole business.



NATHANIEL SHAW
(1804-1860)

SOUTH WEYMOUTH

("SOUTH PRECINCT," 1723)

A partial list of names of South Weymouth shoe manufacturers:

James Tirrell, Kingman Tirrell, Wilson Tirrell, Wilson Tirrell Jr., Minot Tirrell, Albert Tirrell, Alfred Tirrell, Austin (and his brother Albert) Tirrell, Wilson Tirrell 3d, Warren, his brother. Prince H. Tirrell, Cyrus his brother.

Quincy Reed, Harvey Reed, Alvin Reed, Josiah Reed, Henry B. Reed, D. Frank Reed. J. L. Bates, Perez Loud.

Winslow Blanchard, Christopher his brother, Capt. Nathaniel Shaw, his son Nathaniel, Theron V. Shaw, William A. Shaw, Henry Shaw, Josephus Shaw, Warren Shaw, Augustus Vining.

Nathaniel Bayley, Leonard B. Tirrell, Oliver Loud, Orrin B. Bates, Nicholas Thayer, Augustine Loud.

Jairus White, Loring his son, Charles Richards.

John S. Fogg, Charles S. his brother, Augustus Fogg, Franklin Shaw, Noah B. Thayer, John S. Cobb, John Bates, Warren Thayer.

William Dyer, Newton Dyer, Henry Dyer, H. Wilbur his son, Warren Thayer, Isaac Hollis.

John Long, A. E. Vining, A. C. Heald, Ezra H. Stetson.

Manufacturing concerns: J. & A. Tirrell, Nathaniel Shaw & Co., John S. Fogg & Co., Fogg, Houghton & Coolidge, J. C. Lindsay & Co., Lindsay & Gibbs, W. & W. Tirrell, T. V. & William A. Shaw, E. H. Stetson & Co., Stetson Shoe Co., C. & P. H. Tirrell & Co., Tirrell & Bayley.

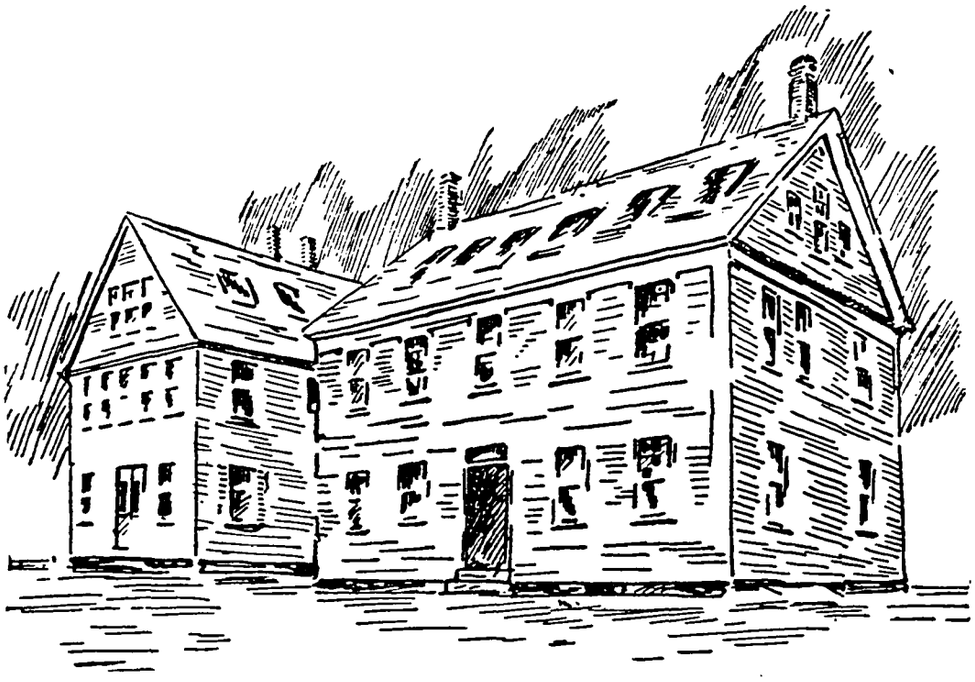
James Tirrell, seventh in the line from John Tirrell of Instow Parish, Devon, England, built the old shoe-shop which is pictured on page 14 at about 1808. It stood on Front St. not far north of where Herring River (afterwards Mill River) crosses the highway, and records of an older shop than this have not been found. The simplicity of the structure is pronounced, and the setting of the windows hints of an addition made, extending the first plan to 75 ft.

James Tirrell's five sons, Kingman, James, Minot, Wilson and Albert, were all makers of shoes and leather dealers. Kingman, the eldest, went to New Orleans 1815-18, took a partner and established a wholesale jobbing-house for the sale of shoes to planters; those shoes were made in South Weymouth.

James Tirrell Jr. for a time made shoes in the same old shop, but the business was later moved to the center (?) of the village, and in 1831 James Tirrell & Co. consisted of the brothers James, Minot and Albert. Minot went early to New Orleans, followed by Albert, both doing a successful business there. The shop was at Independence Sq., on the site of the present Odd Fellows Building, and was a 2½ story edifice about 100 ft. long by 30 ft. wide. At one end was a grocery, probably conducted by the shoe firm, as it was the custom to pay workmen in cash and groceries.

It may be stated that Wilson Tirrell (1833-60) carried on a general store at one end of the old shop, keeping a supply of food stuffs and kit; little real money changed hands in those days.

After Wilson Tirrell, senior, retired the industry was continued at the same stand by Wilson Jr., operating much as had his father, uncles, and grandfather before him. He



THE TWIN PLANT
(Near Independence Sq.)

These buildings were earlier used by Israel Fearing (1809-80) a wheelwright; and the smaller by Isaac Remick, the first blacksmith of record.

JOHN S. FOGG
(1817-1892)

held the fort until 1867, and was the last Tirrell to occupy that now famous shop, which was destroyed by fire about 1920. His sons Wilson and Warren (twins) took up the torch in 1880, having received valuable training with J. S. Fogg & Co. and Josiah Reed & Co.

W. & W. Tirrell installed the first steam factory in South Weymouth; that is, the first where all work was done under one roof, though, as a matter of fact, their plant was a twin also, just off Independence Sq., and the boiler was set between the two shops.

They manufactured men's fine boots and shoes for New England, Southern, Western, and California trade, continuing until 1889, transferring as individuals to important positions in Weymouth and out-of-town factories, thus completing the cycle of nine Tirrell shoe manufacturers for over a hundred years.

John Smith Fogg was born at Meredith, N. H., the 16th of August, 1817, and died at South Weymouth the 16th of May, 1892. As his shoemaking and philanthropies were confined to Weymouth, his memory deserves the appreciation of living and future residents.

At 19 years of age he adventured to Boston, and dropped into an employment agency seeking a job. There one Martin S. Stetson of East Abington (now Rockland) found him, and liking the looks of the boy offered him employment. So, sitting on the tailboard of an express wagon, young Fogg rode out to Abington and began a Massachusetts career, working at treeing boots until about 1840.

At this period of John Fogg's history he was not inclined to remain static anywhere, but was ever looking for the main chance, and it was not a great while before he drifted into South Weymouth where we hear of him crimping boots, one of the untidiest jobs in the whole outfit; but it illustrated a democratic spirit which underlaid his character, even when sauntering up the street looking as aristocratic as you please.

His shoemaking began with Capt. Martin Vining, bottoming boots, but alert for advancement he borrowed some leather and began cutting out uppers evenings, which he sold to the best advantage. From this initiation (1841) rapid developments followed. In due course he launched a shoe-

making enterprise by associating with one Houghton (1851) and later on the firm became Fogg, Houghton & Coolidge (1861). About 1857 a handsome factory had been erected in Columbian Sq. and before the Civil War the foundations of a snug business had been laid.

But John S. Fogg had not irrevocably dedicated himself to the shoe industry, and when his brother Parker returned from a successful jobbing business in Sacramento, Calif. and suggested their engaging in a banking business he accepted the challenge, and with James L. Bates,* just home from the War, they established the new concern in Boston.

At the same time, we suspect his predelections were toward finance, and that the aphorism—"There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will"—applied with particular force to the guidance of John S. Fogg. Although his aptitude as a shoe manufacturer had not been questioned, and satisfactory rewards had resulted, yet he quite easily turned aside from first impulses, adopted a quite different vocation, and only retained his hold on Weymouth by standing behind his son when he attached the family name to the shoe manufacturing firm, Fogg, Shaw & Thayer of a few years later.

Without ever enjoying the advantages of college training, the cultural tendencies of Mr. Fogg seemed to be instinctive; his standards were invariably high. If he were to build a shop, it proved to be the "model" factory of the vicinity, being heralded as "the best equipped shop in the country." If he donated an organ to his church, it was the largest in Weymouth for the time being, and if he contributed an edifice to the setting of Columbian Sq., as he did the so-called Fogg Opera House, or if he left to the village of his affection a library for future generations — why, both were so excellent and decorative for the purposes designed, the "divinity" of the Fogg standard regulated the matter so well, that extraneous comment has been made superfluous.

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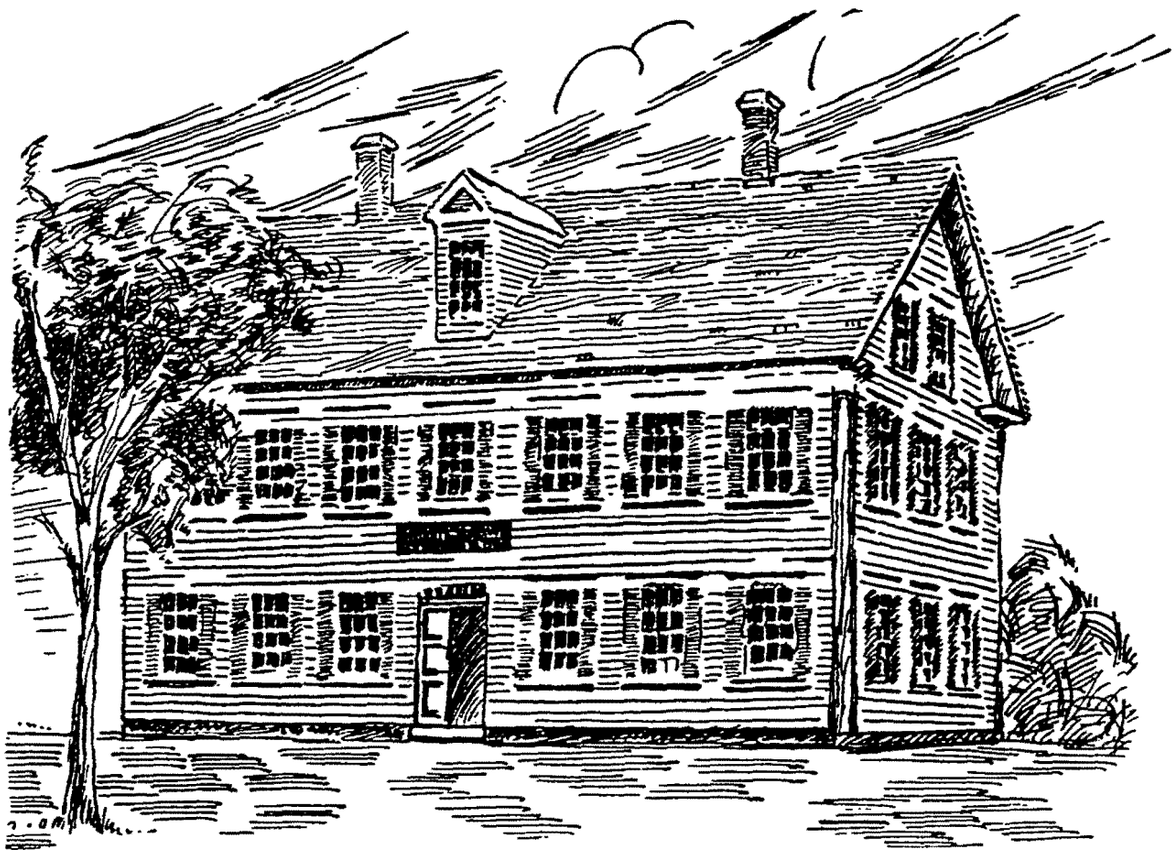
*James L. Bates' first shoemaking venture was about 1846 with Messrs. Fogg & Torrey for one year; then with B. F. White for two years. After a '49-er experience in California he joined with Josiah Reed under the style of Bates & Reed (1851), continuing about two and a half years; and most of the time until the Civil War was in the firm of Durell, Bacon & Co. prosecuting a leather business.

Attention is directed to the Nathaniel Shaw factory, which was located on Main St. a little north of where Front and Main separate; so that it is reasonable to infer the shop was built after the latter highway was laid out, say, about 1850.



THE NATHANIEL SHAW FACTORY
(Main Street)

Here is an example of what might be termed a refined type of oldtime shoe shop; at least, compared with others of the period. Note the "blinds" on the windows! The whole effect is indicative of a man with an artistic sense, not of a person narrowly devoted to commercialism; for the builder had been nurtured within the benign influence of excellent traditions.

Capt. Nathaniel Shaw, the father, who got his title from being the first commander of the local militia, was born at East Abington in 1769, moved early to Weymouth, and died there in 1832, just at the period when the industrial seed of much judicious planting was beginning to germinate. There had also been planting of trees, which is another story.

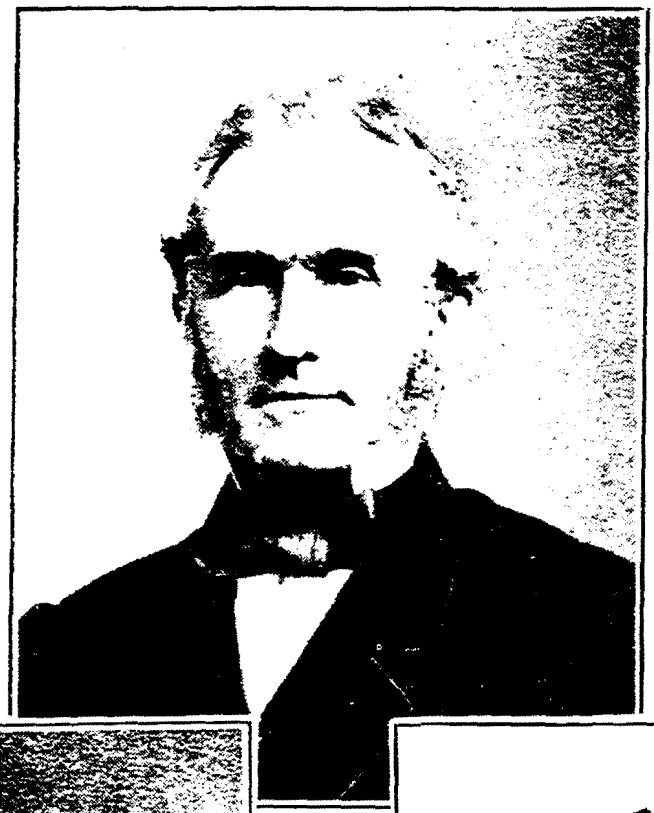
Capt. Nathaniel was a shoemaker and shoe boss of a notable breed of such men, and before departing this life saw clustered about his "shop" the hamlet which had grown to a village as a result of his thrift and enterprise. He was succeeded by his son Nathaniel, who was born 1804 and lived until 1860, embracing an interesting stage in the shoe industry of "Fore St." The son perpetuated many traits of the father, but supplemented business acumen with quite a deal of the humanities; he figured in civic affairs, was prominent in church polity, displayed a democratic interest in his neighbors, which elicited cooperation in return. Indeed, he conducted the first cooperative store, instituted a bank, and issued "scrip" for the convenience of his workmen. Some of these activities are mentioned though they may seem trivial, in order to illustrate the community feeling existent in the earlier atmosphere of shoemaking, when the ten-hour day prevailed, there were no time-clocks, labor (with a capital L) had not asserted itself, but workmen and boss met on an almost even level, and out of this harmony success in the business resulted.

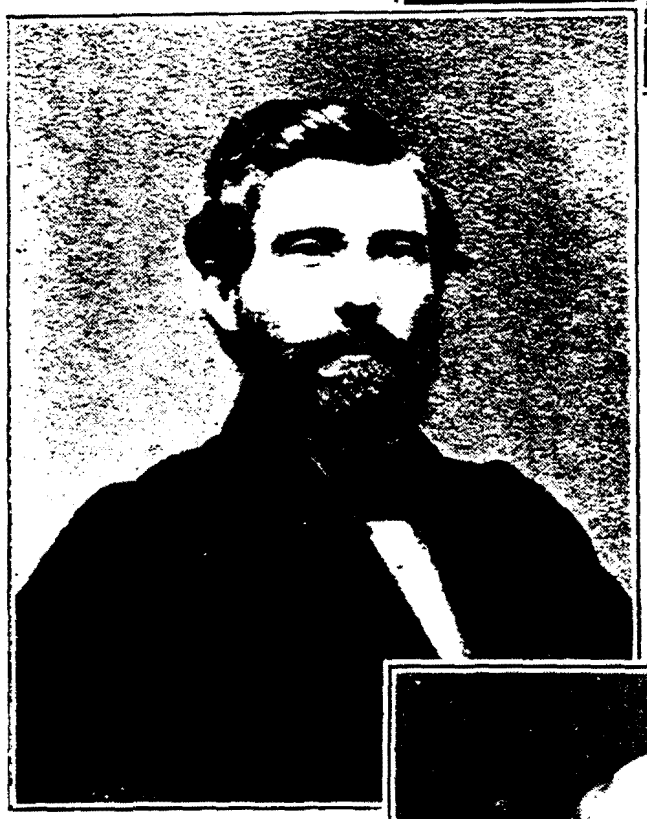
After some out-of-town connections Nathaniel the younger returned to South Weymouth, and (his father having died) about 1835 succeeded to the entire control of the business, conducting it alone for some years, and exhibiting such energy that it grew to a large concern for those days.

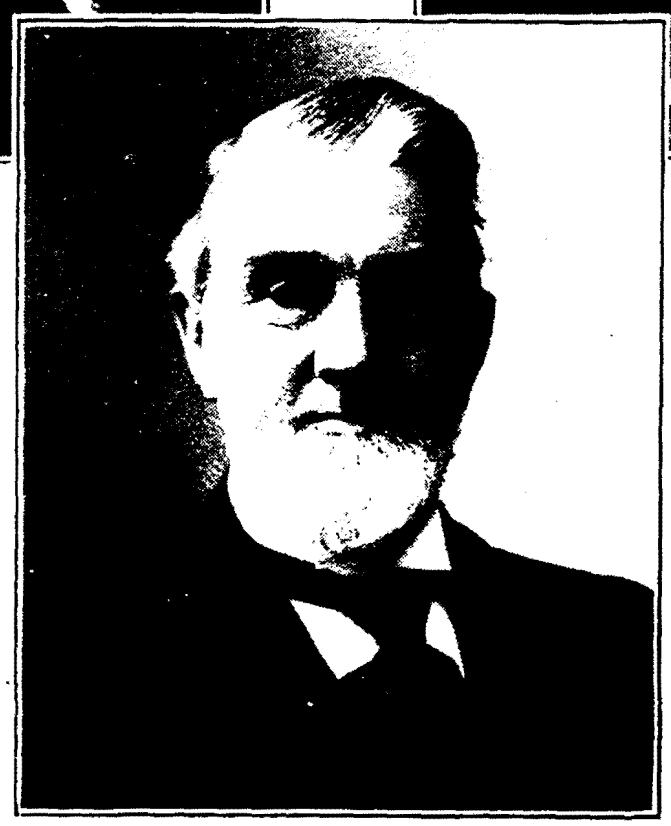
Sometime prior to 1849 Theron V. Shaw, his brother, was admitted to partnership, but the alliance was brief and he continued alone until 1855, when William A., his son, and B. F. White joined him under the firm name of Nathaniel Shaw & Co., which lasted until Nathaniel Shaw's death in 1860.

After that Theron V. again acquired an interest, Mr. White retired, and the firm of T. V. & Wm. A. Shaw continued until 1870; and then, on the death of Theron, his nephew carried on alone for a number of years. When he ceased the shoemaking activities of the Shaw family ended in South Weymouth, leaving a noticeable hiatus in the lives and incentives of the population below "Maj. Bayley's Hill."

Josiah Reed, more frequently designated as "Deacon Reed," was working at the bench in his younger years, when







THERON V. SHAW

WILLIAM A. SHAW JAMES L. BATES

NOAH B. THAYER

one day he paused in his cutting of leather and said to his bench neighbor, "Francis, let's go into the shoe business!"

"Francis" was F. S. Torrey, and he was timorous on the subject, but the 'Deacon" was as brave as a lion, and it was not long before his arrangements to manufacture were made. A factory, called a "shop" in those days, was established next to Fogg's (an enlarged version of it shows on Page 63), and for many years there was provided employment for a large contingent of the community. The story in detail will be told on various pages of this recital by his son.

Not forgetting the labor and influence of Josiah Reed in the religious affairs of the village, perhaps it may be said that the best civic effort he ever made was in 1882-3 when the Water Question was paramount in Weymouth. A water system was eventually secured for the town largely through Mr. Reed's persistency in the face of opposition curiously resembling that of today against equally needed sewerage. But it is not disparaging the labor of others to give the greater credit to Josiah Reed for his vision, enthusiasm, and efficiency in promoting the attainment of town water.

"My father's factory (that of Josiah Reed) was on Union St., next to the Fogg shop, and to my childish whims it appeared a good place to play in, the shed full of rolls of sole-leather being my special province, until admonished to take a run into the open air.

"The interior arrangement of rooms was not different from the typical shop of that period. One irrelevant thing I remember is seeing the bookkeeper shake sand on his writing instead of using blotting paper, but that was just an ancient custom. I also observed the packer cut a piece of tarred paper from a roll and use it to line cases, to guard against mould upon boots consigned for California, which necessitated a voyage 'round the Horn under damp weather conditions of a 120-day passage. Colored cards adorning the office, announced the sailing dates of clipper ships; and the bedroom of a watchman right in the shop hinted of a period when no policeman was on his beat.

"In the cutting-room on the second floor my father "trounced out" (a term not to be found in dictionaries) the "fronts" from calfskins, passing the shoulder-pieces along to James Reed for him to cut into "backs" for men's, boys',

youths' and "cacks," the latter a diminutive expression for the very small child's shoe, but a word of good colloquial standing. Calfskin 'skirts" were saved to make the long welts for side-seams and "feet-lining," while then or slightly later waste pieces of fine stock, resulting from imperfect pattern adjustment, were saved for the string makers. At this time, (1860-65) only one kind of leather was used for "uppers," namely, calfskin, though sheepskin served for linings and fancy tops. The use of French calf, colt calf, and other more fancy leathers marks a later period.

"There was one (sic) sewing-machine, supplemented by a skiver, a rolling-machine, a sole-leather stripper, and probably an eyeletter for shoes, and these, as I remember, constituted the sum total of mechanical assistance.

"In another department a workman stripped sole-leather for "counters" and soles, skiving and rolling the strips in course of the process, and soles, heel stock, etc. were added to make up the bundle of "findings" tied up in case lots for the bottomers. In the meantime the upper-leather fronts, backs, linings, etc. went to the "fitters," (stitchers) who collated the parts and sewed (originally by hand in the earlier days) them deftly together; and upon return of the material so fitted and fastened to a distributing department the "uppers" and bottoming supplies were 'laid out" for the almost final operation of "making," which was customarily done outside, and which might have been pegging, nailing, or sewing as the order demanded.

"Distant from the bottomers in the immediate vicinity there was a vast territory stretching from "Thicket" (West Abington) to Hanover and Hanson wherein was scattered the ten-footer back-yard shops, visited weekly by a wagon from the central factory distributing "findings" and returning with completed shoes; we were about to say "finished," but that was a final process deserving a department in the home shop.

"But what would the present generation think to see a stalwart shoemaker from the outskirts of the village emerge from the central factory with 12 pairs of vamps and a "case" of sole-leather accompanying parts flung over his shoulder; and when his work was done that same case of boots to be brought back for "treeing" and "finishing"

(dressed and rubbed with gums, etc.), and then neatly packed in pine boxes (or sometimes casks for an ocean trip) for shipment to the customer, the box being stenciled with a cryptic description of its contents."

"Women also had a share in the industry, though at first it was not regarded as exactly correct for the girl to work in a shop, or in the same room with men, though she had learned and practiced certain of the operations in the home. Consequently the women worked by themselves in a department, their function being to sew linings onto vamps, stitch by machine, paste and prepare materials for lesser operations; for lo, "Hannah at the Window binding Shoes" had been at this period transferred to the factory, and without loss of social standing in the community the young girl of Weymouth assisted to the extent of her ability in the common industry.

In 1870 Josiah Reed and John S. Fogg accompanied the Boston Board of Trade excursion to San Francisco, a trip notable for being transported by the first through-train of Pullman cars from coast to coast, Mr. George M. Pullman personally conducting the party. The cars were new, and hot boxes gave considerable trouble; moreover, the schedule had to be slow because at many stations the platforms had to be sawed away for the low steps of the "Pullman."

Upon his return Mr. Reed reported that his California trade was "doomed" because the indications were they would soon make all their own boots in San Francisco; that they were already making some very fine goods, and that the demand on the East would be for a second quality men's boot, together with a larger proportion than ever before of boys', youths', and children's goods. But note this change in the situation, namely, the advent of Shoes for that market! Before that all California trade had been in boots.

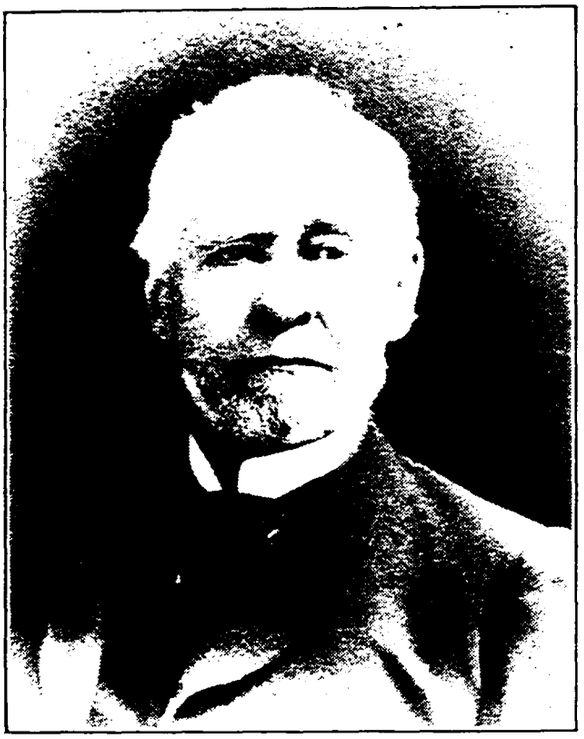
"True we had, in the early '70s already begun to manufacture shoes for the New England customer, and with the opening of Oregon and far Western States by the railroads it was not long before we were doing an increased business in that line, and without the objections and obstacles that had been feared. And it is also singular to note, that although boots for the California trade had theretofore been

fashioned on a stub-toe last, and with high heels (a style unsaleable elsewhere), and with copper-nailed tap soles, when the Pacific Coast dealers bought our shoes they ordered exactly the same style of last and heel we sold in the East.

In 1875, when I took charge of the factory, (Mr. H. B. Reed relating) "times" were exceedingly "dull" (one of the confounded panics), and the leather market rather unsettled. But my father, who had weathered many such experiences kept his courage by the notion that he could buy stock at almost his own price; and he further conceived the plan that by the aid of a reduction in wages we might manufacture boots ahead of the demand which would find a sale in the future. So he cast about to effect a lowering of wages, and by argument and persuasion secured corresponding reductions in contributing agencies; for at that time workmen were not influenced or dominated by unions. Directly our manufacturing activities acquired momentum, and we got out patterns for a long-leg boot with calfskin clear to the top, it being cheaper than sheepskin; and we bottomed some on the California last and some on a Southern last, designating the product— 'The Boot for Everybody."

In a rotation of events the tide turned, the depression was followed by a general revival of business, and even before our low-priced stock had been exhausted a lively market developed, prices took a sharp advance, and a handsome profit was achieved—more money was made than the factory ever earned in one year.

In 1879 there came another and dreadful panic, beginning with a big advance in the price of leather. Nevertheless, taking in my traveling-case four or five styles of California boots, and as many shoes, I fared forth on my first trip West, determined to take advantage of the manufacturers' increase in prices and get a share of new Western trade. In Chicago I found jobbers ready to talk; a leading concern showed me an "Opera boot" made close by, as well as a standard screw boot made in Abington, asking me what I could duplicate them for. I told them, and they ordered 200 cases to follow the samples submitted, which I sent home with instructions to imitate in every respect. I went



CYRUS TIRRELL PRINCE H. TIRRELL

HENRY EDWARDS
(Calif. Partner)

to St. Louis and took orders for 1200 dozen boots under similar conditions; these orders were filled in due season, and so proficient were Weymouth shoe workers that the result of their efforts elicited not a single complaint.

Of course prices had something to do with the outcome, but we charged our old friends in California the full advance, and so came out pretty satisfactorily for the year, being enabled to build on an addition to the factory, and to inaugurate a new business which continued on basis of a 7½ per cent. profit, net, until 1892, when the so-called "Bryan Panic" occurred."

The foregoing, of rather a personal character, is presented to show the resourcefulness of the Weymouth manufacturer in the face of a series of panics calculated to shatter the courage of a Titan in business. To explain the causes operating in the earlier years would be to discuss the whole fabric of finance, which has no place in this book. The currency of the times was fickle, banks were poorly conducted; what the influence of a system something like the present Federal Reserve would have been it is hard to say, but it ought to have been beneficial. At all events, the Shoe industry of Weymouth pursued its destiny in a period of stress and difficulty, and that it muddled through is to the credit of the men engaged.

1894. "Our shop was under the Rockland Union (H. B. Reed speaking) and every new price for labor had to be a Rockland price, which would, in the course of events, oblige us to make the so-called "Rockland Shoe," which, though not consonant with the traditions of Weymouth, was of a higher grade than the "Brockton." So I urged our workmen to organize a union of their own, and thereby protect me in continuing to sell to the jobbing trade; but the men contended that they were not strong enough to promote a union; and, moreover, there was the Stetson Shoe Company, operating a non-union shop, whose prices for work were so high that even the Rockland Union did not come in contact with them."

But the unions were strong in other localities, and growing in power. From the manufacturer's point of view he had to admit that the labor union, *per se,* had been of some

help because it enabled him, when the representative of the union appeared, to deal with an agent who presumably understood the situation; but if the delegate was a man of inferior caliber, little was gained by such a conference.

Up to the organization of the Knights of Labor (1869-71) manufacturers were frequently cutting prices for labor, that being a condition of business from time immemorial; and it was not always a custom to be commended or endured. War prices as late as 1875 were in a constant state of flux, and it was certainly of advantage to the manufacturers when the Knights put an end to competitive labor.

Another way the Knights indirectly helped was by encouraging the introduction of machinery, for they felt there could not be a reduction of wages under their rule; but this innovation brought about many reactions, particularly as the Knights had always favored hand work on the theory that more men would be employed thereby.

They could show resistance in a measure to the inexorable movement of industrial progress by limiting the capacity of the machine through manipulation of the slow operator; but the manufacturer, on the other hand, secured the aid of men from machine companies to insure full capacity, and conferences and revision of figures ensued. In brief, it was the story of suspicion and discontent whenever machinery was introduced to take the place of the human hand, and human vision had not been vouchsafed the power to look ahead any better than it possessed wisdom to regulate current affairs.

This digression is made as a sidelight upon the industry in Weymouth, and as bearing upon the quality of its product and the comfortable condition of the workers upon shoes; there was never any very serious disturbances, for the good sense of the population was able to maintain an almost even balance of direction.

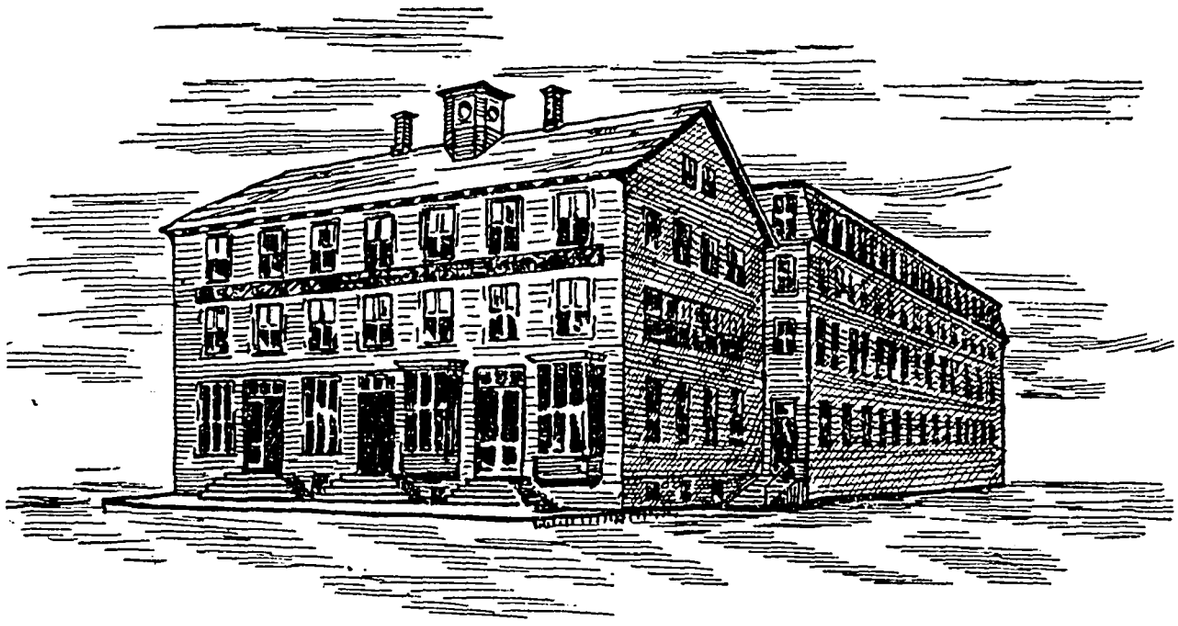
In 1898 a growing competitor practically reached a standard of quality and price, producing what came to be known as the "Brockton Shoe," a grade considered not quite so good as the "Weymouth Shoe." With that came the requirement of the Union that a Stamp be affixed to the sole of every shoe, guaranteeing quality; and at one time the Stamp was so important that it was almost impossible to

DEACON JOSIAH REED
(1826-1896)

market a Brockton shoe without it. In Weymouth there was no such limitation, and the high grade of its shoes was recognized without the urge of extraneous assistance; they stood on their merits!

But of the Unions it is fair to repeat the statement of Herbert Hoover: "It is my opinion that our nation is very fortunate in having the American Federation of Labor. It has exercised a powerful influence in establishing industry, and in maintaining an American standard of citizenship."

Right after the Civil War business, of course, took on a sort of Reconstruction aspect; factories were comparatively small and the financial turn-over corresponded thereto, but the risk was relatively slight and worry at a minimum. Experience gave assurance that the disasters of a "panic" would be repaired in the interval before the next, and current returns were enough out of the "red" to give encouragement that the monetary level of the community might be kept at a comfortable height. By the same token the attitude of foreman toward his workmen, (and vice versa) took on a less serious aspect; there were no time-clocks, everybody lived in neighborhood relations—a rabbit hunt or the lure of Fall gunning might interrupt a day's labor and challenge but the mildest protest.



JOHN S. FOGG FACTORY
(Reed shop rear)

The John S. Fogg factory, which is about the only edifice of War-times still standing with much of its original form,

figured in 1860 as a model of its class. This building was erected about 1857, and proudly claimed the distinction of having an elevator (worked by hand power), a cement floor in the basement sole-leather room, and was heated by steam. It may have displayed other novelties of construction and convenience, being considered such an unusual structure. The location on the corner of Pleasant and Union Sts. warranted the thrifty subletting to stores, but the opposite end of the first floor contained the receiving-room of the factory, to accommodate trucks and workmen, and where there was a space set off by an iron fence to hold a safe and the desks and customary furniture of the accounting department. Half of the second floor was the cutting-room, and the remaining area was divided between the treeing-room and one for "dressing" and packing the product.

A portion of the third floor was occupied by Cobb (John S.) & Fogg (Charles S.), who manufactured shoes also, and the attic, under the sightly cupola, by Isaac Daggett for a stitching-room—where the breaking out of a fire one day demonstrated that the building was somewhat of a fire-trap, in spite of its pretentions to completeness.

As only the cutting of upper- and sole-leather was done in this shop, it is obvious that extensive floor space was not required in which to do quite a snug business. This detail is given to convey a notion of the character and capacity of a shoe factory in 1850-60, but it is necessary to explain that from "Thicket" (North Abington) to Halifax there were scattered small shops, made auxiliary to this central moving impulse, where bottoming was carried on, making it possible, by "farming-out" work, to manufacture successfully in a factory of not gigantic size.

One of the subsidiary operations performed outside the central factory in the old days was crimping, which was the shaping of the vamp of the old-fashioned long-leg boot. Later on most of the heels were made in an outside shop given over to that branch, and still later counters and soles were cut to sizes and furnished to the big shop, and therefrom distributed to departments and bottomers in the outlying districts where the ten-footer dotted the landscape.

Note: In 1842 J. S. Fogg's shop was much simpler than above described.

A. C. HEALD

E. H. STETSON

THE STETSON SHOE CO.

Arthur C. Heald and Ezra H. Stetson, young men in the employ of Henry B. Reed, who succeeded his father, Josiah, in 1875, stepped forth in 1885 to manufacture shoes for themselves, though not without the generous encouragement of their employer. They began under the style E. H. Stetson & Co. and at first H. Wilbur Dyer was in the firm for a short time. Essential elements quickly blended and the enterprise was launched.

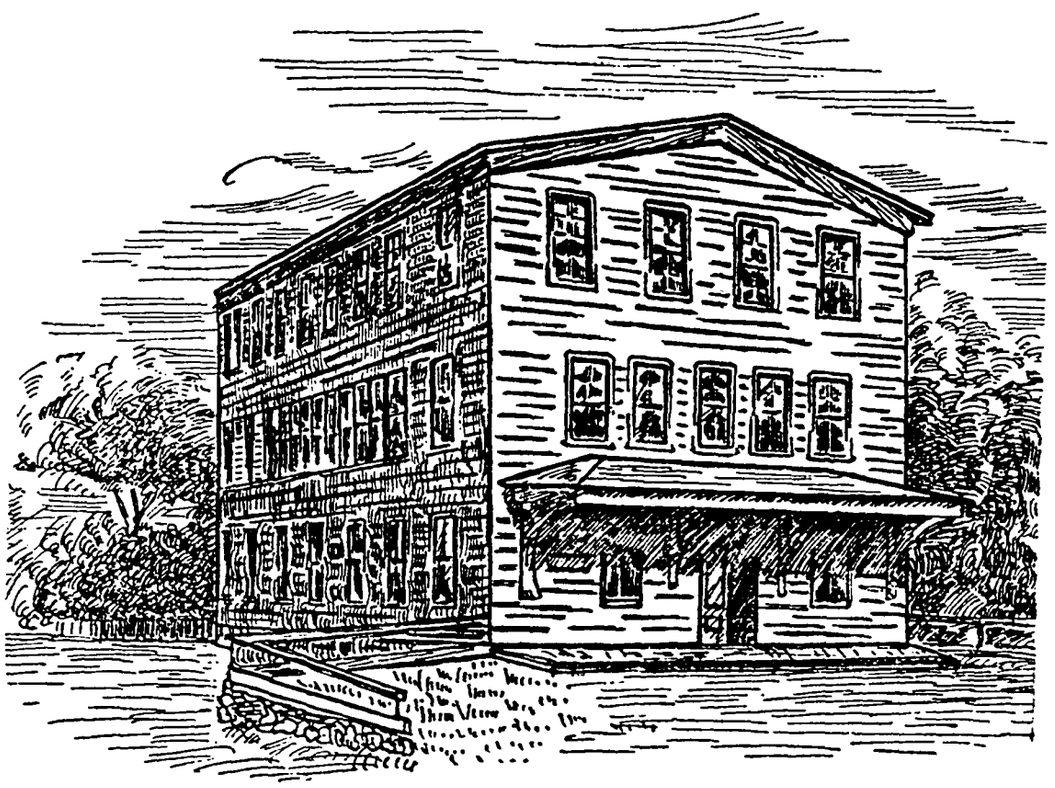
With a comparatively small capital, but reinforced from time to time by financial assistance, they early established the policy of producing high class footwear, going another notch above the excellent reputation of Weymouth goods.

That plan was consistently adhered to, with its advantages and disadvantages, but Mr. Heald wisely took charge of the shop and Mr. Stetson went on the road; so that efficiency was well balanced. In 1900 the concern was incorporated as the Stetson Shoe Co., always maintained as a non-union factory, and resourceful enough to keep even the unions guessing. Retail stores were started as early as 1893, the first being at Springfield. A second was opened in New York City in 1907, followed by two more during the next ten years; also by one in Chicago and another in Cincinnati. Then in due course their organization was strengthened by the lease of a block in Boston, containing offices and a store, and other sales places were opened in Philadelphia, Columbus, etc. at different times.

Though a shoe is an inanimate creation, it may possess characteristics derived from the men promoting it. A. C. Heald was many-sided; he had vision, but he displayed common sense enough to maintain the poise. He believed in making a good shoe, and always endeavored to keep within hail, at least, of the best. He believed also in advertising, and expended large sums therefor. He encouraged many intra-factory schemes for mutual benefit; indeed, the ideals pursued by the organization were largely the creation of Mr. Heald. The Foremen's Meetings with papers and discussions, developing into an effective educative influence in the promotion of the business. The Round Table of factory personnel, resulting probably from the foregoing. The Stockholders' Association, with the privilege to elect a work-

man director. The Pension Fund, Group Insurance, Home Building, Profit Sharing, Stock Ownership, and other similar ideas. The Vocational Department in collaboration with the Weymouth High School, whereby pupils worked for wages at the factory in alternation with school requirements, enabling them to graduate with a trade in addition to scholastic attainments. Radio broadcasting of Stetson Shoe virtues became a national hook-up.

When the time was ripe (1919) women's shoes began to be made, which was somewhat new for Weymouth, and today they constitute a feature of the business. The *locale* has always been favorable to individuality, and a shop's crew used to making "Weymouth Grade" was easily trained to do better. Manufacturing facilities have kept pace with expansion, and now the capacity of the Stetson equipment is very great. Excellent taste predominates in everything. The leading spirit succumbed to supreme exertion, but his ideas,



FIRST "STETSON" SHOP
(Main Street)

supplemented by those of his partner, ought to survive and be an inspiration for years to come!

STETSON SHOE COMPANY FACTORY

Lemuel S. Merritt,* his son Charles L., and his brother Charles, made an appreciable dent in the industrial affairs of Weymouth because of their inventive talent in the direction of making machine needles, knives, tacks and shoestrings, all of which have a relation to the shoe industry.

Lemuel Merritt was a natural "gene," and his little needle-shop on the canal leading from the pond adjacent to the Tirrell estate at the turn of Front St. was still standing in 1932, reminder of a lost art in that locality.

Charles, the eldest son, seemed to have inherited the father's gift of invention, for while working as a cutter for Theron V. & William A. Shaw he employed his evenings "running" shoestrings from fragments of choice upper-leather which might otherwise have been cast into the scrap-pile. The process of educing (literally) a string from a piece of leather, with only a knife for a tool, would in these days excite curiosity, for it is a very skillful performance.

One day Mr. T. V. Shaw casually remarked to "Charlie" that the firm would buy all the leather shoestrings he might make, and this order, for a starter, apparently put the String Business on the map. At first the article came forth from knife and fingers in a somewhat uneven shape and without exactness of size, though remarkably uniform considering the deftness of the operation; and when the strings were measured, rolled and bunched, they were not always graded satisfactorily. Therefore young Charles contrived a device for making them round and of a regular gauge.

It was a simple gadget, but it did the trick exceedingly well; so well that J. W. Pratt of Randolph (dubbed "Shoestring Pratt") heard of it and came over to South Weymouth and paid five dollars for one of them. But when it was set up in Pratt's factory the device remained there only a short time; indeed, it disappeared the second day, the workmen being jealous of an innovation that seemed to threaten their welfare.

A similar machine had been furnished at about that time, consisting of a steel plate having a hole with sharpened edge, but with no means for adjustment, and more compli-

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*Son of Amos Merritt, born 1783 at Scituate. Washington Merritt, another son of inventive ability, built the first organ in Weymouth, and devised important machines for the fan business of Edmund S. Hunt of Broad St.

cated machinery had to be provided for that purpose; but nothing surpassed the little five-dollar "contraption" designed by Charles L. Merritt. He afterwards went into the tack business, and at a time when workmen furnished their own tacks, conceived the idea of cutting them very slim, and so could run more tacks to the ounce.

Charles, the elder brother of Lemuel, also made needles in the small shop already referred to, and like all the Merritts he was inventive. He got out a machine for crimping boots and strap-ties, the custom then being to shape the vamp to the ankle by a process of wetting and pressing the leather into the required form. Charles Merritt's crimping machine enabled him to cut under the prices charged by the hand crimpers, who claimed unjustly that the vamps so treated would not hold their shape. As a matter of fact, the Merritt invention accomplished all that was necessary, and its reputation spread abroad—just that; for the crimper itself was guarded as a secret in an upper room of the needle-shop, where its operations were conducted behind locked doors, and shoe bosses bringing vamps to be crimped had to ring a bell to signal their desire for the downstair door to be opened to take in raw material and deliver finished goods. However, it is suspected in this later time that the secrecy shrouded a process not so very mysterious, but that it was necessary to defeat the eyes of prying rival inventors or the jealous anger of the hand crimpers.

In 1857 Lemuel Merritt invented what he called an "Extension knife" for leather cutters, which consisted of a hollow handle carrying a removable blade which could be detached by use of a key when necessary to change for any purpose. This knife was patented and went into quite general use about Civil War times, though the uncertainties of the period hindered a very successful marketing of the tool. Mr. Merritt manufactured both handles and blades, and the device was said to be as practical in the shoe industry as it was ingenious.

Another "secret" process in connection with the manufacturing of boots was that of stamping and gilding letters and sundry devices on the tops, many of which were made of col-

Note: Young Merritt also constructed a water-power roller for securing further uniformity of shape in the leather string.

ored leather. Such work was done in little outside shops by a few skilled men, Mr. Eri T. Joy in South Weymouth, and the Nashes (A. P. Nash and son) at the Landing; and in this case the person desiring the service never got far inside an outer entry or porch of the place where such gilding was done. The name of the consignee was often displayed in gold letters, sometimes with an appropriate design, on the fronts of long-leg boots. A pair of "cack" (juvenile) boots decorated in this fashion never failed to give great satisfaction to the small boy wearing the same. The author knows, for he was one of the kids thus favored.

The Piece Business became an important outlet to the shoe industry, following the period when much good leather chips were burned (or otherwise wasted) in the big stoves of the cutting-rooms. The cutter of upper-leather was able, from his knowledge of stock, to put aside a great quantity of excellent "cornerings" suitable for string making, and it soon got to be a prosperous business to collect at the various factories the constant supply of string-stock. Incidentally it may be stated that in the early '70s the best of such cullings brought ten cents a pound (kip—6 cts. by ton) and turned into strings* the highest grade sold for a dollar per bunch of 100.

Mr. Simeon T. Madan was in this business; Arthur LaFawn; Tirrell & Merritt, as an annex to their shoestring industry, and many others while that phase was in vogue. There was also utilized the less valuable waste of upper-leather, which was bleached for linings and the like; and absolute scraps were converted into heels by a paste-and-pressure process.

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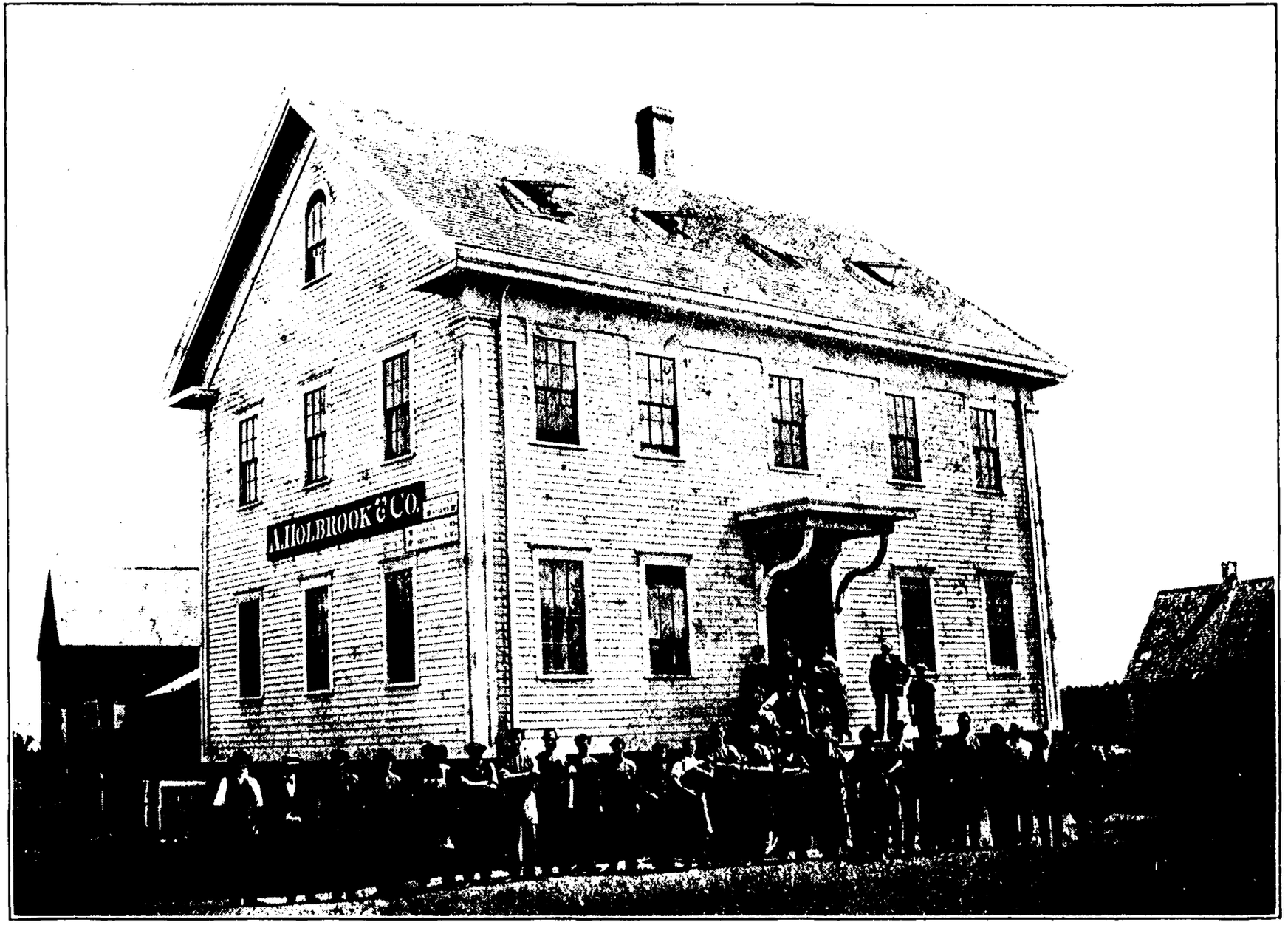
*In "Hawkers & Walkers" we read: "The short and simple annals of shoe laces help to clear up some questions regarding the footwear of our colonial fathers. The New Haven colonists used shoe-strings instead of buckles, and we even find shoe-strings mentioned in an old will in Massachusetts. They were cut from raw hide, and must have been crude; 'whang' was the colloquial name for them."



AN 1874-5 GROUP, ASA HOLBROOK EXTREME LEFT
(Cor. Washington and Pleasant Sts.)

LOVELL'S CORNER

(on "MUTTON LANE," 1820)

From the lips of Mr. Bradford Hawes comes reliable information about the early shoemakers of the "Corner."

David & Micah Lovell occupied the red stone shop at the junction of what is now Washington and Pleasant Sts., and the story of their doings has been partially told. The second manufacturer was Holbrook & Burrell (Gilman Burrell and Asa Holbrook), who were just off Pleasant St. on Washington. Afterwards Burrill continued alone. The third was Horatio Loud, who first made shoes in the back part of Mr. Hawes' present residence, built a shop south of the same, which was afterwards rented to Holbrook & Lovell. Abner Holbrook and Daniel Lovell were associated for a short time, then Abner continued alone. Incidentally it may be noted that Daniel Lovell was the first Republican representative from Weymouth. He built the biggest house at the "Corner" which was later owned by Jotham Salisbury. When Abner Holbrook bought the old original site he pulled down the Red Shop; this was about 1858. Alanson Holbrook and a partner followed, and Joseph Holbrook, who died young. In the '40s and '50s the population of this snug little community was about 160 souls. Dexter Pratt came along later and manufactured, first in the Holbrook shop and then on the historic corner.

Every move made was announced as leading to better things, but the expected did not happen, and the shoe business slowly dwindled to a peaceful end. Today the echoes murmur with the names of Lovells, Holbrooks, and Hawses, but there is no tapping of the hammer of the shoemaker. In other words, "the shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb!"

LOVELL'S CORNER IN EARLY 1800

A study of the shoe business carried on by the twin brothers David and Micah Lovell in the early years of 1800, as revealed by their records even now available, shows the close relationship between factory and home at that period.

In the life of this shoe town in microcosm on the South Shore the smell of leather, industrially speaking, was over all. "There's nothing like leather" was the creed at the Corner of those worthy successors of St. Crispin, and they were aggressively pious, for one of them being thrown into a vat of hot tar, to restrain his enthusiasm, is reputed to have emerged therefrom "much refreshed." That same odor of tar was noticeable on cordwainers up to the 1800s.

It was the "simple life" at the Corner in those days,—one factory, one store, one school, one pond; one of a kind satisfied the Hawses, the Pratts, the Tildens, the Lincolns, the Richardses, the Louds, who never dreamed of an age of steam or of shoe machinery.

The product of the Lovell's factory was mainly a kip brogan, solid leather and hand-made. Nothing was done in the main shop save cutting uppers and bottom stock, and packing and shipping the finished shoes. The brogan vamp and quarter having been cut, the next operation was the hand stitching or "fitting," and this was women's work in the home; not regarded as a menial employment or derogatory of social status.

Next the fitted uppers were taken by the shoemaker to the ell of his house, or to the little shop in his yard, where he joined them together in a manner to defy man's power to pull asunder. The word "brogan" was imported, and is the same as *brog* (long "o"). Some other shoe styles had foreign names, such as Balmoral, Alexis, Oxford, Blucher. "Congress" sounds like a United States product, but the side gores were imported for this pattern as late as 1870. Mr. Quincy L. Reed testified that the brogan pattern was the easiest for the feet of any ever invented, and that the solid leather, hand pegged, brogan made in eastern Massachusetts shoe shops virtually won the Civil War for the North; because the South having no shoe factories, the Johnny Rebs were soon walking on their uppers.

The Rebel "yell" was calculated to put the fear of the devil into the Northern troops, but the Yankee cheer, given with the Irish brogue which they had never before heard, put the fear of God into the Rebel hearts; while the squeak, squeak, squeak of the pegged brogan, as it went marching through dry Georgia, soon paralyzed the Rebel nerve. When they threw up their hands in despair, it is worth while to remember that it was an Irish shoemaker from Lovell's Corner, one Jerry Quinn, who first hoisted the Stars and Stripes over the abandoned capital at Richmond.

The books of D. & M. Lovell show credits today of labor rated according to the brain and brawn employed in the act. Grafting (of trees), then as now requiring a peculiar talent, brought the highest price,—one dollar per day of ten hours. Fencing and mowing, also calling for skill as well as muscle, were similarly rewarded, while planting and cutting wood brought .75, and "howing" (hoeing) .92. The fitting of brogans was ten cents, and hand-pegged bottoming from .40 to .55 per pair, according to the times. The finished brogan sold for .75 to $1.50 per pair at wholesale, retailing at $1.50 to $2.00.

The product was widely distributed along our coast and to the interior, as well as to Cuba, the East and West Indies. All shoe work outside the factory was done by the piece; this is accounted for by the fact that shoe manufacturing at the beginning of the 19th century was only one step ahead of the itinerant shoemaker who boarded with the family while he cut and made shoes for them. If the accommodations were comfortable his job held, but if "commons were short" so was his stay.

The cut of the shoes corresponded with the style of living, and the only way to get a uniform price was by the piece. It was a subsidiary job to farming—or even fishing; a man would do his "chores" around the house and barn, then go to the shop, keeping his own time and opening a running account with the factory and store appurtenant thereto. Shoemaking was a seasonable job, done mainly in the winter after farming was over; it was done under a roof in all weathers, and so was subject to much competition. The South Shore citizen who was getting a living off his farm

could afford to make shoes for much less than the man who depended on shoemaking for a livelihood.

The price of leather on the Lovell books varied greatly. Invoices of 1843 show calfskin bought for .75 per lb.; side kip .16 per foot, with sole leather at .25 per pound.

The shoe business then as now was highly speculative, the prices for labor depending on the "times," which were good or bad as crops went. The thrifty manufacturer with some cash and more credit watched his chances, and operated principally when the signs were favorable; buying upper and sole leather at low figures, he would fit his uppers ahead, and bottom them when the shoemaker was willing to work at the boss's prices. Possibly storing the shoes until the market favored, he sold at a handsome profit, and if the market went against him he "failed;" but as most manufacturers did that sooner or later, it was no particular disgrace.

Like most shoe manufacturers of the day the Lovells carried on a grocery store as a part of their business. Examination of their books shows rum at 4 cts. per gill; "hand" of tobacco 4 cts., a quart of rum .14, ½ lb. of smoking tobacco 5 cts., a pint of cherry brandy .20. 32 lbs. of flour for 22 cts. could not be called "dear." Imported goods were somewhat higher,—¼ lb. of tea .20, one pound of sugar 16 cts., 1 quart of molasses .18.

If we are surprised that the total account of a Mr. C. during the months of April, May, June and July, 1820, was for rum only, and to the amount of $3.28, we must remember that he probably raised about all the necessaries of life on his farm, and called upon the store only for his luxuries.

But times have changed "since Hannah died," for in the early 1800s the shoemaking theory was to distribute the work far and near to the homes of the people, and as late as 1860 one manufacturer sent work to Nantucket, and it took all of one winter to bottom four dozen of calf boots. The big change came with the advent of the sewing machine, which was taken into homes at first, but its entrance to the factory met obstacles. Women refused to work there with men, and the men were reluctant to come under the restraining influence of the women.

However, the introduction of steam settled that question, although it raised a plenty of others; the first steam whistle

of the shoe factory sounded the doom of the one-horse shop, and brought to the fore certain axiomatic principles that have since been worked out in the so-called "modern" shoe factory. One of them is the principle of centralization, whereby all work is done under one roof. This was resisted by men and women, who could not bear to give up the old idea of the little farm with its chores, the hot noon meal, and association with members of the family.

Then there was the principle of standardization of quality and price which, with the assistance of the Knights of Labor, dictated one price and one quality only in a given city or town, and drove all cheaper grades elsewhere. The principle of specialization, also, meant that a man should do only one machine part; the oldtime shoemaker who could perform all the operations, and who could "put into black" six pairs of Brogans in a day, was through. The overhead expense of a machine-crammed factory led to schedules to run that machinery ten hours a day and six days per week the year round, and of course the professional shoemaker came to occupy the whole stage; no more yielding to the allurements of fishing or gunning trips.

The Labor Union, with its Stamp and Agreement for "No strike, no lockout," flourished for awhile, but that is rapidly being superseded by the corporation in which the workmen have a share in the capital and profits of the business. The word "Knight" carried the idea of a servant or attendant rather than a participant in the business, which is better spelled "Stockholder." The arrival of the chain shoe store, with its slogan "From Factory to Wearer," would seem to mark the completion of one era and the dawn of a new regime of shoe machinery plus efficiency in the factory.

Early in the development of shoe machinery the theory of the zone came into view. Hitherto the prosperous manufacturer had built his spacious mansion close by his factory; but the noise, the smoke, the atmosphere of the shop, were not conducive to dignity and repose, and so the line was drawn.

At the Corner the Lovells were succeeded by the Holbrooks, the Pratts, etc.; steam was introduced and in the late 1800s it would seem that the small factory might hold on

for quite awhile; but since the early 1900s changes have come rapidly, and Lovell's Corner with the Fogg's and Dyer's in South Weymouth, and scores of other corners in Weymouth, have joined the residential zone.

The history of the rise, decline and fall of the shoe business at Lovell's Corner is but typical. Many a factory has been converted into stores or apartment houses; the little shop in the back yard held on for awhile, and promised to afford the ancient shoemaker an opportunity to turn an honest penny by cobbling for the community, but a great machinery company saw the opportunity to increase its business, and by installing a full equipment of shoe machinery on lease or rental, has been able to control that situation, and "Repairs while you Wait" has become a new slogan.

Years ago a gaunt Yankee, wearing a plug hat and with a bundle of old boots on his back, might be seen walking the streets of Boston. He was nicknamed "Yankee Doodle," because, as he walked from his customers in the business section to his cobbling-shop in the South End, he always whistled that tune. But he has passed on, and his place taken by the machinery cobbling-shop at almost every corner; and as you sit waiting and watching the process of repairing, you might expect to see this Americanized cobbler pause to change his graphophone — not for "Yankee Doodle" but for "Yes, we have no bananas!"

(— H. B. Reed.)

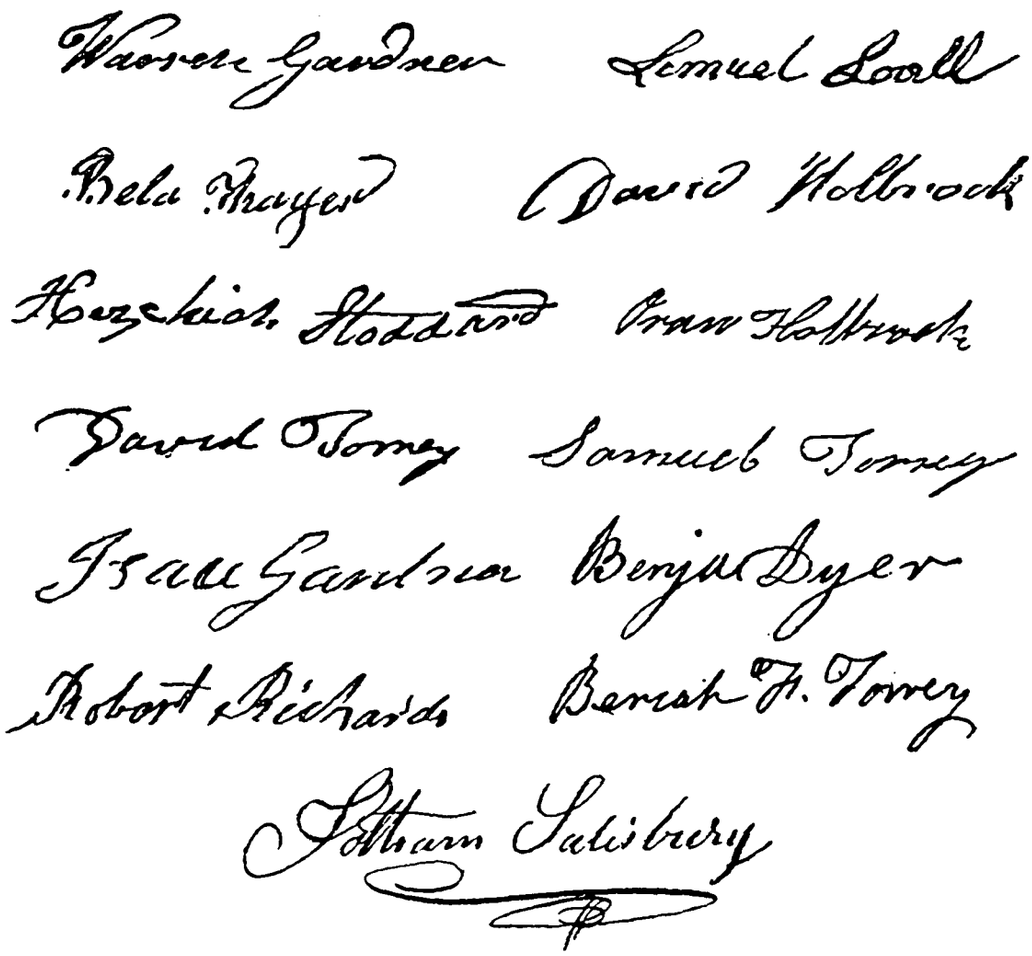
D. & M. LOVELL

In 1830 the Lovells were paying fifty cents for fitting ten pairs of shoes, the old account books not stating what sort of shoes, but probably Brogans. For making they were paying .35. For quite awhile .35 seemed to be the going price, and then they paid James Clapp .40, and in 1831 paid Samuel Orcutt .33 and .37.

In 1846 they paid .15 for making Brogans, and in 1847—.18. In 1850 D. & M. Lovell were paying Nathan Shepherd .34 each for boxes, and using a lot of them.

The D. & M. Lovell ledger was as good as an autograph album, for about so often the customer at their general store, who had purchased a multitude of "Sundrys," came in for a settlement, and underneath the footings we find these

words: "This day settled all accts. between us and made an even balance up to the therein date," and then the signatures of customer and grocer. Below are shown some of the former:



SIGNATURES OF WORKMEN AND CUSTOMERS

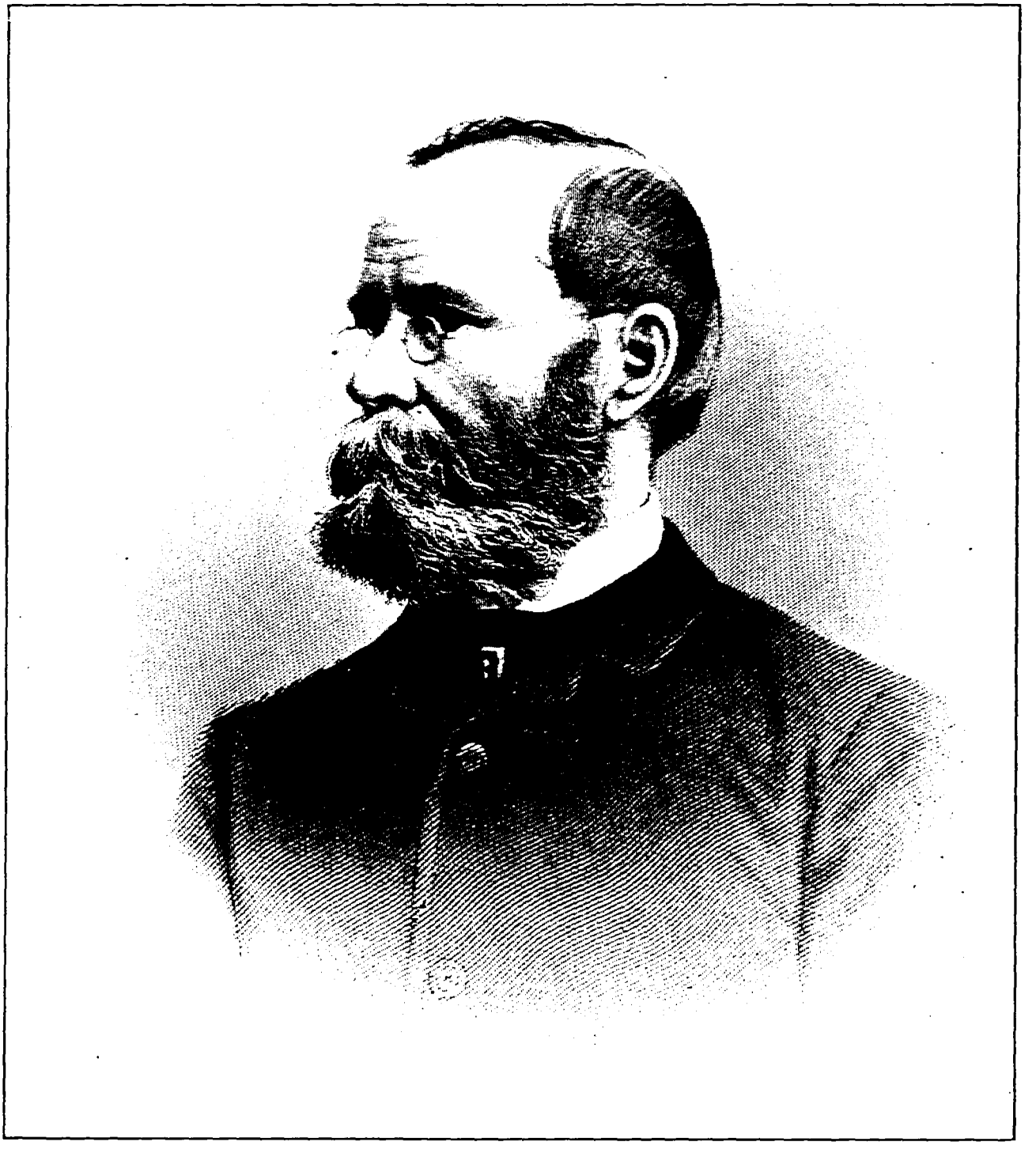
The Account book of David Lovell, commenced April 1, 1807, contains interesting items. The figure notation at first is like this: "To making pair of shoes 0 0 5 0," which means fifty cents. "Tapping a pair of shoes 0 0 1 7"—.17. "To making a pair of thick shoes 0 0 8 2"—.82.

Further on (1818) the notation is like that of today, and we find prices as follows. Pair of vamps—.17; "soalluther" one pair—.33. Shoes at .60 (probably for making) and Nail Shoes at .56. In 1819 we note a "pair of soalluthers for Eben"—.25.

Later on a "gallon of Mallafses .54" sweetens the record, (the foregoing "f" being a stab at old-style "s"), and fifty cents for a wagon to Boston indicates cheap transportation; but very likely being more a grocer than a shoe manufacturer David's accounts embrace a good many domestic

staples. Indeed, the frequent entry of rum and molasses on the book more than hints of the "ingrediences" of "Blackstrap," that famous drink of those days.

However, in 1820 we note a pair of shoes $1.84, and tapping a pair—.42; and another pair of shoes for $2. Also "1 lb copper nails & 1 lb Ion nails—.72." Most of these accounts are from 1818 to 1821, and we judge that David went into company with his twin brother towards 1830, for the ledger above referred to deals with that period.



MARSHALL C. DIZER
(1822-1907)

EAST WEYMOUTH
("BACK RIVER")

The recollections of Mr. Waldo Turner, not a shoe man but a close observer, may be of interest:

"Prior to my personal knowledge (beginning 1860) Marshall C. Dizer began making shoes about 1845 (1843 is the correct date) in a little shop. He later bought out the business of Cottington Nash on Middle St. and enlarged his sphere, moving to what was known as the "Green Shop" at the corner of Broad and Middle Sts., which he occupied until 1861, when he erected a larger three-story building at the junction of Broad and Madison Sts., which still stands (torn down 1929).

"Here during and since the Civil War he built up what at one time was considered the largest and most complete factory of his day, gradually absorbing all departments, so that from treatment of the crude skin as received from the abbattoirs there was conducted the various processes of shoemaking from tanning to cutting, fitting, making and finishing—all under one roof. History records the fact that on a wager a pair of shoes was made, beginning with the raw hide taken from the animal's back and passing through the various departments until the finished product came forth in 2½ hours. (There are other versions of this story.) Mr. Dizer was followed in the Green Shop by Joseph Rogers, I think in company with Alpheus Bates, who succeeded to the business after the death of Mr. Rogers.

"Another firm started at about this time, or a little later, that of James H. Clapp, which is at present running under the firm name of Edwin Clapp & Son, Inc. James Henry Clapp was a mason by trade, working out of town, and not content with day labor came home to Weymouth and began to make shoes in his father's barn, which he remodelled and occupied until a growing business compelled larger quarters; when, with his brother Edwin, he built a large (for the

times) shop at the corner of Middle and Essex Sts., and occupied the same with later enlargements until increased business demanded a bigger factory, which was constructed on Charles St., where the brother Edwin, on the death of James Henry, continued the business, which today is one of the best known in the country, and the market for its goods is the whole world.

Mr. Cottington Nash (1808-1871) also made boots on Middle St. near Broad between 1840 and 1860. In the late '50s Asa French was manufacturing in East Weymouth; also Nathan Canterbury on Commercial Sq., in the basement of a building which subsequently burned. These two manufacturers combined in the 1860s and built a large shop located where the Catholic church now stands. And still later Mr. Canterbury built a much larger factory near by, and left the business to his son, Nathan Dexter Canterbury, who established the firm of Canterbury & Haskell (Richard G. Haskell), manufacturing a high grade of boots for Western and Southern markets.

"Among other and perhaps smaller concerns of those days were Albert Humphrey at Jackson Sq.; Alvah Raymond, Commercial Sq.; Elnathan Bates, Middle and Commercial Sts.; Henry Bicknell, Commercial Sq.; Isaac Reed, later at Commercial Sq.; Reed & Hawes (Martin) same Sq.; Joseph Totman on High St.; Elijah Hobart, Thomas M. French, both on High St.; Nathaniel & Charles Thayer, Essex and Broad; Sheehy & Donovan, Broad St. Place, succeeded by Michael Sheehy, who built on Broad St. near Essex, and carried on for years.

"McKee Brothers & Tirrell for four years manufactured on Randall Avenue, later dissolving, and Henry A. Tirrell continued the business for many years, selling his product in Western and Californian markets. Otis Randall at one time manufactured boots in Jackson Sq., and later N. D. Canterbury built a factory on Hillside Ave., now Whitman St., which was afterwards occupied by Evans, Slattery & Bates, who were sadly hoodooed at the start by being burned out just the day before shipment of their first consignment.

"John Carroll was another pioneer who began modestly in the front room of his residence, but expanded his business

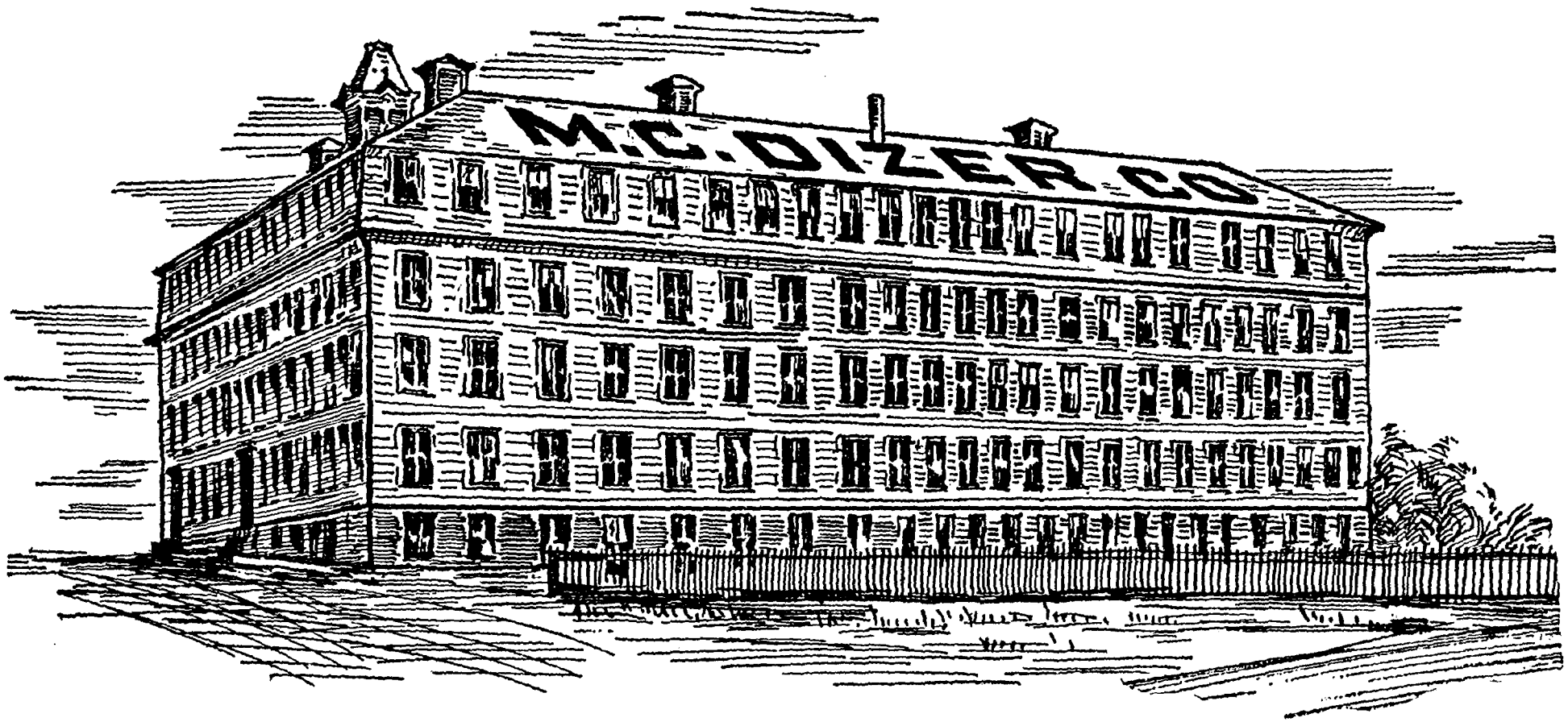
until the factory on Middle St. (1878-9) became among the most aggressive in town; Mr. Carroll and Edwin Clapp introducing to the shoe workers in Weymouth the frugal and pushing race of Italians, this innovation growing out of labor disagreements. Later the firm of Strong & Carroll was established, and after the death of Mr. Carroll, Mr. Strong erected a factory not far from Central Sq., east, which is still running.

"One of the quaintest and least known of the "old timers" was Quincy Randall on Commercial St., a bachelor and a recluse, who was owner, manager, and laborer in the business that he conducted. He had a little shop into which he would go in the morning, and no one ever saw him for the rest of the day; how he carried on and how he subsisted was not known. Each week he took to Boston the product of his industry (a few pairs of brogans), then came home and repeated the performance; and so on in the same manner until his death. The briefest of monosyllables was the extent of his intercourse with those by chance meeting him. I myself boarded some time in a house that he owned, where he reserved one chamber for himself. My own was opposite his, and I recall that he seldom came in at night until late, took off his shoes at the foot of the stairs and crept noiselessly up and into his room, the inside of which nobody ever saw; and Randall as noiselessly slipped out at daylight—just another curious type of humanity!

"Of the present-day firms, Clapp & Co., Keith & Co., Alden, Walker & Wilde, Whittemore & Tirrell, I will not describe further in my enumeration of shoe manufacturers in East Weymouth; only to add that until within twenty years or so the output of these concerns was almost wholly Boots—from the daintiest style of a show-boot to the high cavalry footwear affected by the army. More recently the demand changed to shoes, and the long boot is a thing of the past."

M. C. DIZER CO.

Marshall Curtis Dizer was born in Weymouth Sept. 22, 1822, the oldest of seven children of John and Sophia (French) Dizer, and grandson of another John Dizer, who came into this country about 1790.



M. C. DIZER CO. FACTORY
(Broad and Madison Sts.)

Mr. Dizer's father learned shoemaking when a young man, and followed that occupation until 50 to 60 years of age; then retired to a farm and died in 1887 at the age of 87 years.

Marshall C. was educated in the schools of his native town and as soon as his services became useful entered the shop to help his father at the shoemaker's bench. He was brought up in the atmosphere of this vocation, working at his chosen trade until attaining his majority; he then took a case of shoes to make for a manufacturer, for which he was paid $35. when they were finished.

With this capital he embarked in business for himself in 1843, and from that day continued in the shoe industry, but never as an employe; his function was to buy stock, make shoes, sell them to the best advantage, and with the returns thus acquired would replenish supplies, increase the volume of his business, and so he gradually amassed a competence. All through these struggles Mr. Dizer practised the most rigid economy, it being said that as an instance of his frugality he would frequently, when business called him to Boston, make his noon meal of an apple and a doughnut. After the first three years along this line he purchased and conducted a grocery store as an adjunct to his manufacturing, which was carried on in half of the store.

During all his business career Mr. Dizer never asked or received from anyone a loan, except in one instance when he secured $100. from Jonathan Denton of Boston (afterwards his father-in-law), but this debt caused him so much mental uneasiness that he determined to never repeat the experiment. In a few years larger quarters became necessary, and in the meantime he married and fitted up his grocery store as a dwelling, leasing a bigger shop which later on became too small. He then gave up the grocery department, devoting himself exclusively to manufacturing until in 1861 he built the large factory at Broad and Madison Sts., where he continued at the head of a shoe manufactory that was unusually comprehensive in all its details.

In the financial crash of 1857 Mr. Dizer lost almost the entire accumulation of previous years, and it was only by the most unyielding efforts that he managed to avert suspension of business. Again in 1861 the loss of his Southern

trade through the outbreak of the Civil War, and consequent failure to collect outstanding debts in that quarter, left him almost penniless; but with extraordinary pluck and energy he conquered adverse fortune. When he began the erection of his new factory he had no surplus money, but paid all construction bills as they fell due from the proceeds of his business.

Up to this time Mr. Dizer had manufactured only shoes, but now began making calf boots, and for about three years his specialty was army shoes. He never had any partners except two brothers, John T. and Jacob F., who at different times possessed an interest, until two sons became of age, when they were taken into the firm. In 1874 Mr. Silas C. Dizer was admitted, and in 1880 Mr. Walter M. Dizer was made a member.

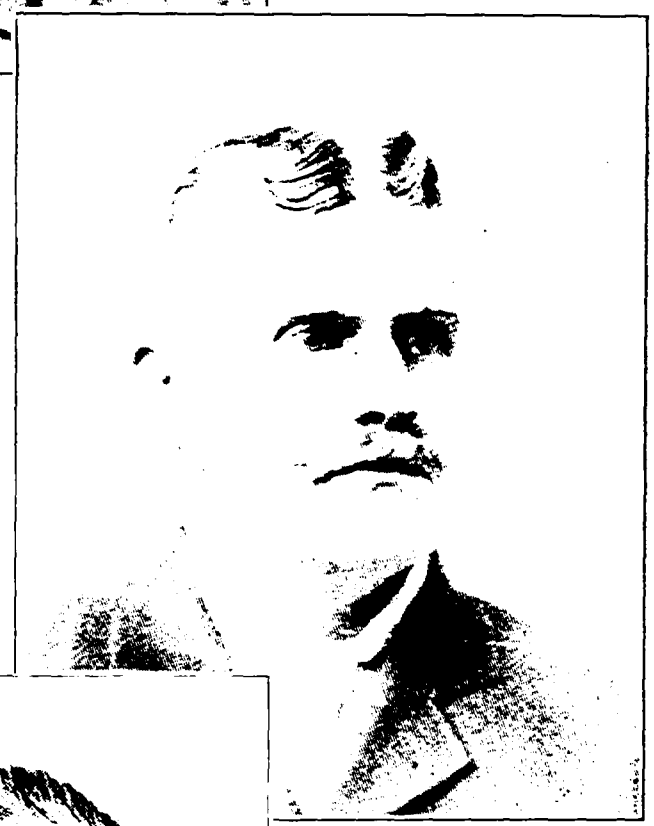
The factory of M. C. Dizer & Co. covered an area of over 100,000 sq. ft. of floor surface, and was about six stories high. The basement was used for the sole leather room, the first floor for offices, packing and treeing; the second floor for cutting and stitching; the third, fourth and fifth for bottoming. A tannery connected with the main factory had an extensive capacity.

INFORMATION FROM ANOTHER SOURCE

"M. C. Dizer started his business in 1843, first making shoes in a house on Middle St. near Central Sq. Soon, in company with his brother, he moved across the street into what was known for years as the "Green Shop," which building was later the Johnson variety store.

"It was sometime later that land was bought on Madison St. and a part of the shop, so familiar to two generations, was built. In the old shop many Weymouth men were employed, and the foundations of a prosperous industry laid. At the death of Mr. Dizer in 1907 the business went to Brockton, in a merger known as the Dizer-Copeland Co., and the factory in East Weymouth was leased to the Alden, Walker & Wilde Co.

An elaboration of one statement in the preceding paragraph has to be made, in view of what appeared in the local newspaper at the time the big factory was being laid low by the Quincy Building Wrecking Co. "It has been almost



PRESTON LEWIS

NOAH T. JOY

EDW. E. ORR

DOUGLAS M. EASTON

impossible to trace the date of the shop's erection, a point particularly interesting and important at this time. Charles B. Cushing of 70 Madison St. had given the time as approximately 1865, but after that statement was made in the Gazette, an old schoolmate called Mr. Cushing by telephone and declared that she was one who took part in a tableau presented at the rather elaborate dedication exercises of the new structure, and that the occasion was in 1861. Therefore, the old shop has seen the troops of this country engage in three major wars, while it has stood housing the wheels of an industry furnishing a part of the equipment of officers and men." The lady mentioned, 77 years of age, was a little girl of nine when personating a character in the tableau which was a novel feature of the dedication.

Douglas M. Easton, formerly superintendent of a tannery in Hyde Park, Mass., became connected with M. C. Dizer & Co. in 1873, at which time they were currying calfskins.

In the '80s Mr. Easton discovered a process for quick tanning, but claimed no special credit, declaring that intensive study of any business would produce satisfactory results; that he himself made almost daily experiments, and claimed the tannage at Dizer's had all the good qualities leather ought to have, with none of the bad. In other words, Easton was an enthusiast, and brought to the trade an uncanny knowledge of causes and effects in tanning.

In 1889 *one* Kangaroo skin was secured and sent to "Doug." for an experiment. His success with it was so great that they proceeded to make the tanning of kangaroo skins a specialty, importing direct from Australia, tanning 1,000 skins daily, and using nearly the entire product of their tannery in their own shoes.

A branch operated by the firm in Altona, N. Y. tanned some 60,000 green calfskins in 1892, and expected to buy 100,000 the following year. After being tanned these skins were sent to East Weymouth where they were finished into wax calf under Mr. Easton's supervision.

The best evidence that the calfskins the firm made were appreciated by the shoe trade, is the fact that the Dizer factory for several months cut 50 dozen a day. In addition to calf and kangaroo this firm was making its own Russia

calf and cordovan galoshes, and one Boston jobbing house handled nearly a quarter of a million dollars' worth of these goods in one year, predicting a greater demand for the next.

An offshoot from M. C. Dizer & Co. was established in 1890, designated as the Weymouth Shoe Supply Co., a concern incorporated under the laws of Massachusetts to carry on a cut sole business, with Preston Lewis as president, and C. B. Cushing as treasurer.

This enterprise grew from a small beginning to a $300,000. business annually, outside of what the parent concern required of their production; and as operations were conducted under the same roof, there was an element of economy involved which proved of advantage. In its later development this Company added cut vamps, both calf and kangaroo, to the line; also uppers, all fitted.

In 1893 M. C. Dizer & Co. were the largest payers of royalty to the Goodyear Shoe Machinery Co. in the United States, making over 100 cases of Goodyear welts daily.

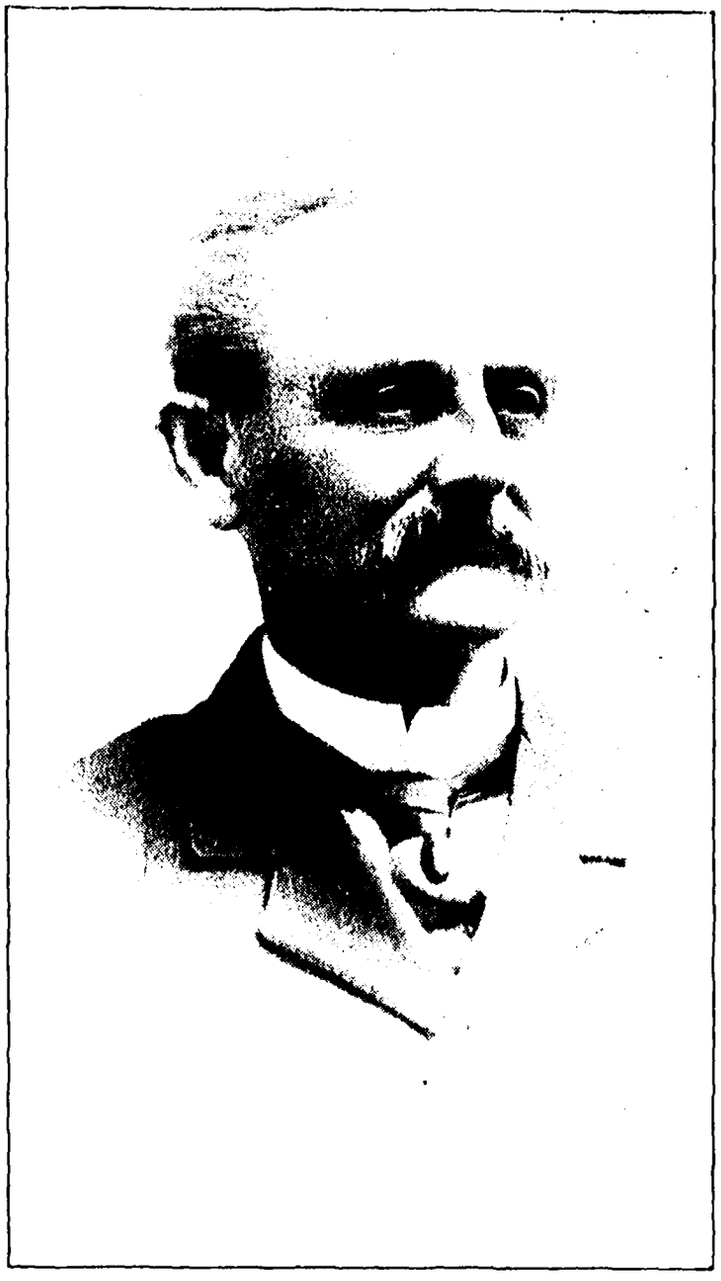
One of the most prominent shoe manufacturers of New York, making shoes for the finest retail trade, visited the Dizer factory and remarked that it was the best equipped shop he was ever in, his comment being: "You have it all!"

In the early '50s the "Congress" shoe (the style with rubber goring at the sides) came into the market, and in this town was first manufactured in East Weymouth. This type of an "easy" shoe had been patented, and a royalty or tax had to be paid.

Preston Lewis first allied himself with M. C. Dizer & Co. in 1883, beginning as an office-boy, but by ability and tact he attained to the position of superintendent of the whole factory.

Another valuable member of the force was Noah T. Joy, who continued in Mr. Dizer's employ for fifty years, deserving an honorable place in the group photograph herewith presented.

NATHAN CANTERBURY
(1809-1890)



N. D. CANTERBURY

Edward E. Orr was employed by the firm thirteen years as master mechanic, and he invented or improved many of the appliances in use about the shop. Strange to say Mr. Orr never served an apprenticeship to any trade, but so remarkable was his adaptability to machinery that he could see at a glance what many would have to study.

QUICKEST SHOEMAKING

The story of the "Quickest Time on Record" for making a pair of shoes, from raw hide to ready-to-wear, was told in 1894 in the Boston *Boot & Shoe Recorder,* but the M. C. Dizer factory in East Weymouth was the scene of the event.

The performance was staged in the presence of a notable company consisting of shoe and leather men, newspaper representatives, and the local workmen who participated to make the feat a success. We cannot go into every dramatic detail, but quote from the published account:

"The tannery was first visited (after two tally-hos had brought the guests from Boston), and then appeared a genius on the scene, no other than Mr. Douglas M. Easton, who has been identified with this firm for over twenty years. Mr. Easton, or "Doug." as friends call him, immediately took possession of the party and called for one of his men to bring a kangaroo skin.

"When the skin was produced he held it up so that all present could see it, and said it was his intention to unhair and tan this hide and make it into a pair of shoes before the gentlemen left for their homes. It was exactly 11:40 A. M. when the skin was taken in hand and the process commenced. After thus shown the hide was first unhaired and then went through a substitute for liming and drenching. This took about 15 minutes, after which it was given to a workman to tan. At 1:20 it was tanned, and then passed to the currying department, where it was fat-liquored, put through several processes, including drying in the boiler-room, and was finished complete for the shoe factory at 2:20 o'clock.

"The leather was then handed to Mr. Lewis, the superintendent of the factory, who started it through the following departments:

Cutting-room, Fitting-room, Lasting-room, Goodyear welted, Bottom filled, Out-sole put on, Stitched, Leveled,

Heeled, Breasted, Edges trimmed, Edges blacked, Heels and top-piece scoured, Ditto blacked, Bottoms scoured, Bottom fore part made, Shanks blacked, Electric finish, Treed and dressed.

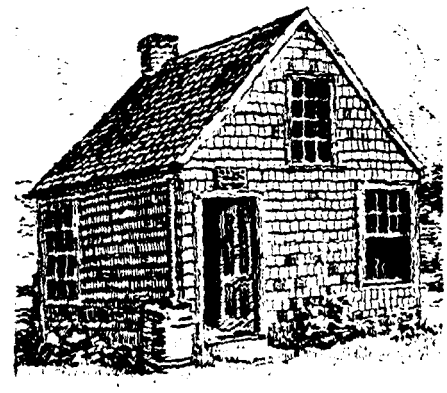
To be exact, the kangaroo skin was started on its journey through the shoe factory at 2:30 o'clock. "From the very start the visitors were anxious to see every process, and under the guidance of the several foremen of departments the pair of shoes was followed step by step, from floor to floor, until at precisely 3:32 P. M. the shoes were finished, treed, and placed in the hands of Mr. James Donaldson, the well known Boston shoe dealer, who placed them upon the feet of W. L. Terhune, publisher of the *Boot & Shoe Recorder;* and affidavits were drawn up testifying to the fact that the entire work had been done in three hours and fifty-two minutes, of which period one hour and twelve minutes was exclusive of the tanning. It was a proud day for Weymouth when this remarkable record was made.

THE "CLAPP" SHOE

James Sylvester Clapp, the father, was born 1801 in Scituate, and later removed to Weymouth, where he plied the vocation of boot-making in a humble ten-footer shop (1845) assisted by his son James Henry, who urged having a larger place, and their barn was fitted up for that purpose.

The second son, Edwin, was born thirteen years after James Henry, and upon attaining his majority joined his brother in the conduct of the business (1864). In 1853 the enterprise was fairly started and salient policies foreshadowed. The slogan seems to have been "Quality," and James Henry from the start exemplified such traits of character and administrative ability that success was insured.

At the death of James Henry in 1882, Edwin became sole proprietor and until 1909 was the living head of the business. The career of Edwin Clapp, and the reputation won by the shoe of that name, make outstanding history. He was one of the first manufacturers of fine shoes to discontinue selling to the jobbing trade, shipping directly to the retailer, . . . and "as a credit manager he possessed extraordinary judgment and intuition . . . He was continually preparing and perfecting an organization which not only should be



JAMES SYLVESTER CLAPP

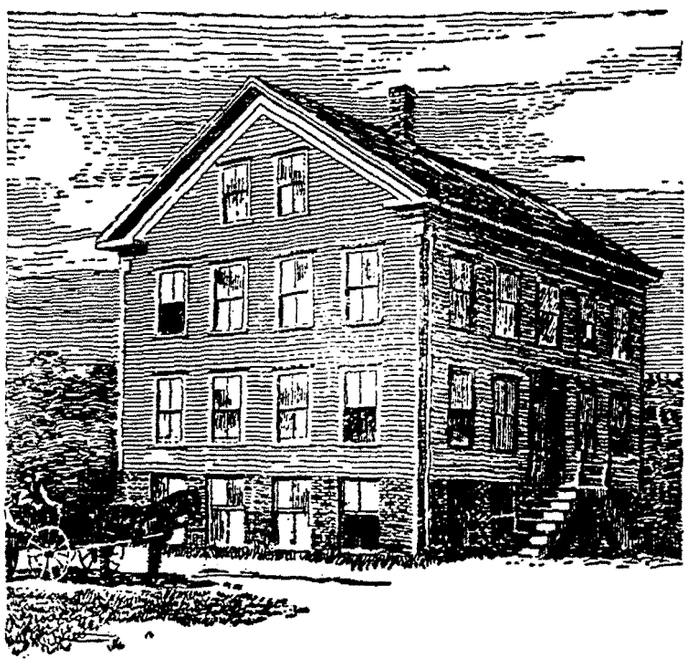
JAMES H. CLAPP

EDWIN CLAPP

able, but would be willing to carry on his work as he would have it done."

Such virility, originality, and stability in management was bound to have a lasting influence, and the maintenance of his ideals was confirmed by the award at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915 of the Grand Prize Medal, the highest distinction conferred for men's footwear.

The progress of events in the Clapp business is well illustrated by the succession of shops, as shown herewith.



THE FIRST CLAPP FACTORY
(Cor. Middle and Essex Sts.)

In the last fifty years of the Shoe Industry more changes have taken place,—more improvements in processes of manufacture, greater financial outlay and cleverer commercial methods, not to mention the establishment of mammoth factories, than in any period of its history. Therefore, it may be interesting to "hark back" and review the shoe manufacturing situation in East Weymouth as outlined in the Boston *Commercial Bulletin* of October, 1875.

J. H. Clapp & Company. "What a reputation for good work can do for an establishment is shown in the case of J. H. Clapp & Company, manufacturers of fine calf and opera boots, both sewed and pegged, of 47 Pearl street, Boston. This firm is now employing 70 hands at their East

Weymouth factory, besides sending work into 100 families outside. They are now running full time on orders, and turning out 200 cases of goods per week for the Western and New England trade. The factory is 30x65 feet and three stories high and fitted up with machinery in the best style. Hard times steer clear of such an establishment.

Canterbury & Haskell. Canterbury & Haskell, manufacturers of calf boots and shoes at No. 3 High street, Boston, are running their factory at East Weymouth on full time with a force of 125 hands. C. H. Pratt & Son have charge of the factory and 250 cases of calf boots and shoes are turned out per week. The goods are readily taken by the Western, Southern and New York trade. This establishment has now been running since 1830, and the shop at present occupied is 84x35 feet and four stories high with an L 100 feet long and two stories high. Orders are coming in very plentifully.

Alvah Raymond.* At the well known establishment of Alvah Raymond at East Weymouth four cases of very fine grade shoes are turned out per week. This establishment has been running for half a century, and at the present time employment is given to 10 hands, the goods being for the most part sold in New England. The products of the establishment embrace men's, boys' and youths' boots, balmorals, Congress gaiters, Prince Alberts and Oxford ties. Business is now quite active, and the fall trade will show a very large aggregate.

M. C. Dizer & Company. In addition to the manufacture of boots and shoes from prepared leather the firm of M. C. Dizer & Company of 94 Pearl street, Boston, do their own currying of calf skins. Orders are now coming in upon them in great supply, and at their factories at East Weymouth 150 hands are now employed, turning out the popular goods of the firm at the rate of 175 cases per week. The factories

*It is related of Deacon Alvah Raymond that, having suffered a temporary reverse, he heroically resumed business and eventually settled with every creditor to the last cent.

CLAPP'S BIG FACTORY

at Weymouth are 100x38 and 40x38 feet and the goods manufactured are sold in the East, West and South.

J. Totman & Son. A good fall business is being done by J. Totman & Son, East Weymouth. The work is all done by hand, and embraces men's calf, pegged and sewed opera boots and Congress shoes. Forty hands are employed and 1500 cases are turned out per year. This house has now been running for 25 years, and the goods turned out are widely and favorably known.

E. Hobart, Jr. At the boot and shoe establishment of E. Hobart, Jr., East Weymouth, 16 hands are employed on full time, turning out 45 cases of goods per week for the New England trade. The products of the house are both pegged and cable sewed, and the fall inquiry is active. Their trade is being gradually expanded, and orders from new quarters are continually coming in.

H. F. Bicknell. Henry F. Bicknell of East Weymouth has now been in his present line of business for 12 years. He gives steady employment to 12 hands, and manufactures 12 cases of goods per week. His products consist of sewed and pegged fine calf boots, calf and patent leather opera boots and Congress shoes, button boots, etc., the same being for the most part taken by the New England trade.

F. N. Tirrell & Company. With an ever active demand for their goods, F. N. Tirrell & Company of East Weymouth, are employing 11 men on full time and turning out 600 cases of goods per year. The products of the establishment embrace calf boots and shoes, pegged and cable wired, and are sold mostly in the Western market. Orders are coming in very rapidly at the Boston office, 12 Pearl street.

J. W. Rogers & Company. The popular and enterprising firm of Joseph W. Rogers & Company, East Weymouth, are doing a flourishing business this fall. Their goods, which are men's fine calf boots, both sewed and pegged, are for the most part disposed of to the New England and New York trade, though sales are also made in the West. Sixty

hands are now employed in the factory on full time. The Boston office of the firm is at 125 Summer street, where large orders are continually coming in.

Pratt & Bailey. All the boots and shoes turned out by Pratt & Bailey, East Weymouth, are sewed custom made work for the Boston trade. Some 15 pair of fine calf boots are turned out per week, and no work is done except to measure. Orders are always in good supply."

In East Weymouth there have been other manufacturers than those mentioned in the *Commercial Bulletin* review, some of them doubtless of an earlier date.

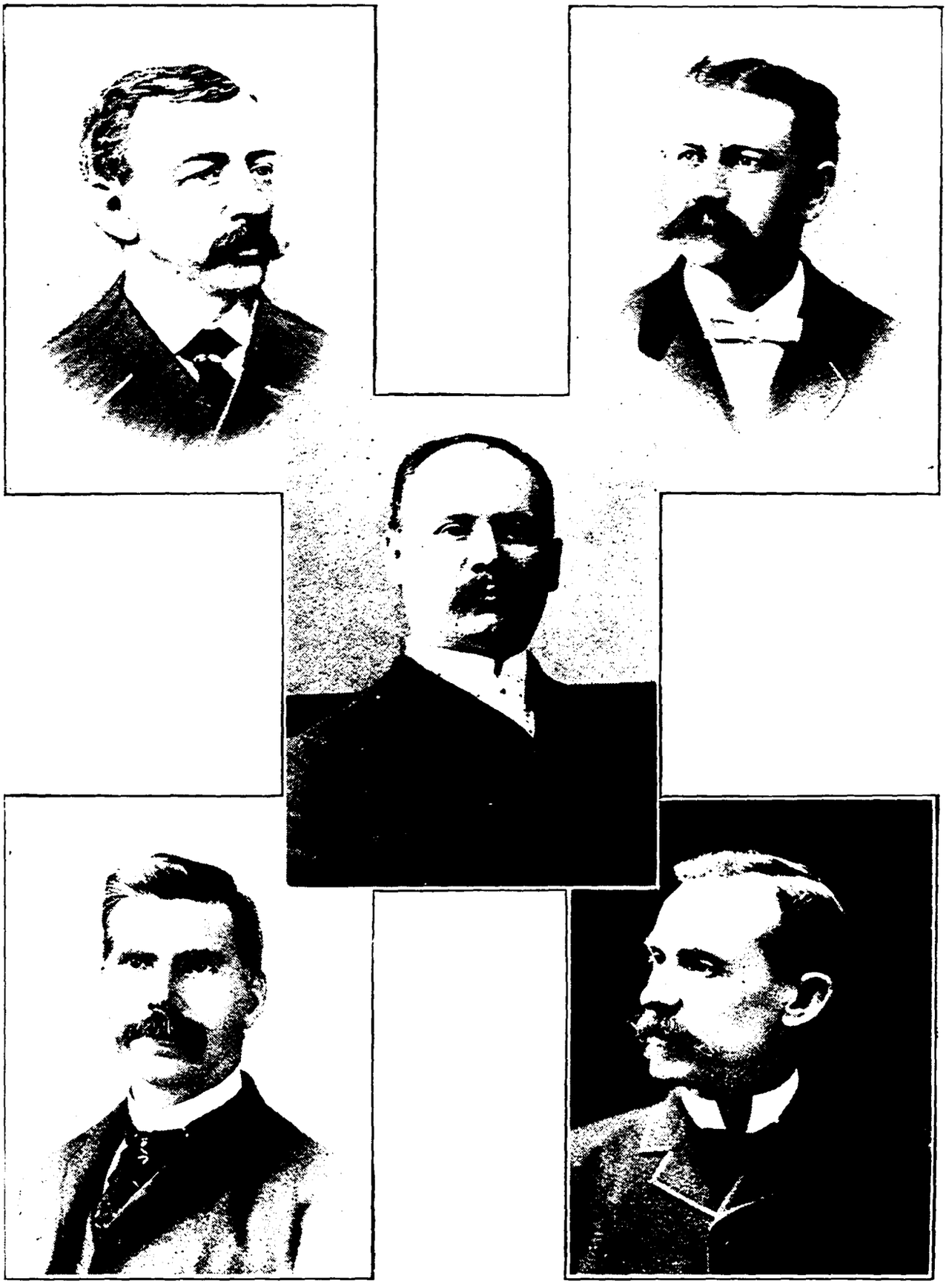
Michael Sheehy started the next year after (1876). James Donovan came upon the scene when Mr. Sheehy built his Broad St. factory, Donovan occupying the shop just vacated in the rear. Henry Austin Tirrell was manufacturing 1875-80, and his extended continuance in business betokens some success. John Carroll, afterwards Strong & Carroll on Middle St., came later, we believe.

Henry Raymond may have intervened, but Alden, Walker & Wilde came over from North Weymouth, 1906-7, and Evans, Slattery & Bates arrived upon the scene later still, to suffer the burning of their factory very early in their career. Reed & Hawes was another enterprising firm, with a factory not far from the railroad crossing.

Michael Sheehy began the manufacture of shoes in a small shop on Broad St. Place in 1876. He is reputed to have been the first on the South Shore to make ladies' shoes.

Within the year he, in company with John Henry Whelan, built a much larger factory on Broad St., and in 1884 he doubled the size of that and then employed about 200 men.

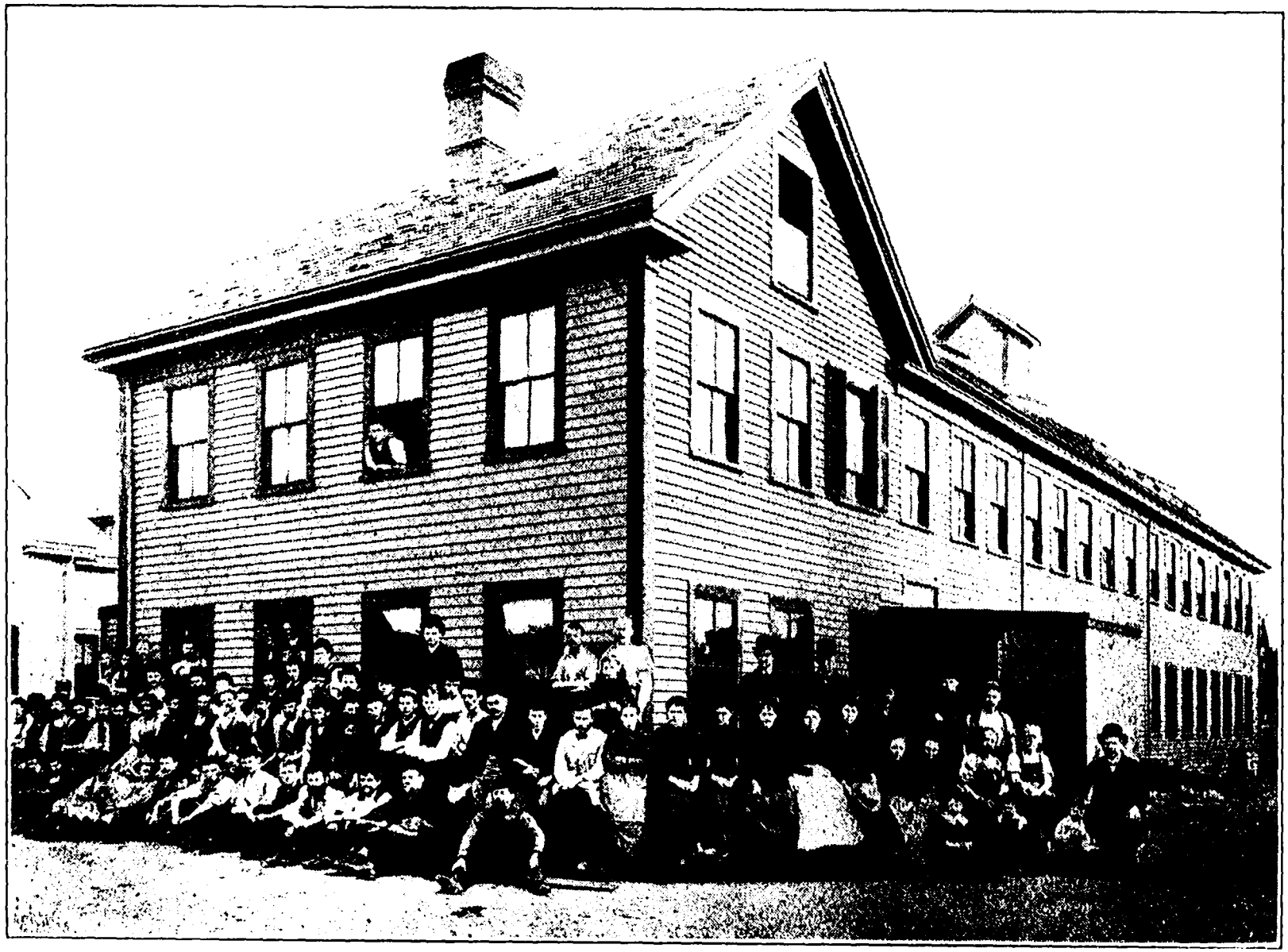
M. Sheehy & Co. did a handsome business in special orders for men's and women's shoes, one of their regular customers being Mrs. Grover Cleveland. Mr. Sheehy was satisfied with only the best in material and workmanship, distributing his product in the South and West where there was a demand for high priced footwear, and where the opinion prevailed that the Sheehy company made good shoes.



JOSEPH W. ROGERS ALPHEUS BATES

T. J. EVANS

MICHAEL SHEEHY JOHN CARROLL



M. SHEEHY SHOP'S CREW; himself at right.
(Broad Street)

Among those whom he taught the rudiments of high class shoemaking in his shops were the following who spread that knowledge: John Sheehy, his son, one of the firm of John T. Ritchie Co., Quebec; Edward McGrath, superintendent of Helmers Bettman Shoe Co., Cincinnati; John White, superintendent of Florsheim Shoe Co., Chicago; Frank Whelan, superintendent for Bannister Shoe Co., Newark; Thomas Slattery, superintendent John & Murphy Co., Newark; John Powers, superintendent of a factory in Lynchburg, Va., and Martin Killory, in business in Brockton.

Michael Sheehy closed his business in 1903, and in later years was interested in real estate development. He was always more than a shoe manufacturer, being of a studious character and devoted to civic betterment. As a young man he planted elms by the roadside, that the public might enjoy their shade; he organized a young men's club in which he established a library; he started a Total Abstinence Society which reached 200 members, active in East Weymouth for many years. Not so long a career as some, but an honorable one!

Just as this book goes to press the compiler receives a communication from an old friend that shows a knowledge of the subject:

"Marshall Curtis Dizer founded the business in the early 1840s, and later his brothers Jacob F. and John T. became associated as partners. Subsequently they withdrew, their places being taken by Silas C. and Walter M. Dizer.

"This house enjoyed an enviable record for 60 years and more as it journeyed down the "corridor of time," growing from a small custom-shop to the largest on the so called South Shore district. In their progression from kip leather and Napoleon boots, opera ribbed leg, with high heels for the cowboy to attach his spurs, on to the comfortable old Creole Congress with side elastics (which they were the first to introduce), so often called "the lazy man's shoe"—through all those years the name Dizer was known to nearly every dealer in the land, largely because of a reputation won as leaders in the shoe industry; they led and others followed! Before the great West became makers of footwear all the big jobbers awaited the coming of Dizer's salesmen

ere they decided what lines they would use, saying in explanation to competitors: 'We will wait, as Dizer always presents something new.' "

Then our informant waxes exuberant and continues: "No one house could have had more to do with the introduction of new methods, machines for the replacement of hand work, new factory systems of production, original devices for processes, than were brought forward by the inside organization of this factory. The trend from long legged boots to low shoes, such as Balmorals, Congress gaiters, Bluchers, and later nearly 100 per cent. Oxfords, of course covered years; but the opportunity to create the different combinations that could be evolved from Standard Screw, McKay, Wardwell Lock Stitch, National Fair Stitch, and later Goodyear Welt and Goodyear Stitch, furnished a field for shoe manufacturing genius to show itself, and M. C. Dizer & Co. continued to lead.

"In course of events they added a tannery, making it a part of factory development, and accomplishing the novelty of tanning the leather and fabricating the shoes under the same roof—said to be the first instance. A million kangaroo skins were tanned previous to the Boer War, but after that war was over the Australian source of raw stock was abruptly cut off.

"India goat skins were finished at the Dizer shop, coming tanned from that country and given the name "Dongolas." Calf skins were also tanned in upper New York State, but finished by Dizer; and it is not generally known, but they tanned thousands of seal skins, the first attempt by anyone, and their value to both retailer and consumer was widely recognized as 'the best on earth for the least money!'

"Dizer policies embraced a great deal for Weymouth homes and the welfare of its families. The concern liked to see more faces in the workrooms, as incidental to an increase of business, and they themselves worked hard to bring that about. Long periods of employment by trusted shoemen testified to that, and when Mr. Dizer would pass through the factory in his later years, and miss some of his old associates in their accustomed places, he would seek the foreman and make inquiry.

"In his prosperous days 10% of his profits each year were given away—a fact not commonly known. He was a great reader, a deep thinker, never went to a show in the Boston Theater in his life, never smoked, and even in his last sickness refused brandy, saying that he would finish without it. He had never tasted liquor in his life!

Mr. Silas C. was a director of the Y. M. C. A. for years, and at his death a trustee of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, along with Julius Rosenwald and others. As a manufacturer he was a genius, prolific of new ideas, and his passing left a void in creative effort bestowed upon men's shoes which is yet to be filled."

William D. Farren first built a little shop on Broad St., just to the right of where the Masonic Temple now stands; after awhile he joined with Joseph W. Rogers (in the '70s) manufacturing in the "Green Shop" at Central Sq., which has been referred to. Subsequently this connection was dissolved, and Rogers associated himself with Mr. Alpheus Bates, continuing in the same "Shop."

John Carroll began making shoes alone in a quiet way, selling his product to a firm of jobbers of which one Walker was a member. The latter became a manufacturer, and in due course there came about the concern Walker, Strong & Carroll (1880-90), Mr. Strong appearing in the picture somewhere along the line.

Mr. T. J. Evans was associated with the Clapps for about 30 years, becoming general superintendent and at one time credit man. At one stage of the situation he was wont to fare forth three days in the week to outlying districts, even as far as Marshfield, with a load of uppers, sole leather, etc., for distribution among individuals and gangs of the bottoming fraternity. Quite a bit of their "finishing" was done by James Kelley of Front St., just below "Nash's Corner."

The factory of Mr. Nathan Canterbury was constructed about 1830, and comprised an 84 x 35 building four stories

high, with an ell of 100 feet, two stories. Asa French was manufacturing in East Weymouth in the late '50s, and Nathan Canterbury was then on Commercial St. in a shop later destroyed by fire. These men combined in the '60s and erected a big shop on the site near where the Catholic church now stands. Subsequently (1873) Mr. Canterbury put up a much larger factory, and in due course left the business to his son Nathan Dexter, who inaugurated the firm of Canterbury & Haskell, who made a high grade of goods. Frank Thayer had charge of the Canterbury & Haskell tanning department. In the early '80s Samuel S. Brown of the firm of Fairbanks, Brown & Co. owned this factory, but it was occupied by Richard G. Haskell; a manufactory complete in all its appointments, and capable of turning out a hundred cases a day of men's fine calf boots, either hand-sewed, Goodyear, Standard Screw, or pegged.

In 1907, after many generations of successful manufacturers in Weymouth, and some of the more notable had gone to their reward, there came a lull in the industry. Propositions had been received by the townspeople from outside, embodying a plan of making women's shoes in East Weymouth provided the cooperation of citizens could be secured. Thereupon a meeting was called to listen to the then proposition, which was—"That citizens were to raise a subscription to shares of $25. each, to the amount of $15,000., the East Weymouth Savings Bank to issue a mortgage of $15,000., the Keith Co. $15,000., making a capitalization of $45,000. to erect a factory pursuant to their plans. They were to return 8% on the cost of the plant; we as citizens to form an Industrial Association to hold the building."

Those present at the meeting voted to accept the proposition, and to circulate a petition asking for pledges to assure the desired amount in full. This was done, and the Keith Co. notified of the result. The said Association started with practically the following officers: Frederick Humphrey, president; William Pratt, treasurer; Minot Garey, secretary; executive committee, George Walker, Henry Hanley, W. P. Denbroeder, and Eldon Keith, who held office for ten years without remuneration.

"Relations with the George E. Keith Company have always been admirable, and at the conclusion of ten years (Mr. George E. and his son Eldon having been 'called home') Mr. Harry Keith, the youngest son, bought up all the shares of stock at the maximum price, thereby dissolving the Industrial Association as well as acquiring possession of the property. The Keith Co. has been of great help to our shoe-workers, thus generously promoting a basic industry of the town."

After the death of Mr. M. C. Dizer, and the heirs had about decided to sell the shoe machinery, and if a tenant could not be secured take the building down, a movement was instituted in the annual Town Meeting (1907) whereby a Committee of Forty was chosen to induce shoe manufacturers to locate in East Weymouth.

An offer was received from W. L. Douglas of Brockton, but the conditions imposed were not satisfactory, and his proposition was declined. The Committee of Forty thereupon died a natural death.

A short time afterwards, inspired by one of the executors, another scheme was advanced which involved Messrs. Alden, Walker & Wilde at North Weymouth, who were looking for a larger factory. Favorable arrangements were made, money raised from citizens to move "machinery and business" to the Dizer factory, and in due time the old site was alive with the bustle of revived manufacturing.

Mr. Benjamin Bicknell to the Estate of

Samuel Torrey decea:

		£	s.	d.
1795 April 1	To tapping & heeling a pair of shoes for Hannah		0	41
27th	To tapping 1 pair for Benja		0	25
May 5	To tapping a pair for Thomas		0	41
9th	To mending a pair for Mrs Bicknell		0	16
26th	To making a pair for Thomas		1	54
June 6	To making a pair for Hannah		1	00
17th	To making a pair for Mrs Bicknell		1	00
July 6th	To heel tapping a pair for Hannah		0	6
	To heel tapping a pair for Thomas		0	41
Septm 8th	To tapping a pair for Hannah		0	55
Octr 12	To tapping a pair for Thomas		1	55
Novmbr 5th	To making a pair for Thomas		2	21
	10th To tapping a pair for Mrs Bicknell		1	00
Decmr 9th	To making a pair for Hannah		1	00
January 29th 1796	To 4 Lasts & pins		0	4

Reserve in full of this acont

James Torrey

QUAINT OLD ACCOUNT
(From North Weymouth)

AMENITIES OF SHOEMAKING

The present writer appreciates the following paragraph, having seen Edwin Clapp on the ball-field: "He was a leader among boys as a boy, a leader among men as a man. He loved sports and excelled in them; he loved courage and was himself a daring disciple. His was the vision of the pioneer; he was a pathfinder to new and better ways of accomplishment. As a boy he led the way to innovations in sport; as a man to innovations in business!"

* * * * *

"Nathaniel Shaw was in many respects a remarkable man (said Gilbert Nash)—remarkable for energy, courage, perseverance under difficulties, and for courtesy of demeanor which he maintained in the most trying circumstances. He had a wonderful faculty for the despatch of business. The enterprise which he built up from a comparatively small beginning was beset by more than ordinary obstacles. At times there seemed to be an epidemic of failures among customers, notably during the panics of 1837 and 1857, but through all adversities he wore a smiling face, and manifested an energy that tided him successfully over all difficulties. It was remarked that he seemed 'to carry sunshine with him wherever he went,' and probably no employer was ever more respected and loved. He was the soul of honor and one of the most charitable of men, always looking after the interests and seeking the comforts of those in his employ."

* * * * *

It was told of Kingman Tirrell that he took a local personage as partner when he located in New Orleans for his jobbing trade of Weymouth boots. Subsequently Kingman temporarily returned to his home town to marry, leaving the Southern business in charge of the said partner, who sold out the whole stock and decamped; a rather distressing vacuum

to contemplate when Kingman went back with his bride, expecting everything to be lovely!

* * * * *

Mr. Humphrey O'Sullivan of Lowell for some reason visited a Weymouth shoe factory one day, and asked if dies could be furnished for making heels, as he desired to submit specifications to a rubber concern and have rubber heels or lifts made. His requiremnts were evidently filled, for the O'Sullivan rubber heel appeared on the market, and became a successful proposition, as we all know.

* * * * *

One of the neighbors of Mr. Fogg, recalling his appearance, said: "He was a man of fine personal carriage, of distinguished physique, in perfect health, and his personal manners easy and sympathetic. He was noted for his *perfect self-control* under even the most exasperating circumstances."

Others testified that while they may have seen him angry on very rare occasions, he was never known to exhibit other than the most composed external bearing, and this habitual 'ruling of his own spirit' gave him great influence. He displayed special sympathy for struggling young men of merit, and his thoughtfulness for the future welfare of the community, as evidenced by his benefactions, found mute expression of a desire that the handicaps of his own youth might be avoided by coming generations in Weymouth.

* * * * *

Almost the sole machine (as much a fact as a pun) in the primitive Weymouth shop was the sole leather Stripper, its principal feature being a long knife which descended in a frame to strip up sides for more convenient handling. A similar mechanism had a curved knife which turned in the air to reverse its effect, and so make right and left sole stock. To trifle with this device was about as dangerous as to monkey with the old-fashioned hay-cutter in the barn.

* * * * *

A *Boston Herald* survey in 1929 declared that after a year of comparative prosperity New England shoe manufacturers faced the future with courage and confidence, which was reflected in Weymouth.

New England in December 1928 made a better relative showing in point of production than any distinctively footwear section of the United States, and there was a gain of approximately 8% over 1927.

Approaching the tercentenary year, New England was still making about 35% of the nation's footwear.

* * * * *

Apropos of John S. Fogg it may be related that when a year and a half old his parents removed to Stanstead, Canada, and his earliest youth was beset by many hardships due to poverty and the death of his mother when he was only nine years old, and his father when he was fourteen, the eldest of five children and compelled to work at the sacrifice of education and many other advantages.

But (as a chatty biographer states)—"On the 1st day of April, 1836, he started by stagecoach alone for the city of Boston to seek his fortune. At Lowell he saw his first railroad train, boarded it, and that afternoon stepped from the car with scant means in his pocket, without an acquaintance in the whole city, with no definite plan save that he was determined to earn a living. He procured cheap lodgings and board, and cast about for something to do. In this he was unsuccessful, and at the end of a week was penniless and discouraged.

On the afternoon of a Saturday, while standing at a place called the 'loafers' stand,' (a sort of employment exchange) he was accosted by a man with an offer of a job, and it is needless to say the proposition was accepted." Thus was John S. Fogg headed toward Weymouth.

* * * * *

The presumption may be made that the "case" of 24 pairs originated in the need for a convenient bundle of goods for transportation. A less number made a desirable stent for workmen, and old books mention the 10-pair case. When pine packing cases were current, 24 pairs required about the size of box that could be tossed upon the baggage-wagon readily. The days when the daily trip to Boston of the huge canvas-topped van, with its load of Weymouth shoes, was made is not entirely forgotten.

As a sidelight to the invention of the McKay Machine, it may be stated that the desirability of a low-priced sewed shoe was uppermost in the thoughts of manufacturers as far back as the late '50s. Considerations of comfort to the wearer of a hand-sewed sole surpassed the comparatively unyielding character of the pegged or nailed, but it remained for the more practical demand of the Civil War to give the cheaper sewed shoe a boom in the sales market.

Edward French came to South Weymouth from the State of Maine, and went to work first in Vinson's Mill making boxes (shoe cases) where it was demonstrated that he was a very ingenious and resourceful workman. It is said that he conceived the idea of a machine to sew soles upon shoes, though one Lyman Blake of South Abington claimed the credit of that.

Blake certainly relied a great deal upon French for mechanical skill, and both of the original inventors had to turn to Col. McKay for the solution of technical and financial difficulties. Such is the tradition that comes down to this generation, and it is further disclosed that the first type of machine did not have the "horn" as later presented.

Today the quaint model of the McKay is still in existence (see illustration herewith), and machines of artistic finish are being made, following substantially the original specifications, and finding a market all over the world for the particular purposes for which this fashion of sewing is best adapted.

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It is a reasonable view that "Fore Street," South Weymouth, is no street at all but a community, and its importance centers at the shoe shop, the proprietor of which might be termed the "father" of the village fragment. It is pleasant to reflect upon the situation in the first half of the 19th century, remembering that the whole town had only 2400 people, and that most of the adults made boots as a sort of industrial family, "holding their allotments by suit and service," as Thomas Hughes said of a similar phase.

The influence of individual enterprise upon a little village like this was more than imaginary, and when the shoe boss figured as a sort of arbiter for his retainers, found time to evince an interest in things extra-industrial, contributed to

every good cause, dispensed charity when deserved, conducted a bank for mutual convenience, planted trees to beautify the landscape* and operated a grocery store in connection with the factory—the situation has no counterpart at the present time.

* * * * *

Some of the Weymouth manufacturers were admirers of excellent horseflesh, and owned good specimens of the same. In 1882 it is recorded that Erastus Nash's "Lady Thornton" took the second prize at Mystic Park one day, and another occasion took the third at Beacon Park, the time being 2.20½ and 2.27¼, which was no' so ba'.

Mr. Albert Tirrell is remembered as driving a handsome pair of "silver-tails," when he was president of the Agricultural Society, and who will forget Jim Henry Clapp, in that light buggy, driving a splendid pair in the "Grand Cavalcade" as demonstrated at the annual Fair. The local paper announced in 1882 that Mr. Nathan Dexter Canterbury had purchased a trotter with a three-minute record.

Harry English, in his ever interesting column in the "Gazette" newspaper, mentions the foregoing prizes won by Erastus Nash, and becoming more personal said: "I very well remember him not only as an energetic shoe manufacturer but as interested in sporting events," the term in those days meaning nothing worse than horse racing.

"My dad conducted an outside shop for crimping boots, and the Nash factory provided most of his work, which I returned each day to the shop in my little express-cart. It was my privilege to enjoy many pleasant chats with Erastus Nash when a lad, and he used to address me as 'The Little Expressman.' The Nash home stood directly opposite the factory, and I used to admire the spacious grounds; it was one of the distinctive residences in the town. To my young mind Mr. Nash was a man of prominence, taking a big part in the town's activities both local and political."

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Mr. H. B. Reed remembers: "In 1868 I had been attending a school (probably the Weymouth High) taught by Prof. F. B. Gamwell, a man of pronounced views which

*Capt. Nathaniel Shaw found time to plant the elm trees which have long been the beauty and pride of "Fore St.;" but he originally set them on Front St., and the construction of Main St. (1820) left them between the two highways.

sometimes took an idealistic direction, and fond of giving advice to budding youth. He once addressed us on "The Future Occupation," couching his views in language easily understandable in the atmosphere of shoemaking that enveloped the village: "Some of you," he said, "will doubtless go into the Shoe Business (he knew about every child would have to), and if you do I trust you will see to it that you manufacture a good article, a shoe that will wear well and prove satisfactory to the buyer. And you should pay your help good wages, so that they may enjoy a high standard of living; and then you should sell your product at a fair price in order that the customer may share in advantages of wealth with you," etc.

Well, that was excellent advice, ethically speaking, but I was destined to that industry, and the fact must be recorded that my first year's experience demoralized me, and all the ideal notions my teacher had taken such pains to instill were forgotten when I had to realize that they were impossible in the presence and under the influence of those inexorable arbiters of the shoe business—Luck and Chance!

* * * *

The younger Wilson Tirrell relates the following:

The shoe manufacturers of 1837-60 visited the Boston market once or twice a week; Saturday was the important day for interviewing the trade. They all owned good horses and drove in over the road, stopping at the Neponset Halfway House to rest and lunch; then proceeded to their destination. The writer has often heard his grandfather, Wilson Tirrell Sr., tell of the other manufacturers of South Weymouth driving around and meeting in front of his factory, and when all had gathered they would start for the city together. They all had fast horses, and the game was to see who could win the race to Neponset. Quite often one or another might pick up during the week a sorry looking animal of the equine persuasion which formerly may have been a fast trotter, and he would unexpectedly "clean out" the rest of the friendly competitors, and do it apparently without much effort. This was all in the day's doings, and we can imagine the good laugh, the excellent lunch at ye inn of mine host, and then the jog along to Boston—and to business!

The same authority speaks of finding in the attic of his grandfather old bills for brogans bought of Henry Wilson of Natick, who later was vice-president of the United States. These brogans were to be resold to the New Orleans trade, and the price asked by Henry Wilson at this time was from seventy-five to eighty-five cents per pair. Quincy Reed of South Weymouth once remarked that in his opinion the Weymouth brogan helped mightily to win the Civil War. It was about the only fair priced footwear that would stand the mud and swamps of the South.

* * * * *

Marshall C. Dizer was always temperate in his habits, never using tobacco or liquors in any form. His liberality to local interests was notable; he was a member of the Baptist Church, which was largely sustained by his benefactions, and of which his father had been a deacon.

During the panic at the beginning of the Civil War one of Boston's leading business men was approached by another, who had but a slight acquaintance with Mr. Dizer, with the query what he thought of his responsibility. The business man replied: "If I knew that M. C. Dizer wasn't worth a dollar in the world, I would not hesitate to trust him for $10,000."

* * * * *

Previous to the introduction of much machinery in the shoe factory there were no very arbitrary rules for regulating the conduct of the workmen. There was not a little freedom of action, circulating from one department to another, and swapping stories to their hearts' content.

The itinerant peddler was admitted to almost any part of the shop, allowed to solicit the workmen and display his goods. One well known trader in Weymouth was Bloche, the jeweler, and I doubt not that many an old watch worn today was bought of this accommodating Jew. Swapping watches had an element of cleverness about it.

Then there was Kingman, a peddler from East Randolph, who would hitch his horse in front of the shop, and make quite an extensive canvass of the various rooms. His unvarying salutation was: "Good Mornin', Mister; I don't s'pose you want any Spaulding's Glue today?" If the reply

was: "No, I guess not," Kingman was sure to say, "Well, I didn't s'pose you did."

When the travelling photographer came to town with his "saloon" on wheels drawn by a horse, the whole gang would step out in front of the factory and pose for a picture; and after father got home that night he was "touched" by son or daughter for enough "change" to pay for some tin-types to be "taken" 'in that same saloon now located in a vacant lot in or near the village. "Those were happy days!"

Another instance of the easy-going attitude of early shop management may have been the admittance of the "Umbrella Man" and his tinkering; or the liberal pause to notice the itinerant Organ-grinder and his monkey. But menders of umbrellas no longer perambulate the highways, and the hand organ has become as obsolete as the tin peddler's cart or the barrel-team!

* * * * *

Another familiar figure was a chap the boys called "Old Jessop," who trudged four miles from East Randolph to Weymouth with his box of candy, and he was permitted to circulate among the workmen; for Jessop's Candy, of the chewing variety and of many flavors, was very popular in the 1870s.

This sweet, however, should not be confounded with the "Prize Candy" of that period, which was sold rolled in paper, and though of inferior quality as a confection there was another inducement to buy. It was the time when paper money of small denominations was current, and an occasional five-cent, ten-cent, or even twenty-five-cent piece of "scrip" might be found in the rolls by the lucky purchaser. This prize candy proposition came near to demoralizing whole departments of the shoe shops, and developed into a nuisance before excluded.

* * * * *

The small shop, so familiar an object in New England, figured commonly as a sort of appendage to the dwelling-house, often entered by way of an intervening shed, and extending in ugly fashion toward the highway, and therefore convenient of access if not exactly beautiful in point of attractive architecture.

Only a few of such L-additions remain today, for in 1927 there was demolished in South Weymouth about the last relic of the old shoemaker's-shop type in that locality, which was attached to the Capt. John Vinson house that had stood on the corner of Pond and Randolph streets for probably over a hundred years.

The thoroughness of construction displayed in this building was shown by boards of hemlock at least two feet wide, fastened by hand-forged iron nails to six-inch beams bearing the marks of hand-hewing, and with wooden pins at the joints. The removal of this landmark seemed like the valedictory at the end of an era in shoemaking, and apropos of the event a local rhymester made the following reflection:

JUST AN OLDTIME NAIL

This hand-wrought nail was fashioned years ago
By hand and skill of clumsy pioneer,
Whose loftier deeds and customs we revere,
Though of his humbler acts we little know.
This bond held hemlock wide, the ruins show,
Or axe-hewn timber straight as warrior's spear;
Huge wood and honest work are noted here,
When renovation wastes and lays it low.

Brave monuments of men climb to the skies,
Their outer flourish patent to the gaze;
The art of architecture keenly vies
With nature's models and her meeker ways;

But when in sterner mood the storms assail,
Man's work is often held by just a nail!

A still better example of the Ten-footer was destroyed at Weymouth Heights when the new Adams school building was constructed (1932).

* * * * *

Apropos of the prevalence of "panics" all through the history of shoe manufacturing, and the almost amusing conditions precedent to becoming a full-fledged shoe boss, namely, the small capital required, the small shop utilized,

the easy borrowing from the jobber, and the whole-hearted cooperation of the community—and it has to be added, the nonchalant relapse into "failure" (bankruptcy) when the "wind changed," or for some equally trivial reason.

Therefore the remark of Deacon Josiah Reed carries pertinence: "You can never tell how much a man is worth until he dies," meaning that, because of the commercial tactics of the times, it was the wiser conclusion to let one's business standing pass current for more than it was really worth.

Another slant on the Deacon and his views: "My father retired from the shoe business at sixty years of age, expressing the opinion that at that time of life a man had finished his best work, and should give way to the younger generation. That view being strongly impressed upon my mind, at sixty I (H. B. Reed) also retired."

* * * * *

A fascinating department of the shoe factory to the small boy was always that of the "Finishers," and there he was sometimes permitted to view a variety of operations.

The long-leg boots from the "makers" had been delivered at the Treeing Department where they were put upon the "trees" (sort of long-leg lasts easily removable) and treated with tallow and dressing followed by a vigorous application of the rub-stick; thereby brought to a condition of upstanding stiffness and sleekness good to look upon.

Then the boots passed to the Finishing Department, incidentally having been buffed and sandpapered as to soles, with perhaps staining for imitation or disguise; so that ultimately a boot was a pretty slick article, decorated to the "queen's taste" by many tricks of manipulation, aided by greases and gum-tragacanth for the tops, and then dried out for shipment. With the tops deftly dented, and packed so that the toe of one fitted the dent in the adjacent top, and with tissue paper between the pairs, a case of 24 pairs was made to occupy a sweetly smelling pine box; and after the cover was nailed on, and one end of the box appropriately stencilled with a brief history of quality and content—and possibly the destination—it may be said that the merchandise was ready for the expressman.

The small boy had not comprehended all these details, but he enjoyed a lot of small talk with an agreeable Finisher,

and gloried in the fact that he had seen a splendid end to all the processes of a shoe factory.

* * * * *

Quincy L. Reed didn't make shoes, but he knew a lot of the talent. Once he remarked that "Capt. Nathaniel Shaw believed in practical Christianity, and let me illustrate: A shipwrecked crew came ashore at New Bedford, where a "collection" was taken on the wharf to pay their stage-fare to Boston. By the time they reached South Weymouth a northeast storm had become a blizzard, and the driver announced he would put up his team for the night at the inn.

After a hearty supper all hands gathered in the bar-room, and some of the neighbors dropped in according to custom, whereupon the sailors retold the tale of their disaster to a sympathetic audience. Capt. Shaw heard of the goings-on, and he stepped across the street as a man interested in everything that happened in the vicinity. He directly sized up the situation, and advancing to the bar (though not to order a drink) planked down a piece of money, and turning to his neighbors said: 'Gentlemen, these men need more than our sympathy; mine is expressed in this much coin of the realm, and if you feel as I do just come forward with your money!'

It is needless to say that a sum was raised sufficient to pay the night's lodging for the crew, and enough more to send them on the way to the "home port" in the city."

* * * * *

Subsequent to the early beginnings of the industry, and the consolidation of isolated and limited cooperative effort, it was almost a generation before it became necessary to employ the "baggage wagon" to transport the product to market, and as late as 1840 it was a large (?) shop which would turn out $500. worth of goods in a week.

About that period South Weymouth received an impetus from its Southern trade, which had been jogging along comfortably from early 1800, and that section pulled away a bit from its rivals at the Landing and North Weymouth. The increase in volume of business, however, was very great in all parts of the town after the opening of California in 1849, and at that period there were about forty establishments, employing upwards of 2500 persons, and requiring more than a million dollars of capital; indeed, the annual production of the various classes of goods was about

$4,000,000. in value, and six or eight of the shops furnished work for from 100 to 500 people each.

The old shop in the yard of the Nathaniel Bayley estate was originally built (1820-30) by the senior Leonard Tirrell, who manufactured boots there and died (1843) at the comparatively young age of 54. After his death Leonard B. joined with Nathaniel Bayley to operate in the same shop, and afterwards Mr. J. C. Lindsay, when he had retired from Lindsay & Gibbs, occupied the shop a short time while building the modest structure across the street which was afterwards the *first* shop of the Stetson Company.

Previously there had been another shop on this site which was moved up to "The Corner," and became the drugstore of L. T. Brown. After the brief tenure of Mr. Lindsay the Bayley Shop was occupied by one LaFawn and a piece business.

* * * * *

Edmund S. Hunt tells this: "Eben Hunt, who at one time manufactured shoes in the Zichri Nash shop, returned from Boston one day and found his son Emmons in a tree out front at work on a shoe (which may have been a sudden inspiration). Asking him what he had done, Emmons replied: 'After I have finished the shoe I am at work on and two pairs more, I shall have made three pairs!' " This same jokester, at a Fore River chowder party, declined to go in for a swim, declaring "it most killed him to wash his face."

* * * * *

"There were no tramps in those times, as we have today, and sometimes a man would enter a shop and say 'Occasion!' —only that one word. We used to call such men 'tramping jours,'—'jours' being short for journeymen. He carried, rolled up in his apron, all the kit he needed for making a boot. If there was no 'occasion' for his assistance he went on; if otherwise, he secured a chair or stool, spread his tools and went to work . . . The tramping journeymen of the shoe fraternity were a means of bringing new blood into the old village. Some of them, finding a bench, settled in the community, married, and became successful citizens."

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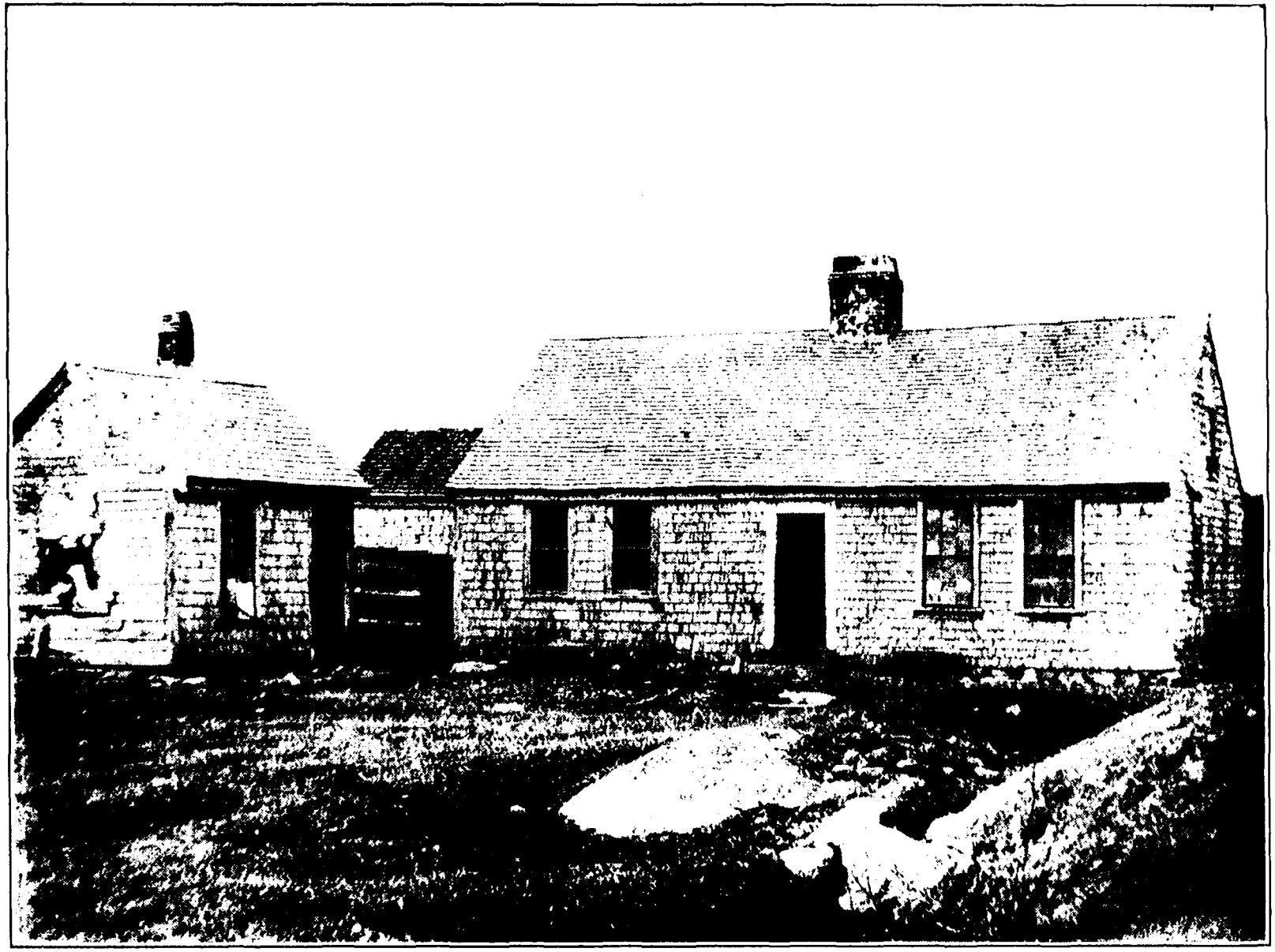
Whereas in the olden time the impulse to make boots was inspired by the possession of a little capital, a small supply



TYPICAL OLD HOUSE AND SHOP
(South Weymouth)

of leather, and a not overweening desire to labor, the modern incentive best expressed itself by machinery, an elastic bank account, and an advertising department!

The local paper of February, 1880, states it was reported of the M. C. Dizer business that it had then been established a quarter of a century, that its factory had available floor space of an acre and five hundred feet, that it employed four hundred hands, and turned out daily a hundred cases of boots and shoes, embracing everything (sic) from genuine hand-sewed down to pegged work, and that the name *Dizer* stood for high water mark in excellency of material and make. Moreover, apropos of machinery, which was beginning to be used more and more, that the introduction of improved machinery had put this concern on the plane of pioneers in that locality; that though the advent of some new device was ofttimes looked upon with grave doubts and some condemnation, yet hardly an effort in such a direction had been taken that had not developed into undisputed success, and without such enterprise it would have been impossibe to meet the demands of an increasing business! Note the exuberance of the friendly reporter.

* * * * *

The ten-hour day had been the custom from time immemorial, until the 8-hour movement, sponsored by G. E. McNeill (1837-1906) of Amesbury, Mass., came into vogue, and was adopted in Weymouth ( ). Picture a brawny workman standing at a log block and with a heavy maul for ten hours dieing out heel "lifts," or, when machinery came, pushing a shoe against a device of some sort with all the strength available!—for 10 hours a day.

* * * * *

Discussing the enterprise which developed into the Stetson Shoe Co., Mr. A. C. Heald said: "We had faith in the shoemakers of Weymouth, faith in the town itself, faith in ourselves." And it may be suggested that probably the foundation of that faith was the hereditary skill of Weymouth shoemakers. Beginning with a capital of only $3,000., but with an ambition to do big things, it was not long before the outlay for advertising alone had reached $10,000., by 1912 it was $285,000. and in 1923 alone $50,000. These are significant figures; they connote other corresponding transac-

tions, and indicate a far remove from methods of shoemaking in early and even middle 1800.

But 1923 was the year when the following statistics were prepared:

STATISTICS OF WEYMOUTH MANUFACTURERS

While the town of Weymouth has not made a gain in the number of its industries during the past decade, the capital invested and the value of manufactured products is considerably greater.

According to the last industrial report, there were in Weymouth 28 manufacturing establishments, as compared with 31 a decade ago. Surprising as it may seem the number of industries has declined, while invested capital, the value of raw material, wages paid, and every other feature of the manufacturing business shows an increase in valuation.

	1923	1913
Number of establishments	28	31
Capital invested	$11,713,954	$5,759,327
Value of stock and materials used	13,167,629	5,506,758
Value of product	21,822,189	8,344,066
Amount of wages paid during the year	2,716,349	1,409,554
Wage Earners Employed		
Males, average number	2,090	1,672
Females, average number	638	565
Both sexes, average number	2,728	2,237
Smallest number employed	1,286	1,777
Greatest number employed	2,767	2,654
Value of products	$21,222,189	$8,344,066

* * * * *

"I remember (H. B. Reed speaking) when the Boston jobber* sought a closer connection with the manufacturer, that John Carroll of Middle St. originated a new idea related to patterns. Mr. Carroll was always on his feet, and he designed patterns for high-cut Congress and button boots based on the theory that a man would be standing or walking most of the time, and that shoes should be made to fit the foot of a person standing rather than sitting.

His Congress pattern was almost straight up and down, and the effect was not so rakish as the intent of the professional pattern maker. Be that as it may, it gave the Walker, Strong & Carroll salesmen something to talk about, and it appealed to the retailer open to new ideas."

"I remember, also, on one trip to Chicago that a customer told me about a new kind of leather that the M. C. Dizer Co. were exploiting for tops. It was called "Dongola," and was a chrome tanned goatskin, to take the place of the old-time alum-tanned calfskin.

*The simon-pure shoe jobber today is about as extinct as the dodo.

"It was said to be produced in Chicago by Eisendrath, and I called at this tannery and was shown the leather; but when I proposed placing an order for a quantity of it, was informed that the Dizers had engaged the whole product of this sort.

"That "Dongola" goat actually cost about one-half the price of calfskin, and I have been since advised that our East Weymouth concern cleaned up a small fortune before other manufacturers were able to cover—which emphasizes Mr. Dizer's reputation for enterprise in the shoe business."

* * * * *

"Jim Henry" Clapp also was fond of a good horse, and he would drive into town, make excellent time, and sometimes have his lunch at the old St. James hotel, later the N. E. Conservatory. T. J. Evans tells of an occasion when the sleighing was top notch; their Boston office was on High St., and they hitched up "Major" (some hoss) and made the run from the home shop to the office in half an hour.

At one of the removals of the Clapp shop, and the brickwork of the northeast corner was being laid, James Henry rolled up his sleeves and wielded the trowel for a space—just for the personal satisfaction that might be found in a relapse to the trade of his youth; not sacrificing a particle of his dignity by so doing!

* * * * *

The shop-lore of an industry like this of Weymouth is always fruitful of entertainment. One Randall, who worked in the Alpheus Bates shop of years ago, has a number of stories to tell, one being that a certain workman was behind in his taxes, and Mr. Cleverly called at the factory to prod him a bit if he could not collect all that was due. He asked Mr. Randall if So-and-So worked in the shop, and was told that he labored on the next floor. So Mr. Cleverly ascended the stairs and inquired of the first man he saw, who in turn referred Cleverly to another floor or room; and while the tax collector was pursuing his search quietly departed from the scene—for he was the man.

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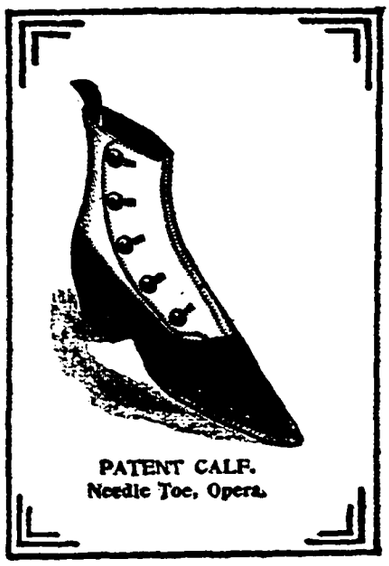
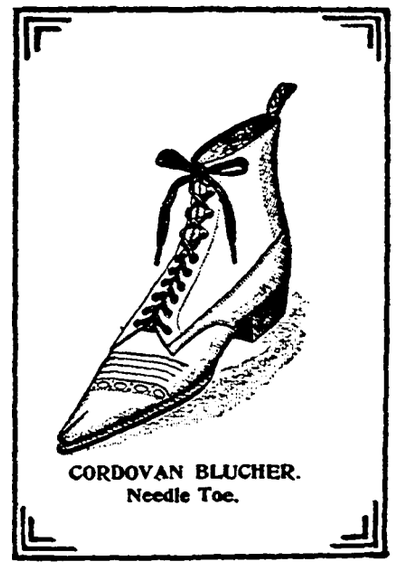
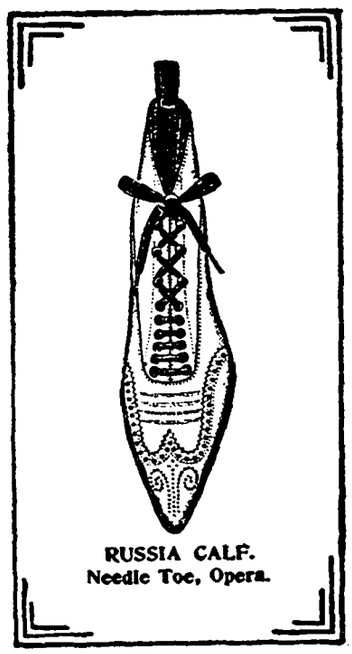
"It is no wonder (H. B. Reed speaking) that the shoemaker often "took to drink" to drown his sorrows in those days of easier morals with respect to sobriety, when the



PATENT CALF.
Needle Toe, Opera.

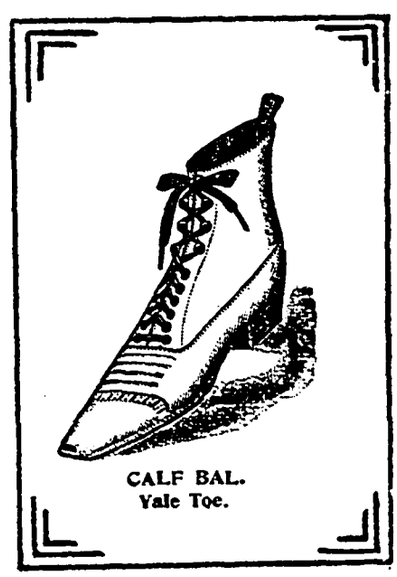


CORDOVAN BLUCHER.
Needle Toe.



RUSSIA CALF.
Needle Toe, Opera.

CALF CONGRESS.
Globe Toe.



CALF BAL.
Yale Toe.

DIZER STYLES OF THE "GAY NINETIES"

temptation to indulgence in intoxicating liquors was so prevalent. However, he was no different from his neighbors in most walks of life.

* * * * *

Pay-day in the factory was shoved forward from Saturday to Monday in order to break up the week-end control of King Alcohol, so that the pay-envelope would reach the housewife unimpaired, and a quorum in the shop guaranteed for the first work day following.

Looking back I almost have the suspicion that the manufacturers winked at drunkenness, because good business commonly enjoyed but a short season, and the shoemaker's contentment with a few week's work, and proneness to discharge himself occasionally—all came in rather handily. But when machinery arrived the doors had to be closed forever against the drunken shoemaker, accomplishing what the law and temperance societies had failed to do. He had to keep his head.

* * * * *

"The commission form of marketing shoes, such as Harvey & Quincy Reed made so much money in, was an easy one for the manufacturer—but fatal to his complete success. My father early warned me to steer clear of auction and commission houses. I once asked my uncle John S. Fogg about them, and he told me that after the Boston Fire of '72 his concern, Fogg, Houghton & Co., did the largest commission business in the city, handling the product of five factories, but that only one (the Farmington) made any money. They did a little over $1,000,000. of business a year, but a big Boston store, expensive salesmen, a large interest account on advances, with other expenses, left little for the manufacturer."

* * * * *

The gold craze of 1849 lured to California a number of Weymouth citizens, some by way of a voyage 'round the Horn, as was accomplished by James L. Bates (see his diary in possession of the Weymouth Historical Society), some across the continent, and others over the Isthmus of Panama.* This latter route was pursued by Prince H. Tirrell in 1851-2, when at the risk of fever he reached San Francisco and remained there two or three years.

*Mr. Alexis Torrey was also a "49-er."

Because most of the adventurers came home "broke," and as Prince Tirrell did not, he was asked how it happened that he annexed some of the yellow stuff? The characteristic explanation was, that quest for gold was something like a group of young people going out to pick berries. Many wander about seeking loaded bushes, and in the aggregate pick but a few; while others would patiently remain in a limited area, be contented with a moderate outlook, and as a result fill their buckets. Prince H. declared that in gold mining he stuck to a prospect and picked it clean.

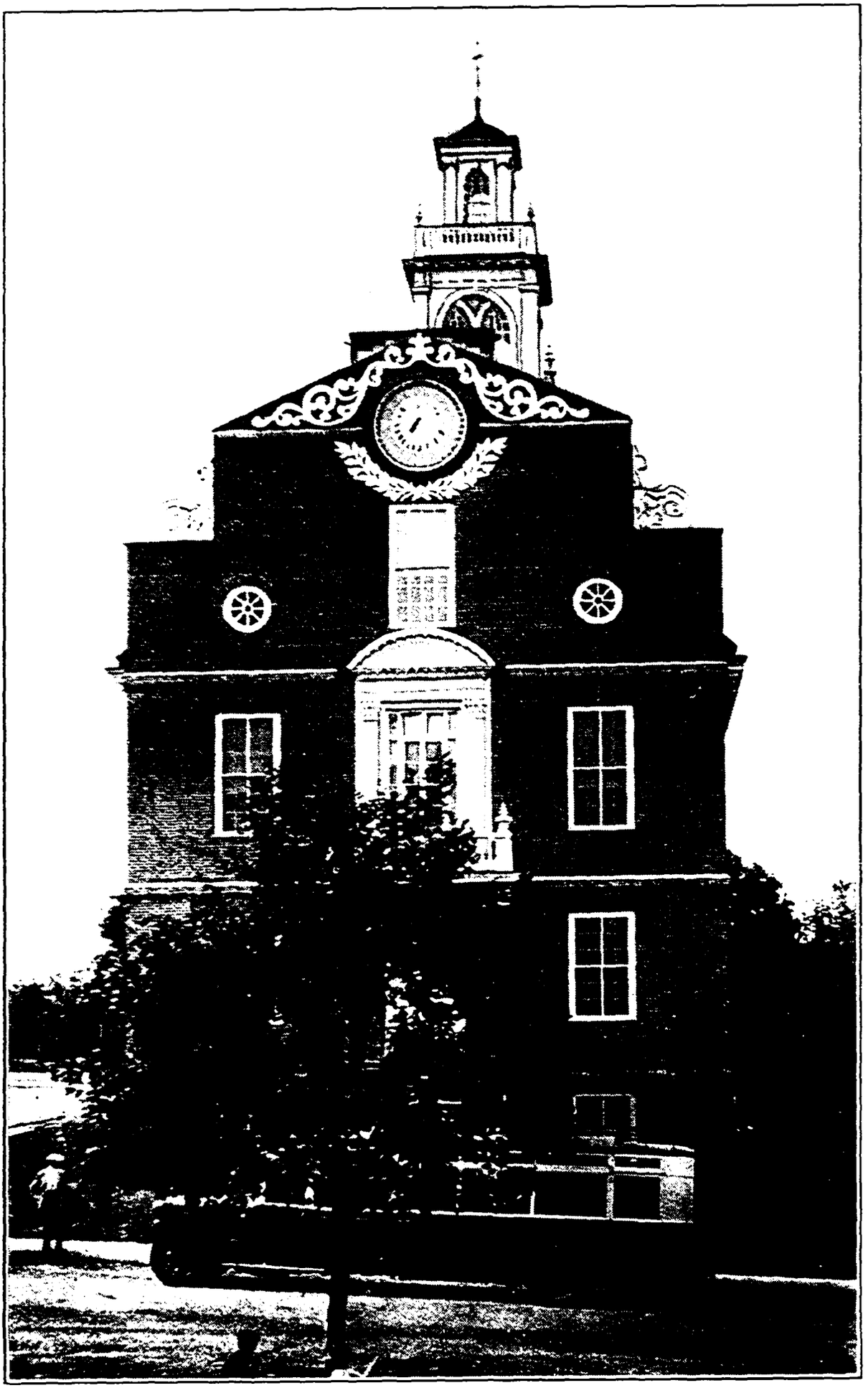
While the Weymouth men were in California their substantial footwear attracted special notice, which gave Mr. Tirrell an idea, and upon his return he began the manufacture of a line of long-leg boots suitable for that section of the country; in the meantime establishing a sales branch in San Francisco, which kept the factory in South Weymouth busy for a great many years. One type of boot for this trade was screw or copper-nailed, with a half double sole and outside tap-sole. This was before the advent of the McKay Machine, which produced a boot calculated to cope with moist conditions.

* * * * *

The last of several (with plenty of shoemakers among them) Reuben Louds of South Weymouth, locally called "Old Rube," was a gentleman friendly to children visiting his saw-mill, and he often entertained them by stories.

One time he told of a gunning trip he made for wild pigeons. He said: "After cruising about I located the birds just at dusk, and there were nine of them roosting in a row on a bough. I crept up—and all of a sudden it occurred to me that if I fired and hit one, the rest would fly away. So I stood stock still and thought pretty hard for a spell, and finally settled on a plan.

"What I did was to shoot and SPLIT the limb, and that caught the whole nine pigeons by their feet in the split. And I lost nary a bird!"



HIGHLIGHTS OF SHOE INDUSTRY IN WEYMOUTH

1622 An "able-bodied cobbler" (in the Thomas Weston company) reputed to have been hanged by the first settlers for stealing from the Indians. Morton said a "bed-ridden weaver" was substituted (first instance of vicarious atonement), and Hudibras made sport of the event.

1700 Shoemaking probably carried on by the cobbler going from house to house, a local tannery providing leather, and the families board and lodging.

1774 Paid for mending a pair of shoes..1 shilling, 6 pence. For a pair of child's shoes..1s. 8d. Women's 6s.

1776 Paid for pair of calfskin shoes..10s. 8d. To soling and heeling pair of shoes..2s. 8d. For a calfskin..5s. 10d. Pair of shoes for oldest girl..3s. 6d.

1779 Mending a pair of shoes..7s. 6d. (This was wartime and prices higher.) Pair of boy's shoes..£1 4s. Making pair of boots and finding vamps and soleleather..£11 2s.

1784 For pair of pumps..7s. 6d. Soling and heel-tapping boots..3s. For pair of men's shoes..7s. 6d. (about $1.20)

1790 The tariff on shoes was fifty cents per pair.

1791 For soling and tapping pair of men's shoes..1s. 8d. For one pint of West India rum..8s.

1807 Daniel & Micah Lovell paid 17 cents for tapping shoes.

1808 First factory in South Weymouth built by James Tirrell. Boots forwarded to Boston market in saddle-bags, and consigned South on shipboard in casks and hogsheads.

1810 Paid for making 12 pairs shoes at 2/6 per pair..£1 10s. Making 7 pairs..17s. 6d. Making 14 pairs men's, lined and bound at 3s..£2 2s.

1810 Quincy Reed being asked—What was the price for shoes? replied—"Well, we got $2. for the best, and from $1.25 to $1.50 for the West India shoe. That was a light, wide-strap, low-quarter shoe, and we made about .75 profit. We began on shoes and worked into boots. I don't think it was until 1825 that another wholesale concern started in Boston."

1815 "Brandy was selling at this time for $16. a gallon," said Mr. Reed, commenting on the social conditions.

1815 Machine for making shoe pegs invented. Previously they had been whittled out by hand.

1818 Benjamin Wilder was paid 9 cents for "fitting" shoes. The Lovells also paid Joseph Hawes $10.80 for 18 pairs of shoes. The tariff on shoes $1.50 per pair.

1820 Out of 450 heads of families 369 made shoes. Population then 2407.

1820 Another informant states that the so called First Tirrell shop (1808) was built or enlarged this year—and we leave the subject with the rival disputants.

1822 131 pounds of "soal lether" @ 26 cts...$34.06.

1830 First Union Store in South Weymouth promoted by Capt. Nathaniel Shaw.

1836 Capt. Elijah Bates was paid $4.70 for making 10 pairs of boots, and $3.20 for 10 prs. brogans.

1837 Wooden boxes for packing boots came into use. This was a "panic" year; the population 3387, and 1300 bootmakers trying to make a living.

1837 More general utilization of coal, and iron more freely smelted with coal as the fuel; use of nails in shoemaking increased, brought about by economic reasons. Weymouth made tacks and nails to a considerable extent.

1838 D. & M. Lovell bought 32 sides of kip leather, 295 lbs., at 16 cts. per pound. And 1843 they sold a Boston jobber 2 cases of calf brogans to net 70 cts. per pair.

1840 In the "Forties" it was quite fashionable for young ladies of Weymouth to prepare "waxed-ends" for their elders before going out to play, alternating such a stent with daily practice on the melodion.

1845 The tariff on shoes was $1.25 per pair. Labor: Cutting $1. to $1.35 per day; treeing $7. per week; bottoming and finishing per 12 pairs. . pegged $5. and $6.; hand-sewed $9. Fitting brogans 3½ to 4 cts. per pair; bottoming cheap brogans 14 to 17 cts. per pair. Lasts 20 cts. a pair.

1846 Brogans sold for 65 cts. a pair and 80 cts. for the larger sizes, but only 40 cts. for sizes 1 to 5. Kip leather at the time was ten or eleven cents a foot.

1846 Invention of the sewing machine by Elias Howe, and its value directly utilized by Elias Beals of North Weymouth.

1849 Nathaniel Shaw received a diploma from the Norfolk Agricultural Society for the excellence of children's shoes.

1849 Josephus Shaw, Quincy Tirrell, William Dyer, Prince H. Tirrell and James L. Bates were shoemakers of South Weymouth who pioneered to California.

1850 Population of Weymouth 5,000, and the town had 1072 men and women making boots.

1850 Nathaniel Shaw was receiving gold dust from the 49-ers of his neighborhood, and was distributing it to the interested relatives at home.

1853 The Clapp business was begun by James Henry, the oldest son of Sylvester Clapp of East Weymouth.

1854 A dollar a day was the current wage for a leather cutter.

1855 Sylvanus Pratt paid 7 cts. a pair for treeing long-leg boots; and Thomas Mackedon paid 4½ cts. for crimping.

1856 Wilson Tirrell Jr. began business in the same old James Tirrell shop (built 1808), pursuing the family custom of opening a jobbing-house—probably in the South.

1859 Diary of George Hollis, son of Isaac who made shoes, makes lament because of long days (and some evenings) devoted to shoemaking; then of a sudden tells of an outing he and Newton took to Plymouth to witness laying of cornerstone of the Monument—of processions and bands, and seeing Governor Banks. But on the train home the crowd got hilarious, settees thrown out—conductor helpless!

1860 $2. a day was a fair wage for a good cutting-room hand just before the Civil War, but during the "unpleasantness" help became scarce and wages arose rapidly.

1860 Fractional paper currency issued by Nathaniel Shaw, being small squares printed to represent money, and called "Scrip"; the same signed by his own hand to signify responsibility for payment.

1865 When President Lincoln was assassinated the Weymouth shoe-shops were hung with crepe and black rosettes and bunting.

1870 Best shoe-string stock brought ten cents a pound, and the highest grade of leather lacings sold for $1. per bunch of 100.

1871 Knights of Labor became a national body, but its influence did not affect Weymouth until 1875-80.

1875 End of moderate sized factory phase in shoe industry, followed by machinery galore, mammoth factories, and much bigger financing. Subsequent fifty years remarkable for everything large in shoemaking affairs.

1880 Wilson & Warren Tirrell started their own business, operating in South Weymouth its first steam-power factory with everything done under one roof.

1880 This is the year that Canterbury & Haskell were reported as making over 8,000 cases for the season; and M. C. Dizer in 1881 was said to be getting out 20 cases a day of hand-sewed shoes.

1885 A new concern started by Arthur C. Heald and Ezra H. Stetson, in the first factory in the village having all operations under one roof; made possible by the lavish introduction of machinery.

1890 Name of foregoing firm changed to the Stetson Shoe Company, incorporated.

1895 M. Sheehy & Co. were fairly launched into making women's shoes as a feature of their business; the Geo. E. Keith Co. started this line in 1908; and the Stetson Shoe Co. in 1919.

1900 The census showed that the quality of shoes had improved nearly 25% in preceding ten years; but 200 men were leaving South Weymouth daily to work in outside shops, and H. B. Reed offered to contribute $1,000 towards a new factory.

1914 The Stetson Shoe Co. sold their officer's high tan shoe for $25. per pair, and their women's shoes ranged from $15. to $18. per pair; and it was ten years after the World War before a cut-price sale showed very much reduction.

1914 At opening of World War the Weymouth price per pair for labor was 75 cents, while the Brockton Union price was 57 for a lower grade of shoe; but the shoemaker's wage was maintained on a scale fixed long before.

1920 Marked the end of a Tirrell hierarchy in shoemaking, which lasted over 100 years—carried on by nine members of that family without a break in the succession.

1923 "Cordwainers" mentioned in the new Town History:— Samuel Nash, 1640; Lieut. James Nash, 1645-1680; Stephen Badlam, 1696 — 1719; Samuel Bates, 1693-1752; Richard Ager, 1700-52.

1923 Hailed the mammoth Clapp factory with recent additions; of course the initial remove to Charles from Middle Street was before, but our picture is the latest.

1924 Marks the end, for the time being, of additions, and the big Stetson Shoe Co. factory stands today as then developed. The picture herein presented is, therefore, up-to-date.

1927 Last jobbing-house to liquidate, selling out to a department store. The Jobber was once a powerful factor in shoe merchandising.

1929 The huge chimney of the Dizer factory felled to the ground in April of this year; it being the tragic finale of more than a splendid experiment.

1930 The number of factories had reduced from "that year when there were 75 shops in Weymouth," but three of those remaining boasted a capitalization of $1,250,000.00 and employed about 1800 workmen.

1932 The ten-hour day was followed by the 8-hour (as elsewhere commented upon), and now the 30-hour week is having consideration.

THE PHILOSOPHIC COBBLER

If not from a higher consideration, curiosity led me not long since to the metropolis to see the entrance of his Excellency the President of the United States. Struggling for some time among the gazing throng, to obtain an eligible situation to view the illustrious personage and the cavalcade as they passed, some one unluckily treading upon my shoe tore it in such a manner that I found it inconvenient to proceed, so I fell back to the rear. While in this situation contemplating the spectacle I noted a cobbler busily employed at his work as the crowd passed by, without testifying to the least degree of curiosity. This extraordinary want of attention highly excited my own, and being in need of his assistance I thought to employ this philosophic cobbler on the present emergency. Perceiving my business he desired me to enter his stall, and taking my shoe began to mend it with much indifference to what was passing without.

"How, my friend," said I to him, "can you continue to work while all these fine things are passing by your door?" "Very fine they are, Sir," replied the cobler (so spelled) "for those that like them, and who have time and money to spare to see them, but what are they to me? . . . if I should run hunting after these kinds of things, what sh'd I get for my exercise but an eager appetite without the means of satisfying it? No, Sir—see this last and this hammer; they are the two best friends I have in the world. Now, while I stick to my good friends here, I find such food and raiment as give me content; but, when I ever so little run after sights and fine things, I begin to feel indifferent to these my constant friends; I begin to hate my work, grow sad, lose my heart for mending shoes and everything goes the wrong way." By this time he had set the last stitch, when liberally paying him for his cobbling I silently retired, but with reflections which I trust will be useful to me as long as I live.

—From the *Adventurers' Almanac,* 1818.

THE OUTLOOK

The simple story of achievement in shoemaking outlined in the foregoing pages need not be accepted with entire complacency. There have been varying fortunes, though the general trend has been upward. It presents a commendable record of resourcefulness in bread-winning and native cleverness in mechanical and commercial development. We might let the industry rest on its laurels, and only mildly hint of an apparent decline.

That sections of this country as far apart as New Orleans and San Francisco, with intermediate areas not neglected, could depend upon a little New England town for a staple article is an interesting fact. But today there has come a change. With one Massachusetts shoe center containing hardly a relic of former factory personnel, and much less of traditionary business; another almost shattered (as some believe) by the unwisdom of contending elements; and a third staggering under stress of world "depression" — what may be said of prospects in Weymouth?

Long ago countryside shoemaking was attracted quite largely to cities, and now they are wavering. When Weymouth was enjoying the heyday of its basic industry almost a monopoly was had, and small interference with its specialty gave little concern. Today shoe manufacturing is widespread; New York State is a fertile field, the Middle West has expanded remarkably, and beyond the Rockies shoes are made.

Therefore, the future offers no particular assurance beyond what may be won by persistence in the face of difficulties common to all parts of the United States. Retrospection may deplore lack of vision in the past, when obstacles ought to have been considered ominous, but the lessons of experience may prove beneficial.

Shoemaking is now an essential occupation bounded by no territorial limits, for there are over a hundred millions of people to be shod; and although in a gasolene age walking is growing unpopular, human feet have to be protected and the niceties of fashion indulged.

Hence it may be reasoned that the shoe industry of Weymouth, as demonstrated by existent agencies, will be able to maintain its prestige, and for a period hold some advantage because of hereditary skill. The future is not wholly without prospects of continued success!

One correspondent, when furnishing valued information, added: "I am glad to do what little I can to assist you in establishing a permanent record of an industry which was famous, skillful and honorable; and in perpetuating the memory of men who were thoughtful, public spirited citizens—a credit to themselves and to the community!"

The author cherishes a huge satisfaction for that expression, and his obligations are due to Henry B. Reed, Waldo Turner, Bradford Hawes, T. J. Evans, Preston Lewis, Edward W. Hunt, Wilson Tirrell, Stanley Torrey, Atherton N. Hunt, and others; and to those who loaned pictures for reproduction.