Old-Time New England

THE BULLETIN OF

The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities

The Abandoned Basin Cove Tide-Mill at South Harpswell, Maine

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On this Old Secretary, now preserved at the Company’s Home Office, was written the first John Hancock Policy, 72 years ago. The first annual report as of January 1, 1864 showed outstanding insurance of $526,950. At present the John Hancock has in force more than three billions four hundred millions of life insurance. The following statement from that first annual report applies as aptly to the Company today as it did in 1864:

“The Directors, in presenting this report, congratulate the members on the success which has attended the Company thus far and its prospects of success in the future. In the management of its affairs they have endeavored to advance the interests of the members by using great care and caution in the acceptance of risks and in the investments of its funds.

“They recommend the Company to those who desire to insure in a sound and reliable institution, managed for the benefit of its members with the utmost economy and prudence.”
Tide-Mills in New England

By Alfred Elden

"The mill will never grind with the water that is past."

Undoubtedly the familiar quotation is true enough if such mill be located where it depends for its power upon the swiftly passing waters of brook, stream or river. Assailable assertion, however, if applied to tide-mills where the outpouring from a tidal basin on the ebb is followed by its return on the flood to do its work all over again.

The recent report of a joint American-Canadian commission, created to determine what effect the carrying out of the much-discussed Dexter P. Cooper dam project would have on the fisheries of Passamaquoddy Bay in eastern Maine and New Brunswick, serves to remind of New England's few remaining ancient tide-mills. Of much interest does the vacationist in New England find these primitive structures, now few and far between.

If eventually the original great engineering plan for harnessing the mighty tides of the eastern Maine and the western Canadian coastal waters does materialize, we shall even then have merely a colossal tide-mill!

To be sure such a super hydro-electric plant would generate between 500,000 and 700,000 horse power. The cost would approximate $100,000,000 and the estimated time for construction is four years. Yet, despite the stupendousness of the designer's statistics, no new principles are involved.

Twentieth-century civil engineers have simply elaborated upon the practices of their colonial forefathers. A century and more ago the tide-mills, and the picturesque grist-mills of the rural areas away from the line of sea and shore, ground the New England farmers' grain. Most of these have passed. Occasionally, the venturer along country highways and byways will come across some impressively aged mill that, despite changed milling methods, has managed to endure through the years, and continues to grind its rather negligible daily quota of corn or wheat.

As early as 1644 a tide-mill was in op-
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The Tide-Mill at Hingham, Mass. Established in 1643

In any award of priority medals to tide-mills Massachusetts looms large. On the creek between Chelsea and Revere, adjoining the Revere Beach Parkway, stands the Slade Spice Mill after a genesis that turns back the pages of time to the year 1721.

Except for brief interruptions due to fire, this tide-mill has been in continuous operation for almost 200 years. By an ancient provision in the original charter, it must at all times hold itself ready to grind corn for any citizen of Chelsea, provided the corn is Chelsea raised! It is to be feared, however, that if the plant depended for its business upon the present-day corn crop of Chelsea its time-honored career would abruptly terminate!

Serenely it rests even as of yore on the edge of the marshes in the shadow of old Powder Horn Hill, steeped in the glamorous romance of pioneer days. Despite the fact that more than half the mill now...

Opening the Sluiceway at the Slade Tide-Mill
The incoming tide opening the sluice gates, and the ebbing tide closing them

has modern electrical equipment, the tide-driven machinery is steadfastly retained and operated daily.

An old stone dam spans the tidewater creek and creates an ideal mill-pond for water storage. Great gates in the sluiceway are hinged with dowels of stout wood. On the flow the pressure of the insweeping tide opens these gates. At the ebb they close and the reservoir of imprisoned water holds them shut. From this head of eight to ten feet is obtained the tidal urge that turns the wheels.

Following up the coast into western Maine, milling traditions center at Kennebunkport and hover alluringly around the Perkins tide-mill. James C. Perkins—the miller himself—will greet you, ruddy of cheek, blue eyes a-tinkle with friendliness.

"An historic mill?" he repeated in answer to an interrogation. "Why, yes, I should say so. It was established in 1749. I figure that carries us 183 years into the
annals of the past. Certainly New England history was then in the making.

"Rather odd but the mill was built by a Perkins who, so far as I can learn, was no relative of my family. And, too, it has never had other than a Perkins for its owner. It came to me through a line of inheritance. Frequently I have heard my father tell of taking toll out of the meal ground for the neighboring farmers—perhaps a quart or two from each bushel.

"The foundation stones, the floor timbers down below where the turbine is, and overhead, as well as the framework and a lot of the planks and boards are still as they were placed by that first Perkins 183 years ago. But no longer do we get our grain from outlying farms. It all comes from the west by rail."

This Perkins tide-mill is located half a mile from the mouth of the Kennebunk River where it empties into the sea. As if designed purposely for a tidal basin, a long narrow estuary curves out and away from the river and extends inland. Near its head the mill-dam and gates were placed thus creating an ideal tidal reservoir.

Regardless of the addition of a modern cupola and some new shingles here and there, the mill is essentially the same ancient structure where natives of the "Port" once sought refuge from bloodthirsty savages. York County history records that in the early days of the Perkins tide-mill a small community of settlers living close by in log cabins was attacked by hostile Indians.

The harrassed families found sanctuary in the fortress-like basement of the mill, closed solidly on three sides and only partly open on the fourth facing across the basin to where the invaders had massed. Well armed, the menfolk held the attackers at bay for three days and nights, while the women prepared such meals as were possible from hastily gathered stores. But supplies soon ran low and sensing this the invaders settled
Stephen Harding, a giant in strength, volunteered to bring aid from the garrison at Wells a few miles to the westward. With his wife and infant child, under cover of night's dark pall, he stole away. Detected and hotly pursued, Harding, who must have been the Primo Carnera of his day, took his wife under one arm, his child under the other, and plunged madly through the dense forests, stubbly fields and oozy marshes.

His extraordinary physical powers enabled him to lead the howling pursuers to Wells which he reached after a terrible night’s experience. A force from the garrison hastened with him back to the tide-mill and following a sharp battle routed the redskins and put them to flight. Both Booth Tarkington and Kenneth Roberts have incorporated the old mill in their writings.

Still further east at Boothbay one finds another notable tide-mill. This is the Hodgdon mill, a combination grist and lumber enterprise. It derives its power from one of the most beautiful natural tidal basins on the North Atlantic coast. For many years the mill-pond, it has more recently been rechristened Mirror Lake. Back in 1826, Caleb Hodgdon, of Westport, an adjoining town, saw cheap power potentialities in this forty-acre tidal basin.

At the narrowest point, the neck of the bottle, so to speak, just where the outpouring waters mingle with those of the Damariscotta River near its mouth, he placed his mill. It is said of old Caleb Hodgdon that he bought logs from adjacent forests, had them hauled and dumped into his tidal basin near the head of Linekin’s Bay, floated them to his mill, sawed them into dimension lumber, fashioned this into vessels, and furnished
their skippers with maiden cargoes of grain ground between the stones of his mill. A close little corporation indeed!

Through inheritance this tide-mill has always remained in the Hodgdon family. In fairly recent years it has sawed out the frames and furnished the planking for many notable craft, among them Commander Donald B. MacMillan's Arctic exploration schooner Bowdoin.

The mill-wheel has fallen to pieces, Ben Bolt, The rafters have tumbled in, And a quiet which crawls round the walls as you gaze, Has followed the olden din.

True enough. At several points are silent and crumbling reminders of what were once busy tide-mills. In lower Casco Bay, at South Harpswell, has stood for many years a striking example — the old Basin Cove tide-mill. Hundreds of summer vacationists from widely scattered sections of the country have rowed around the silent "House on Stilts" as it was known. They have snapshotted it from all angles.

Up to quite recent years native youth delighted in exploring its dark chambers behind the gray boarded windows. Dust lay inches thick over everything. Rats scampered willy-nilly with squealing protest at the interruptions. Barn swallows streamed in and out of the upper loft through the openings which year by year grew larger and larger as the wintry winds tore away shingles and dozy boards.

It was an eery place and parents rather encouraged the belief among their youngsters that it was haunted. A dangerous playground with the water all around and the rotting timbers giving away when stepped on. Now parental fears from such sources are ended. The ravages of the past winters have completed the long-impending dissolution. The tottering structure has crashed and naught remains of the mill but traditions and a
few barnacle-incrusted pilings which were a part of its foundation.

This tide-mill was built in 1867. It was owned by a Portland wholesale grain concern. At that time large shipments of corn were brought in bulk by schooners from New York and Baltimore. They discharged at Portland because all but native Casco Bay pilots disliked to take their vessels in from the sea through the poorly marked channels that led to the Basin Cove tide-mill although there was plenty of water. Thus the corn was transshipped in smaller local hulls down Casco Bay to the mill.

It is said that the discussions and criticisms by navigators over those uncharted perils, created an agitation which resulted in the establishment of Half Way Rock Lighthouse. This is now one of the most valuable aids to navigation in lower Casco Bay.

Basin Cove tide-mill ground much grain up to 1885 when a combination of circumstances made its further operation unprofitable. It cost too much to get corn to the mill, while steam plants and modern machinery set too fast a pace for the antiquated tidal mechanism to follow.

At the sleepy little village of Phippsburg near the mouth of the Kennebec River, the few remaining inhabitants are living largely in the reflected glories of the past. During those days when the sailing vessel was supreme on “the Seven Seas,” more than two hundred beautiful, full-rigged ships, brigs, barks, and later, four- and five-masted schooners, were launched from Phippsburg yards.

Ruins, history and traditions characterize the present-day Phippsburg. Outstanding among the former is a gray old tide-mill resting on piles, said to be the first mill for the grinding of grain along the lower reaches of the Kennebec Valley. The present highway through this part of the town is only a stone’s throw from the mill and passes over what was once the dam which held the waters of the tidal basin.
while corn was the basic crop of the community, and for the most part, it was the staple food for the people. However, as the 18th century wore on, the shipbuilding trade grew in importance, and the Pequod became one of the leading centers of shipbuilding in the region. By the early 19th century, the basin was a bustling place, with a number of ships being built, repaired, and maintained in the area. The Basin Cove Tide Mill, South Harpswell, Maine
Typical Tidal Basin, Phippsburg, Maine

A TIDE-MILL ONCE STOOD WHERE THE WATER NOW RUSHES THROUGH

Tide-Mill at Phippsburg, Me., built in 1795
The action of the tides of years has created new channels so at high water the old mill which originally stood on the mainland is now segregated on a diminutive grassy islet. This mill was built in 1795. James McCobb came to Phippsburg from Ireland in 1730 living in a log cabin hewn from the forests close by. Other settlers joined him, but it was he and his sons who conceived and carried through the tide-mill enterprise. Soon this section became an important shipping and trading point and from the shores of the Kennebec and the New Meadows, and far up and down the coast, the fishermen-farmers brought corn in their boats to be ground.

After the mill was discontinued about half a century ago, the sluiceway was closed and the dam rebuilt into a solid retaining wall over which the highway to Popham Beach is routed, so that marked changes took place in the tidal basin. Formerly, when the salt sea water filled it, the youngsters of the neighborhood fished out smelts, cunners and alewives. Gradually, however, with the shutting out of the tidal flow, the basin lost its salinity. Fed by innumerable bottom springs and several little brooks that tumble down from the hills, it is now a fresh water pond.

There is a summer camp for boys on the shores of the erstwhile tidal basin, the water is pure and drinkable, and the youngsters instead of fishing for sea denizens, bait their hooks with angle worms and catch white perch, pickerel and squirming eels! Just across the roadway—the former dam—looms the mill against a background of broad river and distant shore. An interesting reminder and survivor of what for Phippsburg were truly the "good old days."

Western View of East Bridgewater, Mass.
PRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL BLOCK ENGRAVED IN 1838
FOR BARBER'S Historical Collections of Massachusetts
SOME years ago I remember seeing, in the barber shop to which I was sent periodically for hair cutting, a lithograph which fascinated me. It represented P. T. Barnum in two versions: one in an unkempt shaggy state and the other in the acme of tonsorial perfection. One was labelled "Before," and the other "After." The intention seemed to be to impress the beholder with the miracles which X's hair oil, or what not, could conjure up. Curiously enough, I was so perverse as to prefer the picturesque roughness of "Before" to the oily smoothness of "After."

At about the time of those early visits to the barber, I remember a number of old houses which I passed en route, some of which, though still inhabited, were even then in a pitiable state of decay. I was then too young to take architectural interest in these buildings, but I did feel, in a vague way, how they contributed to the quality of the old streets of the town and made it still a pleasant and distinctive place in which to live. Unfortunately, many of these houses have since disappeared. I am benighted enough to regret their passing, and to feel that "Lubricatoria" are very inadequate substitutes for them, just as I preferred the natural and picturesque state of Mr. Barnum to his condition after being "improved." I hereby submit some photographic evidence, so that New England antiquarians may decide for themselves which
Newport, Rhode Island, Houses

The Site of the William Ellery House

state they consider the more desirable.
Take, for example, the old Easton House, which used to stand on Park Place, diagonally across from the Colony House. This double house apparently was built at different times, for the south half, that to the right, is dated c. 1750 and the north half is ascribed to the 1790’s, and is at any rate post-Revolutionary. The older part succumbed in the 1890’s and was replaced by a large three-storied stable with a gambrel roof, and that in turn was taken down about 1925 so that the concrete block garage shown in “After” might be erected. The north half remained until four or five years ago, when it was supplanted by the Short Line bus station. Only the iron rails of the south steps of the old Colony House survive to indicate that the sites shown are one and the same—so drastic has been the “improvement” elsewhere.

On Duke Street, which runs between Marlborough Street and Washington Square, in one of the oldest parts of the town, were formerly several houses of great interest. Probably the oldest of them, which is not shown in the picture, dated in part at least from the seventeenth century. The houses which do appear were built possibly before 1750, but certainly were considerably modified early in the nineteenth century, as is proved by their doorways and chimney tops. Even so, they were worthy of preservation, it would seem. However, with but one exception, they have given place to the sumptuous brick and marble structure of the Savings Bank and to the automobile service station.

If one goes from Duke Street up Marlborough Street, he arrives at Farewell Street: so-called because it leads to the old burying ground. Here, on the
The Bean House, Newport, R. I.

The Site of the Dean House
The Turner House, Newport, R.I., built about 1800

The Site of the Turner House
The Doctor Vigneron House, Newport, R. I.

BUILT ABOUT 1760 AND AFTERWARDS "IMPROVED"

The Site of the Vigneron House
Toe

Duke Street, Newport, R. I. as it was

Duke Street, Newport, R. I. as it is
northeast corner, adjacent to the grounds of the Quaker Meeting House, formerly stood the Vigneron House—the home of Dr. Vigneron, a Huguenot physician who lived in Newport in pre-Revolutionary days. The house apparently was built about 1760, but in the early nineteenth century it was extended to the north, given a curious parapet around the roof, and, probably, a new door. Some six or eight years ago it was demolished, and on its site has since risen the Lubri(t)orum, which now enchants the view.

A little way up Farewell Street to the north is the junction of four important streets: Farewell, Thames, Poplar, and Warner. Here stood, at one time, several interesting houses, of which but one remains. The Dean House, at the corner of Thames and Poplar Streets, was built in the last decade of the eighteenth century, according to reliable authority. When the photograph was taken, about 1895, it was still inhabited, but as I remember it no one ever went in or out, and it seemed desolate, except for the old apple orchard in the rear which was often noisily inhabited by the boys of the neighborhood. It was destroyed some twenty years ago, and its site, at first unoccupied, is now taken up with a filling station. No vestige of the old house now remains, except the mark in the concrete sidewalk showing where the sandstone doorstep formerly stood and one or two decrepit old trees in the rear.

Just to the south of this house, on Thames Street, stood the Ellery House. This, the home of and built by one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was of the three-story type, so often built in Early Republican days in Salem, Marblehead, and Newburyport, but so seldom seen in Newport. It is curious that the chimneys, instead of being placed laterally, as was the custom in such houses, were set on the main axis, with the result that a continuous through hallway, which was a characteristic gesture of spaciousness in houses of that era, was im-
The Site of the Easton House

The old Ellery house was used as the site of the Easton House, for some time, as a filling station, filling up the northwest end of the street with concrete. A few years later, a few other houses, including a stone building, were built on the site.

The exact date of the house is uncertain, but it is thought that William Ellery built it in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, it disappeared some forty years ago, and its site, at times vacant, is now dedicated to the advertisement of the food and automobile products of American business enterprises.

In the Point district of the town, which was laid out by the Quakers early in the eighteenth century, were formerly several middle and late eighteenth-century houses, but their number has been seriously diminished of late. On lower Washington Street no less than seven houses were destroyed all at once, shortly after the war, at the word of the New Haven Railroad, their owner, which decreed them a fire menace and so had them demolished. A few other losses of like nature, but not of like magnitude, have occurred in this part of the town. The Turner House, at Willow and Second Streets, is a typical example. It was built about 1800, and was an interesting, although not remarkable, example of a small house of that period. It was torn down about 1890, since which time its site has been unoccupied except for billboards such as those which appear in the picture. Its neighbor to the south, whose neo-Classic details indicate such a date as c. 1840, is fortunately still extant.

Many other such parallels might be cited, but the principle involved seems illustrated adequately by the houses and sites mentioned. The old photographs were taken about 1890-1900 by Clarence Stanhope, except for the picture of the Easton House, which is a copy of an unknown original. As far as possible, the modern photographs were taken from the same position as the old ones, so that direct comparison would be possible.
NATHAN COLE lived on the place now known as the Philip Norton farm, in Berlin, Connecticut, his house standing just south of the present Norton home. The older people of the neighborhood (now passed away) spoke of Mr. Cole as a very devout Baptist, much given to prayer and a leader in the meetings of that sect, at the time regarded by the rigid Presbyterians of the neighborhood with considerable disfavor. In his later years he seems to have had a revival of religious ecstasy, for under date of 1780 (he died in 1783, aged seventy-five), he breaks out into poetry as follows, evidently inspired by the vision of himself as he passes through the pearly gate:

Oh: once I was a child of sin,
But now I'm just a entering in,
See, here he comes a lovely soul,
I say to you make room for Cole.

Mrs. Norton who came to live in this neighborhood about 1835, at least fifty years after the death of Mr. Cole, used to tell how one day she saw a bent old man curiously peering about the door yard. He said that he formerly lived near and remembered well Mr. Cole and wanted to see the place where his house stood and he says, "How I loved that old man." "Yes," says Mrs. Norton, "I have been told that he was a very good man." The old man bristled up, "Wall, wall!" he says, "I don’t know about his being so very good, but he was a dreadful good Baptist."

His wife, Mrs. Anna Cole, died in January, 1780, and the tradition is, that it being in the middle of a very severe winter, the snow deep and the paths unbroken, it was thought impossible to convey her body to the Christian Lane cemetery, and she was buried near her home and was the first to find a resting place in the cemetery near the railroad bridge, her grave forming the nucleus around which many have gathered in the 136 years that have elapsed since.

His collection of writings was stitched between covers of leather, probably cut from an old boot leg (they have that appearance). The following bit of personal history and experience was in the collection. There is probably no one in the town who can recall the subject of the recital, a man of some prominence, who built the present Philip Norton house sometime previous to 1800, and who died in 1812, aged eighty-three. For some time a room in this house was used as a meeting place for the little band of Baptist brothers and sisters.

The following is the story of the ancestors of the Williams family in Kensington:

"Advice to any that will take notis for their good in this and the other world as I shall shew by and by as I get along from God’s word in the Bible. I had a wife but no children and the Lord sent a poor fatherless boy to me from another town. The child was between four and five years old and no relation to me at all and I felt pity in my heart towards to poor fatherless child for it was almost naked, his father died insolvent (his estate) and nothing left for the child and the Lord put pity in my heart and in my wife’s hart for the child and we took off its rags and clothed the child well and
the Lord gave me a charge to remember it was a poor fatherless boy and that the Lords eyes are upon the widdow and the fatherless and that God had the care of them and now the Lord put a sollem fear in me concerning this child made me know that it was his will that i should take a fatherly care of the child and the Lord gave me a fatherly heart and affection towards the child and so it has remained all along to this day near forty years but to go along as he grew along up he was faithful and stedy in his business and when seventeen years old he listed into the French war and went a solder for two years and he being young and never been much among men and he had ten pounds bounty and i advised him to leave his money at home for to buy land with when he grew up to be of age twenty one years old for he had the King's stores to live upon but he carried his bounty money with him and being so young and not being used to be amongst all sorts of such men by some means or other they soon got away his money as the soldiers told me when they came home i suppose some did flatter and some jear at him play games and venter wages and all manner of tricks and cheats and some good honest men but hear and there a bad man and spoiled others and larned them to sweare and lie and quarrel again I advised him not to waist his wages and not carry none home to his master but so it was he brought none home to me i went to his captain and he said he lost his gun and that he said was three pounds (said the captain and that was all) so i never has none of his wages for that two years service: one thing was remarkable i kept praying to God from day to day to save him from the wepans of death and from sickness and wounds and put him under the Lords care and told the Lord he was a fatherless child and He had the care of him and he never learned to swim in the water and he had to go most of the way to Canada from albany round by water up the mohoke river and so across nida lake and down swago falls & then across swago lake and then down canad river among the whoorpools and i pleaded with the Lord to save him from drounding and when they came near the grate falls in canad river Captain Ellsworth called to captain Sumner to let him have two men out of his batteau for he had care of part of the army and his men was was wearied and captain Sumner ordered Gideon Williams that lived with me and another man to go into Captain elsworth batteau. they was both to go but Williams went but the other man went not and so they was drowned for that batteau that williams was called out off when it came to the falls it run partly side ways and turned over bottom upwards and drowned about seven men, and the batteau that williams was called was down safe and so the Lord saved his life, for captain elsworth had skill but the most of them was downed was good swimmers and after he was of age he went to work for other men two or three years and get money and bought a farm at shaffield and bilt a house and married a wife and lived there a year or two and them was obliged to sell it to make the last payment and he thought of going further up into the woods or wilderness where he would be in danger of his life from year to year by the enemy. and I remembered that some time after the Lord had sent the child to me and told me or gave me a satisfaction and pressed it pourfully into my mind time after time that I would take a good fatherly care of that child he should become my son at the length pro. 29:21: he that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child he
shall have him become his son at the length: it comes to pass ict. but along as he was growing up one year and another year the Lord pressed it upon me that he at last shall become my son and be a comfort to me in my old age. and I used to be glad and be joyfull and thankfully to the Lord and bless the Lord for his care of providing for me in my old age when I should want a son and I sent for him to come and live with me and work upon my farm upon shars and he came with his wife and one child and lived with me until he had three children born in my house the last still born. And then he thought best for him to go among the new toends and buy a farm and clear it and get an orchard growing for him before he grew old for his comfort & he went & bought a farm at Stockbridge and built a house on it & carried his wife and three little children up there and they went away in the middle of January in the dead of winter and myself and my housekeeper, Cybill Shepard was greatly concerned about them poor little children for fear they would perish with cold or be hurt for them little lambs was got much in our hearts and we laboured hard day and night in prayer to God that he would take care of the family and carry them safely through their journey three days and three nights and we scarcely did any work but was of necessity for three days and the third day near sunset I was set free my burden was taken off and I was coming into the door to tell Cybill of it and that minit she was coming to the door to tell me her distress was gone off and we thought they had all gone safe to their sister lanes house at Canaan & it was at the very time that our burden was took off, for the men that carried them up when they came back said it was exactly so as we thought at the same time and hour. They had some hindrance in the green woods the other sleigh that carried the goods was heavier loaded and horses weary and in the night and eight mills to go to get to a house & deep snow & dark & and they thought they must lay in the woods all night and no fire so the man that drove the sleigh that the women & children was in said that he would so long as the horses can go drive on rather than they should lay out all the night and he left the other sleigh behind and some time in the night got to a house and got the woman and children in and so went on till they got to Stockbridge all safe etc.

"And there they lived a year or tow and then was obliged to sell again to make the last payment. now his failing was not to use enough consideration to know that he run too much in debt to get through by the time the appointed time etc. so was two times disappointed by running too much into debt at once, which has the reuniting of thousands of estates it is the most dangerous way of any way that a man can take to lose his estate for pay day must come and will come and you cannot eskeep and now he thought to go farther out beyond the towns that was not laid out and I felt grieved for them and thought they and their little ones would all be killed and skelped by the enemy but when they went from me with their family to live at Stockbridge then I began to think whether I was not deceived by what the Lord told me year after year and the Lord told me in his word if the vision tarry wait for it in the end it will speak pro. 19: 21. —the counsel of the Lord that shall stand and now I sent him the second time to come again with his family and I would do well by him and he came again with his family and I have given him a deed of gift of half of my land and buildings and
the other half in my will. So that I have made him my son by adoption and all that the Lord has told me is strangely come to pass and fulfilled exactly and now God hath set me as father to him and him as a son to me; and praised be the Lord for it must be the Lord's doings for it hath been remarkable in its coming to pass etc. Eccs: 18: 19 yea i hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun because I should leave it unto the man that should be after me and who Knoweth whether he shall be wise man or a fool, yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun this is also vanity etc. and now the Lord hath put me into the place of a father and put him into the place of a son to me and the Lord hath made it the duty of fathers to teach their children from God's word and if Children hear and received instruction from God's word by their parance God will bless them."

I believe that Mr. Cole redeemed his promise to Gideon Williams and left him his accumulation of worldly goods, no mean store, for he seemed to have followed the course he enjoined upon others and to have known well how to "trade and get much again." The quaint little book which contains the story of the adoption of Gideon Williams is now in the possession of the Linus Cornwell family of Cornwell, Conn.

There is always much sadness in the passing of an old home out of the hands of the family which has owned it through generations, but time is relentless, the country is filling up, and such transitions are more and more frequent. These old homes contain many interesting books, letters and articles which are not removed by the outgoing family and are little valued by the incoming one. It is a pity they should be lost or destroyed.

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*View of the Central Part of Templeton, Mass.*

PRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL BLOCK ENGRAVED IN 1838 FOR BARBER'S *Historical Collections of Massachusetts*
In 1892

If ever the old farm had a holding power it is now. The present day causes one to look back in reflective mood to the childhood days spent down on the farm. The very thought of these early days, brings rest, peace and contentment.

"Backward, turn backward, Oh Time in thy flight." Memory takes me back to the time when I was given my first certificate to teach a district school. It was an event in the life of a sixteen year old girl to go away from the village homestead in Farmington, Maine, and ride with a "committee man," in the clumsy farm wagon, drawn by old Betty, to Grand View Farm on Porter Hill. Though only six miles away, yet it seemed a long, long ride up a nary stoney, woodsey hill-road. A long, but never-to-be-forgotten ride that late May morning. The fragrance of the apple blossoms, lilacs and damp ferns by the roadside. Miles of stone walls, sheep, cattle and horses feeding in the green fields or in friendly groups under shady birches.

Though thirty odd years since then have passed, the pleasant sights, sounds and fragrance come back to me. The call of birds, the silence of many hills. The smell of damp, upturned sod, as furrow after furrow of rocky, red-brown earth, was being steadily and patiently ploughed by the oxen. Sheep shearing was in progress in a barn by the roadside as we drove to the Hill Top.

The white farmhouse with its green blinds looked down on valleys, brooks and long hills which circled Porter Hill, a grand view from the farm where I was to stay. In the little red schoolhouse across the road by the stone wall, I was to teach my first school. It was a one-room schoolhouse with high-back wooden benches and a box-like desk. The little barrel-stove up front had an endless stove pipe, rusty, wobbly and smoky. A pile of wood, water pails and tin dippers and various kinds of lunch boxes were close to the stove, a winter habit no doubt. A friendly apple tree sent white petal messages into the room through the open window, and a curious chipmunk sat unafraid on the window sill. The smooth rocky ledge in the school yard made a sunny gathering place for the little ones when at their noon lunch. We liked the ledge because it told of the approaching of the visiting school committee; before they came in sight we had time to prepare for the dreaded ordeal.

The big square farmhouse, with its long ell, had many rooms, and each one was in use. The homey kitchen, with wide pumpkin-pine wainscotting, boasted four windows looking out on mountains and valleys. The iron teakettle sings cheerily. Preparations are going on for dinner, for the "school-marm" and "hired man." Loaves of yeast bread, dried apple pies, and spicy doughnuts are cooling on a side table. There is the smell of fried ham and baked potatoes. The churning done before breakfast and golden balls of butter, stamped with an
Homestead Farm, Porter Hill, Farmington, Maine

acorn on top, are in the milk room and many round cheeses, also pans of milk with heavy yellow cream, are on the shelves.

The parlor is a retreat in rainy weather and the white birch logs crackle on the hearth. The English wall paper in the hall, with its pastoral scenes done in colorful vegetable dyes, has retained its beauty for over a hundred years. Well do I recall the large spare room, my bedroom, with the four windows, two of which were shaded by heavy hop vines. There, in the spacious closet, I hung the few simple dresses, and in the mysterious small chimney closet by the fireplace kept my few treasures. The panelled door with its brass latch, the dainty satin-striped wall paper with its huge bouquets of corn-flowers and green foliage attracted my attention.

Shall I ever forget the high and noisy husk bed with the feather tick and bolster; the embroidered and beruffled pillow shams and woven blue and white spread? It was fun then to wash in ice cold water from the spring. I recall the quaint blue and white pitcher and soap holder; the coarse homemade towel, and soap, too. Happy, hopeful, busy days then; contentment and enjoyment is making the most of the least.

In 1932

Today, after many years, I go again to the old farm on Porter Hill. It is summertime. No lingering to pick flowers or berries by the wayside, or walking to save the tired horse on the rocky upclimb. The auto speeds along all too quickly. The trip is over. We miss the grazing cattle in the pastures. Where are the flocks of sheep? No longer “sits the schoolhouse by the road.” The worn path is grass grown. The roadway, too, has lost the marks of wheels and hoofs, imprints of former years. Pastures and lanes are wooded; alders, thistles and wild blackberry vines clutter the way. It is rather lonely on the old farm today.
It lacks life; it calls for activity, sociability. It offers many possibilities to the worker and the home-maker with children. The gray stone walls remain monuments to the toilers, now at rest. The grand view is the same; unchanged by time, waiting now to be appreciated and prized.

There is today quiet peace in the big kitchen. The time-worn floors, the silent, rusty iron pump; the low, wooden sink by the window where grandma looked out on the hills as she washed milk pails and countless dishes for years, these remain as testimonial of patient toil and perseverance.

The buttery shelves are bare now, where once rows of blueberry and custard pies waited for hungry ones. The doughnut and molasses cookie crocks are empty, the milk pans and wooden churn are resting from former tasks in the "well-room." Gone are the hands which patted golden butter balls and stamped the acorn pattern.

Treasures of the past are stored in the long, rambling shed chamber, where once-upon-a-time quilting parties met, apples were strung, and husking bees were fall diversions. Young and old came from neighboring farms miles away to enjoy the fun. Doughnuts and cider were treats. Now the spinning wheel is festooned with webs woven by busy spiders, and the sheep shears, scythe, quilting-rack and other implements of labor are idle after years of usage.

The smell of hay yet remains in the barn loft, where once tons of newly mown hay were stowed away to the very rafters. Empty are the tie-ups and stalls where were once a dozen or more cattle and where tired work horses rested after long hours of labor on the rocky farm in rain or heat. We miss the noisy, clucking hens, and grunting pigs. The watering trough and old pump in the barnyard are moss covered now. The wide planks of the stable, of hand-hewn timber, which having borne the test of years of
wood chopping, horses hoofs and wagon wheels, now bear other burdens. The automobile now has the place of honor where the best sleigh and Concord buggy were sheltered in their time. The dust covered old vehicles are crippled and useless although the harness yet hangs on the peg where the master hung it before he took his final journey.
Newspaper Gleanings Relating to Indians
CONTRIBUTED BY GEORGE FRANCIS DOW

We are inform’d, that there lately died at Woodstock (Conn.), an Indian Man of One Hundred and Three Years of Age, who not long before his Death, was in Dedham, about Ten Miles from this Place, and brought there upon his Back, Three Dozen of Brooms, two Baskets, and some Skins. — New England Journal, Apr. 10, 1727.

We hear from the Eastward that the Indians who some time since went to Canada have returned and everything is like to be quiet and peaceable. The poor people taken from Kennebunk last fall were all killed except the boy. It was 9 Indians from St. Francois that did it, and pretend they would not have killed the people had they not been followed so closely by our English. — New England Journal, Apr. 17, 1727.

A young Indian Woman to be Sold by John Brewster, at the End of Cross-street, Boston. — Boston Gazette, July 1-8, 1728.

Ran away from his master Elisha Green of Warwick, R. I., an Indian man servant named Simon George, of pale complexion, wore cinnamon coloured Jacket, pair of long breeches, a woolen shirt and black worsted stockings and an old hat. 40 shillings reward. — Boston Gazette, Oct. 28-Nov. 4, 1728.

Ran away from his Master, Mr. Henry Laughton of Boston, taylor, a tall slim Indian boy named Tom, aged 18 years, hair not above ½ inch long, has a scar on each leg, wore Double-breasted drab coat with small buttons and small sleeves, blue Drugget breeches, black stockings, round toed shoes and black neck-cloth, and a white shirt. — £3 reward. — Boston Gazette, Sept. 29-Oct. 6, 1729.

Mashpee, Barnstable Co. Mass. Nov. 26, 1729. This Day was ordained Mr. Joseph Bourn, M.A. . . . Two Indian pastors from Martha’s Vineyard were present, one of whom prayed in the Indian language. Mr. Bourn then preached in the Indian language, from I. Timothy iv, 16. Nunnukquisish Kuhhog, Kah en Kubkootom [worn]. Take heed unto yourself and unto thy doctrine, etc. . . . — Boston Gazette, Dec. 15-22, 1729.

On Friday last came to this Town from Saco, Four of the Indian Chiefs of the Piggwackett Tribe, viz. Wawrahmanhit, Saquant, Wawhway, and Asangherhoit alias Capt Sanders, to pay a Visit to his Excellency Governour Belcher. — Boston Gazette, June 23-30, 1735.

An Indian woman at York, Me. under sentence of death for the murder of her Bastard Child, is to be executed on the 24th of July next. — Boston Gazette, June 23-30, 1735.

The Chiefs of the Western Indians having arrived at Deerfield, Gov. Belcher proposes to set off for Deerfield on the 14th inst. with the Gentlemen appointed, to interview the said Indians. [His journey was deferred to the 20th, to meet
the Cagnawaga and other Western Indians.—Boston Gazette, July 28-Aug. 4, 1735.

We hear that on the 25th of last Month there died at Marlborough an Indian known by the name of Old David, aged 108 Years last Indian Harvest.—Boston Gazette, June 1-8, 1741.

All Persons Indebted to the Estate of Eleazer Kenepauhepit, late of Natick, deceased, and all to whom the Estate is Indebted, are desired to come and settle the same with Moses Fisk of Needham, Administrator to said Estate.—Boston Gazette, Mar. 2, 1742.

In a detailed summary of deaths in Boston by Small Pox during the year 1752 showing a total of 569, there were included 70 negroes and only 5 Indians all of whom died in the “natural way,” i.e., had not been inoculated.—Boston Gazette, Jan. 3, 1753.

Dec. 9, 1752. On Tuesday last Major Jean Baptiste Cope, Chief Sachem of the Chibenaccadie Tribe, arrived here [i.e., at Halifax, N. S.]—Boston Gazette, Jan. 3, 1753.

Ran away from her master Thomas Stone of Lovewell’s Island [Boston harbor], an Indian girl named Ruth, born in Ipswich, a short well set Girl, has a scar over her right eye and an other in her Throat; she went away with a light colour’d great Coat, without Cape or Cuffs, a bluish colour’d close body’d Coat, smoa’k’d Leather Breeches, yarn stockings, brass Shoe Buckles; and ’tis supposed she has the said cloaths on, having some time since inlisted in the Expedition, in such a Dress, but was discovered and dismiss’d. £5 reward.—Boston Gazette, Nov. 11, 1746.

News from Ohio by way of Philadelphia that “the Gechdugechroanos and the Runatgewechsuchruanus, two strong Nations, who live Westward of the Lakes not far from Mississippi, had been induced by the French to take up the Hatchet against the English . . .” [Twig-twee tribe mentioned].—Boston Gazette, Dec. 22, 1747.

Indians attacked a company of 19 men marching from Col. Hindsale’s Fort to Fort Dummer, only two men reached Fort Dummer. “After the action they heard the Indians given Eleven Cohoop, by which ’tis judg’d they had kill’d and taken that Number.”—Boston Gazette, July 19, 1748.

Three natives of Greenland, 2 men and a young woman, converted by the Moravians, were in Philadelphia, Pa., on a visit to the Brethren there about June 1st., clad in Seal Skins, etc. Two Indian converts from Barbice, near Surinam, also there and met the Greenlanders, with three converts from the Delaware Indians, a comparison of hair, eyes, complexion convinced that they all were of the same race. However, no common word in their languages . . .—Boston Gazette, June 27, 1749.

Conrad Weiser, arrived at Philadelphia, Pa., on Aug. 13th, with deputies from eleven different Nations of Indians including Onondaga, Seneca, Mohock, Cayuga, Oneida, Tuscarora, Shawana, Nanticoke, Delaware, Mohigan and Tutelo; the women and children and men total 260. . . .—Boston Gazette, Aug. 29, 1749.

Proclamation of Edward Cornwallis, Commander in Chief of Nova Scotia or Accadie:—Increasing the reward from £10. to £50. to any Person “who shall take any Indian Prisoner, and for every Head or Scalp of an Indian killed as aforesaid” . . .—Boston News-Letter, July 12, 1750.

A large party of Indians attacked the town of Dartmouth, near Halifax, Nova Scotia, shot the Sentry and Sergeant of
the Guard and several Soldiers, after
which they proceeded into the Town and
murdered several Men and Women in
their Beds, "whom they mangled in a
surprising manner." One Woman es-
aped their Fury, and came over to Hal-
fax "with one Breast cut off by them."
During the pursuit was found "one of
their large Clubs, all over bloody," also
a Gun.—Boston Gazette, May 28, 1751.

Charles Proctor was commissioned at
Halifax, N. S. May 15, 1751, to form a
company of Rangers of 100 men, to
serve for two years, to receive $4. (sic)
at enlistment, and to be entitled to a
bounty of £50. sterling for each Indian
scalp, over and above their pay.—Boston
Gazette, May 28, 1751.

New York, July 15. Our Governour
arrived here last Friday from Albany,
where he had been to meet the Chiefs of
the Six Nations of Indians. . . . Indians
were well pleased at the Presents made
them and promised to keep the Covenant
inviolate. . . . The presents brought by
the Hon. William Bull from South
Carolina, were thankfully received by
those people; and the Chiefs of the Cata-
baw Indians, who accompanied him,
were received very cordially by them,
and a cessation of arms mutually agreed
on. . . .—Boston Gazette, July 23, 1751.

Thursday was sev' night as some Men
were digging Sand at Dorchester-Neck,
they discover'd Bones of a humane
Body, suppos'd to be one of the native
Indians, buried there before the Settle-
ment of the Place by the English, as a
Pot made of Earth harden'd, and spoons
in it made of Bucks-Horn, were found at
his Feet; which is said to be agreeable to
the Custom of the Burial of the Indians
by their Friends at that Time. By the
Length of some of the Bones, he could
not be less than Seven Feet in Height.—
Boston Gazette, July 30, 1751.
rendered the Half King insisted on scalping them all "as it was their way of fighting, and he alleged that those People had killed, boiled, and eat his Father." — Boston Gazette, July 2, 1754.

The Indians afterwards "sent the scalps, and a black Belt, to all their Allies, to oblige them to take up the Hatchet (as they express it) and strike the French." — Boston Gazette, July 23, 1754.

Letter from Ononraguète, Chief of the Falls of St. Louis, to Col. Schuyler in relation to ransom for prisoners. Had received 90 livres and wanted 400 per prisoner, or about £20.—Boston Gazette, Aug. 27, 1754.

Account of General Winslow's expedition up the Kennebeck river, after building forts at Augusta and Winslow (Tecomset). Reached Norridgewalk where grass usually is 5 or 6 ft. high, 400 acres of cleared land. Found 6 Indian men, 3 squaws and several children, they had nothing to fear, soldiers had been ordered not "to go into their Houses." Passegueunt, one of their Chiefs, presented two fine salmon, "and some Squashes of their own Produce and were all very free in drinking King George's and Governour Shirley's Healths." Birch canoes mentioned. On returning to Norridgewalk from up river, 35 Indians, old & young were found who then "dress'd themselves up in their way, very fine, by putting on clean Shirts, painting & decorating themselves with Wampum, they saluted him with a number of Guns and three Cheers." More drinking. Ten or twelve Chiefs present, and asked for a conference "and having clear'd the House of young Men, who diverted themselves in the mean while, playing Ball, etc.," speeches, the young men afterwards danced, on the Colonel's leaving in the morning They "alighted him with 30 or 40 small arms, as fast as they could load and discharge. . . ." — Boston Gazette, Sept. 3, 1754.

Extract from a Letter from Albany:— An Express has come down "from the Carrying-Place, with a Cousin of D. Y. & H. who lies there to trade. Some Indians who had been there, sent by that young Man four Strings of Wampum, to give notice that some Orandax Indians were gone to destroy Hosack." News came that Hosack was burning, and outlying inhabitants came into Albany. "As much faith is to be put in the Promise of an Indian, as in that of a Frenchman." — Boston Gazette, Sept. 10, 1754.

Account of the Attack on Housack— Indians were on the way to attack Fort Massachusetts,—people were withdrawn from new Plantations, save some shut up in poor Forts or picketed Houses. . . . — Boston Gazette, Sept. 17, 1754.

Extract from a letter from Camp Mount-Pleasant, near Will's Creek. 15 Indians, allies of the Six Nations, came in with a white Flag of Truce; suspected to be French Indians "tho' they made their Speech to us with seven Belts of Wampum." They spoke good French. . . . — Boston Gazette, Feb. 18, 1755.

We hear from the Eastward, that five Indians, "two Sanops, two Squaws, and one Papose," were drowned by the oversetting of a canoe.— Boston Gazette, May 26, 1755.
ARK days have been recorded for centuries. Usually there is a gradually increasing gloom until it becomes so dark that artificial light is necessary. This darkness may last a few hours or several days and decrease as gradually as it came.

"We are now able to show that dark days are due to dense smoke in the atmosphere, and that in this country forest and prairie fires have been the causes. In other countries peat fires and volcanic eruptions have also furnished smoke to produce dark days, but such cases are more rare. Theories advanced in olden times that dark days are caused by solar eclipses or by the transit of inferior planets across the solar disk are ridiculous since a total solar eclipse seldom lasts over five minutes, and a transit of Venus, the largest and nearest of the inferior planets, is barely visible to the naked eye, and would not cause a diminution in light or heat that could be measured. If any consideration of such theories were necessary, it would be sufficient to point out that the dark days of modern history have not been coincident either with eclipses or transits."

The record for dark days in the United States and Canada is as follows:

1706—May 12, 10 A.M., New England.
1732—Aug. 9, New England.
1762—Oct. 19, Detroit.
1780—May 19, New England (Black Friday, The Dark Day).
1785—Oct. 16, Canada.
1814—July 3, New England to Newfoundland.
1819—Nov. 6-10, New England and Canada.
1836—July 8, New England.
1863—Oct. 16, Canada ("Brief Duration").
1881—Sept. 6, New England (The Yellow Day).
1887—Nov. 19, Ohio River Valley ("Smoky Day").
1902—Sept. 12, Western Washington.
1903—June 5, Saratoga, N. Y.
1904—Dec. 2, 10 A.M., for 15 minutes, Memphis, Tenn.
1910—Aug. 20-25, northern United States from Idaho, and northern Utah, eastward to St. Lawrence River.

"Notable dark days elsewhere," continues the report, "occurred in Mediterranean B.C. 295, A.D. 252, 746, 775, 1090, 1106, 1208, 1547; in England, January, 1807, May 10, 1812, December 27-29, 1813, November 27, 1816; at Victoria, Australia (Black Thursday), February 6, 1851.

"Most dark days might more properly be called 'Yellow days.' Even 'Black Friday,' May 19, 1780 which was the most memorable of all the dark days of modern times, was preceded by a gradually increasing yellowness and an odor. The same was true of the dark days of 1819, 1881, 1894, and 1903. September 6, 1881, was so distinctly yellow that it is known as 'The Yellow Day.'

"The evidence that dark days result from fires may be briefed as follows: In 1716 the air was very full of smoke, Dur-
ing the dark days of 1780 ashes of burnt leaves, soot and cinders fell in some sections from forest fires in New York and Canada. In 1785 black rain fell during a thunder shower in the darkened area. In 1814 ashes of burnt wood fell and there was a strong smell of smoke. In 1819 a shower in the darkened area was discolored as if the water were impregnated with soot. The fires near Wissitaquik, Me., probably caused the darkness in 1836. In 1868, the smoke from the Coos and St. Helens fires was encountered on the Pacific Ocean. In 1881 dense smoke was noticed over a large area, chiefly from the Michigan forest fires. In 1883 the smoke from forest fires to the westward interfered with navigation, became painful to the eyes and rendered breathing disagreeable. In 1894 the smoke came chiefly from the Hinckley fire in Minnesota.

“In 1902 the smoke came from numerous fires, one of the largest being in the South Fork of Lewis River watershed. In 1903 the smoke was from fires in the Adirondacks. In 1910 the smoke was from the great Idaho fires. Indeed, the British ship Dunfermline reported that on the Pacific Ocean, 500 miles west of San Francisco, the smell of smoke was noticed and the haze prevented observations for about ten days. In connection with the 1910 phenomenon it was noted that a cool wave followed, passing eastwardly over the same area, but spreading farther southward, which gave the lowest temperatures, with frosts, for the month of August.”

More than in any other community has the phenomena of the dark day been noticeable in New England. Here the days have, as a rule, been darker than elsewhere, as may be seen by a study of the list of “dark days” given above. Perhaps this may be explained by the fact that New England is the meeting point of the tracks of many air currents from all parts of the country. Occasionally these currents run counter with opposing storms from the east or the northeast. It therefore seems that the dark or yellow days are caused by the banking up of smoke-laden air. The greatest fires have as a rule occurred in the Northern States, and the winds, transporting the smoke eastward, flow over the New England States. At such a time, it may readily be seen that the air will become dense, and that obscurity and perhaps darkness will result. — United States Forest Service Bulletin, No. 117.

FUNERALS. The Sexton of Trinity Church gives Notice to the Inhabitants of this Town, That he, with proper Assistance, will attend at Funerals, as there may be Occasion; and will carry the Corps to the Grave, at the Price of 24s. He has also a handsome Pall for grown Persons at 7/6; another for Children at 4/. Attendance 5/. He may be spoken with at his Dwelling-House in Summer-street, Boston.—Boston News-Letter, Apr. 9/16, 1741.

FUNERAL COACH. These are to inform all Persons that may have Occasion for a Coach to attend Funerals, that they may be supply’d by Samuel Bleigh, with a handsome Coach and two good black Horses, at any Hour, paying Fifteen Shillings for each Funeral.—Boston News-Letter, Jan. 24/31, 1740.
Map of Boston Harbor in 1694
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