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COPY

A LITTLE HISTORY

of

INDIAN HOLLOW

near

Huntington, Massachusetts

by

ELIZABETH HARTLEY

Born - January 27th, 1852

Written at

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

A.D.- 1934

A LITTLE HISTORY OF INDIAN HOLLOW.

I have often thought that when I pass from earth there will perhaps be no one left to tell the simple history of "Indian Hollow."

From ~~new~~ information I have received from old inhabitants, it appears that Washington gave land to the soldiers of his army after the war of the Revolution.

There were two brothers by the name of Angell, Germans by birth and having no family in America, who wandered up through the country and decided to take their land on the banks of our little stream.

The Indians had, about this time, marched to Canada, and as the country reminded these brothers of their own Black Forest in Germany, they were inclined to settle and remain there.

There were many wild animals, and with night coming on, these men climbed up an old tree at the head of what we call our Island, now belonging to the Bates family. The tree has since been cut but the pine stump still remains.

Mr. Henry Weeks' father (or grandfather), living just across the river a short distance from the tree, heard the barking, or howling, of the wolves, and the voices of men, and taking a lantern he went over and inquired.

"Who's there?"

"Angels", came the reply.

"Well, Well, if you're angels come over to my house and sleep. Your wings might get wet."

The old Weeks home has since fallen down but the cellar hole remains, and a very large stone door-step leading up to the front door is still there, with the name of Weeks and the date of the building carved thereon.

The next morning the Angells ("Angels" as they began to be called), took a survey of the country and decided upon the west side of the river and built a small log house just below Wildwood.

Afterwards one of the brothers married a Weeks girl, and built Ferncliff. This took them sometime, hewing the great beams that support the house which consisted of the living room and another room on the north side.

There are many romantic stories which date from the time when the good-looking blond brothers made their appearance in Indian Hollow.

Much of their history can be traced to the little neglected "grave yard" beside the river, situated just off the main road to South Worthington. The grave yard is filled with the dead of the Weeks and Angell families and had been cared for by the last of the branch of the Angell family for many years.

Upon moving to New Jersey, many years ago, they bequeathed the small plot of ground to me, Elizabeth Hartley. We took great pains in keeping the undergrowth down and

straightening the old stones.

Below is a record of the markings of the graves:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Age</u>	
Nathaniel Miller	Jan. 20, 1848	62 Years	
Roxany, wife of Nathaniel Miller	Apr. 25, 1840	50	"
William Miller	Oct. 21, 1851	77	"
Patsy, wife of Wm. Miller . .	Jan. 19, 1818	28	"
Dea. William Miller	June 4, 1817	84	"
Elizabeth, wife of Dea. Miller	Dec. 19, 1809	67	"
John Rude	Nove. 15, 1847	79	"
Ruth, wife of J. Rude	Sept. 29, 1844	60	"
Deborah, wife of J. Rude, Jr. .	Dec. 7, 1813	47	"
Experience, wife of Terra Rude	Apr. 30, 1848	50	"
Elizabeth, wife of Terra Rude	June 22, 1836	36	"
Electro, Lydia and Laura, children of L. Rude.			
Rhoda Rhoads, Indian Doctress	Sept. 25, 1841	90	"
Simon Rhoads, son of Rhoda Rhoads	June 1842	60	"
Margaret Mulroy	June 9, 1837	22	"
Born Yorkshire England. "By strangers honoured, By strangers mourned."			

There are several markers for the Angells, including Diedamia, Abigal, Stephen, Quartus, Emily, Henry, and some of the Weeks family.

Among the stones that may be lying flat by this time is the one to old Aunt Rhoda Rhoads, an Indian Doctress, who had her cabin on the high land just above the drinking trough,

quite near the main road. She and her brother remained when the Indians went in a file before her cabin on their way to Canada, begging her to go with them.

She answered: "No! The white people have been kind to me and I shall remain."

Her brother, an old chieftan, living in his wigwam just across the river from her, also remained.

Old Aunt Rhoda's fame extended for miles around and she was a welcome sight when she entered the homes of the sick and dying.

There is an account of a young English girl coming to Aunt Rhoda, a girl whom the doctors of England had given up, who recovered from Aunt Rhoda's care, and lived in the little cabin with her for many years. When she died she was buried in the little grave yard. This was Margaret Mulroy.

There are two other graves to be noticed on the hill quite a distance back of Ferncliff. Lemuel Weeks and his wife. There is a modest stone erected over the grave of the man and we are supposed to know that the little grave beside him is that of his wife. Or, doing justice to Lemuel, it may be that she went after his death and there was no one left to do her honor.

As marriages and the neighborhood increased, schools became a necessity. The first school was located on the bank of the little stream opposite Ferncliff. Afterwards a small school house was built under a sheltering rock on the road below Ferncliff. Then, in 1892, the school house on the Bates place was built. When it was opened there were only four children, and it cost but fifty cents more per week to have school than to take them to Norwich Bridge, so they opened the school for only eight weeks. Teachers at that time were Ethel M. Moffatt, Nettie E. Bisbee and Arvilla Pomeroy. At the end of the term there were but three pupils, so they were taken to Norwich Bridge, or as it was then known as Knightsville, costing them forty cents per day, the cost for each pupil being \$10.97 per month.

The main road for many years ran along the east side of the river from Knightsville to Chesterfield. Only a well worn foot path ran along the western side of the river, where there is now a road.

All this while church services depended upon Norwich Hill, a long distance in bad weather for the people of Indian Hollow, or services at South Worthington, another long distance. As a compromise, a meeting in the school house at Knightsville was provided.

Later on in South Worthington, Dr. Russell H. Conwell, a noted man, drew farmers to hear him in the church that was built there, and large audiences from adjoining towns came, bringing their lunches to the nearby grove.

Dr. Conwell was pastor to a large Baptist Church in Philadelphia and a lecturer of note, his lecture, "Acres of Diamonds" has been heard throughout the Country. He came every summer to his country place in South Worthington, and preached good practical sermons.

It is interesting to remember that Russell H. Conwell's father was one of the first settlers in South Worthington. An Irishman with good sound principles, together with native wit and wisdom. He no doubt had much influence on his talented son Russell.

The latter kept the old homestead intact after his father's death, keeping the four rooms as they were, but building wide piazzas around the house, keeping the red color as it originally was.

At the end of the long row of maples, after crossing the little bridge leading to South Worthington, there stood, many years ago, a small house occupied and owned by William Miller and his wife Lydia.

Mr. Miller was a deacon at Huntington and was a good and useful member of the community and neighboring farms. His first wife was Elizabeth who died in 1809, aged 67 years. Deacon Miller died on June 4, 1817. His second wife Lydia did much to beautify the place, caring for the double row of maples.

Aunt Lydia took an important place in our affections. She gave me many of her experiences as she remembered them.

She said that when it was thinly settled and the Indians were numerous, that she and her husband used to keep a light in their window for belated travelers along the lonely path on the west side of the river, which at times was a real river. If late travelers came up on the other side of the river, they would halloo, and Mr. Miller would cross in his boat and bring them to their home where they would set before them the best food they had. All told their stories, and afterwards, with a big fire in the fireplace, the travelers would stretch themselves on the floor, their feet toward the fire, and sleep the "Sleep of the Just."

In those days there were no "gangsters" but all were early settlers looking over the wilderness to search out a place where they could secure land and build a cabin.

Aunt Lydia delighted in keeping alive, in the minds of those living, the interesting parts of the history of Indian Hollow. She had no children and went about in her gentle way, interested in everyone. One day, in my remembrance, she came to Wildwood, leaning on the arm of Levi Angell, to see the old hemlock on our Island where the first "Angel" spent the night.

This Mr. Angel's nephew, with his wife and three children, came to a tragic death from eating polluted meat. Only two of the family - little girls, now women - survived, and they are now living in Westfield. There were no near relatives left to see justice done to the market man who sold the meat.

Aunt Lydia whose memories of the olden times were very interesting was always a most welcome visitor. Later she was living as a neighbor to the Joseph Burrs.

I must tell you about a true descendent of those two brothers who first came to Indian Hollow, Old Uncle Levi Angell! He and his wife then owned the little old house at the top of the hill, now called Ferncliff. How he loved his violin - his fiddle as he called it - and how many times I have seen him out on the broken down piazza, a noble head with its silvery hair hanging down on his shoulders, playing his old fashioned tunes: "Money Meek", "The Irish Washerwoman", and "Yankee Doodle", etc. Many an evening have I climbed the hill and sat down on the old doorstep to listen. One evening, I well remember, he and his fiddle had an air of companionship hard to describe. A sort of reckless dare-devil time of it, when from inside the house a fretful voice demanded:

"Levi Angell, did you bring in the wood tonight?"

"Yes mum", he replied as he played "There will be no more sorrows there."

Voice: "Well, you didn't lock the hen-house and them pesky hens is roostin' in the trees."

Levi had reached "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand" and on his face there was such a peaceful look - the chair creaked then, the boards on the piazza were a little uncertain; Levi never fixed them. There were so many things he didn't care about. What if the chimney did smoke and the kitchen

roof did leak? He was a man that such little things like that did not trouble him, and his fiddle agreed, it was playing now, "In the sweet field of Eden".

I usually gave him a silent nod of approval and retarded my steps down the hill, feeling that I had been in the presence of one who had chosen the far better things of life, and was in name and in soul an Angel.

Among the first people in Indian Hollow to come to see us were Elias and Nancy Rood. He was a great help to us in planning where our garden should be, what kind of hens we should keep and a thousand other subjects. They had no children and Elias worked hard. Perhaps his was the largest farm anywhere around. His animals were especially loved and taken care of.

Nancy was very domestic and had been a school teacher of the olden times. Punctuality and precision were her fine traits and it was a pleasure to visit her home where her flowers ran riot around the house.

Added to her other qualities, she was a good old-fashioned cook. We were invited to dinner one day and all went well until it came to the dessert. It was apple pie. I remember her standing up with the uncut pie in her hand saying: "Well now, if you havn't had enough, who'll have a piece?" Of course we all refused pie. She knew better than we that we had had enough, but Nancy - bless her - was also a little "savin'".

After a few years more, loved and honored by the neighborhood and village, Elias was killed by a pet bull, one he had brought up from babyhood. Not having children, all his animals were pets. His death was terrible, and a shock to us all, but to none more than to "Dovie", a niece who lived with them.

The name "Dovie" alone attracted me and when I met her I could see how the name was appropriate. A small, clear eyed, simple soul, of perhaps twenty-six-or-seven years, childlike in all her actions, but having been constantly in the care of her aunt, Mrs. Nancy Rude.

Her early education had been more or less interwoven with Bible teachings. It was but seldom that she did not explain or introduce some Scriptural text and always quoted correctly.

If you asked her age she would tell you adding;
"As thy day so shall thy strength be."

"Are you happy out here in the country?" I asked.

"Oh! yes, 'Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace, and her hope of the righteous shall be gladness', Oh! yes, I'm happy."

We asked her to come out under the trees and help eat our lunch.

"Are you enjoying this Dovie?"

"Yes, but I'm not desirous of his dainties for they are deceitful meat."

Still in spite of not being "desirous", Dovie did enjoy our good things, and how we enjoyed her!

Occasionally she became a little mixed in her quotations. I remember one time, I met her as she was returning from the woods, her arms filled with wild flowers. Her face was very sad. She had just lost a pet calf. It had choked to death. She felt this very keenly. I tried to comfort her but the attempt seemed hopeless. At last she broke out:

"God moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform,
and plants His foot-steps on the sands of time."

I had nothing more to say.

Arvilla was another character with strong, sterling New England qualities; a person whom one could depend upon in time of trouble. I think that she was in some way related to Nancy. While she lived near us there was not much time for personal visiting. Though always a friendly wave of the hand as people passed our door, assured us of their friendship.

Arvilla passed through the shock of seeing her husband accidentally killed, as he, with a party of men were starting out on a hunting trip, his gun went off as he took it from the wagon. She had one child which she supported by weaving carpets. This little girl grew to womanhood and was happily married to a well-to-do young man, who proved to be a real son, and he came to Arvilla's support so she lived very comfortably.

These pages would not be complete without mentioning little Vinnie. She came into my life as an old friend of the family at the age of sixty - a perfect model of a little woman.

She came from England when a baby, had a fall from her nurse's arms on board the boat that brought them over, and though not deformed, it always hindered her growth.

She always wore a three-cornered piece of lace on her head, high collars and white aprons. She came to us as a widow and became one of the family.

This went on for years when to my surprise she told me that she was going to be married. After the first surprise we all decided to give her a wedding. I gave her a Shepherd plaid silk trimmed with rose velvet and lace they were to be married at Wildwood - the minister was spoken for - she and the groom was to come from the library as I played the Wedding March in the parlor. Everything was arranged and then we sat down and waited for the expected bridegroom.

There was a long path down through the meadow where he would come from the stage. Well, we waited, and he finally came! A little old bow-legged wizened man. I looked some more, and then I said to Vinnie;

"Well, Vinnie, we will omit the March."

Instead, the next day, we furnished a horse and carriage and they drove to Norwich Hill to be married.

An old German who stood with us and witnessed the departure, shook his head sadly and said;

"Too olt und too stiff."

It was not so bad after all. Though he wasn't as rich as he represented himself to Vinnie, they had enough to build a neat little house near us and they lived very happily for some years.

* * * * *

There was a deep gully in the road between the Big Rock and Lyman's place which Mr. Russel Conwell remembered. He said that Mr. Sam Bartlett made a wonderful bridge of stones and earth which few who rode over it recognized as a bridge, unless you were on the river looking up at it, a really very fine piece of work. A bridge has also been built across the river to accommodate the school children from Pisgah.

Speaking of Mt. Pisgah - remembering that the travelled road from Huntington Village was on the east side - the inhabitants there composed a little settlement by themselves. It was called Norwich Lake.

The "meeting house" and town hall were on that side. Farms and well-kept places began to flourish, and from the old residents there drifted down to us many romantic stories.

One was an old bachelor way up on the ridge of Pisgah, who by hard labor and self denial - very little money - had built quite a pretentious house, and although he was surrounded by many pretty girls of Norwich Lake, (which by the way had attracted many summer visitors) he being of a quiet and retiring disposition had never mingled with people.

He was often called the "Hermit of Pisgah", wearing his hair long and going unshaved. He had fine eyes, a well shaped head, and was of a commanding stature.

After his house was built - most of it done by himself - and his farm always seeming to prosper, he continued buying more and more land, terracing it down the mountain side until it took on the appearance of real beauty, and with his fine drove of cattle and sheep everyone wondered, "What the old hermit was up to."

Weekly trips to the town of Norwich Lake seemed to be his only pastime, although some folks told of hearing the strains of a violin ("fiddle") occassionally coming down from old Pisgah.

Time passed on. Rumor had it that a mysterious magazine came through the Post Office addressed to him. Then after a while it was noticed by the old postmaster, (or was it his wife?) that letters came frequently to Mr. John Rhoades. If he ever wrote a letter it was taken to Huntington.

Then came a day when the hermit disappeared. His hired man didn't know "Nuthin" about it". But one day he had orders to meet the boss in Huntington.

People tell of the alighting from the Springfield train of a fine looking man with a lady. No one knew who they were until Sam - the hired man - drew up to the waiting room and took them in his "carry-all", bag and baggage.

Well, many were the windows where curtains were hastily raised and lowered as the new-comers passed along the

streets of Norwich, and one could hear the "Did you ever?", "Well what do you think?", "If that old codger aint gone and got married!", "But who'd a thought it!", and "It don't look like John nuther".

Strange to relate weeks passed and nothing more was seen of the new comers.

Sam came to the store and the Post Office but to all questions he was very unsatisfactory in his replies. People became more curious. Except to the extent of seeing a lady walking on the grounds, or the fleeting sight of a gentleman and lady riding by, nothing more was known of the mysterious people. The man of the long hair and whiskers had completely disappeared, and Sam attended to all outside matters.

Among the young people of Norwich there was a young man who was looked up to as having had more advantages than the others. For hadn't he been to Springfield to school, and once to New York? Therefore to him fell the lot to investigate the Pisgah mystery.

"Why yes", he said he would go up there as a "book pedler", go to the door and see the lady herself - this "Beautiful lady", for by this time the country round had been singing the praises of this "unknown beauty of Pisgah".

Sam, in the mean time, had heard of the proposed call and immediately told his beloved Mrs. Rhoades of the intended visit.

"Just leave it to me", she told him.

Leisurely twirling his cane the young book agent appeared - approached the house and the door bell was rung.

Immediately there came a big, disheveled, slouchy woman of middle age, limping painfully to the door, her "specks" half falling off her nose, as she asked.

"And phat is it you're wanting young man?"

"Why, why, I wanted to see the mistress of the house."

"And phat is it you want after seein' the mistress?" she asked. "Phat is it? Speak up, and then be going on your way."

"Is this Mrs. Rhoades?" the surprised young man asked.

"And who else would a body be lookin' for?" she inquired as she glowered at him, and then closed the door.

The story soon became town talk, and the book agent became the butt of the village, while the conversation was of the lady of Pisgah, "Who was she?"

In the Rhoades home could be heard peals of laughter over the way the lady had appeared at the door for the benefit of the book agent.

I never heard the sequel to this story so that I will leave it as it is, for further investigation.

"Time marched on, bringing changes to the Hollow."

Charlie Angell sold to Frank Runnells. The Hartleys bought Wildwood of George Terry. Then came one cold, blustering March evening the Lyman family from Springfield will remember. They will remember the night, and they will remember the poor health of Mr. Lyman. His health was shattered through hard work, but with great courage he and his wife succeeded in raising a fine family, improving their land, and finally becoming one of the prominent families of Huntington.

The old Levi Angell's place up on the hill, next to Wildwood, has become the Summer home of the Townsends and the Hancocks. Mrs. Susue Townsend is happy with her son, daughter-in-law and boy. The name of the pretty Summer home is Ferncliff. Although there are many changes made in the place, such as verandas and running water, there are many things not changed, as the old home-made doors, and the hewn beams for the support of the floors.

I cannot close without mentioning my own experience in buying the run-down neglected old house that became my home for twenty-five years. I shall never forget my first glimpse of it - an unpainted house, rags stuffed into what was supposed to be windows, sagging roof. An old barn, roof caved in, standing down by the road, a zig zag path leading from the side door to the barn. It took more of courage than I was aware, to buy the place, pay off the mortgage, tear down the barn, build a new one where it now stands, make a circular drive-way in front of the place. Paint the house white, green blinds

to every window; bring in running water; build a rustic bridge across the little stream in front of the house; clear out the little stream of water; taking out swamp grass and cat-tails. Build a spring house, and finally putting in three colors of water lillies.

People from far and near came to watch our improvements. My mother was then living, and my sister and her husband. Mr. Frank Morey made this their home, while my delight was to come from New York and watch the improvements.

To any one tiring of the crowded streets of a big city, let me suggest just such an experience. I feel that my happiness fully repaid the outlay.

Nor can I forget my husband's happiness - a man not fitted for the hard life of business, the place was indeed a Haven of Refuge!

I am closing the simple telling of this past and in doing so will append the following.

MEMORIES OF WILDWOOD

(With Apologies TO Hiawatha.)

I

In the foothills of the Berkshires,
In the fastness of the forest,
Where the rivers meet and mingle,
Join in laughter at their meeting,
Coming from their mountain sources,
In that land all undiscovered,
By the busy man of commerce.
Where the birds are the companions
Of the hermit and the poet --
Where the deer rove o'er the meadows
Unafraid and unmolested.

There it is in simple quiet
Stands an old Colonial farm house,
Stands a home-like and inviting
Structure, which if it could speak
Would whisper, "Listen to me,
O, ye people! Ye who here have
Lived and laughed and grew to love me,
Listen to me while I tell you
All the thoughts that come to me,
From those two who dwelt within me."

II

Winter now has covered over,
With a drift of snow-white feathers,
Covered all the craggy hillsides,
With a warm protecting blanket,
Covered all the lakes and valleys,
Tipped with white the ancient hemlocks,
Bending low the mountain laurel,
All without is icy splendor,
All within is genial comfort.

Sitting by their pleasant fireside,
With their books and papers round them,
One says to the other, smiling,
"Let us take a wireless visit
To the land of the Manhattans
To that great and brilliant city,
To the homes of all our loved ones,
Hear the voices, catch the laughter,
Know all they would say unto us,
Say to them all we are thinking,
Leave our blessing to the utmost,
Carry them back to our fireside,
Thus with glowing hearts deep musing,
Thank the source of all true friendship,
And though many miles asunder,
We are yet bound close together."

III

Many there have been who lingered
All their lives here, and reluctant,
Left behind them, only memories of the past,
And my heart was often saddened
By the visions of their griefs.

LATER

1933

Just now my old walls ringing
With the happy laugh of childhood,
Cheers me with happy anticipations.

So I gather them, within me
I, the homestead of the younger,
Happier inmates "Come to bless you,"
Asking of the one who writes this
Only loving memories.

- - Elizabeth Hartley