

# STONE WALLS



WINTER 1990

\$2.50

169 9 33E  
06 22 '90  
06 12 '90

# EDITORIAL

The damage caused by the October earthquake in California makes us stop and look at our familiar hills and wonder. Storms are predictable, but not earthquakes! The realization that rock and earth can move suddenly on such a vast scale is difficult to comprehend.

The few earthquakes that we have known in our area have been mild wobbles. Yet there are ancient fault lines in the region where the earth has moved in the past. Our rocky hillsides seem eternal to us but not to a geologist. Nature has its own timetable. It was only fifteen thousand years ago or so when this area was covered by a glacier which reshaped our hills and valleys, dropping off boulders and other debris along its path. Meanwhile our brooks and rivers are in the process of making their own changes in the landscape. It all makes human activities seem puny in comparison. Let us take another look at our beloved hills and valleys, beautiful in the snow and ice of a New England winter.

*Lucy Conant*

## STONE WALLS

Box 85

Huntington, Massachusetts 01050

Vol. 16 No. 4

*STONE WALLS is published quarterly. Subscriptions are \$9.00 a year, \$2.50 for individual copies. Please add 80 cents with a special request for any back issue to be mailed. The retail price of individual copies may be modified only with the permission of the editorial Board. We welcome unsolicited manuscripts and illustrations from and about the hilltowns of the Berkshires. The editors of STONE WALLS assume no responsibility for non-commissioned manuscripts, photographs, drawings, or other material. No such material will be returned unless submitted with self addressed envelope and sufficient postage. We also welcome letters from our readers. No portions of this publication may be reproduced in any form, with the exception of brief excerpts for review purposes, without the express consent of the editors of STONE WALLS. Due to the fact that we are a non-profit making publication, we will continue to publish our magazine as long as it is financially possible. If at any time we are unable to continue, we will be under no obligation to refund any subscription.*

© STONE WALLS 1989

## - CONTENTS -

2	Diary of Charles H. Gardner – 1861 Continued from Spring of "89" .....	<i>Pam Hall</i>
4	To Know The Indians .....	<i>Carol Laun</i>
6	Hildred Palmer Cortes: "Memories of a Time That is Gone" .....	<i>Doris Wackerbarth</i>
10	The Life of a House in Worthington .....	<i>Joan Hastings</i>
13	North Granby – Bedford or The Wedge .....	<i>William S. Hart</i>
24	Index for 1985 – 1989 .....	<i>Ida Joslyn and Connie Dorrington</i>
28	William C. Whitney and the Whitney Estate .....	<i>John Wright Crane</i>
32	The Deacon's Son and The Parson's Daughter .....	<i>Dr. Howard A. Gibbs</i>
34	Blandford Settlers Built Three Forts .....	<i>Robert L. Soule</i>
35	A Visit to Aunt Hannah .....	<i>Dr. Howard A. Gibbs</i>
36	Norwich Once Separate Town .....	<i>Robert T. Soule</i>

# Diary of Charles H. Gardner

## PART III

### Continued from Spring Issue "89"

*Submitted by Pamela G. Donovan Hall of Huntington and Ann and Richard Gardner of N.C.  
Charles H. Gardner was Richard's great uncle.*

Charles H. Gardner was the son of William and Electra (Miller) Gardner. He was born in 1840 in the Knightville section of Norwich (now Huntington). This diary begins when he was living in the Village of Norwich.

- Fri. 11 Cloudy and rainy all day was much disappointed this AM in not getting a furlough to go home but the Col. was not available and being a soldier I must submit to orders
- Sat. 12 Cloudy and rainy in the AM cool in the PM pleasant in the evening went on picket duty got cold was sick took a Corporal prisoner and had a good time.
- Sun. Oct. 13th to Fri. Oct. 18, 1861 BLANK
- Sat. 19 Rained very hard in the AM showery and cold in the PM came off guard duty early this AM laid out last nite and caught more cold it is quite cool this evening
- Sun. 20 Rained hard in the forenoon cold and showery in the PM came off guard about 12 o'clock and laid in the tent today. It is cold tonight.
- Mon. 21 Very pleasant we was detailed for barn duty 2 days had some work and a good deal \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ the horses \_\_\_\_\_ fellow got \_\_\_\_\_
- Tues. 21 Very pleasant worked down to the barns all day had a chance to ride and got kicked as well as my horse but did not get hurt much expect to go \_\_\_\_\_.
- Rest of month empty
- NOVEMBER
- Fri. 1 Pleasant and continues warm in the middle of the day but was cool at night with a cold wind am much better then I was have written 8 letters and received no answer.
- Sat. 2 It is a cool windy day and I have been out on drill for the first time in 2 weeks had a letter from Rachel Miller to day and was disappointed at not hearing from \_\_\_\_\_
- Sun 3 Rained hard all day the forenoon it was the hardest storm we have had all the fall but cleared up before night and was quite pleasant Father and Fordyce came into camp last evening
- Mon.4 Very pleasant but cool wind has been blowing all day Father and Fordyce left here this AM and were quite pleased with camp life they brought me a lot of things that \_\_\_\_\_
- Tues. 5 Very pleasant and warm drilled and done stable duty. There is a mass brewing here that is certain but cannot tell when it will come off but am ready to do my part
- Wed. 6 Still continues pleasant and warm went to the stable in the AM but had a high time here in the PM Co. revolted and several were put in irons
- Thurs. 7 The weather still continues warm and \_\_\_\_\_ we were confined in our quarters until 10 AM when we went out and got a blowing up and our office were turned out of office.
- Fri. 8 Pleasant and warm \_\_\_\_\_ in the

PM on guard in the evening staid  
down to the barn all night and slept  
\_\_\_\_\_ got up early this AM

First week worked 6 days

2nd	"	"	"	"
3rd	"	"	"	"
4th	"	"	"	"
5th	"	"	"	"
6th	"	"	"	"
7th	"	"	"	"
8th	"	"	"	"
9th	"	"	"	"
10th	"	"	"	"
11th	"	"	"	"
12th	"	"	"	"
13th	"	"	"	"
14th	"	"	"	"
15th	"	"	"	"
16th	"	"	"	"
17th	"	"	"	"

MEMORANDA

Fri. Oct. 18, 1861

Very stormy called at E.S. Searles  
and saw Gertrude and she prom-  
ised to send me her picture and  
promised to write to me as \_\_\_\_\_ as  
she received my letter

Nov. 2

Wrote to Gertrude last Sunday and  
have not heard from her yet expect  
she has not received mine

Tues. Apr. 2

Saw Miss Wheeler she left for Conn.  
today promised to write to me \_\_\_\_\_  
to send some papers to her

May 10

Received a letter from Annie today  
in which she promised to corre-  
spond with me In camp at Read-  
ville and sick at that wish I was at  
home but cannot go like camp life  
better than perpetuated we have a  
fine bunch of boys here 12 of whom  
are in the tent with me

Thurs, Oct. 11, 1861

Had a letter from Jule today in  
which she said she was sorry that  
she gave me the (Matter)(?)

Commenced work for H. Williams April 1st

Remember me through many miles  
We distance be

Julia

Charlie  
Hasten home

Charles H. Gardner served with the 1st Mass.  
Cav. Co. F from Sept. 25, 1861 to July 18, 1862  
at which time he was given a medical dis-  
charge because he had contracted consump-  
tion. He died four weeks later at the family  
homestead in Knightville and was buried in  
the Knightville Cemetery. He was 21 years  
old.

*Wrote to Gertrude last Sunday*



# To Know The Indians

by Carol Laun

---

Some early writers regarded the Indians of New England with admiration for certain traits of character. Writings from the late 1600's and early 1700's were gathered by Rev. Henry White and published in an 1841 book called "Early History of New England." It is rare to find objective and factual reports of Indians written in that time period. Most contemporary articles were colored by the social prejudices and moral values of the writers.

Hospitality is mentioned by several writers.

"Belknap, speaking of the reception the Europeans who first visited Canada received from the natives, says, "Suspecting no danger, and influenced by no fear, they embraced the stranger with unaffected joy. Their huts were open to receive him, their fires and furs to give warmth and rest to his weary limbs; their food was shared with him, or given in exchange for his trifles; they were ready with their simple medicines to heal his diseases and his wounds; they would wade through rivers and climb rocks and mountains to guide him on his way, and they would remember and requite a kindness more than it deserved."

Williams in his History of Vermont, says, "Among the savages, hospitality prevailed to a high degree. The Europeans everywhere found the most friendly and cordial reception, when they first came among the savages; and from their hospitality they derived all the assistance the savages could afford them. It was not until disputes and differences had taken place, that the Indians became unfriendly. Even now, an unarmed, defenseless stranger, who repairs to them for relief and protection, is sure to find safety and assistance in their hospitality."

"Hospitality," says another writer, "is one of the most prominent Indian characteristics, and has its source in an enlarged view of the goodness and justice of our heavenly Bene-

factor. The productions of the earth, with all the animals which inhabit it, are considered by them as a liberal and impartial donation to the whole family of mankind, and by no means intended to supply only the wants of a few. Hence an Indian is ever free to give of all that he possesses, and will often share with strangers even to the last morsel, preferring to lie down hungry himself, than that a visitor should leave his door unfed, or that the sick and needy should remain uncherished and in want."

The shrewdness of the Indians seems to indicate that they were the original "Yankees."

"As Governor Joseph Dudley, of Massachusetts, observed an able-bodied Indian, half naked, come and look on, as a pastime, to see his men work, he asked him why he did not work, and get some clothes to cover himself. The Indian answered by asking him, why he did not work. The Governor, pointing with his finger to his head, said, "I work head work, and so have no need to work with my hands as you should."

"The Governor told him he wanted a calf killed, and that if he would go and do it, he would give him a shilling. He accepted the offer, and went immediately and killed the calf, and then went sauntering about as before. The governor, on observing what he had done, asked him why he did not dress the calf before he left it. The Indian answered, "No, no Governor, that was not in the bargain. I was to have a shilling for killing him. Am he no dead, Governor?" The Governor, seeing himself outwitted, told him to dress it, and he would give him another shilling."

"This Indian, having several times outwitted the Governor, was asked by the Governor how he had cheated and deceived him so many times. The Indian answered, pointing with his finger to his head, "Head work, Governor, head work!"

"A sachem being on a visit at the house of Sir William Johnson, told him one morning of a dream which he had had the preceding night. This was that Sir William had given him a rich suit of military clothes. Sir William, knowing that it was the Indian custom to give to a friend whatever present he claimed in this manner, gave him the clothes. Some time after, the sachem was at his house again. Sir William observed to him that he also had had a dream. The sachem asked him what. He answered, he dreamed that the sachem had given him a tract of land. The sachem replied, "You have the land, but we no dream again."

"A white trader sold a quantity of powder to an Indian, and imposed upon him by making him believe it was a grain which grew like wheat, by sowing it upon the ground. He was greatly elated by the prospect, not only of raising his own powder, but of being able to supply others, and thereby becoming immensely rich. Having prepared his ground with great care, he sowed his powder with the utmost exactness in the spring. Month after month passed away, but his powder did not even sprout, and winter came before he was satisfied that he had been deceived. He said nothing; but some time after, when the trader had forgotten the trick, the same Indian succeeded in getting credit for a large amount. The time set for payment having expired, he sought out the Indian at his residence and demanded payment for his goods. The Indian heard his demand with great complaisance; then looking him shrewdly in the eye, said, "Me pay you when my powder grow." This was enough. The guilty white man

quickly retraced his steps."

"I am glad," said the Rev. Dr. Y—, to the chief of the Little Ottawas, "that you do not drink whiskey. But it grieves me to find that your people use so much of it." "Ah, yes," replied the Indian—and he fixed an arch and impressive eye upon the doctor, which communicated the reproof before he uttered it—"we Indians use a great deal of whiskey, but we do not make it."

Other anecdotes illustrate the Indian traits of fidelity, gratitude, sympathy, maternal affection, filial love, and veneration and kindness shown the aged.

Perhaps one of the most striking examples of the difference between the "savage" Indians and the "civilized" Europeans is in the matter of honesty.

"Trained up to the most refined cunning and dissimulation in war, the Indian carries nothing of this into the affairs of commerce, but is fair, open, and honest in his trade. He was accustomed to no falsehood or deception in the management of his barter, and he was astonished at the deceit, knavery and fraud of the European traders. He had no bolts or locks to guard against stealing, nor did he ever conceive that his property was in any danger of being stolen by any of his tribe. All of the infamous and unmanly vices which arise from avarice, were almost unknown to the savage state."

These early writers paint a picture of a people with a well-developed social and moral structure; living harmoniously with their environment. The systematic destruction of the tribes is a chapter of shame in the history of America.



# Hildred Palmer Cortis: "Memories of a Time That is Gone"

*by Doris H. Wackerbarth*

---

Hildred Palmer was born on Mountain Road, Russell Mountain, in 1900; she has seen the active community of which she was once a part swallowed up by forests, and the town of Woronoco spring up almost full-grown over night, and begin to dwindle away. She grew up in the days when people didn't walk for their health: they walked because that was the way a person got any place, and no one stayed home because a distance was three or four miles and it was raining—or snowing. When she went to work for Strathmore Paper Company in her late teens, her family was living on Russell Mountain, four miles up Blandford Road—Route 23—and she walked to work to be there by eight in the morning; after work, at five o'clock, she walked back home again. (It wasn't a solitary walk, there were others to walk with part of the way.)

Hildred's family were pioneers who came into the Woronoco-Russell area when it was a farming area, when so many salmon came up the river to spawn in the spring they could be harvested in baskets. Her forefathers were here when county records listed Woronoco as Fairfield Station. (The Fairfields who built the first papermill were from Russell Mountain, originally, too.) Her great-grandfather's farmhouse was the substantial house halfway between Woronoco and Russell, known as the Savage Place (the name of the family who last lived there, not a description): on the "wrong" side of the river, across from route 20. It was a landmark for generations, standing isolated and alone, staring across the valley, a destination on a pleasant Sunday afternoon for hikers who were not put off by the necessity of watching carefully for rattlesnakes.

By the time Strathmore Paper Company

became a world-famous manufacturer of high quality paper and acquired all the property contingent to its spreading mills, Hildred's immediate family was well-established in the community along the General Knox Trail, (then called Mountain Road.) There were farm families every half mile or so along Mountain Road, and along South Quarter Road which angled off to the west and Blandford, and Robbins Road to the east, along the summit of Russell Mountain (it circled back to Blandford Road, just above Laurel Road.) The Appalachian Mountain Clubhouse looks out over the Connecticut Valley from where a stalwart Robbins family once earned their living. There were no woods along Blandford Road or the other roads on Russell Mountain then. Everywhere within sight was fenced mowings, meadows and pasture, with wood lots beyond the last stonewalls at the back of a property. For those like the Robbins who looked out over the valley, the view must have been worth being whipped by the winds in winter.

Hildred was born in the pleasant cottage that became the Sanborn summer home; she started school in a little one room school house about a half mile from her home, on a triangle of land where South Quarter Road took off from Mountain Road. (The schoolhouse disappeared without a trace, but its lilac trees flourished for years.) The story of the Russell Mountain community is a fascinating one, worthy of more than one later story: this is an account of Hildred and changes she remembers of her lifetime—she and her younger sister, Ruth Richards, are the only persons left of that once busy area.

When Hildred was nine years old, her family and the Shurtleffs on Shurtleff Road sold their farms skirting Hazzard Pond to



Horace A. Moses, developer and president of Strathmore Paper Company, for Moses Heights and Woronoke Farm, his summer estate. The pond had a bountiful supply of bass and pickerel, and gravestones in the little cemetery at the west end of the pond give evidence to how it got its name: more than one family lost members who were caught on the pond in winds that evidently came up suddenly and were unique to the area, perhaps due to the narrow passes at both ends of the pond.

With the sale of his farm, her father bought acreage across from where Mountain Road leaves Blandford Road, and built a two-story, two family house for his family and his parents, and became the R(ural) F(ree) D(elivery) mailman. (I remember him in winter wearing a really swashbuckling, full-length fur coat that reminded me of a Russian Cassock. I knew that the collar was red fox, and she tells me that the coat was of red squirrel—but she doesn't know whether he was the marksman himself, or how he acquired it. He also had a robe I remember him throwing over his lap—he drove an open touring car at the time I remember him. I had been told the robe was buffalo. If it wasn't, it surely was of bear, because it was very shaggy.)

After the Palmers moved to their new house, Hildred went to school in a one-room school almost across the street from her new home. She describes it as, "stuck in a sandbank, in such a small area it was hard to believe a school could be built there." Perhaps the area was chosen because that land had no value with the sand gone for use on the road past its door. When that school burned down, an attractive one-room cottage was built on a knoll farther east, down the road. (It was discontinued in 1929, and after Prohibition was repealed in 1933, became a country night club of sorts. The Russell Mountain area did not have a supply of musicians, so country dances were not part of their past times; the new club attracted patrons who were strangers to each other and willing to brawl, so that it did not continue for long. Later, Bill Hatton, Woronoco's long-time storekeeper, installed a package store there—

rather out of keeping with the neighborhood.)

Being taught was a problem for students attending country schools. Not as many teachers married farmers and stayed in the area, to be pressed into service when needed, as has been believed. According to Hildred, teachers didn't stay long enough to get acquainted with the local swains. Some towns allowed girls fresh out of high school to teach in their home towns where family peer pressure helped with discipline, and the girls had the support of her family and the comforts of home while gaining experience. But Russell, probably due in no small part to Mr. Moses's progressive turn of mind, required two years of Normal School training. Teachers came and went with distressing regularity. They didn't like the isolation, their boarding houses were not as comfortable as their own homes, and there was all that walking—no trolleys in this mountain community. When the weather was at its worst, if the teacher was boarding with someone not much interested in education anyway, she didn't make it to school, though the students who lived closest to the school always did. The Russell Mountain school didn't require the teacher to shovel snow or keep the fires burning as neighboring Granville did—Hildred's brother was paid fifty cents a week to tend to those chores—but even with such coddling, in one year Hildred had four different teachers.

Hildred vividly remembers her first encounter with an automobile. She had heard of horseless carriages—neighbors who went to the city more often than she did had seen them and told her family about them. One summer day when she was about seven, she and her brother were walking along Blandford Road when they heard the most frightening sound she ever had heard. As they stared at each other in terror they realized that it was approaching them from over the hill behind them. As soon as they got their breath and gathered their wits, they scrambled up the banking beside them, scrambled over and ran until they felt safely out of reach of the monster that went coughing and bucking down the highway, right where they had been standing. I asked her if the passengers

smiled at them and waved. She laughed, remembering how those passengers looked. She said that there were four of them, two men and two women. They were not smiling. They never saw her and her brother—they were all looking grimly straight ahead, as if they were as afraid of where the car was going as she and her brother was of its very being.

She tells a fascinating tale of how hearty country folk were then, and of how much they walked: The young people in the community were having a sleigh ride one evening and one of the boys was late arriving. That day he had moved a family from down in the gorge below the Knox Trail to Blandford, the woman walking all the way beside the sleigh because there was not room for her on the sleigh along with her household goods. When they reached her new address, she sent him back for a box of buttons she had put down and left behind. When he returned with the buttons he was flabbergasted to discover that she had delivered a new baby, Hildred explained that except for broken bones, and appendicitis and such emergencies, families took care of their own medical problems. The closest doctor when she was growing up lived in Huntington and there were no telephones. Doctors tried to keep track of their pregnant patients, often walking miles in bad weather to attend a delivery. When they didn't make it, the woman or her family or neighbors managed on their own.

Hildred was in her teens before she rode in a car. Sunday school was held in the school, and one day Mr. Moses dropped in to visit and drove all the children home. A year or two later her father bought a car and began to deliver the mail by car in good weather. He went to Woronoco for the mail, which came in on the Boston and Albany train, and didn't get back from his route, along all the mountain roads and into Blandford until evening. In winter, he often had to revert to his horse and buggy to complete his appointed rounds, and one winter when his horse couldn't get through the drifts to some mail boxes she and her brother did the honors. She remembers with a delighted chuckle how in the twenties, after her husband got his first car, he said one

afternoon that he was going to drive into Westfield for something he needed right then, and she exclaimed, shocked: "Leave for Westfield at three o'clock in the afternoon?"

When Hildred finished school she went to work in Florence. Coming home for a weekend was a four hour adventure by trolley. She worked until noon on Saturday and began her trip home—an occasion, not an every week occurrence—by trolley from Florence to Northampton. Her jaunt required two more changes, with lots of waiting around, often in unpleasant weather: blistering sun, or rain, or wind and snow. The second leg of her trip was from Northampton to Westfield, and then a change at Park Square in Westfield for the ride to Woronoco. (The trolley continued on to Huntington and ran until ten o'clock at night. But not often.) Her father met her with his horse in Woronoco.

The house Hildred's father built for his family in 1909 had an iron sink in the kitchen, of which they were very proud. It had a pump—indoors—the latest innovation in housekeeping—no more going to the well and breaking ice in winter. She was married in 1919 to Robert Cortis and moved into his parent's house, and acquired her first Singer sewing machine. Seven years later her husband installed an electric pump in the cellar so that she had faucets and an enameled sink in the kitchen. Not much later, they had a kerosene heater installed for heating water when the wood stove, the center of comfort for generations, was not needed in the warmer months.

Hildred and her husband lived for fifty years in the house where they went to live as bride and groom. There they raised five sons and two daughters, all worthy citizens. Three of their sons are veterans of World War II. Unfortunately, Robert Cortis died two weeks after their Fiftieth Wedding Celebration. She now lives in a pleasant, spacious and comfortable apartment in the home of her son, Wallace, on Maple Street in Westfield. Now, instead of walking miles she makes beautiful quilts by hand, piecing them of all new cloth. She has made quilts for all of her four daughters-in-law and last year for Christmas gave

each of her twenty-one grandchildren a pieced quilt, some of them queen-sized. She hopes to make one for each of her forty-three great-grandchildren, too. Now, so close to the heart

of a city, she has all the modern conveniences she can use and is within earshot of every kind of transportation.



*The first encounter with an automobile*

# The Life of a House in Worthington

*by Joan Hastings*

---



Every old house has a story or more to tell. The Victorian Italianate house next to Albert Farms in Worthington—"the Pease Place"—is no exception.

The land it was built on already had the history of five farming families to tell when, in 1881, Chauncey D. Pease first bought the 140 acre "John Adams Farm" from Joseph Preston for \$2700. (This included what is now Ida Joslyn's house and most of Ben Albert's potato fields in the area.) Chauncey then bought a farmhouse, as part of the 130 acre Lewis Hollis farm for \$1000 in 1887. That purchase included the 1854 schoolhouse still standing on the property. Chauncey's property eventually also included the Thrasher property, now known as Denworth Farm.

One wonders what life was like for the Peases about 100 years ago when family prosperity was rising with the times. Chauncey was born in Worthington in 1836 of a farming family. He left to study music

and the manufacture of pianos with an uncle in New York City. He became a successful piano manufacturer in the Bronx, New York and returned to his native Worthington in the summers when he was about 40 years old, with small children. The town had become a fashionable summer community for people from New York City and Springfield. He probably stayed at the elegant Bartlett's Hotel at the Corners before buying property. Through the 1880's he lived with his wife Mary and teenage children, Nellie and Harry, in the Gothic house (now Ida Joslyn's). The people living at the Thrasher farm (now Denworth) ran a dairy business for him. Chauncey's descendents, the FitzGerald's, are still in touch with the farmer's descendents.

You can imagine these Pease children's pleasure playing in Watt's stream, riding horses at the farm down the road, and picking apples in the orchard across the street before returning by bus or train to school near their

horses, played croquet, and drank iced drinks on the large piazza with friends. The ladies wore long dresses and enjoyed games of canasta.

Their children also returned as adults. Laura married Holt Secor and brought her child to live with her parents in the summer. Helen married Ralph Bretzner and travelled the world, returning to Worthington after she was divorced in the 1930's. Son Chauncey lived near New York and came occasionally. Mary Pease married Archer FitzGerald. They travelled from the City to spend summers with their three children on the family farm down the road. Dairy farming was flourishing in the 1920's, and the family prospered, shipping dairy products to the city and managing a thriving piano business. Chauncey's grandchildren grew up in the 1930's balancing on top of the stone walls, pitching horseshoes, playing tennis, golf, and bridge with summer folk and year-rounders alike. They hosted and attended numerous parties with a variety of people of many ages before they grew up and left the area.

The depression, combined with the growing popularity of the radio, created hard times for those in the piano manufacturing business. The Peases continued to come to Worthington, though the lack of disposable cash meant that no major repairs were done to the house from the 1930's on. The summer community evaporated as the Lee-Lenox area became more popular with wealthy New Yorkers and the area reverted to the rhythms of rural life to the great pleasure of many longtime residents.

In the 1940's, the house was the summer residence of Harry and Cora and their daughters, Laura, Mary and Helen. The trees began to grow up around them, ruining the tennis court and covering the fields. They sold 40 acres for \$1200 to Alberti Albert for his new potato farm, the only growing industry in town. (Surveyed in 1987, it turned out to be 85 acres!)

By the early 1950's, when family economics caused the New York brownstone to be sold, it was necessary to install a hot-air heater so the family group of five could all live in

Worthington year round.

During the 60's, after Harry and Cora were dead, the sisters spent winters with children or friends, and continued to play pinochle and canasta on the piazza, frequently hung with Japanese lanterns, each summer. They looked forward to occasional visits from the FitzGerald boys and their families.

By the 1970's Massachusetts prosperity began reaching westward again and young families built and restored houses in Worthington where land values were still affordable and good cars enabled them to commute to jobs in the valley. Helen lived alone by then, in charge of the family heirlooms. The vandals came in winter when she wasn't around to stop them, carrying off valued pieces of furniture, pictures, and silver.

After Helen died in 1979, the house was vacant while the estate was settled and thieves collaborated with nature to slowly diminish family possessions. The house gained a reputation for being haunted and attracted local teenagers to hold Halloween style parties in it. They never trashed it though as it apparently commanded considerable local respect.

In 1984, two energetic people, Scott Heyl and Marie Burkart, interested in architectural restoration, "discovered" the house and bought it to save it. They both worked as city planners down in the valley and spent nights and weekends, often with the help of friends, working on the house and enjoying the view from the piazza over the potato fields to the hills beyond. They had the cellar pumped out, replaced the rotted sills, cut down the trees whose roots were undermining the foundations. Over three years they modernized its basic systems, heat, electricity and plumbing and painted it three shades of tan, appropriate to its era.

In late 1986 they sold it to Wil and Joan Hastings who wanted to move from the Boston area, leave professional careers, and live with a more peaceful quality to life. They loved the possibilities of this "white elephant" as they wanted to grow food and flowers, work free-lance, and participate in the life of a small community. They also wanted to

have space available for a network of family and friends to live with or visit them and share in the joys of upkeep for this historic house.

One daughter, Claire, lived in the house with other students while attending Westfield State and gradually replastered and painted all the rooms in the house. A greenhouse was added to the kitchen. The group made their own maple syrup and ate the summer's harvest. Claire became a member of the Worthington Planning Board.

Now that the house is fully insulated and zone heated, it enters its next stage as a year-round home. Joanna Brown, a friend, has become a resident in the Hastings collabora-

tive household this year. Granddaughter Emily and her parents visit when possible. The cycle of decay and renewal continues in Worthington as elsewhere.

#### SOURCES:

Hampshire County Registry of Deeds  
History of Worthington, 1983  
Pease family Bible, courtesy of Archer Fitzgerald  
Ida Joslyn's and Archer Fitzgerald's memories  
Clement Burr's diary  
Scott Heyl's interviews with local people



## *Different Views*

*by Alta Crowley*

*The FOR SALE sign that's now in view  
stands where wild flowers grew.  
The sign that's marked School Bus Stop  
is where first robins flocked.*

*See the tires, papers and cans,  
I can recall clear, level land.  
Those houses, condos, all in a row  
are where cows grazed long ago.*

*Just where that mailbox stands  
was the farmer's pasture land.  
The quiet brook now litter-lined  
was crystal clear all the time.*

*Gone are the cornstalks and trees so tall,  
replaced by cars near a mall.  
What's happened? I hasten to ask,  
it's Progress! Get real! Get out of the past!*

*W.S. Hart*

# North Granby–Bedford or The Wedge

by William S. Hart

---

## PREFACE

*The towns that lie around us, wherever we happen to live, have been called by the same names for several generations; however, many of them have changed from those given by the first settlers.*

*Hartford was first called Newtown in 1635, Windsor was Dorchester, Wethersfield was Watertown, Avon was Northington or Nod, Bristol was started as Poland and later became New Cambridge. Winsted, Connecticut is an interesting example as it is the combination of the spellings of two towns. When the Industrial Revolution arrived, the people left the surrounding hill farms to utilize the water power of the Mad River to run their factories. As it grew in population it took the "win" from Winchester and the "sted" from Barkhamsted to form Winsted.*

*For my purposes here, I am concentrating on North Granby, Connecticut which many of us know was previously called Salmon Brook Society and was a part of ancient Simsbury.*



I was looking through some old papers and found a 1929 letter written by George Seymour Godard who was the Connecticut State Librarian from 1900 to 1936. He said the portion of North Granby that pushes up against the Massachusetts state line and has East Hartland to the West and Southwick to the East was called Bedford (Fig. 1). He also listed an index to the Connecticut Archives<sup>1</sup> at the state library that related to it. This put me on a fascinating search of old deeds and local histories which I hope will be of interest to others who care about our land heritage.

This little known story of Bedford really began back in 1686 with a deed from an Indian named Toto who sold six miles square of land. This small piece fell into the hands of a sharp land speculator named Atherton Mather from Suffield, Connecticut. Shortly after his acquiring it the area was curtailed by approximately fifty percent but, undaunted,

he sold additional acres beyond the scope of his deed which added present day Granville and Tolland, Massachusetts to the original tract.

To clarify this Bedford and also the adjacent "jog" it is necessary to take a brief look at the colonization of New England. The English Crown, as early as 1620,<sup>2</sup> recognized this distant place as a part of her empire and incorporated a Council to manage its affairs. The Council set up a Patent, an instrument or grant of public lands, which included all the territory between the fortieth and forty-eight degrees of North latitude from "sea to sea." This then was the land lying between Philadelphia and Quebec, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific.

Eight years later in 1628 this Council, by deed, made a grant of land for a settlement at Massachusetts Bay.<sup>3</sup> The several grantees involved were able to obtain a Charter under which

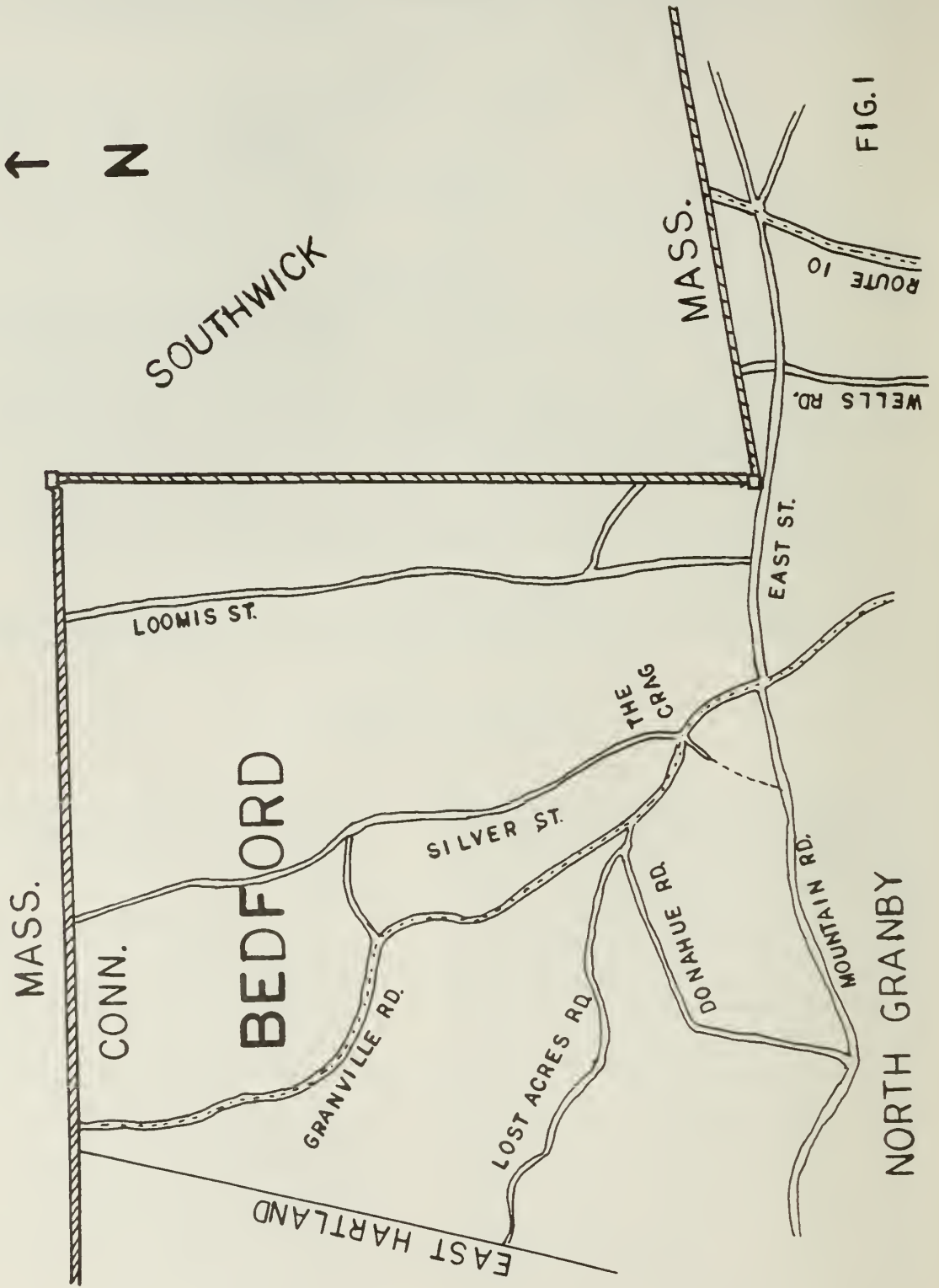


FIG. I



Governor John Winthrop sailed and began the Massachusetts Bay Colony by Boston in 1630.

In the same year Robert, Earl of Warwick, was President of the Council and it conveyed a grant to him. This was approved by a Royal Patent of land in New England and has since been referred to as the "Warwick Patent."<sup>4</sup> It was then believed the scope of land included all of today's Connecticut and extended to the Massachusetts Bay Colony line which they considered as being near Worcester.<sup>5</sup>

As can be imagined, problems were to develop as the Colony of Connecticut and the Province of Massachusetts Bay Colony apparently overlapped each other (Fig. 2). Even Governor Winthrop felt Windsor was in the bounds of Massachusetts. This was honest disagreement; however, as shown by William Pynchon, of the Bay Colony, who had started a trading post at Agawam in 1636 which he later moved to the East side of the Connecticut River and called it Springfield. He thought it was part of Connecticut and even represented Springfield as a "Magistrate" to the Connecticut General Court in 1637. Shortly after, trade differences arose between Springfield and the lower Connecticut River settlements and she decided to become part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and was entered as such when the New England Confederation was organized in 1643.<sup>6</sup>

The Province of Massachusetts was unhappy with the many claims of property being made by the Connecticut settlers so hired two surveyors, Woodward and Saffery, who ran a boundary line in 1642 (Fig. 3). The Massachusetts Charter of 1629 said the South border should run West from a point three miles South of the southernmost part of the Charles River. This point was established, and apparently to save the trouble of surveying cross country, step by step, Woodward and Saffery went around Cape Cod, through Long Island Sound and up the Connecticut River to where they calculated to be the correct latitude. Time proved this point to be eight miles too far south. This incorrect location, just North of Windsor center by Bissell's Ferry, put Suf-

field and Enfield in Massachusetts Bay Colony territory.<sup>7</sup>

The Colony of Connecticut was upset with the survey but, even though she made protests, did not strongly pursue them. Time went by and in 1662 she was granted a liberal Charter by King Charles II.<sup>8</sup> This established the East boundary as Narraganset Bay, North by the Massachusetts Bay Colony line, South by Long Island Sound and West by the Pacific Ocean (Fig. 2).

Confusion still continued and in 1686 further complications came when King James II sent Sir Edmund Andros, Captain General of New England, to pick up both the Massachusetts and Connecticut charters and set up governments by the direct representatives of the English Crown. In the Colony of Connecticut this led to her Charter supposedly being hidden in an Oak tree by Captain Wadsworth.<sup>9</sup>

At this same time in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Sir Edmund Andros appointed James Cornish of Woronoco (Westfield) to be Clerk of the existing Court of Hampshire County.<sup>10</sup> This James Cornish learned an Indian named Toto, a sachem or chief from the Poquonock tribe near Hartford, claimed the land West of Woronoco. James Cornish made a purchase from Toto on 6/28/1686, said to be for a "gun and sixteen buttons" for six miles square of land.

The description in the deed says the six miles square is "bounded by the land granted by the said Toto unto William Leet Esqr. Southerly, and by the land granted by him also unto John Williams of Windsor, Northerly and runs Westerly towards Housatunnk bounded by the mountains and Easterly by the land belonging to Westfield or Springfield by the highway or road running from the lower end of the Ponds unto Two Myle Brooke near Westfield on a straight line."<sup>11</sup>

The foregoing description interprets into the "Housatunnik" being a tract of land just West of Westfield, Massachusetts, "Two Myle Brooke" now called Great Brook near Southwick Center and the "Ponds" as Congamond Ponds. "Bounded by the mountains" in construed as the range running from East Hart-

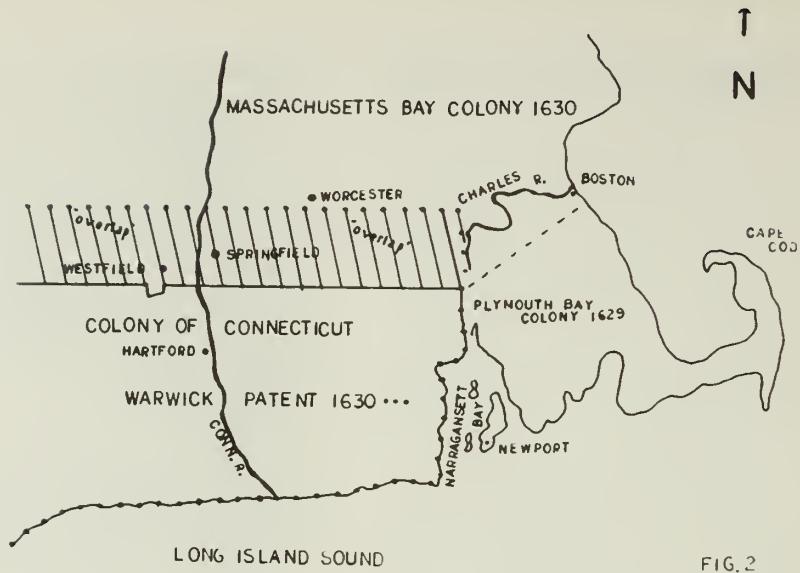


FIG. 2

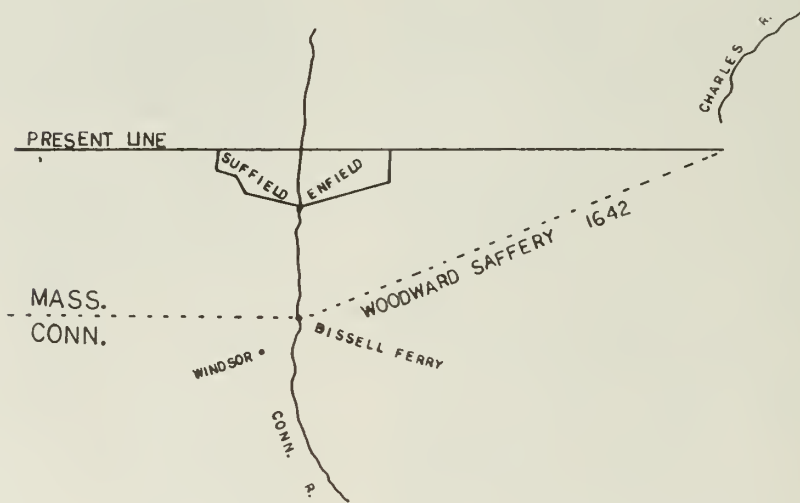


FIG. 3

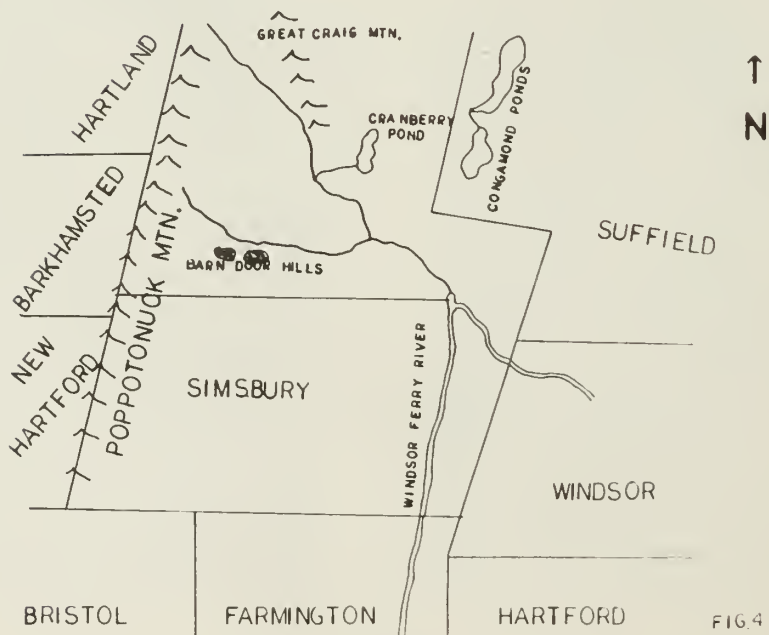


FIG. 4

land center down to Collinsville, Connecticut. This range was called "Popponuck Mountain"<sup>12</sup> on a Map done by Blodget in 1791 (Fig. 4).

Figure 5 shows an approximation of where this square should be. The Northern limit is tied down by the description in the 1685 deed from Toto to John Williams which states "unto him the said John Williams one parcel of land being one full mile square and lyeth in a place commonly known by the name of Two Myle Brooks and abutteth on said brook marsh and on the commons on the East and to run the breadth half a mile each side the brook and from the Northeast corner to run a full mile towards the West on a due West line and from the Southeast corner to run due West a full English mile, makes the aforesaid tract a mile square".<sup>13</sup>

A search of many records does not turn up the William Leet deed to pinpoint the Southern border; however, using six miles from the John Williams property gives an approximation of it.

James Cornish was also concerned where his property was located so to be safe he filed his deed in Connecticut in 1686 and then in Massachusetts in 1689.

After James Cornish died his heirs sold the land to a speculator, Atherton Mather, of Suffield on 6/26/1713.<sup>14</sup> As it turned out just three weeks later a Commission, set up by both colonies to solve the border line disputes, agreed to a new survey line which corrected the old 1642 eight mile error.<sup>15</sup>

Figure 6 shows the new colony line puts Suffield and Enfield back in the Colony of Connecticut. The Commission recognized this but indicated that since the towns had been started by the Province of Massachusetts Bay Colony and paid taxes there they should remain that way. They further said since the Colony of Connecticut has lost this territory they would have Massachusetts give 105,793 acres of land as an "equivalent." This land bordered the East side of Hadley, Massachusetts. Three years later Connecticut sold it at auction to Gurdon Saltonstall and several others for 683 pounds.<sup>16</sup> The money was turned over to Yale College.

This is quite ironic for in 1724 Suffield and Enfield petitioned Connecticut to be brought into her jurisdiction. The Connecticut General Assembly refused by saying the 1713 compromise should not be broken. This request came up again in 1749 and this time Connecticut changed her mind saying the 1713 decision had not been accepted by the English Crown and admitted Suffield and Enfield as well as Woodstock into the Colony of Connecticut.

It should be noted here that Simsbury and Windsor were also having serious taxation problems because of their questionable boundaries so they had a survey completed in 1711 by Goodrich Kimberly<sup>17</sup> which established the North line of Simsbury (Fig. 7). This along with the new 1713 Colony line gave Atherton Mather much concern as it now put most of his "six miles square" in Connecticut and might restrict his holdings. He petitioned the Commission for the two colonies<sup>18</sup> and they honored his claim to the land in the original Toto deed with the proviso he couldn't have title to any land which fell within the bounds of Westfield or Suffield in Massachusetts, or in Windsor or Simsbury in Connecticut (Fig. 7).

This mention of Windsor refers to the fact that Hartland, which was first called Hartfordland, was at that time owned by merchants from Hartford and Windsor.<sup>19</sup> What the Commission meant was Atherton Mather could not have the land to the West that was part of present day East Hartland. These curtailments reduced his "six miles square" or approximately 23,000 acres down to approximately 5,000 acres.

Atherton Mather now went ahead and started selling acreage on a large scale to investors as far away as Boston who had never seen the area.<sup>20</sup> A glance at Figure 8 will show how he completely ignored the "six miles square" wording and went some 15 miles from the Westfield West border to the Farmington River at Sandisfield and North-erly to where Blandford, Massachusetts is today.<sup>21</sup>

Incidentally, Lockwood, in his History of Westfield, claims Westfield owned Bland-

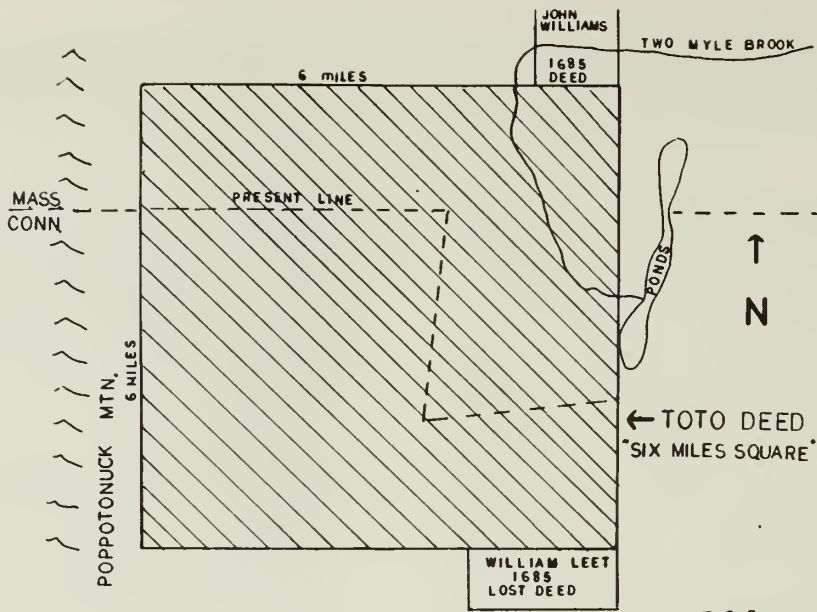


FIG. 5

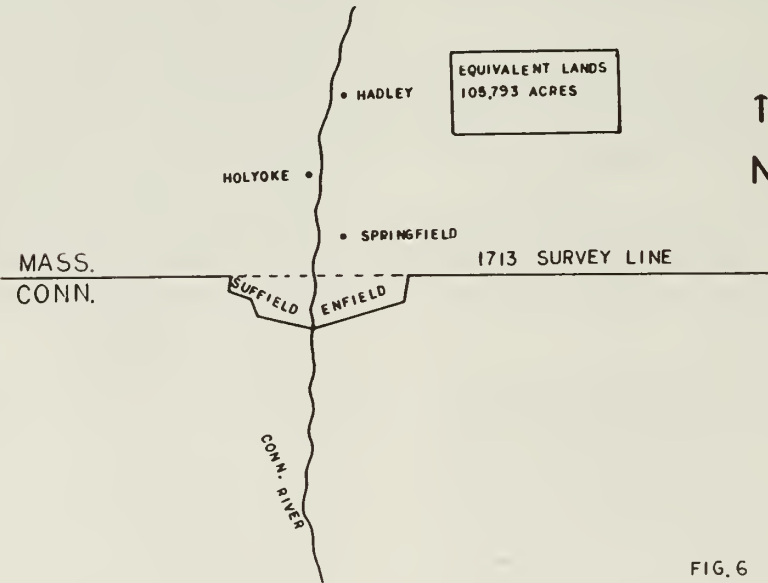


FIG. 6

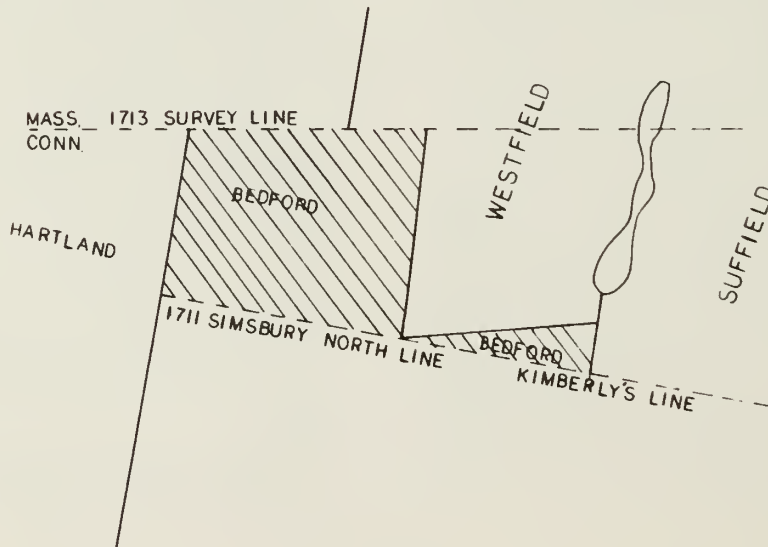


FIG. 7

ford in 1732 and later sold it to Christopher Lawton of Suffield.<sup>22</sup> In settling boundary disputes Westfield gave land to Suffield and the General Court appeased Westfield by granting her "6 miles square." This was called the Suffield Equivalent, later Glasgow and now Blandford.

A.M. Copeland's, Town of Blandford, and Summer Wood's, Ulster Scots and Blandford Scouts, differ with Lockwood by saying the General Court granted the land to Suffield on April 5, 1735 because Suffield had to give up some disputed land to Windsor and Simsbury. In any event Christopher Lawton ended up with it.

Getting back to Atherton Mather, his unethical dealings are evidenced by excerpts from a 1715 letter<sup>23</sup> from a cousin which says "and now after all the wrong things that you have imposed on me, what is it that you design to do.

I have many months ago, freely told you my thoughts, about your conduct, and the rules of charity and discretion violated in it. But I now again desire you to pay your debts unto me, without which I must be put into extreme trouble, to discharge mine to other men.

If you refuse to do this; I have another proposal to make. Never till last night, had I any discourse with Mr. Oliver Noyes concerning you and your affaires. And now, I perceive that he has the same account of you, that I have had from every quarter. However, for your debt of an hundred pounds unto him, you have invested him in two thousand acres of land, in your new Plantation. If you deal no worse with me, than him, you can do no less than invest me in six hundred acres of as good land, in your Plantation, if it be not all disposed of."

His final paragraph is "If you don't give me quickly to hear from you, I must put over my business, into the hands of our attorney, in your parts of the county."

This Oliver Noyes referred to, a doctor from Boston, got the first deed from Atherton Mather in 1715 for 2000 acres that was broken into three separate divisions "being partly within the Province of Massachusetts Bay

and partly within the Colony of Connecticut. Near to some part of Westfield Township and bordering upon some part of Simsbury Township."<sup>24</sup>

The several deeds following this first one referred to the area as "in Bedford so called," "in a place known by the name of Bedford," "lying in my Plantation called Bedford," "in the bounds of Bedford," etc.

The several proprietors who invested in the area below the 1713 Colony Line in Connecticut became very worried about what Atherton Mather had done and whether or not they had clear title. Seven of them grouped together, among which were John Hunt, Belcher Noyes (son of Oliver Noyes) and Robert Breck. They drew up a memorial or petition and presented it to the Connecticut General Assembly in Hartford in May of 1733.<sup>25</sup> They requested patent or title to 7000 acres which they described but for which they did not attach a survey. The Connecticut Archives show no further action on this memorial. It must be the memorialists learned about the restrictions put on Atherton Mather by the 1713 Commission, for one year later they submitted a new memorial for only 5000 acres.<sup>26</sup> In this petition they acknowledged that 2000 of the aforesaid 7000 acres were "within the grant of the government to the towns of Hartford and Windsor" thus they relinquished the land within the East Hartland bounds. This time they attached a survey which is represented in Figure 7.

The General Assembly acted the same month and appointed James Wadsworth, Nathan Hanley, Esq. and Captain Thomas Wells to investigate the matter.<sup>27</sup> They reported back five months later and recommended the several memorialists be given clear title by saying "Said land as surveyed and bounded aforesaid can't be of any considerable advantage to this government if they should grant the same as free from all claims, the soil being generally poor." It was also suggested the memorialists pay fifty pounds to the Colony of Connecticut as there had never been an equivalent paid at the time of the Commission decision concerning Suffield and Enfield in 1713.<sup>28</sup>

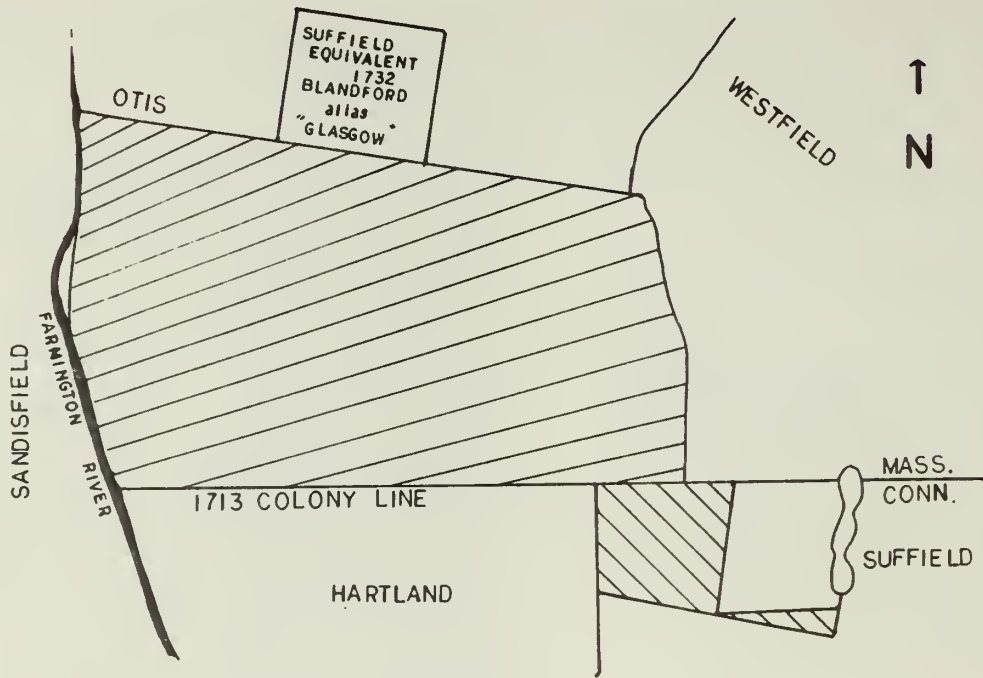


FIG. 8

MAP NOV. 8, 1753

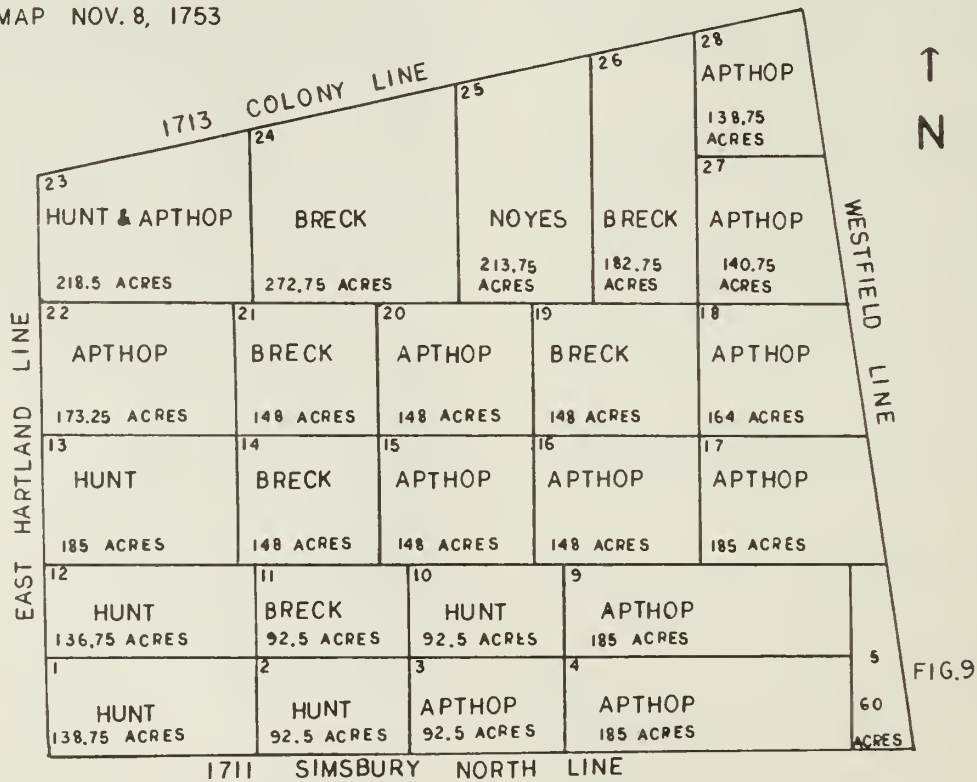


FIG. 9

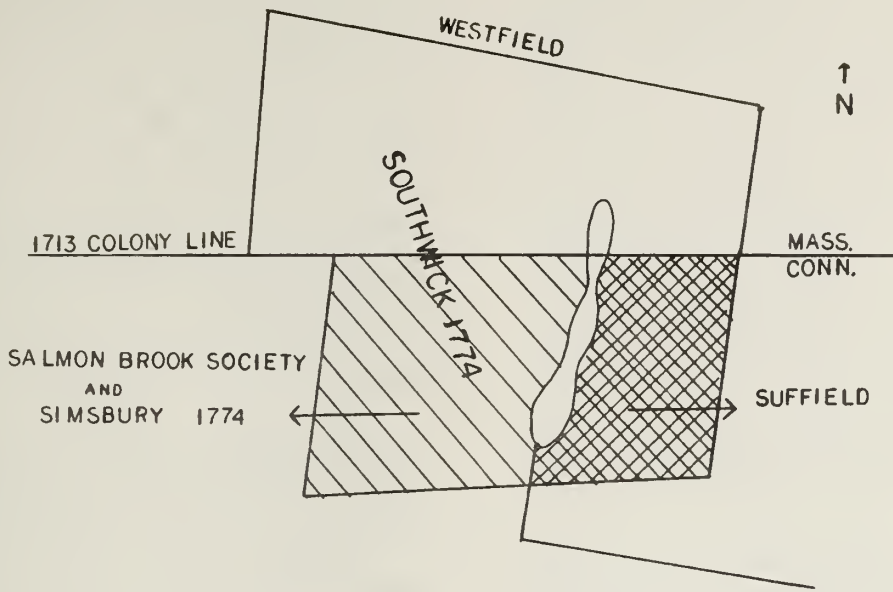


FIG.10

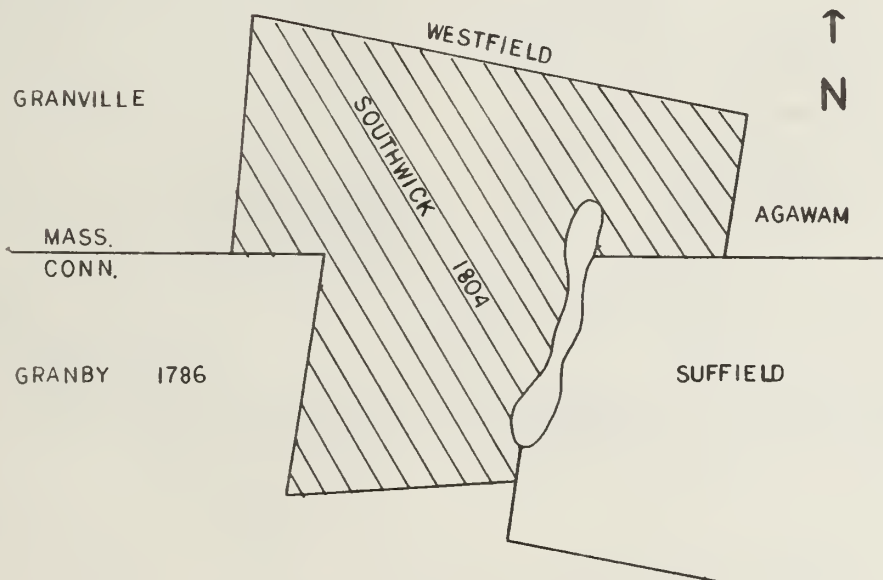


FIG.11

For some reason there was no further activity on this from 1734 until the General Assembly, in 1738, granted clear title but demanded an equivalent of five hundred pounds instead of the previously suggested fifty pounds.<sup>29</sup>

It is interesting to discover some of the memorialists also had bought land in that part of Bedford in Massachusetts above the 1713 Colony Line. They had a survey made of this area and petitioned the General Court in Massachusetts in 1738 for 42,532 acres bounded South on the Colony Line, West by the Farmington River, North partly by Westfield, partly by "Suffield Equivalent," alias Glasgow, Easterly upon Westfield" (Fig. 8).

The petition was granted, so it can be seen how the original Toto "six miles square" or 23,040 acres expanded into some 47,500 acres in Connecticut and Massachusetts, thanks to the shrewd Mr. Atherton Mather.

The land in Massachusetts was inhabited by settlers who stood by the name of Bedford and in 1751 petitioned the Massachusetts General Court as "Inhabitants of Bedford" to be incorporated as a district.<sup>31</sup> This was granted; however, the Court advised that in 1729 portions of the towns of Billerica and Concord had petitioned and been granted incorporation as the Town of Bedford.<sup>32</sup> The "inhabitants" then had been forced to abandon the name of Bedford. They then chose the name of Granville, later the Western section broke away and became the Town of Tolland, Massachusetts.

Back in the Colony of Connecticut some years went by after the several memorialists had been granted clear title. In 1753 the various proprietors tried to bring some semblance of order to the old Bedford tract and divided it into 28 parcels of from 60 to 272 acres as shown on a map<sup>33</sup> dated 11/8/1753 (Fig. 9).

Since it was now clear another town named Bedford was in existence the new deeds referred to the area as "the wedge." The description in one old deed says "lyes in the wedge so called and is part of lott no. 3" etc.<sup>34</sup>

Looking at the 1753 map (Fig. 9) we note the small triangular piece that should extend East from the lower corner is missing. This contained lots numbered 6, 7 and 8. Proof of this is in a deed to Benjamin Reed<sup>35</sup> saying "in that part thereof called the wedge and contains 227 acres of land and is bounded North on a line formerly called the Westfield Line, South on a line formerly run and affixed by Goodrich Kimberly for the North bounds of Simsbury being the South bounds of said wedge before the name was annexed to Simsbury."

This wedge acreage was annexed to Salmon Brook Society and Simsbury in 1774. Later in 1786 Salmon Brook Society pulled away in incorporated as the Town of Granby.

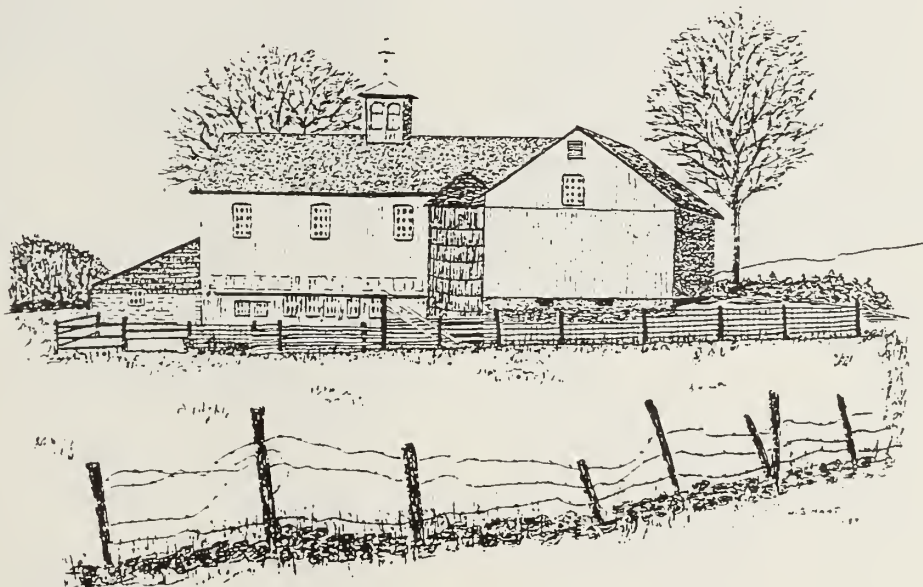
At last the Bedford issue has been settled and attention can be turned to the Southwick "jog." As Westfield was originally part of Springfield, so was Southwick part of Westfield.<sup>36</sup> Back in 1770 the people who lived in the outsettlement of Westfield broke away and called themselves Southwick. Four years later the people living in Southwick below the 1713 Colony Line petitioned the Connecticut General Assembly to become part of Connecticut. The Assembly immediately agreed to this request and as shown in Figure 10 resolved that those inhabitants below the Colony Line belong to Connecticut and further, those living West of Congamond Ponds should be annexed to Simsbury and Salmon Brook Society and those East annexed to Suffield. This was not acceptable to the Province of Massachusetts; however, the year of 1775 arrived and with it the beginnings of the Revolutionary War so the disagreement continued. In 1804 another attempt was made and it was agreed the portion of Southwick West of the ponds should be part of Massachusetts and that portion East belong to Connecticut. Thus there is the "jog" in the state line (Fig. 11). The last state line survey of 1906 corrected minor discrepancies.

## Bibliography

1. Conn. Archives, Towns and Lands, Vol. 7, documents 63, 64



2. History of Conn. Norris Osborn, Vol. 1, pages 40, 143
3. History of Conn. Norris Osborn, Vol. 1, page 41
4. History of Conn. Norris Osborn, Vol. 1, page 42
5. History of Conn. Norris Osborn, Vol. 1, page 105
6. Connecticut, Van Duren, page 43
7. Connecticut, Van Duren, page 93
8. Connecticut, Van Duren, pages 67-70
9. Connecticut, Van Duren, page 87
10. History of Granville, A. Wilson, pages 3, 6
11. Registry of Deeds, Springfield, Mass., Book A, page III
12. Conn. Historical Society, Blodget Map of Conn. 1791
13. Registry of Deeds, Springfield, Mass., Book B, pages 83-84
14. Registry of Deeds, Springfield, Mass., Book 1715-1721, page 79
15. Connecticut, Van Duren, page 94
16. Registry of Deeds, Springfield, Mass., Vol. 1715-1721, pages 139-140
17. Three Centuries of Simsbury, W. Vibert, page 51, also Simsbury Land Records Book 2 1/2, page 107, "A Record and Documentary History of Simsbury, 1643-1888 by Lucius Barber, M.D. pages 128-129
18. History of Granville, A. Wilson, pages 12-13
19. History of Hartland, S. Ransom, page 4
20. History of Granville, A. Wilson, page 14
21. History of Granville, A. Wilson, page 24
22. Westfield by Lockwood, Vol. 1, 1669-1919, page 175
23. "American Classic" Vol. 2, page 403, A diary of Cotton Mather
24. Registry of Deeds, Springfield, Mass., Vol. C, pages 80-81
25. Conn. Archives, 5/18/1733
26. Conn. Archives, 5/19/1734
27. Conn. Archives, 5/1734
28. Conn. Archives, 10/1734
29. Conn. Archives, 5/1738
30. History of Granville, A. Wilson, page 22
31. History of Granville, A. Wilson, pages 42-43
32. History of Granville, A. Wilson, page 51
33. Conn. Archives, Map, 11/8/1753
34. Granby Land Records, Book 1, page 248
35. Granby Land Records, Book 1, page 220
36. The Southwick Jog by Rev. Edward Dodge (Southwick Bicentennial 1770-1970)



# Index for 1985—1989

by Ida Joslyn and Connie Dorrington



- Academy, SU84:29  
Accidents, SP85:8; SP85:12  
Agricultural Society, F86:9  
Allyn, Lewis B., SP84:12  
Animals, SP84:8  
Annual Report, F87:36  
Apollo Acres, SP84:8  
Arson Ring, W86:14; F87:12  
Athenaeum, Westfield, SP84:3  
Autobiography, Jeannie Joyal Cooper, W87:4  
Samuel L. Campbell, SP88:16; SU88:2; F88:3;  
W88:2  
Autographs, SP85:5; SP89:20,36  
Auction, SU87:29  
Autumn, F85:20  
Barge Canal, SU84:17  
Bartlett, Mrs. Horace F., SP84:29  
Becket, W88:7; F89:22  
Beckley Blast Furnace, SU89:22  
Bell House, F85:32  
Bell (Murrayfield), SP86:25  
Big Pond SP85:8  
Birds, SP85:20  
Black Settlers, F89:4  
Blandford/North Blandford, SP83:22; SU84:8;  
SP85:2,24,29,33,34,37; F85:3,6,35,36; W85:10,  
29; F86:9; SP87:35; F87:5; F88:22,36,F89:17  
Blizzard of '88, SP88:10  
Blueberries, SU88:10  
Bookcase, SP88:14  
Boys Club, SP85:8  
Brass, Weslie, SP86:22  
Buell, Phineas Lyman, W86:6  
Burdick, Hulda, F88:28  
Burleigh, Lucien, W88:19  
Burma Shave, F87:20  
Campbell, Samuel L., SP88:16; SU88:2; F88:3;  
W88:2  
Canoeing, SU85:2; SP85:2  
Capron, Milton, SP85:14  
Cats, F86:21  
Caves, SP83:32  
Cemetery, SU87:18; W88:14  
Chandler, John, F87:22

Cheese, SP88:22  
 Chester, F87:27; SP85:14; SP86:2; SU86:33;  
 F86:18; SP;87:31; SU87:24; F87:22; SP88:16,21;  
 SU88:2, 24; F88:3, 28; SU89:12,16,35; F89:4,27  
 Childs, A, W85:13  
 Childs, Lizzie Dell Wallace, W85:22; SP86:6;  
 SU86:22  
 Christmas, W85:20  
 Churches, W85:29, SU86:6,22; SU87:35  
 Civil War, SU85:36; W85:3; SP86:29; F86:22  
 Clocks, SP87:31  
 Cobble Mountain, SP88:2  
 Coles Opera House, SU87:7  
 Conductors, F84:25  
 Cooper, Sadie, SU88:17  
 Corn, Planting Rhyme, SP85:29  
 Cousins, SP86:2  
 Cricket, F87:27  
 Cummington, F86:15  
 Dalton, Flintstone Farm, W85:16  
 Deane, Dr. Wallace, W85:34  
 Death of a Daughter, SP83:28  
 December, W86:20  
 Decline of Hilltowns, F86:16  
 Deer, W84:6  
 DeWolf, Dr. Oscar C., SU87:24  
 DeWolf, DeWitt Clinton, SP88:21  
 Diaries, SP83:6; SP84:29; W84:2; SP85:22;  
 SU85:25; W85:3; W86:2; SP86:29; F86:22;  
 SU87:28; SU87:33, F87:18, W88:31; SP89:2;  
 SU89:2  
 Dicie Flats, SP86:4  
 Dickinson Family, F89:8  
 Diseases, F87:9  
 Doctors, W84:17; SU85:28; SP86:15  
 Donovan Home, W86:27  
 Duck, SP88:30  
 East Otis, SP85:8  
 Emery Mine, F86:18  
 Fairs, F86:6, F88:14  
 Family Reunion, SU86:12  
 Farm, W85:16; W86:31; SU87:14; W88:11;  
 SU89:30  
 Fifty Years Ago, SU85:2  
 Fire, SP84:27; SP87:26  
 Flintstone Farm, W85:16  
 Flood, Williamsburg, SP83:23  
 Flying Saucer, SP86:19  
 Forests, SP87:17  
 Frisbie, Mary Harkins, F86:2; W86:22; SP87:6  
 Gardner, Charles M., F85:26  
 Gardner, Charles H., SP89:2; SU89:2  
 Geneology, SP83:35; SP84:36; SU84:16; F84:37;  
 SP85:30; F85:37; W85:37; SP86:37; F87:35;  
 W88:37; SU99:37; F88:37; W88:37; SU89:37;  
 F89:16  
 Gibbs, Hannah A., W86:2; SP87:28; F87:18  
 Gibbs, Mari, W84:2; SU85:25; SP85:22; F85:10;  
 SU88:19  
 Gifts, W86:26  
 Gold Mine, SU84:8  
 Gordon Hall, SP87:13  
 Grandmother, F85:18; SU86:14  
 Granville, F86:2; F88:24; SP89:32; F89:8  
 Grief, SP83:28  
 Grist Mill, SP89:8  
 Growing Up, SU84:6  
 Haiku, SU85:20  
 Hall, Gordon, SP87:13  
 Hall, Pamela Donovan, F86:12  
 Halley's Comet, SU86:37  
 Handwork, SP85:26  
 Harmony, SU86:13  
 Hastings Family, F89:17  
 Hay, SU84:2  
 Hays, Capt. Samuel, W88:22  
 Hawk, SP86:34  
 Hayden, Doris Wyman, F85:3  
 Haynes, Lemuel, F84:32  
 High Pasture, SU86:16  
 High School, F84:10  
 Highways, SP85:10  
 Hilltown Happenings, F87:16  
 Hilltown Statistics, SP85:31  
 Hinsdale, Harriet Marie, SU85:33  
 Horace Hatch Tavern, W87:9  
 Household Hints, SP86:16  
 Huffmire, John A. , W84:17; SP85:28  
 Hummingbird, SU87:27  
 Huntington, SP86:25; SP87:26; SU87:7, 11;  
 SP88:23, 27; SU88:12; F88:36; W88:13; SU89:2;  
 F89:30  
 Huntington, Charles P., F89:30  
 Indian Village, SP84:30  
 Industries, F85:6  
 John Adams House, SU87:36  
 Kaolin Road, F85:35  
 Knitting, SP85:26  
 Leaning Rock, SU84:31  
 Legends, SP83:32

Letters, SP83:36; F84:18; F86:37; F87:19  
 Lightning, SP84:13  
 Littleville, SU87:2  
 Lucas, Dr. Herman S., SU89:12  
 Maple Sugar, SP86:17; SP88:8  
 Marriage, SP87:20  
 Mason, Irene Merrill, SU87:29  
 Medicine, SP86:15  
 Meeting House Marker, SU85:34  
 Memories, F84:3, 35; F85:29; W86:19  
 Middlefield, SP83:2, F85:32; F86:6; SP89:12  
 Montgomery, F85:29; SU88:28; W88:35  
 Mormanism, F89:22  
 Movie Houses, F86:31  
 Moving Day, SP84:18  
 Murder, SP84:12; SP85:14; W87:18; F88:10  
 Murrayfield Bell, SP86:25; SU87:22  
 Music, SU84:33  
 Musical Instruments, W85:10  
 Mythical Monsters, SP84:6  
 Nanny, F85:18  
 Newburgh, SP86:20  
 Nooney, Frank S., SP87:2  
 Nooney, Prof. James, F85:28  
 North Blandford, SU85:29; W85:29; SU85:29;  
 F85:6; SU88:19  
 North Granby, SP89:8  
 Norwich Hill, SP88:27; F88:26; W88:14  
 One Hundred Years Ago, SP83:13; SU84:14;  
 W84:8  
 One Hundred Forty Years Ago, SP86:17  
 Old Folks Association (W. Cummington),  
 F86:15  
 Old Sayings, SU84:32  
 Olds Family, SP89:12  
 Otis, W87:18; F88:10  
 Pail, F84:16  
 Parks, Rolland, SU89:27  
 Pastures, SU86:16  
 Pease, MO, SU88:10  
 Phelps, John, F88:24  
 Phrenology, W86:6  
 Plainfield, SP89:5  
 Poor, SU89:35  
 Postmasters, Blandford, F85:36  
 Proverbs and Sayings, SP83:19  
 Quarries, Granite, W87:3  
 Quotations, W85:13, 17  
 Rabbits, W85:32  
 Railroad, SP84:32; W86:37; SU86:33; F86:36;  
 W86:37; F88:30  
 Railroad, Accident, F86:36  
 Railroading, F84:12  
 Rausch, Ann, F87:28  
 Recipes, SP84:35  
 Religious Life, W85:18  
 Remembrance of the Past, SP83:15  
 Remedies, Kill or Cure, SP86:15  
 Reunions, SU86:12  
 Revolutionary War, SP86:20  
 Rice Family (Worthington), F87:12  
 Roads, SP85:10, SU88:18  
 Robinson, Jane C., F87:5  
 Rural Social Gatherings, F85:22  
 Russell, F86:36; W88:35; SP89:22; SU89:27  
 Sampson, Orange Scott, SP88:23  
 Schools, W84:13; SP86:2  
 Shakers, SP85:17  
 Skunk, SP86:26  
 Slaves, W84:10  
 Snow, W84:16  
 Soisalo Family, F89:27  
 Spring, SP86:28  
 Squire, Capt. Sylvester, F87:32  
 Stanton, Emroy L., SU86:31  
 Statistics, Hilltown, SP85:32  
 Stonewalls, SP83:31; SP84:26  
 Store, F89:2  
 Strathmore, SP84:14  
 Sugar Maples, SP86:17  
 Sumner, Henry Jesse, W85:3; SP86:29; F86:22  
 Summers, SU86:2  
 Superstitions, W85:17  
 Taggart, Charles, SU85:36  
 Telephones, SP84:20  
 Tolland, SP87:11  
 Tree and Shrubs, SP87:17; W87:22  
 Turnpike, SU85:22  
 Tyler, O. B. Joyful, SU88:26  
 Union Agricultural Society, F86:6  
 Victory, W86:21  
 Working, F86:20  
 Walrath, Ed, SP84:10  
 Washington, SP85:12  
 Water Falls, W87:19  
 Water Systems, SP84:22  
 Wesley Bass, Ballad of, SP86:22  
 West Cummington, F86:15  
 Western Mass., SP88:34  
 Westfield, SP84:3; SU84:29; W86:6

Westfield River, SP85:2; W85:1  
West Granville, F89:2  
Wild Life, SP83:11  
Williamsburg (Flood), SP83:23  
Williston Family, SP89:5  
Wilson, Lavinia Rose, SP89:32  
Wind, W85:14  
Winn, Olive, SP89:22

Wise, Gerald - Artist, W87:12  
Wolves, SP85:13  
Wood, Rev. Sumner G., SU85:18  
Woodpile, W84:9  
Woronoco, SU88:27, 34; W88:14, 26  
Worthington, SU86:14; F87:2; SU87:36; SP88:10  
Wright, Grandma, SU86:14  
Zenda, F84:9

.....

## Forgotten Water

*The purple blackness of a winter stream whirls and eddies as it flows a serpentine course before out of sight it goes. Of times stumbling on a hidden rock, white flecks of froth it shows while constantly nibbling at the bank's encrusted snow.*

*Where fallen trees lie cross its path the current seems to slow, then surges over in a splash, spraying bordering branches low, forming ice upon their lengths to arch them like a bow.*

*Shining through the frigid, crystal air a rising moon gives off its glow, making silhouettes of trees that long shadows throw, casting an embroidery upon the land too intricate for hands to sew, yet, threading a moving pattern linked to the long ago.*

W. S. Hart 11/89

# William C. Whitney and the Whitney Estate

*by John Wright Crane*

---

In 1895 and the following years curiosity was greatly aroused in Washington as large and small farms were being bought up by some unknown party. The curiosity continued to increase as each year marked the gradual absorption of all the farms in an entire school district. The wholesale buying as far as Washington was concerned was confined to the land west of Washington Center and comprised the lands long known as "Washington West Woods." The farms bought began with the one near the Congregational Church and included the farms owned in the early days by Jasper Morgan, father of Edwin D. Morgan, the "war" governor of New York. In those days "The Pittsfield Sun" frequently had items from Washington alluding to this land buying as follows:

"Land for a summer home can be bought very cheap. Three or four hundred dollars will buy sufficient, several acres in fact, and one may have hill or vale for a location, near the village or remote. It is the "lone lands," between Becket and Lenox that the "mysterious millionaire" is making such extensive purchases through lawyer Post, a farm bought last week completing 6000 acres now acquired with more to follow. What all this land is bought for is as much a secret here as elsewhere, and as Mr. Post takes the title in his own name the person behind him is effectively hidden."

Soon after the public knew that W. C. Whitney was the real owner of this vast domain he began to build the famous "Whitney Lodge," now known as "The Antlers." The work upon its erection was "speeded up" by bringing up an electrical plant to furnish lights so that the work could be carried on by

a day and night set of workmen. The men were able to finish the lodge in time for the October wedding of Mr. Whitney's son, Harry Payne Whitney. The bridal party spent their honeymoon at the "Antlers Lodge" which gave a romantic interest to the lodge ever after.

The palmy days of the Whitney Lodge were before the very serious accident to Mrs. W. C. Whitney, from which she never recovered. Mrs. Whitney had intended to do a number of things which would have benefited the entire town particularly the church and schools. After her death, Mr. Whitney's interest in the estate changed perceptibly and the enthusiasm for the future growth of the place left him and the dispersion of his herds of wild animals soon afterwards began.

In the days when Mr. Whitney was stocking up the estate on October mountain, carloads of deer were shipped from Wyoming. These were unable to withstand the cold winters of the Berkshires and then carloads were sent from Fraser River, British Columbia; these were the Black Tail deer and it was expected they would endure the winters better than those sent from Wyoming. They were the finest specimens known in captivity and the buffalo bull which, on the dispersion of the herds, was sent to Central Park, New York, was the largest animal of his kind ever known in captivity. There were at one time on the estate a herd of Buffaloes, Moose, Elks, Black Tail Deer, Wyoming Deer; also game birds and English Pheasants. The animals had sheds where hay was provided for them during the winter and the game birds were fed when deep snow was on the ground.

At its best the Whitney Estate has been

assessed for 9.175 acres, 20 dwelling houses and 26 barns; 25 buffaloes, 59 elks, 84 deer (the black tail from British Columbia and the deer from Wyoming), 19 moose, 15 horses, 10 cows, 100 sheep and 45 Angora goats.

October Mountain, now so prominent and largely in the Whitney Estate, was originally known under the name of "Washington Mountain." Early in the 18th century a portion of it was known as "Monument Mountain," as gravestones were quarried out of it and the name of Monument Road is still retained as one of the roads starting by Lake Ashley and leading out into New Lenox after leaving the mountain.

As has been told elsewhere, October Mountain first came before the public by the pen of Herman Melville, in the year 1850; but its real prominence began after the mountain practically became a part of the Whitney Estate. A sketch of this mountain and the Whitney place by James Hosding, Editor of the "Pittsfield Sun," in that paper of October 12, 1899 has the following interesting description:

"It is a drive of about eight miles from Pittsfield to the Whitney place on October Mountain. We went by New Lenox, the mountain climb beginning at the Hutchinson sawmill, quite a pretentious building with dam and flume. The City's dam seems to be a very good piece of work and there was a good supply of water. It looked as tho it might be an important auxiliary to the Lake Ashley supply and worth the cost. Roaring Brook is a much larger stream and tumbles musically down the hillside and along a ravine, now flashing and foaming in little sunlit waterfalls.

"The road is very good and not difficult. There are steep pitches of course but many restful "thank-you ma'ams," when your team may breathe while you get glimpses of "far countries," visible thru vistas as you climb up. An unceasing wonder is the vari-colored foliage. There are trees as green as June and with them the most brilliant scarlet and yellows. The dark pines and spruce and hemlocks, the russet elm and the flaming maples, the silver poplars, illimitable acres and miles

of color. It is said that an easier and better route is by way of Lenox Dale, but we find this route as comfortable as need be, and many sketches of glowing landscape delight the eye as seen from many sudden places of outlook.

"Soon after crossing Roaring Brook evidence of extensive ownership begins. Signs on the roadside trees warn us against "Gunning, fishing or trespassing under penalty of law," and these placards bear the signature of W. C. Whitney and are not to be trifled with. Some say they would chance the good nature of Mr. Whitney for a few partridges or rabbits in their season; but one glimpse of the burley game-keeper, with a blunderbus at his beck, galloping along the ways and lanes that cross and border the estate, cures any disposition to poach. He looks fierce enough to take a man's life for the theft of a chipmunk even, and so partridges dust themselves in the highway and perch temptingly upon the branches, and no man unauthorized lifts gun or pulls trigger.

"The Whitney Settlement is just over the crown of the mountain with a southern and eastern exposure tho with northern view open to Greylock purplish blue in the distance.

"You come to "forks" in the road at last where the plateau begins, The road to the right leads to the head quarters of the big game where Mr. Frank Chapel and family have watch and ward. From this little spot a vast stretch of brush and tree and brown hard hack pasture is in view. Down in the valley and on the Knolls and on Slopes are those strong figures on a Berkshire landscape, American deer, elk and buffaloes. Twenty-three elks have been born on the estate the current year and there are now fifty-nine head. The herd is increasing rapidly and the mountain will soon be as populous with this fine game as the woods of the shooting sections of Maine. Some of the bucks have splendid antlers and seem to be in fine health. All are in good condition, sleek and fat and almost as big as an ordinary horse.

"There is a very picturey majesty about the old bucks as they toss horns and heads up when they scent or see an intruder, and it would be quite a brave man who would

confront them. "She is going to roar," she said trembling with terror, but it was we who "roared," for the voice of the elk is a plaintive little cry like the call of a bird. And when Mr. Chapel whistled a score of the beasts came up to the fence, took some ground oats from the hand or pan, were petted and patted and then "She said, 'Why to shoot these would be like shooting cows.'"

"The buffaloes wander at will and seem fat and stupid. There are nine cows and four bulls. Two have been born here and seem to thrive. They do not appear to be as domestic as the elk. They stood in the yard with heads down, sullen looking and sulky. It has been necessary to buy shed shelter for them in the winter and to feed them grain and hay. It gives one rather a queer feeling to remember that in almost recent years these animals roamed the plains in countless thousands and now there are in the country only such fragmentary herds as these, the race practically exterminated. The elks are becoming acclimated and are breeding well, but there has been less prospect of success in breeding buffaloes, some having died and the increase as yet not being up to expectations. Dr. Kinnew has been the veterinarian in charge for a year past and under his care the herd seems to be in better heart than when left to a "state of nature" and it is now thought the herd may be not only preserved but increased. I heard that the English pheasants have now made the anticipated increase and it is charged that the foxes are very destructive to the young birds. The other experiments in game birds and beasts have been moderately successful.

"The Whitney residence stands in a sunny bit of field, perhaps we should call it a lawn. A little way removed are the frames of a dozen little cottages, canvas covered upon an occasion and used as an annex to the big house when the company is larger than the mansion's capacity. The servants are here for Mr. Whitney has been making flying visits, and there is a report that Harry Payne Whitney, family and friends are soon to be here. There are horses in the stables, carriages from the little buggy to the great coach in the barns and all the equipment for mountain touring.

From the front of the house, the view extends across the valley now autumnly gorgeous. Here and there are the little artificial lakes; beyond are the roofs of the cottages or other buildings essential to the oversight of such a vast estate of more than ten thousand acres, and the ownership extends far and across this vale and over and over its slope until the red summits meet the sky at the horizon.

Mr. Hosding has certainly given a charming glimpse of the life which was lived on the Whitney estate in its best days.

## WHITNEY'S OCTOBER MOUNTAIN

*The following appeared in the Pittsfield Sun, Feb. 4, 1904.*

*Reprinted from the "New York Tribune."*

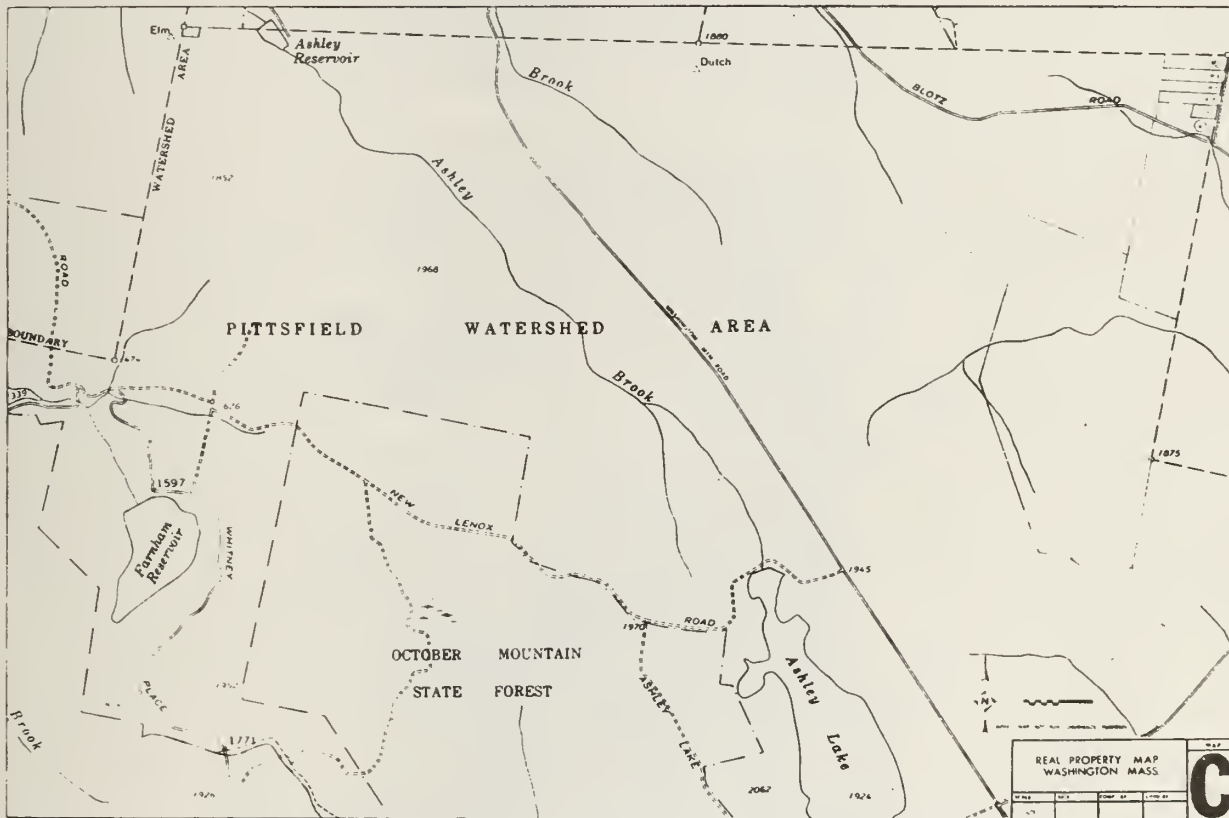
"Mr. Whitney was the largest property owner in Massachusetts. He owned ten thousand acres in Washington, Lee and Lenox, in the Berkshire hills where he had one of the largest game preserves in the East. Mr. Whitney's agents began buying property on October Mountain, one of the most sightly places in the Berkshire Hills, as far back as 1895. So quietly were the purchases made that it was not till buying had been going on for eight months that it became known that someone was attempting to acquire vast holdings. In 1896 an order was sent to his Lenox agent for the construction of a camp on the mountain. It was to be built and furnished in 30 days. With feverish excitement construction men were employed and by working day and night, by the aid of calcium lights at night, a large and expensive camp was completed in contract time. Then came the announcement from Newport that Harry Payne Whitney and his bride Miss Gertrude Vanderbilt were to occupy the camp for their honeymoon.

"The development of the mountain into a game preserve followed. From Jackson's Hole in Wyoming, carloads of elk and black tailed deer were shipped to Lenox. These were followed by buffalo, moose and Angora goats. A game and pheasant breeding farm was



established and for several seasons in the fall Mr. and Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney entertained shooting parties on the mountain. Lately Mr. Whitney has been distributing the big game which found an excellent and prolific breeding spot on the mountain. Most of

the elk were shipped to the Adirondacks and released on the public lands and the buffalo were sold or shipped to Bronx Park. The Corbin preserve in New Hampshire acquired some of the best buffalo bulls. One was given to the Zoological Gardens at Cleveland, Ohio."



# The Deacon's Son and The Parson's Daughter

1935

*by Dr. Howard A. Gibbs*

---

In olden time in Blandford town,  
The parson held place of great renown;  
A learned man of austere mien,  
Interpreter of things unseen,  
Guardian of morals, spokesman for God,  
With dignity the earth he trod,  
With powdered wig and head in cloud  
Above the level of the common crowd.

His daughter, Mary, finely bred,  
Closely guarded lest she should wed  
Beneath her lofty place and sphere,  
Was to the parson's heart most dear.  
Elijah was the deacon's son,  
Strong limbed and keen but quite homespun,  
His spurs had won in Freedom's fight;  
Between the two 'twas love at sight.

The parson raved; he almost swore;  
He ordered Elijah from his door,  
But the youth who feared not British gun,  
Would scarce from a parson's anger run.  
Alas! not all the parson's pride  
Could build a wall with love outside.  
In spite of stern parental sway  
True love will have its own sweet way.

One bright morn in the month of June,  
When lovers' thoughts are in nature's tune,  
When it's just as easy for the heart to be true  
As for grass to be green and sky to be blue,  
The parson found ladder to window above,  
Open sesame for youthful love;  
Out of the window the bird had flown,  
With her grandmother's gift of silver spoons.

In forest wild, four miles to the West,  
The young couple built their honeymoon nest  
A log cabin small in clearing new,  
As years went by to a cottage grew;  
The cottage became a mansion grand  
In wide expanse of well tilled land;  
Eleven children came to bless the pair,  
Stalwart sons and daughters fair.

The parson's anger melted away  
As wealth and honor came to stay;  
Honored and respected far and wide,  
The runaway couple lived and died.  
Parson and wife in the churchyard lie;  
Elijah and Mary on the hill close by;  
Children and grandchildren bless the day,  
When true love had its own sweet way.



# Blandford Settlers Built Three Forts

*Article From the Westfield Valley Herald, February 14, 1935*

*Entitled: "Afoot With Camera In our Valley"*

*by Robert L. Soule*

---

## Blandford Settlers Built Three Forts To Repel Indian Attacks

All But Four Families Fled From Hilltop in 1749, But Returned Within Year — Did Dairying Business on Big Scale in Early 19th Century.

The hardships which the early settlers of the town of Blandford experienced were perhaps unequalled in any other section of the Westfield Valley, as mentioned in last week's article. In fact, so poor were those early settlers of the Hilltop town that the Province of Massachusetts Bay gave 10 bushels of salt to be distributed among them.

In 1749 the Indian tribes of this region began to harass the town and all but four families fled to Westfield and Windsor, Sufield and Wethersfield, Conn. yet all returned within the year. Six years later the Province of Massachusetts Bay gave the town a swivel gun and one-fourth barrel of powder with 100 flints to be used to repel Indian attacks. Three forts were erected in which all families gathered at night, and during the day the men worked in the fields under the protection of sentinels posted to be on the lookout for Indians.

### Carried Guns to Church

They even carried their guns to church, so wild was this country in the early days. The nearest grist mill was at Westfield, and some of the men would pack grain on their backs and walk to Westfield to get it ground, and then return home with the meal for bread and other baking. Others pounded the grain or corn in mortars.

North Blandford was at that time a great hay section with most of the hay coming from there for the feeding of stock. Twenty years

after the first settlement in the town, the first grist mill was started, known as Bunnell's Mill. Salmon came up the river to Woronoco, one being caught that weighed 13 pounds. (Woronoco once was the village of Salmon Falls on account of the salmon caught there.)

During the Revolution Blandford was on the direct route for transporting military stores from Boston west. It required 20 yoke of oxen and 80 men to convey a mortar over Blandford hill on its way to West Point. In 1791, Mr. Gibbs brought the first single wagon into town. Before that time people used to walk or ride horse back.

### Had 1535 Cows in Town

In 1807 Amos M. Collins came to Blandford from Connecticut. He was a man of wealth, making most of his money in the store business. He became interested in dairying and induced the farmers to make butter and cheese. He even went into New York state to buy cattle and then distributed them among the farmers, going from house to house showing these people how to make cheese.

By 1837 we find 1535 cows in town producing 230,000 pounds of butter a year. The value of the cheese was \$16,000, and the butter \$3000. This industry employed 200 men and 300 women, and the capital investment was \$60,000. Mr. Collins accumulated \$23,000 on this investment. Later he was succeeded by Orrin Sage who was, during his 30 years in business, called the "Bank of Blandford".

At one time the limits of Blandford extended into Huntington. The school which stood near the common was controlled by three towns, Chester, Norwich, and Blandford. Owing to the unsatisfactory condition of such an arrangement the boundary lines were changed, but the town still survived.

# A Visit to Aunt Hannah

by Dr. Howard A. Gibbs

Aunt Hannah was a maiden,  
Was ne'er beguiled by men;  
She lived in single blessedness  
Till three score years and ten,  
Romance had never touched her,  
Until, to shock the town,  
She took the good old name of Clark  
And dropped the well known Brown.

Two little nephews had she,  
And I was one of them,  
For us her heart was tender, warm  
Beneath her rugged face and form.  
We never had an ice-cream cone  
Nor yet a red banana,  
Our height of bliss and happiness  
Was a visit to Aunt Hannah.

Aunt Hannah wore a home made dress,  
In checks of red and black,  
Of wool she'd carded, spun and wove  
From off her own sheep's back.  
Its cut was to of Paris style,  
It had a rugged grace,  
Well fitted to her sturdy form,  
Her firm and forceful face.

Her doughnuts were of ancient mold,  
The body bigger than the hole;  
Her apple pie with maple sweet,  
To boyish taste a real treat.  
A gooseberry bush close to the door  
Had flavor never known before;  
On old-time chestnuts near at hand  
Grew biggest nuts in all the land.

Aunt Hannah had an eight day clock  
Stored in her dusty attic,  
We'd wind it up and strike it down  
With loud and awful racket;  
With rattle, bang, it pealed off time,  
To us it was music most sublime;  
The noise we made disturbed her none,  
Her ears were deaf as moss-grown stone.

Aunt Hannah passed, time long gone by  
To brighter realms beyond the sky;  
A cellar hole, a crumbling chimney base  
Is all I find to mark her place,  
But when I reach the golden gate  
I'll say in childish manner  
Dear Saint Peter let me in,  
I've come to see Aunt Hannah.



# Norwich Once Separate Town

*This Article Appeared in the Westfield Valley Herald of September 20, 1934  
Afoot With Camera In Our Valley  
by Robert T. Soule*

---



1985 Norwich Post-Office, Norwich, Mass

Norwich Once Separate Town, Had Thriving Industries 150 Years Ago  
Settled in 1763, Had Sawmills, Tannery, Bark Mill, Blacksmith Shop and Other Business in  
Early 1800's

Time and space keep us from mentioning all the different families who came to settle the town of Norwich in the early year of 1763.

John Kirkland, James Fairman, Zebulon Fuller, James Clark, Samuel Knight, Caleb Fobes, the Hannums and others, elected to settle on the hill section of the town and when the eastern part of Murrayfield decided to have a town of their own (1773) this section was well established and fast becoming an important business and social center of the new town.

Located on the main road to Northampton most of the travel from the valley and towns north of Norwich passed through Norwich Hill on its way to the county seat, and these early settlers were quick to take advantage of this fact and stores and mills soon were in operation and it was not long

before church and social activities centered in that part of town.

## Mountain Road Oldest

Probably the oldest road leading to the hill is what we today call the "Mountain road." This was used by the people of the lower part of the valley and Norwich bridge section, while from the Knightville section were two roads which lead to the hill and were used by the people from that section and Worthington. Later a new road was built to the hill which we today call "The Pond Brook Road," and most of the travel today reaches this section by this road.

Along the brook, which is the overflow from Norwich Lake, were mills and tanneries and today we find old dams, and lumber which were used in the construction of some

of the mills. About half-way up Pond Brook Road was a sawmill, operated by Lyman and Fairman and further up the road almost to the top, was another sawmill. Where the roadside stand is located today was the factory of the Hannums who made axes there for many years. When the railroad came up the valley they moved the factory down to Falley's cross roads and continued there for many years more.

Near the present roadside stand was a picture gallery operated by William Clapp of Northampton, where old and young came to have their pictures taken and were rewarded with their likeness on a piece of tin, called tin-types, and highly popular in those days.

On the road to the lake just above North hall and on the same side of the road may be found the remains of another dam, where Knight & Knight had a sawmill, and a blacksmith shop stood nearby. Across the road was the old tannery. This building is still standing and is used as a dwelling house.

### Had Bark Grinding Mill

Next to the tannery, on the other side of the brook, was a grist mill owned by Whitman Knight. This mill was later used for the making of whip-stocks and there was also a wheelwright shop there. Farther up the brook, near the outlet of the lake, we find that Seth Porter had a mill for grinding bark. This was back in 1830 and this mill supplied the bark used in the process of tanning leather.

Joel Searles came and located on the shore of Norwich Lake and a few years later he built the home which is still there today and up to a few years ago had remained in the Searles family for nearly 150 years.

The first store on the hill is not recorded but Aaron Dimock had a store about 1850 on the lower end of the common about opposite where the parsonage now stands, and later Albert Knight had a store located across the road from the home of Leon Woods. The present store is located in the old Searles homestead near the lake and is the last remaining sign of industry in that once busy section.



**BRADFORD P. FISK  
Incorporated  
The Corners Grocery**

Telephone: 413-238-5531

Worthington, Mass. 01098

When You Want Your  
Printing To Be Something To

**CROW ABOUT**



**FOR ALL YOUR PRINTING NEEDS**

**Southwoods  
PRINTING**

592 College Highway • Southwick, MA  
(413) 569-0266 or 569-5325

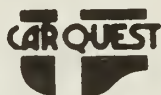
**Wolcott Realty**

**NORTH ROAD WESTFIELD**

*Specializing in Country Property*

To BUY or SELL call us.  
We have many exclusive listings

**CALL 562-4778**



**GATEWAY  
—AUTO PARTS—**

*"More Than Just An Auto Parts Store"*

ROUTE 20, HUNTINGTON, MA 01050

**(413) 667-3101**

**Call Toll Free 1-800-992-1054**



# *Oldies Review Music*

Route 20  
Russell, Massachusetts  
(413) 862-4412

**Music For All Occasions**

# WM

Raymah Westgate  
Russell H. Moore, Jr.

## WEST-MOORE INSURANCE AGENCY

Main Street  
Chester, Massachusetts 01011  
(413) 354-9688

*Insurance For Your*  
**HOME • BUSINESS • FARM • AUTO**  
*Also Life, Accident and Health*

*"Your Local Hilltown Insurance Agency"*



*Hilltowns Working Together...*

## Country Journal

*A Weekly Publication*

*"Devoted to the Needs of the Hilltowns"*

**667-3211**

**Main Street                      Huntington, MA**

*We're with you every step of the way.*



**ENTRE COMPUTER CENTER**

*For the most in personal computing*

Century Village 138 Memorial Avenue  
West Springfield, MA 01089  
413-736-2112

To Subscribe to *STONE WALLS*

\$9.00 a year  
Box No. 85  
Huntington, MA 01050

**B.F. CASSIN  
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.**

Auto - Home - Business - Life - Health Insurance  
SERVING THE VALLEY

Route 20, Huntington, Mass. 01050  
Tel. 667-3081  
Tel. 568-1243

**ILS BUSINESS SERVICES**

**FULL SERVICE PRINTING & COPY CENTER**

- PRINTING
- TYPESETTING
- STATS
- GRAPHICS & ARTWORK
- PHOTOCOPIES
- WORD PROCESSING
- MAILING SERVICE
- FAX SERVICE

345 North Westfield Street, Feeding Hills, MA

**789-4555**  
FAX 789-4090



**HUNTINGTON  
TRUE VALUE HARDWARE**

*new location*

East Main Street, Huntington, MA 01050  
667-5531

*Quality  
Hardware, Electrical & Plumbing Supplies  
Screte Products, Glass,  
Lawn & Garden Products*

**MOLTENBREY'S  
MARKET**

*Serving the people of Huntington  
for over 35 years*

**DARRYL FISK, Prop.**



**Stonehengineering**

Builds and repairs stonewalls,  
foundations and wells  
Creating in Stone, Brick, Ceramic Tile  
Ferro-cement  
**BRUCE MASON** Moss Hill Rd.  
Russell, MA.  
(413) 528-0673

**OVERDALE FARM**

Registered Romney Sheep  
Fleeces & Other Wool Products

Lucy Conant  
Johnson Hill Road, Box 324  
Chester, MA 01011  
413-354-2226

**WESTFIELD PHARMACY, INC.**

Stanley F. Nowak, Reg. Pharm.

"Posie" Flower Supplies  
Convalescent Supplies — Cards  
Candy — Gifts

**Tel. 562-4411**  
65 Franklin Street . Westfield, Mass.

— Editorial Board —

Natalie Birrell  
Lucy Conant  
Connie Dorrington  
Helena Duris  
William S. Hart  
Ida Joslyn  
Ellie Lazarus  
Louise Mason  
Doris Wackerbarth  
Grace Wheeler

— FRIENDS —

*Gerald Chapman*  
*Mr., Mrs. Ralph Hiers*  
*Barabara Kupec*  
*Edith H. Phelon*  
*James B. Nooney*  
*Arthur Bastion*  
*Richard W. Gardner*  
*Vera M. Smith*  
*Eleanor Tortolani*  
*Harold N. Jones*  
*Marian R. Sweeney*  
*Gordon E. Tinker*  
*Lucy H. Conant*

*Robert Pike*  
*Fred Mildren*  
*H. Newman Marsh*  
*Harriet V. Fish*  
*Shirley Bruso*  
*William S. Hart Jr.*  
*Judith Adams*  
*Charles Blackman*  
*Elizabeth Fortune*  
*Barbara Brianerd*  
*William French*  
*Bob & Karen Patenaude*  
*Ron Tremblay*

*What days of lonely toil he undertook!  
What years of iron labor! and for what?  
To yield the chipmunk one more nook,  
The gliding snake one more sequestered spot.*

The Society for the Protection  
of New Hampshire Forests

STONE WALLS

Box 85

Huntington, Massachusetts 01050

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

HUNTINGTON, MA 01050

PERMIT #1

Mrs. Dorothy M. Fuller  
15 North Rd.  
Washampton, MA 01077

Spring ~~189~~  
90