

# HISTORICAL SKETCHES

BY

JABEZ H. HAYDEN



WINDSOR LOCKS, CONN.

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## PREFACE

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These fugitive sketches, which have been written from time to time for the Windsor Locks Journal, or taken from papers read before some public gathering, have been deemed worthy of preservation for their historical value, and the publisher has ventured to offer them in book form to the public.

These sketches comprise reminiscences of my own long life, (89 years) the traditions of former generations of my ancestors, together with researches among the Windsor and other ancient records. I am of the seventh generation from William Hayden, who came out from England in 1630 with the church and people which came to Windsor, Conn., in 1635.

William Hayden took up his residence two and one-half miles north of the Palisado, in a district long since called Hayden Town; its railroad station is now called Hayden's. In that neighborhood six generations of my Hayden ancestors have lived. My father, Levi Hayden, (1773-1839) had listened to the stories of the past told him by his grandfather, Dea. Nathaniel Hayden, (1709-1803) and Nathaniel had climbed the knee of his grandfather, Daniel Hayden, (1640-1713) and Daniel was the first Hayden born in Windsor. In my boyhood days six Hayden families still remained in that neighborhood. My first remembered visit to Pine Meadow (two and one-half miles from Hayden's) was 86 or 87 years ago, when my mother brought me to see my grandfather, Jabez Haskell, whose house stood where Memorial hall now stands. There were then less than twenty houses within the present township of Windsor Locks.

I trace my descent from two colonial governors, three magistrates, six deputies, three reverend ministers, three deacons,

one major-general, five majors, four captains, five lieutenants, three Pequot soldiers and three Revolutionary soldiers.

In 1838, nine years after the opening of the canal, I came to this place to engage in manufacturing. Our water-power was drawn from the canal, the first privilege granted by that corporation. Since reaching the age of "three score years and ten" I have lived much in the past, and these sketches are reminiscences of my own life and times, and my studies of the life and times of my ancestors.

JABEZ HASKELL HAYDEN.

Windsor Locks, Conn , October, 1900.

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## SETTLEMENT OF WINDSOR.\*

Early History and Dealings with the Indians. Story of Saltonstall  
Park. The Pioneers of Windsor Locks.

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Paper read before J. H. Converse Post, G. A. R., Windsor Locks, May, 1892.

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Six years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, the Indians living along the Connecticut river looked upon a sight to them as new and strange as were the ships of Columbus to the natives of San Salvador 122 years before. It was to them a huge canoe with white wings, by which it breasted the current without paddle or other visible means of motion. Here at the foot of the falls the white wings were closed and the great canoe sat motionless in mid-stream.

The men on board of her had white faces, such as they had heard of twelve years before, perhaps, when Bartholomew Gosnold and his thirty-two colonists attempted to make a settlement on one of the Elizabeth Islands off the coast of Massachusetts.

This craft was the "Restless," a Dutch vessel sent out on a voyage of discovery from New York the first year of the settlement of that place in 1614. Having passed through Hell Gate and cruised along the Sound to the mouth of a large river, they ascended it to this point, where they were arrested by the falls. Here the Dutchmen looked out upon an unbroken forest on either shore, a virgin soil awaiting the hand of civilization to be converted into fruitful fields, and smiling villages.

The Dutchmen tell us nothing of meeting Indians above latitude  $41^{\circ} 48'$ , the latitude of Wilson's Station, three miles

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\*Windsor formerly included what are now the towns of East Granby, Bloomfield Windsor Locks, Windsor, East Windsor, South Windsor and Ellington.

above Hartford, where there was an Indian village or fort where the natives cultivated maize, or Indian corn. The Dutchmen call the Indians "the Nowaas," a name which has led J. H. Trumbull to believe that the Podunk Indians, who lived on the east side of the river and about a mile from it, were referred to.

But when the men from Plymouth began a settlement in 1633 (nineteen years later) the Windsor Indians were living at Wilson's Station, and they continued there 150 years after the Dutch visited them, until the last of the tribe, an old Indian woman, supported by the town in a white family within sight of the graves of her fathers, was seen by the late Frederick Chapman, who told me that he saw her, when he went to one of the neighbors to play with one of their boys, about the year 1770. There were doubtless Indians living at Namerick, now Prior's Brook, about two miles below Warehouse Point, at the time of the Dutchmen's visit, and possibly some were living at Pine Meadow, on this side of the river. Relics found on its borders with Indian remains, prove that the relics had been procured from Europeans, but not necessarily as late as this visit of the Dutch, for Bartholomew Gosnold came on to the coast of New England as early as 1602, and he then found copper kettles in possession of the Indians, probably obtained through trade in furs with the French, who had had mission stations and forts in Canada many years.

When Windsor Locks was first organized as a town in 1856, the river was encroaching upon the banks along by the John Osborn place, so that it was deemed necessary to protect the bank, to avoid the necessity of removing the house, and widening the road. In grading the river bank to prepare it for the stone, the earth was carted from the roadway, at what had been the highest part of the meadow, a point above ordinary floods, a spot where the Indians had made a burial place. Several graves were uncovered, one skeleton was nearly intact, but all that remained to mark most of the graves was simply a line of black earth.

About fifty years ago, the brick makers got moulding sand,

say twenty rods south of the "yellow tavern" now owned by Miss Webb, and a skeleton was there exhumed. In 1873 while digging sand for use at the Dexter mill, Peter Malone opened two graves on South street, about ten rods southwest from the home of Mrs. Prouty. With these bones were found many trinkets, copper beads, sea shells that came from the coast of the Carolinas, and two stone whistles, which would blow a shrill blast. The copper beads were European make.

So there may possibly have been Pine Meadow Indians here to gaze upon the Dutchmen and their craft, though I am confident there were none twenty years later when the English came to Windsor. The Indian relics Alfred W. Converse finds between Clay Hill and Suffield lead him to believe that Indians once lived there. We have both traditions and record evidence that Indians lived just below Warehouse Point in 1660 and 1671. Under the first date an Indian sold to John Bissell all his planting land, "only the grass land excepted," and in 1671 an Indian sold a tract of land extending from Broad Brook east to the hills beyond the pine plains. But the evidence leads me to doubt whether there were then more than a dozen Indians living there. And these are all the Indians I can learn of living either east, west, north or south, nearer this place when the whites came, than Poquonock, Wilson's Station and Podunk, five, nine and ten miles respectively.

Trumbull's history of Connecticut, written 100 years ago, is a valuable work, but he is evidently in error concerning the number of Windsor Indians. He says "there were ten distinct tribes within the town of Windsor alone;" that the number of the bow was 2,000; that about 1670 (thirty-seven years after the whites came) "it was the general opinion that there were nineteen Indians, in that town, to one Englishman." For this general opinion Dr. Trumbull was probably indebted to the stories of an old man in his dotage, who had been a child at the time of King Philip's war, 1675-6, and the old man was probably as near the facts as the Connecticut boys who luxuriated in the snow drifts



of the blizzard of March 12, 1888, will be when they get to be 80 or 90 years old, and tell the story of that storm with nobody to contradict them.

The Rev. Frederick Chapman told me about sixty-five years ago, that he once heard Mr. Hinsdale of the North church of Windsor, say in a sermon, that when he came to Windsor in 1765 a man was living here who was born when there were nineteen Indians in Windsor to one Englishman, and Mr. Herlehigh Haskell, who was 17 years old when Dr. Trumbull's history was published, once told me that when Dr. Trumbull was compiling that history he came to Windsor and consulted the Rev. Mr. Hinsdale and doubtless he told him the Indian story as he received it from the old man. But a few figures will show its absurdity. Matthew Grant's genealogical record tells us that the births in Windsor down to 1677 were 1,025, but of these 175 were born after 1670, leaving 850, and of these 55 had removed from town, and about 100 had died leaving 700 born and remaining in Windsor about 1670. This was thirty-seven years after the first settlement, and of the first and later settlers there were probably at least one or two hundred still living, but for our present purpose we will only add 50 to our 700 native born "English," making the population of Windsor about 1670, 750. This number multiplied by nineteen gives us 14,250 Indians, a few more than the present population (as per census of 1880) of the territory of the Windsor of 1670, viz., the towns of East Granby, Bloomfield, Windsor Locks, Windsor, East Windsor, South Windsor and Ellington. Think of the present population getting subsistence from the soil and the chase, with only bows and arrows for taking game, and only one rod of cleared land for each inhabitant fit for cultivation, the rest all primeval forest, without an axe, a hoe, or other tools with which to clear off the land or cultivate it!

When the Indian wanted a canoe he gathered up decayed wood and burned it at the roots of a tree till it fell, then by a tedious process he burned it off a suitable length for his canoe,

then hollowed it out by the same long process, using, it is supposed, his stone axe to break away the charred wood as it burned. Think of the care necessary to avoid losing their fire altogether and the difficulty of carrying it any great distance. The same tedious process was required to open land for cultivation. Think of the patient labor required to burn down a single green tree three feet in diameter, without axe or saw.

And yet the Indians had prepared about 1,000 acres in this way in Windsor, which they once cultivated, raised Indian corn, pumpkins and beans, but such cultivation! They had no plow or team to draw one; no spades, or hoes, or other iron tools, to work with. Their spades, which they used for their corn land and digging graves, were flattened and shaped by fire, and the handles formed by the same process. About forty years ago, by the breaking of the Connecticut river bank in the great meadow in Windsor, say forty rods above the mouth of the Farmington river, about a bushel of corn was exposed which was doubtless of Indian culture. It had been charred which prevented its rotting. It was about the color of browned coffee. The peculiarity which marked its cultivation was the form of its many rounded kernels.

But where were the Indian cultivators when the whites came here? Not one appeared on the Plymouth Meadow (100 acres) below the mouth of the Tunxis river, on the great meadow (600 acres) from the Tunxis to the Ellsworth place, Sequester meadow (seventy-five acres), or Pine Meadow (seventy-five acres), at Windsor Locks, or on the little meadow along the Tunxis in Poquonock, with the single exception of Indian Neck, a little meadow of perhaps fifty acres, which the Poquonock Indians were living on in 1642, and reserved when they sold to Windsor all the land from there to Simsbury. But where were the Indians who had burned down and burned up the forest, and subdued this 1,000 acres of open land in Windsor which had been cultivated so recently that the forest had not returned to to cover it? Land which Ludlow (?) speaking for the Windsor

people, says, "We at first judged the place (the great meadow) so free that we might, with God's good leave, take it, and use it, without just offense to no man, it being the Lord's waste, and for the present altogether void of inhabitants, that indeed minded the employment thereof, to the right ends for which land was created." The Plymouth company then living on Plymouth Meadow, had previously secured the Indian title to the great meadow from the Indians living at Wilson's Station and elsewhere, and the question of title was not with the Indians, but between the Plymouth and Dorchester settlers. But the record proves that no Indians were left when the whites came here.

More people came to Windsor the first four years than could find open land to cultivate. There appears to have been a genuine land boom.

Edward Griswold says in an affidavit, that "land fit for cultivation was very high in 1639; that in consequence of some going to locate by the seaside with Mr. Ludlow, and some to England, the price of land then fell off about half within ten years." The evidence that all the open land was taken up by the whites convinces me that the ground that Mr. Converse finds so strewn with Indian relics, above Clay Hill, was not open when the whites came, for the ground was not taken up for more than a century. I think it was their winter quarters in the woods, or perhaps their camping grounds in the spring, while they fished near the falls in their rude way for shad and salmon.

There is reason to believe that these Indians, as well as those living on Pine Meadow, and the Poquonock Indians were parts of one family, or when they had become too few or feeble to live by themselves had joined the tribe at Poquonock, for an Indian, Nehano, evidently living at Poquonock, sold to the whites about the time of the Pequot war, 1637, the land between Hayden Station and Stony Brook "opposite the great island on the falls."

Forty years later the Poquonock Indians sold Terry's Island to John Lewis for £3 English money, and they claimed to be

"owners of a certain island lying in the great river of Connecticut, so called, as having derived our right from one generation to another, and now it being out of our way to live upon it."

This certainly, implies that their tribe had once occupied this section of the country.

The whites first came from their settlement in Massachusetts to Connecticut on the invitation of the Indians, who thus sought the protection of the white man's guns against their Indian enemies, the Pequots.

And here let me say there was ever amity between the whites and Indians of Windsor. I find no evidence of murderous assaults committed by the Windsor Indians. The Indians which made a raid into Wethersfield, killing and capturing the new settlers, were Pequots, whose grievance was that the whites had allied themselves with their old enemies, and when the whites declared war against the Pequots, the army they sent out under Captain Mason consisted of ninety whites and seventy Indians. That only seventy Indians accompanied the expedition from all the River Indians, is a striking proof of the number of the Indian population on and near the Connecticut river in 1637. It was very providential that the Europeans were enabled to settle New England in families and communities, at the very first, without trespassing upon the cultivated lands, in the occupation of another people. Bradford says that when the Pilgrims first came to Plymouth "the Indians had nothing as much corn as they have since we sold them hoes, and showed them better cultivation."

In the account of a visit to Massasoit in 1621, Bradford tells of passing where there had been an Indian village about three years before, but the plague had swept off all the inhabitants, their skulls and bones lying unburied. This plague was the small pox which was introduced by the French in Canada, or by some vessel which came on to the coast to trade.

Bradford also tells us in his history of the effects of small pox here on the Connecticut after the Plymouth men came to Wind-

sor in the winter and spring of 1633-4. He says that "those Indians that lived about their trading house (this was written at Plymouth) fell sick of small pox and died most miserably. Very few of them escaped, notwithstanding what the Plymouth men did for them. The chief sachem himself died, and almost all his friends and kindred, but by the marvelous mercy of God no one of the English was so much as sick. The whites were very good to the Indians and helped them much in their suffering," and this does not accord with the prevailing opinion of the treatment the Indians of New England received from the whites.

With the exception of the Pequot war already spoken of there was no war, and but little trouble with the Indians until King Philip's war in 1675 and 1676—fifty-five years after the landing of the Pilgrims.

In this war thirteen towns, including Simsbury in this state, were utterly destroyed, 600 buildings burned, and about 600 of the colonists slain. Connecticut suffered less severely than Massachusetts or Rhode Island. But to return to a further search for evidence that these open meadows along the Connecticut were wrested from the Indians by pestilence and not by the whites, and that the whites, as Mr. Ludlow wrote, "found them entirely void of inhabitants," we will quote from Bradford once more: "It will be remembered that the Dutch from New York, entered the river before the English from Plymouth. The Dutch stopped at Hartford and planted their guns, and forbade the English going above them; but they went on and located five miles above them at Windsor." Lest the English by their strategies should secure the trade of the Indians above them, the Dutch sent up in the beginning of winter three or four men far up the Connecticut, probably at Wanonaco (Westfield, Mass.), to live with the Indians through the winter and secure their trade for the Dutch and bring it to Hartford in the spring. There were 1,000 Indians when the Dutch went among them. The small-pox broke out, and before the Dutch, delayed by the inclemency of the weather,



Jabez H. Hayden's Birthplace, Hayden Station.

could start out to return in February, more than 950 of those Indians were dead.

Between the time of the Pequot war, 1637, and King Philip's war, 1675 and 1676, there were times when the Windsor settlers feared treachery on the part of the Indians. We find instances on record of men exempted from the night-watch, because of some infirmity, or the exposed position of their family, as in the case of Simeon Hoyte, and his boys, in 1640, who lived at Hoyte's Meadow on the Tunxis, a mile from the nearest neighbor's, and William Hayden, who lived at the extreme north end of the town.

The whites did not steal the Indians' land, but recognized the Indians' title to the land they could no longer cultivate, by paying them for it. Their friendship gave them a sense of security.

As already said, the Dutch navigators were arrested by the falls, in 1614, and turned back. Six years after the Pilgrims came to Plymouth. The Dutch told them of this river, and recommended it as a better place for trade and settlement than Plymouth. Following their suggestions, they then sent a vessel into the river to trade with the Indians for furs divers times, and not without profit. It is hardly probable that they came as high up the river as this, for, as we have already seen, there were practically no Indians here. The Dutch built at Hartford, and the Plymouth people came on in 1633. In the spring of 1636 a vessel from the Bay, with supplies for the Springfield settlers who came from Roxbury, arrived at this, the highest point that a sea-going vessel could reach. The freight was landed and carried hence by land, probably packed on horses. I think it would have been impracticable to have opened a road for wheeled carriages so early; though it is to be noted that the forest trees were large and stood apart, and for ages had so shaded the ground that little of the underbrush which cumbers the woods of our day could grow.

At this point Mr. Pynchon, the chief man of Springfield, later on built a warehouse to store the Springfield freight when necessary, or the produce from Springfield awaiting the next arrival from Boston. The point on the river became known, after the building of the warehouse, as "The Warehouse Point," a name which remains to-day, but without the special significance which gave it birth. The Falls and Kettle Brook, on this side, are the only other names remaining which were given by the first settlers. Mr. Pynchon had a vessel lying here in the spring of 1637, on the breaking out of the Pequot war, and the Connecticut authorities, apparently without saying "By your leave," took the shallop as a transport for the soldiers who went on the perilous expedition to Mystic, and Mr. Ludlow sent a letter of apology to Mr. Pynchon from out the Palisado in Windsor, pleading the pressing necessity and haste of the occasion. From this letter we get glimpses of the perilous situation of both Springfield and Windsor at that time; that neither was in a condition to help the other, and we learn the cost of the semi-occasional mail service by Indian runners between the two places. The Palisado in Windsor was an inclosure 70 rods square, into which the settlers gathered for safety.

The Connecticut Court, in 1636, defined the north boundary of Windsor as Kettle Brook on the west side of the river, and a continuation of the line due east for the boundary on the east side of the river. Later on, the court extended the bounds two miles north of "Stony Brook, opposite the Great Island on the falls." But Massachusetts claimed that Kettle Brook should be the south line of the Massachusetts colony, and the claims and counter claims of the two colonies were not adjusted for many years.

At a later day the Massachusetts Court extended the bounds of the town of Springfield south to Mr. Pynchon's warehouse and twenty poles below. This locates the warehouse on the river bank twenty rods north from opposite the mouth of Kettle Brook.



I said at the beginning that when the first white men, the Dutchmen, came here to the foot of the falls, there was an unbroken forest on both sides of the river which remained such nearly a century, except the warehouse and its traffic, and the road to Springfield, which was extended south to Bissell's Ferry, at Hayden's. A road from that ferry had been opened to the east, to the Bay, and another from the ferry to Warehouse Point, to connect with Mr. Pynchon's road, for the accommodation of the Connecticut colony in her intercourse with Springfield and higher up in the Massachusetts colony.

#### SALTONSTALL PARK.

Nearly 2,000 emigrants who came over from England in 1630 to Massachusetts Bay came under the auspices and by the aid of a company of capitalists formed in England which assisted in their transportation and other pecuniary expenses. Among the members of that financial and philanthropic enterprise was one Sir Richard Saltonstall, Knight, who came over to Boston himself in 1631, and it is thought came to the Connecticut river before there were any settlements on it. However that may be, he returned to England and in 1635 sent over a vessel with men and means to build houses and inclose land in Windsor preparatory to the coming of himself and other lords and gentlemen to settle on the banks of the Connecticut. I cannot here give all the reasons why Francis Stiles, who had charge of the enterprise, did not accomplish all that was expected at Windsor, but will proceed to quote from the affidavit of Henry Stiles (aged about 79) and Daniel Hayden (aged 69), dated 1710: "This is to say, that we very well knew Mr. Francis Stiles, formerly of Windsor, and have often heard him say that he was sent over from England to New England by Sir Richard Saltonstall, Knight, to take up a tract of land for him of about 2,000 acres, upon Conn. river, and to fence it in for a Park; and accordingly he had taken up that quantity \* \* on the east side of said river \* \* at the foot

of the fails; \* \* and that the said park was one mile in breadth from north to south at the said river and did run east with that breadth from the river until it included 2,000 acres."

The affidavit made three-fourths of a century later says that the land was bought of Ne-row-we-nock, an Indian sachem unknown to fame, who probably had as good a right as anybody to give a deed; but Connecticut confirmed the title to Saltonstall, and Massachusetts later on claiming the Kettle Brook line of Windsor as the north line of the colony, extended the "bounds of Springfield south to Mr. Pynchon's Warehouse and twenty poles below" to the Kettle Brook line; and Massachusetts also confirmed Saltonstall's title to the park. Some time after, Connecticut released the condition that the park should be impaled in three years, and Daniel Hayden further testifies "that about 60 years ago he saw a company of men going towards the park to work, and that his father, William Hayden (then living at Hayden Station), told him they were going to fence the said park;" and said Stiles farther says that he hath seen a high palisado fence that was set up and standing near the south side of the park about 60 years ago (1650). They also say the park had never been cultivated, and there is no evidence that more than a beginning was ever made to inclose it.

Claims and counter claims were made respecting the line between the colonies, but in 1713 a line was agreed upon where the north line of Windsor Locks now runs, leaving the park in Connecticut and leaving several thousand acres within Connecticut further east; and Connecticut exchanged with Gov. Gurdon Saltonstall, grandson of Sir Richard, 2,000 acres in the "equivalent," in the town of Woodstock, for the park at Warehouse Point.

#### EARLY SETTLERS OF WINDSOR LOCKS.

The only open ground in this town, when the Dutchmen came here in 1614, was Pine Meadow, which lies along the river below the lower locks of the canal.

The first settlers of Windsor early came up here to cultivate it, and just thirty years after the Plymouth settlement there, Henry Denslow, a son of Nicholas, one of the first settlers of Windsor, built a house and brought his family to the "higher end of Pine Meadow." His nearest neighbor was William Hayden, two miles away. His family consisted of his wife and seven children, the youngest about two years old; and to these were added another daughter, Elizabeth Denslow, February 11, 1665, the first white child born in Windsor Locks, 234 years ago. When this child was ten years old, King Philip went on the war path, spreading terror and dismay through every hamlet in New England. The tradition was, when I was a boy, that Mr. Denslow removed his family to Windsor, ventured back alone to look after his premises, when the Indians fell upon him. The marks of a struggle remained, but he was carried away, and was killed; but his friends did not know where.

This tradition was before the journal of the council was published, about fifty years ago, and tradition and record are much alike. After death of King Philip and the dispersion of his warriors, the widow and children returned to their home at Pine Meadow. The daughters married, and the son, then 17 years old, remained on the homestead.

One of the grandsons built a home at the head of the spring in the west end of our cemetery. Another, forty or fifty rods farther south from the latter house. A later generation, after Center street was opened, built the house now occupied by Miss Mary Webb, who is of the seventh generation from Henry Denslow, and whose Pine Meadow farm has remained in the family of her ancestors from the first.

The site of the original Denslow house is on the hill southwest of the lower lock, nearly opposite the railroad crossing. The site is now marked by a flint boulder suitably inscribed, which was laid there by the family in 1876, the two-hundredth anniversary of Mr. Denslow's death.

Henry Denslow owned all the land from the Broderick barn in the meadow to Dr. Burnap's, and a quarter of a mile in width from the river. That part of the farm near Miss Webb's house was added when the commons were divided about 150 years ago. Nearly 160 years ago the Denslows sold to the Haydens half the saw-mill, "when it is finished," and half of Kettle Brook, with the privilege of turning in Add's Brook to add to the mill-pond. This is the brook running across west of the Memorial Hall. It formerly emptied into the Connecticut where the electric-light works now stand. A little later the Denslows sold the Haydens all the land from Kettle Brook to Dr. Burnap's and south to School street.

When the commons lying west of the eighty rods were distributed to the people, in 1752, in proportion to their tax lists, Center street was opened, and the Haydens received as a portion of their share of the commons the strip of land lying between that bought of the Denslows and said Center street. In 1769, this lot, from School street south side of Mr. Cooley's lot to about as far north as the railroad depot, came into the hands of Haskell and Dexter, who came here from eastern Massachusetts.

The next settler after Henry Denslow was Nathaniel Gaylord. His father, William Gaylord, son of Deacon William Gaylord of Windsor, died in 1656, when Nathaniel was three months old, and left directions to have the lot in Pine Meadow, thirty acres, kept for this son until he reached his majority, when he married and came here to live, in 1678, twelve years after the death of Henry Denslow, and the family continues to live there still.

The third family was that of Abraham Dibble, to whom the town granted, in 1708-9, a few acres of land lying south of Miss Webb's barns. In 1754 the Dibble family removed to Torrington, but they left behind their name on what is known as Dibble Hollow, into which the south end of their lot extended.

In 1757, to find the center of population of Windsor (to fix the site of a new meeting-house), the distance was measured from

every house in Windsor to the Palisado, and a rude map had each house marked on it. A second Gaylord house had been built—one where the family now live—and both were occupied. The original Henry Denslow house was gone. The houses of the two grandsons already mentioned are marked, and the Dibble house, then occupied by Nathaniel Copley, who had married into the Denslow family.

So there were only five houses here in 1757, nearly a hundred years after Henry Denslow first settled here. Nineteen years later, at the time of the Revolutionary War, there were nine families living here. One of the Gaylord houses was gone, and the two Denslow houses before mentioned. Their representatives, Capt. Martin Denslow, was living in the Mary Webb house, and his cousin Samuel where Mr. McAuley's farm-house now stands, on West street. The Birge family lived on North street, opposite Mr. Grube's. Mr. Coy from Ellington and Mr. Wing from Rochester, Mass., lived on either side of West street, south of the present Spring street. Seth Dexter from Rochester, Mass., lived on Center street, north of Kettle Brook, and Jabez Haskell from Rochester, Mass., had a house on the site of Memorial hall. Tradition says that in 1776 the head of every family except one was serving in the army.

Down to 1788 there were no public roads east of Center street. Then, to provide ways to the ferry, Saw-mill Path, now Elm street, was made a public way, and the saw-mill dam, which was and still is an earth dam, made wide enough to be utilized as a bridge. Thence the road ran to the river bank and on to the ferry. Another road was opened from Center street, a little north of Oak street, crossing Spring street near the Catholic church, and along the site of Mr. King's store and to the ferry. A store was built at the ferry before there were any public roads to it. This was converted into a dwelling for the ferryman's family. The lower story of this house was demolished by the ice in the spring of 1812 (?) and the upper part moved back to about

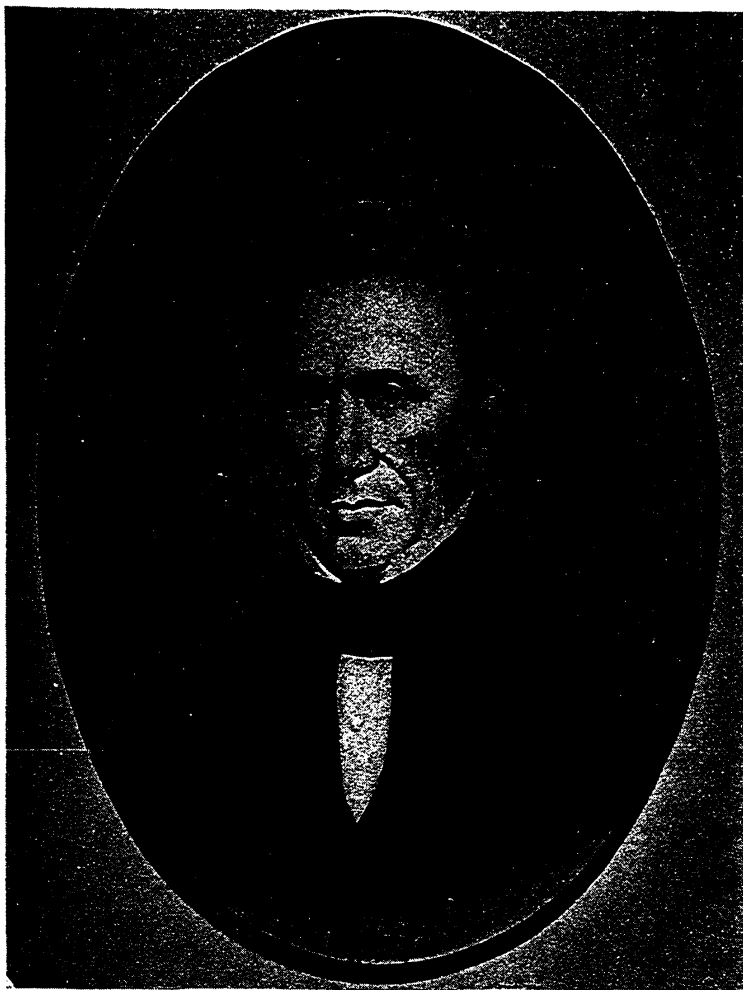
where the canal bridge now stands. When the canal was built it was removed up the ferry road, and when that road was closed it was still known as the old Denslow House, and stood back of E. D. Coogan's store.

Seth Dexter, in the year 1770, built a mill on Kettle Brook where Mr. Holbrook's mill now stands, and introduced into this part of the country the art of wool-carding and cloth-dressing. Previous to this, each family carded their own wool, wove the cloth, and made it into clothing, as it came from the loom. This cloth-dressing resulted in a marked improvement in the wearing apparel of that day.

In 1811 a gin distillery was erected where the silk-mill now stands. This was operated about twenty years, and until several years after the canal was opened, and ran the first water-wheel from it.

November 11, 1829, the canal was opened to facilitate the river traffic and provide water power. There were then less than twenty houses within the present limits of this town, 166 years after Mr. Denslow built the first house here.





Born Dec. 22, 1776.  
Died March 31, 1841.

**SETH DEXTER**

## EARLY RIVER NAVIGATION.

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### Recollections of the Days of Up-River Freight Boating, and the Building of the Windsor Locks Canal.

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Previous to the opening of the canal at Windsor Locks, the navigation of the river had been much impeded by the Enfield falls and the rapids twelve miles above Hartford. Three years after the first settlement on the Connecticut at Windsor by the English (1633), Springfield, Mass., was settled by Mr. Pynchon and the people of Roxbury, Mass. There was about a hundred miles of pathless forest lying between Roxbury and Springfield and the Springfield colony shipped their goods around from Boston to the highest point attainable by a sea-going vessel on the Connecticut river, fourteen miles from Springfield, their destination. From that point it was necessary to pack their goods to Springfield by an Indian trail. Mr. Pynchon's warehouse was built on the east side of the river, opposite the mouth of Kettle Brook to facilitate the loading and unloading of his vessels. Later on, flat bottom boats of light draft were built (perhaps invented here), with which it was practicable to scale the falls, and cargoes were transferred from sloops, sea going vessels, to scow boats at Warehouse Point for Springfield, Northampton and other up river towns, and until the Hartford bridge was built about ninety years ago, Warehouse Point was "The head of sloop navigation."

My mother, born in 1776 in the Haskell house, where Memorial hall now stands, told me that she had counted at one time sixteen sloops at Warehouse Point. For a time after the bridge was built an occasional vessel came through the draw to Windsor or Hayden's for a cargo of brick and to Warehouse Point or Pine Meadow with supplies for the distilleries and a return cargo of best rye gin.



From the time of the building of the bridge Hartford has practically been "the head of sloop navigation," and the scow-boats (12 to 20 tons capacity) have gone there for their up-river freight. Whenever there was a fair south wind the boatmen left Hartford under sail, at other times their slow and toilsome way to the up-river towns was along near shore with setting poles in the hands of a stalwart crew. In my boyhood days, before the age of railroads, I counted as many as thirty sail of scow-boats in a single day on their way to Warehouse Point. Then if they had not sufficient wind, they discharged so much of their cargo as exceeded twelve tons which was sent around by teams to the head of the falls at Thompsonville, and added "falls-men" to make their crew equal to the number of tons remaining on board. With the aid of the "falls-men" they poled their boat over the falls, five miles to the head where they discharged the "falls-men," reshipped the freight sent around by land, and from there pushed their way to their up-river destination. There were canals at South Hadley Falls (Holyoke) and at Bellows Falls, in my early days.

A store was built by Haskell and Dexter in 1784, about where the electric light station in Windsor Locks now stands, with a salt room, to which vessels came in high water with cargoes of salt direct from Turks' Island. The writer remembers "the old salt house," which stood on the river bank at Hayden's. The owner was dubbed by a crazy man, "old Turk" because of his direct trade with Turks' Island, and a little island in the river near by which he owned, was called Turks' Island. At the Levi Hayden place at Hayden's there is among the out buildings an old store, occupied previous to 1800 by David Matson. The "salt room" in it was very damp when I was a boy and there I pounded Turks' Island salt in the salt mortar for table use. In early times all the country up the river and as far west as Berkshire county, was supplied with Turks' Island salt via the Connecticut river, and it was owing to its being a heavy commodity that it was carried as near as practicable to the consumers by water.

Windsor people claimed that Captain Hooker retailed more "West India goods" on Palisado green than any one house in Hartford. This was after the Revolutionary war. At that time vessels sailed from Windsor Little river, under Windsor captains and crews. Vessels were also built there. The writer was one of the small boys present at the launching of Captain Alford's brig about 1818. This shipyard was about fifty rods below the town bridge. Soon after the Revolutionary war, Master John Hayden came up from Pettipogue, now Essex, and established Hayden's shipyard at Hayden's in Windsor, where he continued ship building twenty or thirty years, and was succeeded by Mr. Winslow. A boy four years older than myself witnessed the launching of the last vessel built there. The old red house built by Master Hayden still stands. I knew a man who had worked in the shipyard at Warehouse Point and at the mouth of Scantic river, and I have heard that vessels were built at other places between Hartford and Warehouse Point.

Seventy years ago there were many bricks made in Windsor beyond the demand of the Hartford market. My father had 200,000 to 300,000 brick to market every spring, and when it was practicable to do so, vessels came up to Hayden's. But the bridge at Hartford was such an obstruction that masters of vessels often remained there and waited for the brick to be sent down to them in scow boats (at an expense of fifty cents per thousand to the owner). The distilleries at Windsor Locks and Warehouse Point suffered from the same difficulty. I remember seeing two grave, middle-aged men get somewhat excited in talking over their experiences, after having been in Hartford all day trying unsuccessfully to get through the draw the vessels they had engaged. There was a general impression up the river that Hartford was perfectly willing to be "the head of sloop navigation." It is to be presumed that our elders had sometimes said in the presence of the boys that they wished the bridge in some other place, for I remember, when discussing the situation, a big-

ger boy than I expressed himself, and I fear the general sentiment of us all, when he said, "I hope the ice will be so strong when the river breaks up next spring that it will knock old Hartford bridge all to smash."

In 1822 the Legislature of Connecticut chartered a company to build a canal from New Haven via Farmington to Northampton, connecting at the latter point with the Connecticut river, about 40 miles above Hartford, and thereby bringing New Haven into competition with Hartford for the up-river trade. Hartford, the head of sloop navigation, did not sit down and quietly wait the result, but the business men bestirred themselves, obtained a charter in 1824 for the Connecticut River Company, not only to canal Enfield falls, but with the co-operation of Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont to open and improve the navigation to the head waters of the Connecticut and to Lake Memphremagog. Erie Canal, between Albany and Buffalo, was proving a success, not only in carrying freight, but becoming a great thoroughfare of travel between the East and the West, and why might not Hartford be the point of departure for a similar line of travel by packet boats along the Connecticut river to its head waters and to Canada. A committee of prominent citizens of Hartford, after being provided with a light draft steamboat, *Barnet*, "suitable to navigate the river above this place," set forth from Hartford about the middle of November, 1824, to prove the feasibility of the proposed work; and to interest parties above in the scheme. This was the first steamer that ever troubled the waters above Hartford bridge.

When the news reached Hayden's that the steamboat, *Barnet*, was on her way up from Hartford, a lad of my own age and myself took our guns and powder horns and hastened to the river to salute the first steamboat to come above Hartford. The boat was in sight a mile below, being saluted by musketry from both sides of the river, and the sound of the exhaust steam from her low pressure engine equalled the report of the musketry. When

the boat reached us we opened fire, and the crowd of men and boys cheered themselves hoarse, and we loaded and fired until we had exhausted our stock of powder. One man walked some distance along the shore and said the boat went just as fast as he could walk. The *Barnet* reached Warehouse Point that night, the point where Pyncheon's vessel was arrested by the falls nearly two hundred years before. And as the late J. Preston Abbe told me, she took on a number of "falls-men" the next morning and attempted to get over the falls, but only succeeded in getting a little above the present railroad bridge and returned to Hartford. A few days later, November 27th, a second trial was made with a scow-boat lashed to each side manned with thirty "falls-men" with their setting poles, and they succeeded in ascending the falls and reached Springfield the same day.

On the 12th of December, the *Barnet* had reached Brattleboro, Vt., and set out on her return to Hartford two days after, where she arrived on the 19th. The successful trip demonstrated as was anticipated, the feasibility of the project and the event was celebrated by a great supper at John Morgan's coffee house in Hartford, many guests from Springfield and other towns being present. Previous to the commencement of work of digging the canal at Windsor Locks some gentlemen in charge with their engineer came on the ground to decide what should be the slope, the angle of the inside of the canal necessary to prevent the new made bank from sliding in when the water should be let in. I was here on a visit at the time and followed on to see whatever pertained to the proposed canal. They went over the river bank and selected a spot where the Dexter paper mill now stands, then they graded off the bank until they obtained what they thought a suitable pitch or grade. When the man of the shovel raised a laugh by exclaiming "if they will make it as good as that I'll compounce it good." The engineer made a note of the angle of the slope decided upon for future reference. It was not until 1829 that the canal was completed. Around the bluff at the

present railroad bridge the river bank was abrupt, rocky and high and it was necessary for some distance at that point and above to lay the outer bank (the tow-path) of the canal in the bed of the river. Runs were made for wheelbarrows extending from the top of the bluff and out over the proposed tow-path, and the earth wheeled out and dumped on to framework prepared to receive it below, but during the work a freshet in the river carried away all that had been done at that point and above.

The highway through Pine Meadow (Windsor Locks) to Suf-field, which had been opened about a dozen years before, ran along the river bank from Pine Meadow Brook, a mile below the lower lock, as far as the railroad crossing in its present location; thence continuing to the Horton mill on the river bank except at the Haskell & Dexter saw mill. From Horton's it ran to the foot of Clay Hill (Bidwell's lumber yard). The road from South street ran east of the canal along where the rolling mill stands, and east of the distillery where the silk mill now stands, and of the little house next south of Clark's mill, then used for a malt house and office. Thence the roadway passed up through the mill yard, across the mill dam as now and back to the river bank, to avoid the filling of the lower mill pond, which furnished power for the grist mill, built in 1784. This old grist mill building was built into C. H. Dexter & Sons paper mill, where it remained until 1898, when it was torn down to make room for their new brick stock house.

There were no dwellings south of the saw mill except the Haskell house where Memorial hall now stands, and above only the newly built house of Seth Dexter, in which Arthur Coffin now lives, and Harris Haskell's where Mrs. Hyde lives. These houses stood in the present highway and were removed when the railroad was double tracked (about 1856). After the road way had been removed west to make room for the canal the roadway continued to run east of the present row of maples nearly thirty years.

November 10, 1829, the canal being completed, the water

was let into the canal and the opening celebration was held on that day. Mr. Blanchard brought a company of gentlemen from Springfield with his newly invented stern-wheel steamer and went out of the lower locks into the river and returned through the same into the canal. There were two scow-boats with horses attached ready to join in the procession. A larger company from Hartford was present than from Springfield. I was a lad of 18 and had hoped to be a passenger on the steamer when there should be an invitation for people to come on board, but Mr. Blanchard came out and requested that nobody come on board except the stockholders, for he wanted them to see how little his stern-wheel steamer washed the new made banks. Then I hurried back to the scow-boats which were to follow. Sixteen scow-boats with freight for the up river towns had preceeded us. We went to the head, examining the upper lock. The Springfield party returned up the river, the stockholders returned with us and the water was drawn off lest the new bank should give away before it was sufficiently settled.

There were a goodly number of up-river scow-boats which passed through the canal the first fifteen or twenty years, owned by Springfield and Northampton companies and companies from other towns above, before the introduction of railroads. When I began business in Windsor Locks, in 1838, my next neighbor, O. M. Nelson, kept horses with boys to ride them and made a business of towing boats through the canal until the railroad was opened in 1845. A stern-wheel steamer ran daily between Springfield and Hartford, down over the falls and up through the canal. The steamer, Agawam, which ran several years on this line became famous from having Dickens for a passenger on one of her trips. In his "American Notes" he rated the boat as of two pony-power. The fare from the lower locks (a mile below the present railroad station) to Hartford was fifty cents, double the present fare by the railroad. Capt. Peck was as famous as the Agawam. On one occasion at a time of extra low water, when

we grounded on Scantic flats, Capt. Peck stepped over near the bow of the boat into the water two feet deep and pushing a lever under her bow he lifted while the stern-wheel was worked to its highest capacity and the boat moved on. Capt. Peck then climbed back as deliberately as he had stepped over, and we had passed the worst sand bar between Hartford and Windsor Locks.

The freighting business through the canal began to decline as soon as the Boston & Albany railroad was opened and ceased altogether after the N. Y., N. H. & H. R. R. was opened, though the boats were able to compete with the railroad for the freight of coal to the Windsor Locks mills on the canal bank, as it could be wheeled from the boats directly to the coal bins at slight expense for handling. But it was then economy for me to have a car load of coal for my house brought by rail and not to cart it from my own stock at the mill, which had been brought by boats. After Congress passed "the short haul bill," the railroad company was compelled to bring our coal at no higher price than they charged the Holyoke mills, where they met the railroad competition of the Boston & Albany road. Since then the Enfield falls canal has not been used for freighting purposes, and the boatmen have been obliged to seek other occupations. We have one of the veterans of that craft still with us, Capt. John Abbe, who was born in Warehouse Point, was a boatman from boyhood, succeeded to his father's well equipped business, which for a time he prosecuted successfully, and was among the last to abandon the business.

Though navigation was the primary object for which the canal was built, yet much was claimed for the valuable water power to be created, which would ultimately make the investment pay large dividends. There was a rumor abroad that some capitalists of Boston had offered to build the canal for the water power. The distillery, before spoken of, then standing where the Haskell & Hayden silk mill now stands, with its building extended down to the rolling mill, was supplied with water



Lower Locks of the Canal.



from Adds' brook with a pond where the canal now is, which being in the line of the canal was discontinued and the canal company laid a flume on a line with the bottom of their proposed canal, and built their tow-path over it. This was the first water power drawn from the canal, but this added nothing to its income as it was given in exchange. After about fifteen years but a small part of the water power had been taken and the canal company took a new departure and granted several leases at greatly reduced prices, among them one to Ripley & Co. of Hartford of 700 inches at a perpetual lease of \$1,050 per annum less than the price before. As an aid to building up the village, the canal company subscribed \$200 to aid in the erection of the first church edifice built here in 1846. In 1848 Haskell and Hayden, with the consent of the company, removed their flumes to a wheel pit where with double the head and fall they doubled their power, the canal company closing up the original flume which they put in.

From the time of that new departure the manufacturing interests and the village increased rapidly, until in times of extreme low water in the river the old wing dam at the head proved insufficient to give the canal a full supply of water, necessitating an extension of the dam and dredging the canal. In earlier times the water drawn at the mills and at the lower locks when boats went through, created so little current that the eel grass grew in the canal, as it does in the river when there are eddies or other obstructions making slack water. This grass became so thick as to check the flow of water and necessitated mowing it off. It then floated down and lodged in the racks of the mills and was hauled out on to the tow-path, proving that extending the canal to Hartford for a water supply, as was at first contemplated, would have proved a failure.

The digging of the canal was done by Irishmen who came here for that purpose. I remember having seen but one before. They dug and removed the earth with wheelbarrows on plank runs of the width of a single plank, and when near the bottom of

the excavation it required a run of steep grade, and strong muscles, to dump the barrow on the tow-path. When near the present railroad bridge, when the run was an even grade from the top of the bluff to the tow-path fifteen or twenty feet below, it took good nerves and a steady gait to wheel a load and dump it in the proper place. Temporary board houses were erected and made tenable for the workmen, but with very few exceptions these men left when the canal was completed. Whether any of the present residents of Windsor Locks are descendants of those first comers I am not certain, but think the increase of the Pine Meadow population has all come in with the increase of mills and manufactories, the result of opening the canal which was originally created for the purposes of navigation; but for that use it proved as an investment, a total failure. It brought little or no dividends at first to the stockholders and of late there has been no revenue from canal tolls.

Soon after the the canal was completed there was an application for a post office to be located at Charles H. Dexter's store near the grist mill. The canal officials wished some recognition of the credit due the canal for creating a village entitled to a post office. Its upper lock was in the town of Suffield, the lower locks in the town of Windsor. The village was destined to grow up around the latter and the name for the post office proposed was Windsor Locks, which thenceforth became the accepted name of the village.

My friend, Capt. John Abbe, suggests that there is one unique experience which deserves notice in connection with this sketch. The spring freshet of 1854 was the highest known since 1639 and that was "higher than any of the Indians had ever known."

There were no railroad trains running out from Hartford north or east. The town bridge at Windsor over the Farmington river had been swept from its piers. The bridge at Poquonock four miles higher up the river had been rendered impassable and

all communication with Hartford by land was cut off. This flood of 1854 was at its height May 1st, and C. H. Dexter had a note to meet at the bank that day and chartered the steamer, G. P. Goodsell, with Capt. Abbe, to take him to Hartford. Fifty or more of the citizens of Windsor Locks and Warehouse Point availed themselves of the opportunity to make an excursion to Hartford on the Connecticut at the highest flood known in more than two centuries. With steam up and about ready to start, a stage coach arrived at Windsor Locks which had been chartered at Springfield to get the Boston mail through to Hartford. It was in charge of Sam Cooley, a famous character in those days. When he learned that it was not practicable to get through by land, he gladly availed himself of the invitation to bring the mail bags aboard the steamer.

The flood covered the meadows on both sides, making a majestic river, deep enough to float the largest ocean steamship. We passed through the draw of the Providence & Fishkill railroad bridge. The water touched the bottom of a portion of the old Hartford bridge, but we neither passed under it or through its draw, but steamed around it. The East Hartford causeway being "navigable" we sailed over it with two feet of water under our keel. Then we made for the foot of State street, which proving "navigable" we steamed up to Dr. Isaac D. Bulls' drug store, on east corner of Front street, and from our skiff (the steamer's tender) the excursionists and the mail bags were landed above Front street. From thence the mail bags were taken to the post office and exchanged for the up-river mail bags and we returned to Windsor Locks the way we came, having made for the time being, the Connecticut river between Windsor Locks and Hartford an improvised mail route for the great northern mail.

The flood of 1854 like that of 1639 was caused by "much rain out of the southeast." Winthrop's Journal under the same date, March 16, 1638 (9) speaks of "a severe southeast storm and there came such rain withal, as raised the waters of the Connecticut

twenty feet above the meadows;" and Matthew Grant's record says "that over the river (South Windsor meadows) all the ground there was drowned to one little ridge where Samuel Grant now (1678) lives," and the same "little ridge" showed above the the flood of 1854.

There seems to be an impression these days that the river above the bridge is pretty nearly dried up; that there is little water in the river compared with what there was fifty or sixty years ago when scow-boats carrying twelve to fifteen tons, plied between Hartford and all the river towns above, even to Vermont and New Hampshire. A very pretty theory was gotten up after the great flood of 1854 (probably never equalled except by the "Jefferson flood," 1801, and the great flood of 1639) that all the forests on the water shed of the Connecticut river had been cut off, and the land put under cultivation and drained, so that the snow melted rapidly in the spring and with the rain ran off readily to the river and all came down in the spring, leaving a small supply for summer. I doubt the truth of this theory and think the river is much the same as in former years, varying with the changing seasons as it has always done.

People frequently speak of seeing the bed of the river bare above the railroad bridge at Windsor Locks between the island and the west shore, but that is not a new or rare occurrence; besides the stream is more irregular now in consequence of the dams at Holyoke and on the Chicopee and Westfield rivers holding back the streams above in extreme low water over Sunday and at other times, and besides at such times no inconsiderable part of the river runs in the Windsor Locks canal. As marvelous a story of low water is told by Capt. Mason (considering the season of the year) as can be told in more recent times. Mr. Pynchon's vessel was one of the fleet of three vessels which carried Captain Mason and his little army from Hartford, "in the beginning of May," on their expedition against the Pequots in 1637. He says: "the water being very low we fell several times aground." Their

Indian allies being impatient at the delay were set on shore and marched to Saybrook, fought one pitched battle with some Pequots on the way and got there before Captain Mason. This was when the watershed of the Connecticut was one unbroken forest save a few acres of meadow land under cultivation by the Indians. Captain Abbe, who followed his father's occupation of boating from boyhood to recent years, testifies that during the summer of 1885 there was the best pitch of water for boating above Hartford that he ever knew, and several summers in recent years the water has been almost equally as high. There are now times every year that any sea-going vessel that can cross the bar at Saybrook could go to Warehouse Point as well as in Mr. Pynchon's time, were it not for the bridge at Hartford.



## EARLY ROADWAYS IN WINDSOR.

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The first public thoroughfare used by English residents in Connecticut was an Indian trail between Plymouth meadow and the head of Hartford meadow at Wilson's Station, about two miles. The white settlers followed this trail, a simple foot-path through the woods, near the river, "daily for weeks together." The whites were doubtless able to use this public highway at first without expending any labor on it, but later on when made suitable for cart and horse, they were obliged to use their English axes to widen it out. When the Hartford and Wethersfield people came and communication was opened between "The Three Towns," Wethersfield, Hartford and Windsor, the traveled way was continued from Wilson's Station through Hartford Meadow, and north from Plymouth Meadow along the Island road, where some of the Windsor people settled, to the David Rowland place; thence east to a ferry over the Rivulet (Little River); thence by the Ferry Lane, into the southeast corner of the Palisado, along the east side of the present Green and on, two and one-quarter miles, to the upper side of William Hayden's house lot. The next highway was probably the one running west from the Dr. Pierson place, and its branch road, Backer Row. Several families settled there probably before 1637.

Before 1640 a way was opened from the Island road, a little south of the Rowland place across the north end of the present Broad street on to "the mill;" and nearly a mile beyond to Mr. Phelps' house and Phelps' meadow. Under date of 1641 we find the record of a way from the Main street, about one-quarter of a mile above the Chief Justice Ellsworth place, "down to Bissell's Ferry over the great river, for and above to Agawam (Springfield) and the Bay," Boston and vicinity; thence from this ferry road south, "to the bridge and so by the head of the Plymouth Meadow to Hartford." This bridge over the Rivulet, and

ferry over the great river were on the great thoroughfare to and from the Bay, and the former united the north and south parts of Windsor. It was doubtless built at a great sacrifice of valuable time to the Windsor people. We have none of the town votes on the subject, as the records of the town acts of that date have crumbled away. But the Colonial Records show us that while it was in building, it made a heavy draft on laborers needed elsewhere. "February 20, 1639-40, Mr. Hull moved the court in behalf of Thomas Ford of Windsor, that in regard the workmen are much taken up and employed in making a bridge and meeting house with them, and his work hindered of impaling the ground which was granted him by the court for a Hog Park, that there may be granted him a year longer time for fencing it in, which was for reasons aforesaid condescended to."

Tradition has preserved an incident relative to the building of this bridge, which shows that the ministry entered personally and zealously into this great work. The Rev. Mr. Warham lived at what is now known as the David Rowland place. The Rev. Ephraim Huit lived the north side of the Rivulet within the Palisado. The Rev. Messrs. Hooker and Stone of Hartford came up to visit their clerical brethren. After calling at the house of Mr. Warham, the three went out together to see Brother Huit who seems to have been chief engineer and superintendent of the work, but they found him so absorbed with his work that he could afford little time, and scant courtesy to his visitors. Mr. Stone, turning to his companions, said, "Ephraim is joined to his idols—let him alone."

Another reference to this bridge has recently come to light in the journal of the younger Governor Winthrop, which shows that this bridge on which so much labor was expended was soon carried away. It was in 1645 that Mr. Winthrop left Boston with one companion and a horse to carry their baggage. They reached by the Indian trail Agawam in five days; thence they came to Connecticut by Mr. Pyncheon's road to Warehouse Point; thence

by the Agawam road to Bissell's Ferry, where they were delayed until twilight before they could transport the horse and themselves over the Connecticut. He relates that the Connecticut was frozen over above the Enfield falls and "the small streams were frozen so as to bear us and the horse." From Bissell's Ferry he passed down Windsor street to the Rivulet; "where there used to be a bridge, but now broken down by a flood." He seems to have crossed here on the ice. The journal continues: "Mr. Allen going with us where we might miss the right path. About 9 o'clock we reached the inn of Thomas Ford at Hartford." It is not surprising that this first bridge was so soon swept away. There was not a saw mill in the colony; every stick of timber had to be fashioned by hand from trees growing in the forest. Plank were made over a saw pit, one man standing on the log above, the other in the pit beneath. The wonder rather is that it should have been standing in 1641 when the road to Bissell's Ferry was put on record. It was about 150 years before another attempt was made to bridge the Rivulet.

Eight house lots were set out to as many first Windsor settlers. These lots extended from the Rivulet on the east to the present Broad street. These parties first built on the Island road, but the great flood of 1639 "drowned many houses very deep," and they later on built on the higher ground at the west end of their lots. A manuscript came to light a few years ago at the rooms of the Connecticut Historical Society at Hartford which reads: "April 4, 1642—It is ordered that there shall be a highway betwixt Mr. Witchfield and Mr. Marshall's home lots, to pass from the Island highway before the Little Meadow, west, above Mr. Witchfield's (at Grace church); thence to cross the home lots northward until they fall into the highway that goes unto the mill (north end of Broad street)." This highway was laid out for the special benefit of those whose "houses were drowned very deep" in 1639. Each of these parties is named in order. They were required to build the fence before their own lots, east side of present Broad





HERLEHIGH HASKELL

Born Oct. 30, 1780.  
Died July 7, 1858.

street—"Mr. Witchfield, John Moore, Thomas Moore, Mr. Branker, Mr. Nowel, Mr. Marshfield, Mr. Williams and Richard Vore."

The first reference to the present highway from Broad street to Hartford is dated April 5, 1638, when the general court at Hartford voted, "that whereas there is a desire of our neighbors of Hartford that their way be a public highway for cart and horse upon the upland between the said Hartford and Windsor." A committee was appointed to consider a fitting and convenient highway, to be marked and set out and bridges made over the swamps, then, it being confirmed by the court, the inhabitants of Hartford may, with making a comely and decent stile for foot, fence up the upper end of the meadow. The meadows were then the only planting ground fit for cultivation, and the Indian trail across every man's lot for convenience of travelers, became a nuisance. January 11, 1640, "It is ordered that the highway betwixt Hartford and Windsor as last set forth upon the upland shall be made passable by each town, what lyeth within their own bounds, within the space of one month, and there shall be liberty granted to use the meadows until said upland highway be so sufficiently mended for horse and drift. Then the highway through the meadow shall cease." But during the next five years travelers continued to drive over the cultivated meadow of the citizens of Hartford, and April 10, 1645, the matter was again brought before the Court. "Whereas there has been much dispute about the highway between Windsor and Hartford, which hath been lately used in coming through the meadow of Hartford with cart and horses, to the annoyance and prejudice of the inhabitants of Hartford that have lots in said meadow, it is therefore thought meet and so ordered that the highway, as for carts, cattle and horses be stopped up, and that the said highway between the said Windsor and Hartford in the upland be well and passably amended, by Hartford as much as belongs to them, and Windsor as much as belongs to them, by each party in six weeks or two

months, on penalty of twenty shillings per week for each party that fails either in whole or in part."

It is to be presumed that this last order, made at the end of seven years from the first one, to have the road put in such passable condition that people would use it was complied with, and by so doing relieved the owners of Hartford meadow. It is an interesting fact that the road through Hartford meadow is still a private way, owned by the owners of the meadow; though by sufferance other people having occasion may drive through, as I did more than once half a century ago. The first order, 1638, was that the committee "shall consider of a convenient and fitting highway to be marked and set out, and bridges made over the swamps." This part of the order was probably considered impracticable when the committee discovered the number of bridges required; and it was to obviate this necessity that the road was laid around, and not through the swamps. And if the reader who rides on the trolley 260 years after the original layout, will, when being "jerked around the curves" notice the depressions, (then swamps) on either side, he will call to mind the very good reason why he is to-day travelling over a very crooked road, and he will appreciate the younger Governor Winthrop's need of a pilot while traveling over this road in the night time in 1645, when on his way from Springfield to Hartford—"Mr. Allen going with us, where we might miss the right path."

It must have been a heavy burden on the first settlers of Windsor to have made this road, when it required unceasing labor to raise enough "wheat, peas and Indian corn" for taxes and the support of their own families. The record of the opening of Broad street and defining the upland road is not dated, but the former road was made between the date of John Bissell's deed of the Ludlo lot, 1649, and the removal of Mr. Rosseter from Windsor, 1652.

The upland road was opened at least sufficiently for use in freshet time before the layout of the road from Grace church to

the Island way—1642—consequently it must have crossed the present Broad street from the “mill way,” from the north end to the southwest corner, where it crosses Creamery Brook. The layout of the road on the east side, for the special accommodation of those who had removed from the Island road to the high ground at the west end of their lots, had a proviso that if the parties interested can agree to alter it, “they have liberty thereto.” And it is evident that they never opened it across the swale which extended up through Thomas and John Moore’s lots (late H. S. Hayden) into the common (Broad street); but it appears evident that they ran their road past their “home lots” from Mr. Vore’s lot at the northeast corner of Broad street, to Mr. Branker’s (Esq. Allen’s); thence westerly around the head of the swale, and thence directly to Grace church corner, where it continued in use until closed by the Village Improvement Society a few years ago. There is an interesting bit of history about the changing of a part of this east line of Broad street. About a century ago the town appointed a committee to discontinue unnecessary highways. For some reason, perhaps because of the swale, they commenced at Grace church corner and brought the line of “the lots” several rods into the street, selling the land to the owners who were supposed to be benefitted by it. When they came to Esquire Allen’s lot (next north of the late H. S. Hayden’s) he said to them, “Gentlemen, you cannot sell the street in front of my premises to another party and cut me off from the highway, and I do not wish to buy it.” The new line was not parallel to the old one, but widest at the south end. Some of us remember the abrupt ending of the new line at Esquire Allen’s lot, and that Mr. Baker’s (his successor) street line was back on the original line, as were all lots north of it. It was in recent years that the new line was continued on until it was merged in the old one.

The upland road undoubtedly left the “mill way” near the northeast corner of the Green, as it does now, and probably in nearly the same track to the west side to avoid crossing the swale.

There is a tradition that people from the old mill road on their way to Hartford by the upland road went directly down the west side of Broad street. If, as we suppose, the upland road ran nearly as it does now, the traditional road probably ran as now, and merged itself in the upland road as it does now. There was probably a road in use, though there may be no record of it, from Grace church corner to the upland road, making a road all around what is now Broad street Green, with three paths crossing it diagonally, thus rendering this common land unfit for "setting out men's lots," and it was a happy suggestion of some one, to throw it all into "a spacious way" and set out house lots on the west side. Thus grew Broad street Green, still lying in commons, as it did when the first settlers arrived, and until recent years the the grass growing on it was cropped by anybody's horses, cattle or sheep, and everybody living on the Green was obliged to keep his front gate closed for self protection.

An important extension of this upland road from Broad street north, though made a century and a half later, deserves notice. It substituted the causeway and a bridge for the ferry, and the building of the causeway was at that day looked upon as a great work and a great burden to tax-payers of the town. To lighten that burden a lottery was granted (a frequent boon to great works a century ago) and it was regarded as little less than a public duty for every one to work out the price of one ticket. My grandfather, Levi Hayden, went down from Hayden's three miles with his team and negro, Tom, and worked out a ticket for every member of his numerous family, all of whom drew blanks. The highest prize, \$2,000, went to a woman living in the brick house which is still standing on the west side of the upland road at one of the sharp angles, about an eighth of a mile north of the mile stone four miles from Hartford.

A bridge across the Rivulet in connection with the causeway was built at the same time (1793). This was a trestle bridge, supported by timbers in place of stone piers. I think that more

than one bridge shared the fate of Mr. Huit's before my voting days. After I became a voter several special town meetings were held to consider the proposition of building a new bridge on "Towns Plain." Bloomfield and Windsor Locks were then parts of Windsor to share the burden of taxation. There was a great deal of town meeting oratory expended—among the orators I well remember Francis Gillette of Bloomfield (afterwards United States senator), who made so eloquent a plea for "those of us living on the other side of the woods," that everybody else stopped talking while he had the floor. R. G. Drake, then a young lawyer, said at one of the later meetings that "the expenses and loss of time to the voters had already equalled the cost of a new bridge." The bridge was finally voted and built, and stood about twenty years, until the great flood of 1854 lifted it from its abutments and piers and floated it down where bridge number one went 209 years before.

We have seen that the only road from Connecticut to Springfield was at first by way of Bissell's Ferry. Nearly twenty years after the first settlement of Windsor, Northampton, Mass., was settled, and by the route then opened it was necessary, if one would reach that place from Connecticut, to cross the Connecticut river at Bissell's ferry to the east side and recross to the west side at Springfield. To make a direct road to Northampton, one was opened from "the Lot" across the plains. That route (about a mile longer) was taken to avoid the bridges and swamps where the present thoroughfare runs. Within a mile of William Hayden's the plains were reached, where the road was laid between the heads of the streams flowing east and west, and in marked contrast with the upland road to Hartford, there are but two angles, and those slight ones, on the whole five miles—not a stream to cross nor a hill to climb. To open this road little was needed except to clear away the trees wide enough for a path "passable for cart and horse." There was no necessity for ditches to carry off the water, as with rare exceptions the rain was absorbed as

fast as it fell in the loose sand. Little more was done to it than to widen and double track it during the one hundred and seventy years that this road continued to be the great thoroughfare between Boston and New York.

For nearly one hundred years the plains continued to lie in commons, when in 1752 the land was divided in severalty among the tax-payers of Windsor. Some men soon cleared and put under cultivation their new lots, inclosing them with a ditch and hedge fence (trees fallen along the ditch). When President Washington on his tour through New England crossed these plains October 21, 1789, he wrote in his diary, "Between Windsor and Suffield you pass through a level, barren, uncultivated plain for several miles." Washington's estimate of the plains would not answer for my boyhood days, thirty or forty years later, when my father raised on the plains several hundred bushels of both rye and corn, and most of the families north of the Rivulet went on to the plains to cultivate their rye, which grew there of superior quality, and supplied their tables with excellent rye bread. When the River road was laid by the court about one hundred and fifty years later the tax-payers of Windsor looked upon the building of it as so great a burden that but one man, Herlehigh Haskell of Pine Meadow, advocated the building of it. It was opened in 1815, but as the old Indian trail from Windsor to Hartford was for a time preferred before the upland road, so most of the travel, including the mail stage, was across the plains for about fifteen years after the new road was opened. There are now no travelers to be seen crossing the plains. Where there were two well trodden tracks, there is now but one, and on some parts of this weeds grow undisturbed.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH.

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The "Plains" and how they were Cultivated by the Early Settlers.

The Great Fire of 1794.

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The early settlers of Windsor apportioned the "land fit for cultivation" among themselves according to their individual "estates and person;" the ratio they paid of the general expenses of their emigration from Massachusetts to extinguish the Indian title and bear the future burdens of taxation. There were about 800 acres of open meadow along the Connecticut river in Windsor "void of inhabitants," and one or two hundred acres along the Tunxis, in Poquonock. All else was one unbroken forest. The meadows they put under cultivation at once, and men enlarged their borders as they had need by clearing away the primeval forest.

The "plains" which lie west of Windsor Locks were not wanted for settlement or cultivation while other and better land was to be had nearer home, and for this reason they lay in common (undivided) more than 100 years after the first distribution. Previous to 1720, land had been set out to individuals, as they needed it, by vote in town meeting—to newcomers and old settlers alike. That year all "the commons," the unappropriated land in Windsor proper, and all "our western land" were transferred to "the proprietors," comprising those only whose names appear on the tax list of that year, in the ratio of their individual tax lists. About two years later "our western land"—the townships of Torrington, Barkhamsted and Colebrook, and half of Harwinton—were apportioned to Windsor families on the basis of the grand list of 1720. For instance, those who had their share of the western land set to them in the town of Torrington had a



lot containing as many acres as they had pounds on that list, and thenceforth they became proprietors of the undivided land in their respective towns. Some lots were sold, but in many instances, within the next few years, one of the grown-up sons took his portion of the family estate in western land, married and "went west (about 30 miles) to grow up with the country." Tradition says there were tearful partings in Windsor families when some of their members set forth to go so far into the wilderness to make a home and suffer the privations of a new settlement; and this was but 160 years ago. Twenty-five years ago I attended the anniversary of a Congregational church in the town of Torrington, where I found a greater per cent. of original Windsor names on their catalogue than there was at that time on the catalogue of the old mother church at Windsor.

In 1752 every family had its share of the "commons" on the plains in severalty. Many of those living at a distance (for instance, in Bloomfield) sold to those living nearer, and some at once cut off the wood and put their lots under cultivation. While in "commons" they were common property for all alike in Windsor, to cut wood and to let cattle run unrestrained to pick up a living in a swamp or opening in the woods—any spot which produced grass. There is still a record-book in the town clerk's office giving the "ear-marks" of every man's cattle, that they might be distinguished from his neighbor's cattle when they had become herded together. Long after the common land had been divided, the highways (except on the plains) were considered commons, and within my recollection every person who chose turned their horses, cattle, or sheep into the highway for pasturage. Although the "commons law" had been repealed in my boyhood days, and cattle running loose on the highway were liable to be put in the pound and the owner mulcted to the sum of twenty-five cents, yet it was thought ungenerous to wholly restrict the practice, and the streets were about as close-fed as the pastures.

Before my recollection, when nearly every family raised sheep

to produce their own wool for the domestic manufacture of their winter clothing, it was a common practice for several neighbors to club together and "flock their sheep," hire a shepherd to go with them, and pasture them in the highways. I have one of the agreements of this kind, dated 1809, and signed by nine owners of sheep—the numbers owned by each running from 12 to 39—a total of 170. Any of the farmers were ready to furnish an enclosure for them at night. I heard many stories connected with the care of the flock when Hendrick, an old Hessian, and his half-witted son, Liba, had charge of it; but it was before my day, although later I knew them both very well.

Soon after the distribution of lots on the plains, some men cleared their allotments and put the land under cultivation, and as cattle were still at liberty to range over the plains it was necessary for every man to enclose his cultivated lot to save his crops. For this purpose he dug a ditch around it and felled trees on the embankment of earth thrown up from the ditch, making a hedge fence. These old ditches are still to be found all over the plains, and their origin and the purpose for which they were made is a mystery to many. Since my day cattle no longer run at large, and men opened new ground on the plains without enclosures, save in one case, where a man dug a ditch and put a light slat fence around a twenty-acre lot, for a sheep pasture, but that proved a failure. This was about the year 1830. Wherever there was a cultivated lot next the old country road there was a ditch, and between the ditch and the traveled path was little but scrub oaks, six to ten feet high. Nothing could be seen beyond them, making the level, sandy road still more monotonous; but we have seen that the land in these days was considered quite valuable. I remember my father having some business for an estate (about 1825) with a man who had been a senator from Litchfield and on a committee to visit Newgate prison. He tried to describe to my father a great barren desert that he crossed, such as he supposed was not to be seen in Connecticut; but he

was somewhat crestfallen when my father told him that he raised from six to ten hundred bushels of grain on that barren spot every year.

It is since my time that we began to plow down the ditches bordering the old country road, clearing the bushes in the highway, and cultivating out to the traveled path. Wheat, peas and Indian corn were the principal crops at first, and these, at specified prices, were received for all taxes; but, before my day, rye had had superseded wheat almost entirely. Rye grown on the plains was of a better quality than that grown in the meadow; consequently, most of the farmers living on Windsor street, within three miles of the plains, raised rye on their plains lots (raising a little wheat on some spot best adapted, for visitors and extra pie-crust), and during harvest time there was an almost continuous procession, some days, of loads of rye through Pink street. Those living near raised more corn than rye. The production of grain on the plains, I think reached its maximum seventy years ago. I have before said that when the distribution was made, in 1752, every man's lot was covered with wood. When I began to work on the plains, all but two lots had been cut off. On these the trees stood in their primeval strength. The owner had been Eliakim Mather, who from the first believed that the time was soon coming when there would not be wood enough for family use, so he held it all his after life; and when I was a boy his son, Sam, then an old man, went on to the plains from time to time every summer with his horse-cart bringing away the dead wood which Mr. Squiers had cut on shares the winter before. Mr. Squiers, our next neighbor, used up his share, one-third, in course of the year; but Mr. Mather's, which was "cart length," accumulated from year to year, and was a huge pile as I remember it—much of it "so rotten that a man could strike an axe into it four feet, at a blow." The lots remained until 1835, save for the removal of the dead wood, in the condition the first settlers found them two hundred years before. The reader is reminded that we

knew nothing of coal as a substitute for wood in those days. The first coal fire I ever saw was in Middletown in 1830. There were few coal-stoves in Windsor Locks before about 1850.

There is one thing more about the plains which deserves mention, and that is the "Smoking-tree," which stood "half way across the plains." There was no water in sight on the whole five miles of the old country road, but about one hundred rods south of the present half-way house (on the way to Poquonock) a fine spring rises only a few feet from the west side of the road. This was made available for watering ox-teams which were then generally used in taking produce from the north to the Hartford market and returning with merchandise to their respective homes—some as far away as Berkshire county, Mass. These teams as well as their teamsters and the travelers who ran a "foot train," rested and were fed under the "Smoking-tree," which stood opposite the spring, and there the men sat and smoked their pipes. The last vestiges of this once out-door place of refreshment were gone before my recollection, except the name which was applied to my grandfather's "Smoking-tree lot," where the spring rises.

#### THE GREAT FIRE ON THE PLAINS.

The fires which occur on the plains from time to time remind me of one which happened one hundred and five years ago, which I believe was greater in extent than any of those of more recent years. It was started a little northwest of the Catholic cemetery by a Suffield man who carried fire on the plains to burn some brush on a lot he was cultivating. The fire got beyond his control and into the woods where it raged furiously fanned by a high wind. An alarm was sent out into the neighboring towns and men from all quarters hastened to the scene. When my father and others arrived from Hayden's they met the fire above "Smoking-tree." Men were fighting the fire valiantly but to no purpose. The flames in some cases leaped from the tops of the highest pine

trees—a circumstance that has been noticed in other fires in this locality. At the “great fire” men did not carry friction matches in their pockets with which they could set back fires, but my father (then a young man of 21) with Mr. Pickett got a burning brand from the fire and ran with it down the old country road about a mile and set a back fire on a road that branches off from the east side of the main road running northeast past the west side of what is now Mr. Chaffee’s burnt lot and on to the Elm street road a few rods west of Mr. Ferry’s house. The fire on the east side of the country road was arrested by this, but on the west side men fought the flames with desperation and scarcely checked their progress till the fire had swept through all the woods in its course, when it went out because there was no more material to burn. This was as far as Sylvanus Griswold’s, opposite the present Poquonock meeting house.

The burnt district was estimated to contain 4,000 acres. One man, whose name I have forgotten, who had suffered a heavy loss from the fire, put an attachment on the property of the man who set the fire, and as the “grab law” was in force, he got all the man’s property and the others got nothing. When I was a boy my father cut the wood from a lot which had been my grandfather’s near the half-way house. I remember that he said that after the great fire some thought it best to cut off the wood, others to let it stand. This lot of my grandfather’s had been left and I think it proved that it would have been better to have cut it off soon after the fire. The burnt district extended in width from the road already mentioned on the east, to the road running from Poquononk to Suffield on the west, and from north of Kettle brook to the Poquonock meeting house. The burnt lots of Mr. Chaffee and others lying east were not burnt in the great fire.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH.

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### Early Mail Facilities.

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One of the privileges enjoyed by the present generation is that of the mail facilities, which appear in striking contrast with the privileges enjoyed by those who have gone before us. When the Dorchester pioneers came from Massachusetts to prepare dwellings for their coming families on, the brow of the hill which overlooks the great meadow, they were met with a protest from the Plymouth people, who had settled two years before on the meadow below, and who had bought the Indian title to the great meadow. A letter written by Jonathan Brewster, dated Mattianuck (Plymouth Meadow, Windsor), July 6th, 1635, tells us of a company of Massachusetts men encamped near by "who had a mind to the land we last bought"—the great meadow referred to. A letter written the next winter by Sir Richard Saltonstall shows that when the lords' and gentlemen's pioneers arrived soon after from England and proposed to take up the great meadow against the protest of the Plymouth men, that the Windsor men, who had not been able to find another spot to suit them, assumed a better right to that meadow than the lords and gentlemen, and took possession of it trusting to future negotiations to satisfy Plymouth. The lords and gentlemen had a patent of the territory, and claimed some privileges over both the Plymouth and Dorchester people; but their pioneers could only wait till their letter of grievance could be sent to England and a letter of instructions returned. Taking advantage of this long waiting, the Dorchester men made dwellings for their families and shelters for their cattle, and in October they set forth from Dorchester, Mass., a company of "men, women and little children, with their cows, heifers and swine," and were found in actual possession when the

letter of instructions from their lordships returned—which was not until the next winter, about six months after. In the present day the time required would be about half of one month.

There is in my possession the journal of Augustin Hayden, a young soldier who served in the French and Indian war in the campaigns of 1758 and 1759, at Lake George and Ticonderoga. Under date of October 20th, 1758, he writes in his journal: "I had a letter from father (Samuel Hayden of Hayden's) dated October 6th, and another from Daniel Hayden, dated Oct. 4th"—fourteen and sixteen days respectively; 200 miles. One day would suffice now. The next summer, 1759, under date of August 30th: "I had four letters from home; one from father, dated July 31st, the other three from my brother, Moses, dated June 23d, July 16th, and July 30th." Louisburg, on the island of Cape Breton in the province of Nova Scotia, was captured from the French by 14,000 English and provincial soldiers, supported by 20 ships of the line and 18 frigates, on the 26th of July, 1758. This must have been important news for New England, and news to be hurried to the regiments fighting the French and Indians at Lake George. Under date of August 28th, the journal above mentioned reads: "The Grate guns and Small arms ware Fired three Times Round for the Good News that we heard from Capebriton, (Louisburg). We Heard that it was Taken from the French." This was thirty-three days after the event.

In 1753 Benjamin Franklin was appointed Deputy Postmaster-General of the English colonies. In 1760 "he startled the people of the colonies by proposing to run a stage-wagon to carry the mail from Philadelphia to Boston once a week, starting from each city Monday morning and reaching its destination Saturday night"—about 325 miles through the oldest and best-settled portion of the colonies, at a speed of 65 miles per day.

I have a map, made about 1795 (?)—40 years later—of a great mail route from Brewers, the extreme northeast corner of Maine, to St. Mary's, the extreme southeast corner of Georgia.

The mail was to leave Brewers, also St. Mary's, every Monday morning. Each day's progress is marked on the map, and all the post-offices on the route—just 100 in number. Suffield is on it. Windsor is not, although the route lay through the town. The distance between post-offices is marked; the total distance, 1,799 miles. The schedule time was six weeks and three days, an average of 46 miles a day, or 246 miles per week. The first two weeks in Maine—then a very new country—the progress made was 219 miles,  $18\frac{1}{4}$  miles per day. The third week was from Wiscasset, Maine, to Hartford, Conn., 310 miles; 52 miles per day. The next week was from Hartford to Fredericksburg, Va., 430 miles; 72 miles per day. From Fredericksburg to St. Mary's the average progress was 52 miles per day.

An anecdote is told of Chief-Justice Ellsworth showing his talent for communicating specific information in a few words and shows also the mail facilities provided for Windsor. On one occasion, while he was a member of the United States Senate—1789-1795—Congress was supposed to be on the eve of adjournment. He could only communicate with his family through the mail to the Hartford post-office, nine miles away; but an arrangement had been made with the stage-driver to look for Mrs. Ellsworth's letters at the Hartford office and bring them to Mr. Howard's store, opposite the Congregational church in Windsor. Anticipating a letter, Mrs. Ellsworth had sent the hired man to Mr. Howard's,  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles, daily, for a week or two, before the expected letter came. She sat down, wiped her spectacles, broke the seal and read: "One more week, and then;"—and that was all. There was no mistaking its purport. He hoped the Congress would be able to adjourn in a "week," and "then," if they did not, he would have to remain from home until it did adjourn. More than 50 years ago, when in Savannah, Ga., I had the privilege of looking over a gentleman's collection of autograph letters of distinguished public men. Among them was a characteristic letter from Judge Ellsworth, written from Paris, August 5th, 1800,



while he was minister to France, directed to his wife at Hartford, showing that Windsor was still without a post-office.

The Hon. Gideon Granger of Suffield, Conn., was appointed Postmaster-General in 1802, and during his administration of the department, while on his way from Washington to Suffield in the mail stage, he noticed the driver take from his hat several letters and give them to Mr. Howard, and Mr. Granger remarked, "You ought to have a post-office here." On his return to Washington he sent Mr. Howard a post-office commission; 170 years after the settlement of the oldest town in Connecticut, a town through which the northern and Boston mail had been carried since there had been a Boston mail route. I once heard it said that in Mr. Granger's administration the Suffield office was a distributing office when Hartford was not.

In my early days the mail was carried in a bag, under the "boot" and the seat of the driver of the mail stage. It was taken off at each post-office and carried by the postmaster into a private room where the bag was emptied and the mail matter assorted. Anything for that office was taken out, and anything to be forwarded from that office added to the contents of the bag, which was then returned to its place in the stage. The time allowed for this process was, I think, seven minutes, during which time the passengers were to possess their souls in patience, or otherwise, as they felt disposed.

Mail facilities were increased when parties were permitted to go into the highway and call a halt to the mail stage, give the driver a letter, which he carried in his hat to the next post-office, where the postmaster wrote the name of his office on it, with the date and the postage due at the office of its destination—6, 10, 12½, 18¾ or 25 cents, according to distance; adding to letters brought in by the stage-driver, "way one cent."

I have two volumes containing about four hundred manuscript letters which passed through the mails between 1824 and 1840. Besides their family history they tell us something

of the mails during that period. Letters were usually written on letter paper,  $7\frac{1}{4}$  by 16 inches, and as the postage was for a single piece of paper, and not by weight, when we wanted to write a longer letter than three pages of letter paper we took foolscap, and some of these were crossed with red ink and marked "single" lest the postmaster should suppose there were two sheets and mark them double postage. One of these letters was written to my father from Amherst academy by my oldest brother, under date of September 10th, 1824. After saying that there was some mistake about the mailing of his last way letter, he suggests that "when you send them by the stage they would come much more direct if you would give directions to have them mailed at Suffield," by the up stage, rather than send them to Windsor to be mailed. Among these letters are to be found some bearing every rate of postage, from  $6\frac{1}{4}$  to 25 cents, and about 250 of them are marked 25 cents. Most of these were to or from Charleston, S. C. A number of them are marked "ship" from Charleston to New York, thence by mail for  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents; others, a part or all the way by private hands, without postmarks.

There was a good deal of economy used in those days in taxing one's friends to be mail-carriers. I remember delivering a letter in New York for a lady friend, paying two  $6\frac{1}{4}$  cent omnibus fares and taking an hour's time from my business day. We had neither envelopes or stamps, and when the rates of postage were high the number of letters was correspondingly small.

Seventy years ago a petition was circulated in Windsor asking to have the post-office removed to Broad street, on the south side of the little river, and I signed a counter petition which claimed, on the authority of Mr. Howard, the postmaster, that Levi Hayden, Major Ellsworth and two others living on the north side, received more mail matter than all the people on the south side; and yet I doubt if my father, one of the four, received more than three letters and two newspapers a week by mail on an average.

The canal was opened in 1829, and later on it was proposed

to have Mr. Dexter (who had opened a store near the grist mill) made a postmaster. Alfred Smith of Hartford, then president of the canal company, urged a change of name from "Pine Meadow" to "Windsor Locks." (The head lock was in Suffield—the lower locks in Windsor.) The first quarterly return from this office was under three dollars—probably less than a full quarter—and this with high rates of postage. The quarterly returns of this office in recent years, with its increased population, under a uniform letter rate of two cents, average about \$1,500. Once at least I paid letter postage—25 cents—to Mr. Dexter on a two-cent newspaper from Charleston because there were a few words pencilled on the margin.

Sixty years ago I heard a couple of Hartford merchants talking at the breakfast table about their New York morning paper. There was then no daily paper in Hartford. One of them said: "I should be lost if I did not find my morning paper at my office when I get there after breakfast;" and yet his paper bore the date of the day before. It had been brought by the New Haven boat, then by stage, which reached Hartford during the night in time for the mail to be distributed before the clerks went to their stores next morning. Now I receive the daily *Courant* at Windsor Locks at 6.30 on the morning of its publication, with its telegraph news from all over the world, and frequently containing news not to be found in the New York papers, which go to press two or three hours earlier. The newsboys have the New York and Boston morning papers here at 10 o'clock in the morning on the day of their publication. Letters mailed in New York the evening before are received at this post-office at 7.30 o'clock the next morning, and if the mails are still too slow for this progressive age, you can for about the old rates of postage, send instantaneously by telegraph; or, better still, by telephone one can hold conversation with another person hundreds of miles away.

## RECOLLECTIONS OF A LONG LIFE.

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### Beginning of the Silk Industry in Connecticut.

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"If we have as much as our neighbors we can get along with almost anything." Such was the remark I heard one woman make to another more than three-fourths of a century ago. The first had remained at Hayden's in Windsor, where nearly two centuries of industry and culture had transformed the once wilderness into a goodly land from which the daily toil of the people procured for them many luxuries beyond the reach of the generations which had preceded them. The other was telling of the trials and privations incident to her lot after she left Hayden's a young bride, and journeyed to the then far west, the western part of the state of New York. There she had only such a living as the new country afforded. Her husband had died, and, like Naomi of old, she had returned with her three children to the home whence "she went out." To the question, "Well, Mrs. Lamberton, you had as much as your neighbors, didn't you?" she answered "Yes, we lived as well as our neighbors." Then came the remark (as true to-day as it was then), "If we have as much as our neighbors we can get along with almost anything."

In my boyhood days many of the country houses in Connecticut were without paint, and the painted houses like the others, were with rare exceptions, without carpets and there was but one piano in the town of Windsor. They were alike without stoves or furnaces. When I was three and a half years old I went to the summer school nearly a half a mile away, barefooted, and sat on the little bench which was made from a slab brought from the saw mill. It stood on four legs set in auger holes, with the planed flat side up, on which I sat with no rest for my back. For the older pupils a writing desk was arranged along the wall at the

sides of the room, with a seat along in front of it and when the scholars sat facing the teacher they could rest their backs by leaning against the edge of the board which constituted the writing desk. The room was warmed by an open fireplace in the corner of the room, and the parents were expected to furnish their quota of wood in winter for the fire and board the schoolmaster, except such families as did not "live as well as their neighbors." A fireplace to warm our church would have been of little practical use, and we had none. A pan of live coals in a foot stove, a little tin vessel inclosed in a wood frame, was taken to meeting from home for the morning service, and some family living near kindly replenished the fire pan for the afternoon.

Our bread was made from rye of our own raising, with a little wheat for visitors. Meats were principally of home production and a custom of exchange among neighbors who slaughtered their animals at different times, extended the period of fresh meat much beyond the time it could otherwise have been enjoyed. There passed through Hayden's from Bloomfield, ten miles away, once a week in the summer, a meat cart, but it was before the introduction of refrigerators and ice and few of our neighbors patronized it even occasionally. Men's board was one dollar a week. My father hired men in winter for eight dollars a month and board, and ten and twelve dollars in summer, and we all toiled from early dawn to dewy eve, in the longest days from about six o'clock in the morning to seven and a half at night, with one hour out at noon for dinner. Seventy-five years ago I heard the schoolmaster, who boarded around at \$10 a month, tell my father that his uncle, John Bissell of East Windsor had hired a man who was a great worker for the next summer, for \$14 a month. My father said, possibly he may earn it, but not at raising corn at the market price of fifty cents a bushel. Few families had hired help in the house and few girls who went out to do housework got more than a dollar a week. My schoolma'am was paid a dollar and a quarter a week and boarded at home.

Our clothing was mostly "homespun," manufactured in the family. I had sisters older than myself who spun flax for the boys' clothes on a little wheel, and wool and flax tow on the great wheel. The flax was raised on the farm, but as we did not keep sheep we bought the wool from our neighbors and that was sent to the wool carding and cloth dressing mill to be returned in rolls ready for the spinning wheel. The loom on which the cloth was woven was a clumsy affair and the woolen cloth produced coarse and rough. Previous to the coming of Seth Dexter to Windsor Locks from eastern Massachusetts, 130 years ago, with the art of cloth dressing, this cloth was worn as it came from the loom. His mill was built on Kettle Brook where Mr. Holbrook's mill now stands, the first mill of the kind in this part of the country, and the first of any kind in Windsor Locks, except the saw mill which was built before 1742. About eighty years ago the grown-up daughters of our two nearest neighbors received yarn from a cotton mill, wove it into cloth and returned it to the mill receiving a certain price per yard for the weaving. If there was discontent in any family who had not as much as their neighbors, it was very rare that anyone applied to the town for help and to go to the poor house was a humiliation few ever experienced.

Great changes have taken place in modes of travel since my boyhood days. Travelers in early times usually went on foot or on horseback, and it is said journeys of long distances were made in less time on foot than on horseback without a relay of horses. There is a tradition that a woman living in Suffield, who was a member of the Windsor church before 1698, (at which time the Suffield church was organized) was accustomed to attend the Windsor church on Sunday, not less than eight miles distant, walking both ways. Horace Birge once told me that he and his father went to meeting in Windsor on foot, fully six miles away. I have heard it said that my grandfather had been seen on his way to meeting at Windsor on horseback with his wife on a pillion with a babe in her lap, and leading a horse on which rode

three of his little girls. In my mother's early days there was no bridge over either of the seven brooks which cross Center street, but all were forded. Seth Dexter and his wife, Joanna Haskell, came here in 1770 from Rochester, Mass., about 150 miles distant. My mother told me that she remembered one occasion when Uncle and Aunt Dexter went to visit their friends in Rochester, they both rode on one horse and Aunt Dexter carried a babe in her lap.

The first one-horse wagon ever seen in Windsor was made here in 1815, when I was three years old. It was made by David Birge, father of Henry Birge. His place of business was in the then extreme northwest corner of Pine Meadow, the eighth school district of Windsor, about a mile from Memorial hall on the north side of North street, opposite the former residence of Mr. Grube. Mr. Birge was an expert mechanic in his day, and I remember with what boyish wonder I looked at his one piece of machinery in motion when a few years later, an older brother and myself went up to Mr. Birge's from Hayden's in our one-horse wagon to get a wheelbarrow which had been ordered, and with an order from our mother to Mr. Birge for a wheelboy with which to turn the big spinning-wheel. When Mr. Birge had put a little rough stick into his lathe and with his foot on the pedal set it humming, and with the chisel shaped the handle and turned a groove at the end to fit the spokes of the wheel, I saw in operation the most complicated and wonderful piece of machinery then in Windsor Locks. It was several years later that Mr. Birge told me the history of that first one-horse wagon. He said that it was made for Moses Mitchel, a worthy colored citizen, who lived on Center street, about half a mile south of Miss Webb's. (He and his brother, Oliver Mitchel, a Revolutionary pensioner, were "made free" under the old charter before 1818. I remember meeting them at the polls when I cast my first vote in 1833. They fraternized with the democrats and I with the Whigs). Mr. Birge said that Mr. Mitchel was very proud of the one-horse wagon, and

when he took it from the shop he went home by the way of East Granby to show it. Steel springs were not invented until many years after, but the bodies of the one-horse wagons rested directly on the axletree; the back seat was arranged on wooden arms, which afforded a spring seat for its occupants; the forward seat was a board which rested on the sides of the wagon body. The chaise, a two-wheeled, one-horse vehicle, had been introduced before the one-horse wagon, but was too expensive a luxury for general use. Ox-carts and two-horse wagons were common, and four-horse stage coaches were to be seen daily on the principal mail routes. I also remember seeing in Windsor the hack used by Chief Justice Ellsworth when he held court in the different states. It was taken out on Sunday to convey the family to meeting about two miles distant. I never saw it used on any other occasion.

Mr. Birge's one-horse wagon gave a new impulse to the use of one-horse vehicles and they were soon used almost exclusively for common road carriages, both for short distances and for longer journeys. By degrees they were improved upon with various kinds of easier riding one-horse carriages, until the original form is nearly out of date.

About the time of the introduction of the "Birge Wagon," Fulton's steamboat was in successful operation carrying passengers between New York and Albany, at a speed of five miles an hour. In 1825 the steamboat Oliver Ellsworth was making regular trips between Hartford and New York, fare \$5 with meals. That was the price paid by my father for myself when I was thirteen years old. We left New York soon after noon and reached Hartford about noon next day. The time was much reduced before 1836, when I was sent by the Vanderbilt boat; to New York to buy stock for the Connecticut Silk Manufacturing Company. I left Hartford Monday afternoon, bought the goods Tuesday and returned with my freight in time for breakfast Wednesday morning. Mr. Colt, president of the company, had years before been in trade in Hartford and had had occasion to make one or more trips.



annually to New York. He said he took a sloop from Hartford and was gone about two weeks, "and here is Mr. Hayden who left here Monday afternoon, been to New York, had time there to make his purchases and has returned with his freight and is at his desk at the usual time Wednesday morning." And now, a man can accomplish all I did then by daylight, leaving Springfield, Mass., by rail in the morning and returning the same day; or one can take a steamship and make a trip to Europe and return in the time it required Mr. Colt to make a trip from Hartford to New York less than a century ago. In 1843 I took the cars at Albany on the New York Central to go to Buffalo. The schedule time was twenty-five hours and we were two hours behind time when we arrived there. The speed of railroad travel has been greatly increased in the last fifty-five years.

In these days we occasionally see the motor carriage on our streets and great hopes are entertained for its future. The bicycle which attains a good degree of speed, requires neither horse or steam power to propel it.

There were few factories of any kind in my early day, none within the range of my travels. An almanac of about 1820 gave a boy's account of his visit to the cotton mill in Pawtucket, R. I., only the first verse of which I recall:

Did you ever go down to Pawtucket ?  
Good Lord what a buzzing it makes,  
Like fifty live crabs in a bucket,  
What a darned sight of cotton it takes.

The first protective tariff was not the work of New England statesmen. The great majority of New England people were opposed to it. My father believed that children would be employed in mills, as in the old countries, their education neglected and that the introduction of mills would militate against the then prevailing moral character of the people of New England. But later on when it was found that young children were not sent into the mills, and their education was not being neglected; when capital and labor which had before found employment in shipping and

manning the vessels which once visited the ports of all nations, had been transferred to considerable extent to manufacturing establishments, then New England became an advocate of a protective tariff, and when mills were multiplied and more help was needed to run them, there came those not of New England to occupy the places. By degrees domestic manufactures were superseded by mill-made goods, the domestic spinning-wheel was transferred to the garret and the loom to the wood-pile.

Soon after the close of the Revolutionary War, Dr. Stiles, president of Yale college, convinced by observation and experiments that the culture of silk might be carried on with success and profit in Connecticut, took great pains for the extensive distribution of mulberry seed as the first step towards its manufacture. This seed was sent to eighty ministers in Connecticut to be sown in as many parishes, and within the next forty years this industry became the leading one in many families in Mansfield and adjoining towns. The silk was reeled from the cocoon on the family reel, spun and twisted on the big wheel into sewing-silk, and to guarantee uniformity of length of thread to the purchaser, the legislature made a penalty of seven dollars to sell a skein of sewing-silk of less than forty yards in length.

In 1828 a Congressional committee investigated the business, and in the protective tariff of that year placed a duty of forty per cent. on sewing-silk, and it was believed that henceforth the feeding of silkworms was to be an extensive and lucrative home industry. Marvellous stories were told of the amount of raw silk worth \$16 a pound produced from a single tree of ten-years' growth. In 1831 my father procured and set out on our farm one thousand white mulberry trees.

Later on came the Chinese mulberry, the *morus multicaulis*, with a leaf as big as a cabbage-leaf, which required much less labor to gather the leaves with which to feed the worms.

The Rixford reel, which produced a raw silk that could be worked on machinery, was invented, and to stimulate the growing

of silk the legislature voted a bounty of fifty cents a pound on silk reeled on the Rixford reel and chartered the Connecticut Silk Manufacturing Company of Hartford. Fifteen thousand dollars was appropriated from the bonus of the Exchange Bank of Hartford, \$2,000 of which was to go to Gamalial Gay(?) for his improvements on silk machinery, and the manufacturing company was to pay from the remaining \$13,000 to a silk society to be formed in each county five pounds of white mulberry seed per year for five years, and 100,000 silkworm eggs for five years, and a Rixford reel yearly for the same length of time. The Connecticut Silk Manufacturing Company was organized in Hartford and began work in the spring of 1835, at which time I entered their employ.

One department of their work was to be a filature, to which parties engaged in raising silk were invited to send their cocoons, where they could be reeled with more uniformity than in the family, and consequently be worth more at the mill. As domestic raw silk to supply the mill was still in the future, foreign raw silk was brought here from China at a cost of \$4.50 a pound—only about one-quarter the price named for raw silk in 1831, and the yield per tree suffered a still greater shrinkage.

It fell to my lot to take account of the cocoons brought to the mill and of the amount of raw silk produced from them, and when some woman with one or two grown-up daughters brought half a bushel of cocoons, the result of some portion of their time, picking leaves and feeding worms for six weeks, it was pathetic to see the disappointment manifested when I told them that we reeled the cocoons and paid three dollars a pound for the product and that it took a bushel of cocoons to make a pound. The same parties never came but once.

The beneficiaries of the \$13,000 were all about equally unsuccessful. The manufacturing company ran four or five years and failed, and the white mulberry tree and the *morus multicaulis* proved alike worthless, because other industries paid better

than raising silk in competition with the Chinese, who "lived as well as their neighbors" on a very meagre diet, which cost but a few cents a day, and sent their raw silk into New York at a cost for freight of about one per cent. of its New York value. Thus ended in failure the silk culture as a domestic industry in this country.

Several other silk-mills were started before the collapse of the Connecticut Silk Manufacturing Company, which, profiting in some measure by the experience of the latter, were eventually moderately successful. Among them was the Haskell & Hayden silk-mill in Windsor Locks, which was started in 1838. I came here with the experience gained by three years' service with the silk company at Hartford. We employed less than a dozen grown-up girls and a boy. We paid the most efficient of them two dollars and a half a week, and those whose homes were not in this village paid one dollar and a quarter for board, and we "lived as well as our neighbors." We worked faithfully twelve hours a day. Our stock consisted of China raw silk, which required more skill to wind successfully than had been acquired in this country. Our most expert girls could wind but an average of half a pound a day, making a waste of about seven per cent., or about a dollar's worth of raw silk a week. The quality of our sewing-silk, when sent to the fair of the American Institute in New York in 1839, was awarded the first premium, a gold medal; but, at the end of a little more than two years, without any return for the use of our capital, with two more reductions of the compromise tariff before us, which after 1842 was to be a revenue tariff of twenty per cent. on all importations alike, we deemed it wise to close our mill and send the girls home.

In 1843 a revised tariff offered us some protection, and we again called in our help and put our spindles in motion. There were then several kinds of raw silk on the market from China, India and Turkey. One New York importer sent us several samples, asking us to work them and report the relative value of each

for our use. One of the samples, a bundle of five pounds, wound so readily and with so little waste that I reported all the others of little worth in comparison with the unnamed five pounds, which we afterwards learned was the product of the Rixford reel of which I have already spoken. The Connecticut Silk Manufacturing Company had sent out two of them to China, asking to have silk reeled on them for this market. The port of Canton was then the only one open to foreigners, and there the silk manufacturing industry had been pursued during many generations. Instead of sending the reels back into the country where the silk is raised, they set their skilled workmen to re-wind (re-reel) from the long reeled canton, before sent us, to the Yankee, or Rixford, reel. Their work added to the cost of re-reeled silk was but little compared to its increased value to us. Millions of dollars' worth of the re-reeled silk has since then been sent to this country and to England, and the girls in the Windsor Locks silk-mill now wind from six to ten pounds in a day of ten hours of the same silk they once wound but half a pound in a twelve-hours' day, and do not now make more waste per day than then—a saving in waste equal to the wages of the girls in 1840.

Most of the raw silk sent here from China and Japan is now reeled in filatures on reels similar to the Yankee reel. The other processes in the manufacture of silk are very much facilitated by improved machinery, and the improvement in the dye-house is fully equal to that in the mill. Girls now receive for ten hours' work an average of six dollars a week and pay three dollars a week for board—the price I paid in 1837 for first-class board in Hartford, sitting at the same table with two of Hartford's wholesale merchants and their young brides.

The machinery in cotton, paper and other mills has been greatly improved, the work much facilitated, and the wages of operatives have been increased in like ratio. The implements of the farmer enable him to produce his crops with half the labor required three-fourths of a century ago, and it is evident that

the improved condition of the community, both for the laborer and the capitalist, has been due to the increased facility with which the necessities and luxuries of life are produced through the investments made in mills, machinery, better houses, railroads, etc. Seth Dexter, the mill-owner, who died here in the year 1797, left an estate of \$5,000. Horace Birge once told me that Mr. Dexter was the richest man then in Windsor Locks, but we have now scores of families in the town who came here since I did sixty years ago, with no other capital than their own right arms and a willingness to work, who to-day have capital invested in their own dwellings, and elsewhere, equal in amount to that of Mr. Dexter at the time of his death in 1797. The increased abundance of the present day enables the operatives of the mills of Windsor Locks to live better, to be better housed, better fed and better clothed than the richest of the community were when Mrs. Lamberton returned to the "bread enough and to spare" of her old home in Connecticut four score years ago.

But it is still true, as of old, "the poor ye have with you always." Yet the poor of to-day are still those who are only relatively poor. As a class they have been benefitted by the abundance of the times, in about the same ratio as all others. In our improved conditions we claim as necessities what we once accepted as luxuries, and complain of "starvation wages" which do not enable the unfortunate and the unthrifty to "live as well as their neighbors."

#### FUNERAL CUSTOMS OF FORMER DAYS.

When our friends die we naturally wish to prove our appreciation of them by acceding to the funeral customs of the times, and meeting any expenses incident thereto. The customs of a century ago would now be deemed unbecoming a pauper funeral, and yet friends were as dear and their loss as deeply mourned then as now.

When Seth Dexter of Pinemeadow died about a century ago, the "Burying-Ground" was in Windsor. There had never been a hearse in the town, but the dead were carried on a bier on men's shoulders. The carriers formed in procession and walked before the bier, and from time to time changes were made by the four men at the head of the column stepping aside, while the others passed on till the remains were brought to them, when they took the bier on their shoulders, relieving the others, who took their place at the foot of the procession, to again become bearers when all before them had taken their turn. Mr. Dexter's home was fully five miles from the burying-ground. He was a man of more than average weight, and arrangements were made to have his body carried in a wagon as far as Picketts (Pink street), where a sufficient number of carriers were in waiting, who took the remains on their shoulders, and by frequent changes carried them thence three miles to the grave.

About twenty years later, Herlehigh Haskell of Pinemeadow proposed at the annual school society meeting (which still has charge of the old burying-ground in Windsor) that a hearse be procured for use at funerals. The suggestion shocked the sense of propriety of not a few. One objection urged against it was that if there was no need of their services at funerals there would be less attendance and a lack of proper respect for the dead. But a hearse was in preparation, and so nearly completed that it was used for the first time at the funeral of Peletiah Birge of Pinemeadow, November, 1815. When a death occurred, the neighbors who had horses and wagons tendered their use to the family of the deceased and their relatives for the funeral occasions, that there should be the least possible expense to the family. I have a copy of the probate account of the settlement of the estate of the mother of Esquire Ezra Hayden of Haydens in 1804. The total funeral expenses were less than six dollars. In my early days it was said of a man that I knew that he once charged one of his neighbors for use of his horse and wagon to *attend a funeral*.

When I was about a dozen years old a young man from our neighborhood went down the river and made a home there, thirty or forty miles away. Within a year or two he was drowned, and as many as four adult members of his father's family attended the funeral, and as they did not keep a horse my father tendered the use of his. They were gone three days. When the horse was returned it looked jaded and worn, but no pay was exacted or expected for the use of the horse and wagon.

After a hearse had been in use about forty years and another generation occupied the place of their fathers, a suggestion to have a funeral conducted without a hearse produced a shock hardly less profound than that to have one had on the former generation. After Grove cemetery had been set apart for a burial-place in 1845, the hired man of one of my near neighbors died, and I was asked to conduct the funeral. The services were to be at 10 o'clock in the morning. The night before I was taken sick, and was unable to leave my bed. When the religious services at the house were ended, it was discovered that no hearse was in waiting and that no provision had been made for its coming. The house stood at the cemetery gate, and there were young men present who were able to assist the bearers if necessary, and some one proposed that the remains be taken to the grave (about thirty rods distant) without the hearse. One of our public-spirited and influential young men, L. B. Chapman, protested that it would look like an indignity shown the deceased because he was a poor man.

The custom of having the neighbors furnish the carriages for the family, and the present custom of having the family hire the carriages for themselves and for their neighbors, is about as complete a reversal of the order as possible, and those who practiced the former custom would doubtless have looked upon our present custom in this respect as the degeneracy of the times; possibly would think we had adopted as strange a custom as the ancient eastern one of having hired mourners for our funerals.



No undertaker was seen at funerals. The conductor and bearers were supposed to be in sympathy with the mourners. If the deceased had been a member of the church, the conductor and bearers were church members.

The first time I remember to have seen flowers at a funeral was when my own infant child was buried in 1847—more than half a century ago. My cousin, Martha Haskell, then a young lady of seventeen, bought two rosebuds and placed them in the coffin beside the child. And now flowers occupy a conspicuous place at nearly all funerals, in many instances at a cost to the family or friends greater than that of the whole funeral expenses of Seth Dexter, the richest man in Pinemeadow a century ago.

#### THE STORING OF ICE FOR SUMMER USE.

It is related that the first cargo of ice taken from Fresh Pond, in Cambridge, Mass., by Frederick Tudor, and shipped from Boston to the West Indies, was in the year 1806, and that the same party sent ice to Charleston, S. C., in 1817 and to New Orleans in 1820, and until 1836 there was none shipped from any port except Boston, or by any other party than Mr. Tudor.

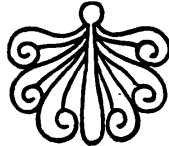
There were no ice-houses at first, but the ice was taken from the pond and placed on board the vessel in winter, which vessel sailed away at once to a people living in a perpetual summer climate. It is believed that the first ice-houses seen in New England were built at Warehouse Point and Windsor Locks, and a sketch of their origin may be of interest to some of my readers. Persons living in sight of the Connecticut river know that it is closed in winter, the ice being of more or less strength as the winter is more or less severe, and sometimes when the river "breaks up" the piles of ice crowded upon the shores prove the almost irresistible power by which it crowds its way towards the sea. A remarkable instance of this was seen here in 1857, when a moderate rise in the river released the ice which had accumulated on the

rapids above us, where it had but little hold on the shore, and where the rapidity of the current hurled it down in broken masses upon the unbroken ice at the foot of the falls, while that was still too strong to be readily moved. The broken ice, resting against the other, choked the flow of water, causing it to rise and set back until the increased pressure caused the whole to move down, breaking up more or less of it to form a still more formidable ice dam below. It was an unusual occurrence when all the ice from Holyoke, 22 miles above, came down upon us before the way was open to the sea. During two or three days the mass repeatedly broke away to make a still more formidable ice dam below, until when about four miles below the Enfield dam it was so high and compact that it set the water back and made a flood at Windsor Locks exceeding that of the unparalleled freshet of 1854, the water standing nine inches deep on the silk mill floor, three inches deeper than in 1854.

On another occasion, forty-five years before, there was a still more eventful break up of the river, when the ice crushed in the basement story of the ferryman's house, which stood where the Medlicott mill now stands, causing the flight of his family in the night to the nearest neighbors, the miller's house, and Mr. Haskell's, where the Memorial hall now stands. There was high water in the river at that time and the unbroken ice which usually rests against the sloping bank of the river and breaks into pieces when crowded up on it, then rested against the perpendicular river bank at Pinemeadow Brook Point, a mile and a half below Memorial hall, when the pressure was so great as to crowd the sheet of ice into the bank, under the frozen earth and the trees in such a mass that it remained until midsummer. This occurred in the winter of 1811-12 (a specially eventful winter for me, that in which I was born). I do not claim that I remember the time, but I do remember that when a lad I heard Mr. Lamberton, one of our neighbors, say that he got ice from that deposit on the Fourth of July to make cold punch for that day's celebration, and I remem-

ber that when my father cultivated that lot twelve or fifteen years later, I assisted in plowing down an elevated spot, which was made by the earth and debris crowded under it by the ice. The distilleries of Warehouse Point and Windsor Locks had been set in operation, but the owners had learned that in converting grain into gin, in the summer time, they were much hindered for want of some cooling process corresponding to the winter's cold, and a skiff load of ice from that buried ice in the river bank suggested a relief from their difficulty, and they set about devising means for securing a supply of ice for the next summer, adopting in part the plan of the original storehouse from which they had learned the value of ice in summer. They built underground ice houses in the side hills. The first ice I ever saw in the summer time (unless I had possibly seen hail stones) was when a lad of about a half dozen summers, I came up to one of the stills with a two-quart tin pail to get some yeast for my mother. (There was a yeast jug at home in which the yeast not wanted for immediate use was set in the spring or by a cord hung in the well). On that visit I saw two men bringing ice from the ice house in a corn basket. Such were the ice houses built by the distillers, and it was considerable time before any were built for domestic use. When I lived in Hartford, 1835-38, there were no ice-carts on the streets, no ice used in first-class boarding houses, and few private families anywhere had ice houses of their own. Senator Hoar of Massachusetts in a recent paper says there was no ice used in Concord for the preservation of food sixty years ago. I have a recent letter from a niece of mine in Charleston, S. C., in answer to my inquiries relative to the use of ice in that city. She obtained the following information through a friend: "Ice was first brought here from Boston in 1847 or 1848; no ice from Maine until somewhere about 1860. Ice carts were first used by Gage & Co. in 1877 or '78" I remember myself when they were first used. Up to that time it was kept in a large room or warehouse in different parts of the city, and everyone who wanted ice had to send a servant for it.

In Windsor Locks, as elsewhere, many families now have refrigerators on their own premises as a matter of both economy and luxury, and ice carts go through the streets three times a week to replenish them. Many of the farmers at the present day find it necessary to have ice houses, and store them with ice in winter, with which to cool their milk in summer, and thereby utilize the product of their dairies through the butter makers at the creamery. Depositories for storing ice in winter for summer use, which were first suggested by that at the mouth of Pinemeadow brook 90 years ago, not of man's contrivance or man's labor, but thrust upon him without man's consent, have been multiplied until they fill the land, and it would be deemed a cause for war if any party should now attempt to take them from us, and leave us as we were eighty years ago.



## SLAVERY IN CONNECTICUT.

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Slavery in Connecticut, as in the Southern states, was legalized previous to 1784, at which time the Connecticut Legislature made provision for its abolition within her own jurisdiction by decreeing that all persons born after that date should be free at the age of twenty-five years. In 1797 the age of their becoming free was changed to twenty-one years. This provided for the gradual abolition of slavery in Connecticut as the old slaves one by one died, and as those born after 1784 reached the age of twenty-five years, and after 1797 at the age of twenty-one years. The law forbidding the freeing of slaves who were liable to become a town charge, was not repealed in 1784, and the owner of worn-out or incompetent slaves could not turn them loose, to become town paupers. There are several permits on file at the town clerk's office in Windsor, given by the civil authorities, justices of the peace and selectmen, authorizing the release of individual slaves and releasing their owners from further responsibility respecting their support.

The following is copied from the original in the town clerk's office:—

To all people to whom this paper may come: Know ye that whereas Doctor Hezekiah Chaffee of Windsor, in the county of Hartford, with his female negro slave, Sarah, have this day applied to the subscribers being the civil authority and selectmen of said town of Windsor requesting their desire that the said Sarah be set at liberty.

Whereupon we have examined into the premises, and do find that the said Sarah is a healthy person, and now in the 34th year year of her age, and to all appearance capable of taking care of herself, also that she is desirous to be set free—Therefore, we do

hereby certify that we are satisfied of the truth of said facts, and do consent that the said Sarah be emancipated, and set free by her said Master.

Dated at Windsor this 15th day of September, 1800.

HEZEKIAH BISSELL,	{	Justices of the Peace.
ISAAC OWEN,		
DANIEL TALCOTT,	{	Selectmen.
EB. F. BISSELL,		

Then followed Sarah's release signed by Hezekiah Chaffee.

There was a case in Windsor, about one hundred years ago, where a slave was liberated, and the owner, Mr. Pinney, did not take the precaution to get the town's consent. The slave removed to East Windsor, where for a time he prospered, but in old age he became poor. John Watson, first selectman of that town, learned by searching the records of Windsor, that he had not legally been freed, consequently Windsor was not responsible for his support, so the poor old negro was turned back upon the Pinney family for support for the rest of his life.

In my boyhood days there was living at Hayden's in Windsor an old negro named George Turrer, who had been a slave in the family of Lawyer Phelps, who lived in the first house below the railroad station at Hayden's. With some assistance from the Phelps family, George had provided for himself a little one-story house at the upper end of Pink street, where he was living with his family in comfortable circumstances. He had a commendable degree of self respect and conducted himself accordingly. He was by profession a butcher, and living at a time when everybody raised their own pork, he did a fair business in this line. He also raised corn "on shares" and worked for the neighbors by the day in summer and chopped wood by the cord in winter.

In those days few country people insured their buildings against loss by fire, and when one was so unfortunate as to suffer loss thereby, a contribution by the neighbors and friends, in large part or fully made up the loss. And when by reason of long

sickness a man's crops were suffering from neglect, the neighbors on a given day gave the sick man "a spell," and gratuitously performed the labor the sick man had been unable to do himself. When I was about a dozen years old, my father sent an older brother and myself with the team to plow out George Turrer's field of corn which he had planted before he was taken sick. The next day his white neighbors gave "a spell" and hoed and put in order his field of corn and he had a crop to gather the next autumn. I have known several of George Turrer's descendants, (but one of whom is now living) and not one of them more worthy of respect than the ex-slave, George.

Tom and Smut were slaves given to my grandmother, Margaret Strong, who married Levi Hayden in 1772. She was a daughter of Return Strong of Windsor and his wife, Sarah Nichols, daughter of Cyprian Nichols of Hartford, who had more slaves than he could afford to keep. He would sell none, but gave them away to his children and grandchildren when they became heads of families. I think Tom and Smut were brother and sister, and about a dozen or fifteen years older than my father, born in 1773. My father related many incidents occurring in Tom's slavery life, but in none did he manifest a livelier interest than when he told us (when I was eight or ten years old) of his meeting Tom on the street in Hartford. He was then living in Farmington. This was fifteen or twenty years after his emancipation. What became of Smut I am not certain, but think she died before the public approved, and the custom became prevalent among owners of slaves to set them free.

Doctor Primus was originally a slave belonging to Doctor Alexander Wolcott, to whom "he acted as body guard, in his visits to his numerous patients, and as assistant in the preparation of his medicine for the sick." Doctor Wolcott was the doctor in Windsor more than fifty years and died in 1795. After Primus was made a free man he removed to the opposite bank of the Connecticut river and was at once recognized as a "Doctor." Some

time after, Primus was called to visit a patient in Poquonock, within the jurisdiction of his old master, and on his way back he called at the door of Doctor Wolcott to say that "I was called to see a sick child of an old neighbor up in Poquonock. I found it to be a very simple case, and said to the mother it was not necessary to send so far for a doctor for you could have done just as well as anybody else."

In those days it was customary for travellers to use their own teams or go on foot, and when one had a vacant seat in his wagon and was going the same way as the foot travellers, custom required that the pedestrians should be taken in and given a ride. It was near the close of Doctor Wolcott's life that a two-wheeled vehicle with a single seat was introduced, and at once adopted by the doctors. Those who went foot said, "It is because the doctors are so sulky that they are unwilling to give us a ride," and the one-seated carriage took the name of "sulky" and so remains to this day. One day Doctor Wolcott was standing at his gate talking with a neighbor, when he saw Doctor Primus driving up the street, and exclaimed in a tone of disgust, "and the nigger doctor has got a sulky too!"

General Newbury, a distinguished citizen of Windsor, had a slave named Mark, a negro of more than average intelligence and ability. His master gave him his freedom and he went to live in Litchfield, where for a time he prospered and was respected. His former master never lost interest in his welfare, and at least once the general and his wife went to Litchfield to visit him and remained there over night. On one occasion, immediately before election time, my Grandmother Haskell, a niece of General Newbury, was at his place on a visit when the general said to his wife, "We must be ready to go to Hartford to election." After he left the room, Mrs. Newbury turned to her guest and said, "Oh dear, I had a great deal rather go out and see old Mark." Towards the close of Mark's days he became poor and the Newbury family gave him pecuniary assistance. General Newbury died in 1814.



His son-in-law, Esq. John Sargent, died in 1829. My father was one of the administrators on the latter's estate, and I remember his visit to Litchfield in the interest of that estate after the death of old Mark, to collect, I think, the balance of some investments made there by the Newbury family for the use of old Mark in his declining days.

It is said that the earliest record of a negro slave in Connecticut is to be found in the inventory of the estate of the second Henry Wolcott of Windsor, who died in 1680, when his negro, Cyrus, was appraised at £30, and 177 years after, old Nance, the slave of Col. James Loomis of Windsor (possibly the last slave in Connecticut) died but half a mile from the home of the first one. Old Nance was born nine years before the act of emancipation was passed, in the family of Hezekiah Bradley of Fairfield. She was given to his daughter, Charlotte Bradley, the wife of Doctor Chaffee, Jr., of Windsor. Nance's mental capacity was below the average, and at no time of her life could she have had her emancipation with the consent of the authorities of the town had her owners wished to free her, but they did not. When my mother, Wealthy Haskell, attended school kept by the younger Sherman, in the Bell schoolhouse at Windsor, about 1790, she boarded at Doctor Chaffee's when Nance was table waiter. When Nance set the table she began: "Dat plate's for Marsa Chaffee, dat's for Missus Chaffee, dat's for Misse Haskell," and so on until she had provided plates for all the family. On the death of Doctor Chaffee in 1820, she was commended to the especial care of his daughter, Abigail, the wife of Col. James Loomis. She considered herself one of the family, made herself useful, and was kindly cared for to the day of her death in 1857. A marble slab marks her grave in the corner of the old cemetery in Windsor.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH.

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### The Old Fording Place Opposite Windsor Locks.

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A recent item in a newspaper regarding the possibility of fording the river at a time of low water, brings to my mind recollections of the ancient ford which was in use long before the establishment of the ferry between Windsor Locks and Warehouse Point. Very many years ago, doubtless more than two hundred, this fording place, the only one in the colony, was discovered and used even after the opening of the ferry in 1783. The earliest story I remember to have heard about it was the experience of a certain party who crossed here about twenty years after the establishment of the ferry, which perhaps could not accommodate them then, or because they preferred the ford to avoid paying ferriage. I had the account from one who participated in it. It occurred over one hundred years ago. A Mr. Wilcox had married a daughter of Edward Griswold of Poquonock. It was not customary then as soon as the marriage ceremony was performed for the married couple like culprits to "Fly far while night shall cover you;" but the next day or the day after they put in an appearance at Mr. Haskell's, with a modest turnout equal to the requirements of the time, consisting of a one-horse chaise, which contained besides the bridal party the bride's outfit, and they asked directions for crossing the ford.

One of Mr. Haskell's grown up boys volunteered to saddle one of the horses and lead the way. When they had reached the "Old Horse Pasture," an island which appears at low water, extending from a few rods below the ferry, near the east shore, extending down more than half the distance between the ferry and

Kettle brook on the west shore, the proper course took the party to the lower end of this island, between which and the east shore was deep water, where Mr. Pynchon anchored his sea-going vessel in 1636. When the bridal party had followed their guide along the island, the man cried, "why can't I go across here?" "No, no, follow me." After following a little farther came the same question and answer. When they had gone farther still, where the distance to the shore was but a few rods, he cried out, "I am going ashore here," and turning his horse he plunged into deep water. The horse was soon swimming and the occupants of the carriage were deep in the water. The guide hastened to the rescue, swam his horse to the lower side of the carriage and prevented its being overturned and all reached shore, a wiser and wetter crowd. The bridal dress and other articles of the outfit were thoroughly saturated with water, the bride was dripping wet to the waist, the groom just as wet and the horse had been entirely submerged. I do not know what the reflections or comments on that occasion were, except that the guide remarked, "I guess next time you will go where I tell you."

Since 1838 I have occasionally seen parties crossing at the ford to save ferriage. More than half a century ago, a two horse team had been sent from some place east of the river to the western part of the state for a load of lime, and on returning the driver thought to save his ferriage by utilizing the ford. His cargo was about a dozen barrels of lime standing on end on a platform wagon. My attention was called to the team when nearly half way to the other shore and I noticed that the driver turned too soon, going directly to the "Old Horse Pasture," which carried him into deep water, when his wagon went out of sight, and the lime barrels stood in water several inches deep. The driver made haste to get to the island where he detached his horses and led them some distance from the wagon, fearing that the lime had got so wet as to slack it, then there would be an explosion. After waiting considerable time and the feared disaster not occurring,

he went back and hitched his horses again to the wagon and drove off at the upper end of the island and went on his way rejoicing, or otherwise.

The last time I crossed the ford was more than thirty years years ago, when I was induced to go by two little boys of about ten years growth, who wanted to wade across the Connecticut river just once. The water was very low and taking the hand of each we entered the ford below the mouth of Kettle brook, and easily waded to the point where we made directly for the "Old Horse Pasture. Then we crossed the channel where the water was so deep and the current so strong the boys would hardly have kept their feet under them if they had not clung to me. We crossed to the other shore and returned in safety, but I could not have been induced to try the same feat again. Capt. Abbe tells me that Ben Pease of Warehouse Point was accustomed to ford the river to save paying ferriage still later on, and on one occasion Father Smith seeing Mr. Pease driving off at the ford, thought he could ford the river also, and driving on to the island he turned across towards the west shore, about where he had first seen Mr. Pease, but before he had reached the channel persons from this side had to go to his assistance, or both he and his horse would have been drowned. Fording the river at even its lowest stage gave me a greatly increased appreciation of the volume of water the "Long River," the Connecticut, bears to the sea in its ceaseless flowing tide.

Since beginning the above sketch the question has occurred to me: Were not the ferry and ford both necessary 117 years ago? In 1783 when the ferry franchise was granted there could not have been at low water depth enough to have floated a ferry boat large enough to carry a loaded team between the west shore and the channel, more than half the whole distance. Before my day a stone wharf had been built out from the west shore to the channel, high enough for foot passengers, when the water in the river was not deep enough for the ferryboat, and a gravel knoll

was built at the end of the wharf on which to drop the apron of the ferryboat. In time of low water the ferryboat stopped there, and from there the teams forded the river to the west shore, and the passengers walked dry shod on the wharf. There was comparatively little crossing in those early days and the improvements which had been made before my day could hardly have been made in the very early years of the ferry. If my theory is right, the ford was still a necessity after the ferry franchise was granted.



## AN OLD TIME SUNDAY.

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In a recent issue of a city paper is related the grievous experience of a Hartford clergyman, for whom no train was in waiting between the hours of 10 a. m. and 3 p. m. one Sunday.

About a hundred years ago Lemuel Welch was tything man in Windsor. One Sunday he stopped a carriage which was passing his house on the road. When some one from within called to the driver to know what he had been stopped for, he replied, "There is a man here that won't let me go on." The door of the carriage was thrown open, and a man in military uniform, with a drawn pistol, looked out but without intimidating the tything man, who said, "I've seen a bigger gun than that, sir; I've been in the Revolutionary war, sir. You can't go this way to-day." The traveler after parleying, went back about a quarter of a mile to Chief Justice Ellsworth, who was then a Connecticut magistrate, and reported himself a United States military officer under orders to report at Boston without delay. The magistrate gave the traveler under United States authority a pass, and Mr. Welch's authority was set aside, much to that official's chagrin. The next morning he called on the judge for an explanation, asking, "What kind of a net is that which catches all the little fish and lets the big fish go through?" declaring he would never again execute the office of tythingman, and he never did. Later on it became known that a person could travel through Windsor on Sunday with impunity, and the leading men in the community, with Judge Ellsworth at their head, declared that it must be stopped.

This effort to restore the efficiency of a Sunday law which had been waived for the accommodation of a single individual, was told me by the late Herlehigh Haskell of Windsor Locks. The constable, Levi Hayden, my grandfather, was instructed to

arrest the first violater of the law. He had not long to wait before a party, evidently not on a mission of necessity or mercy, drove past the meeting house, and had gone considerable distance before the constable had received the necessary papers, and with his posse, got their horses saddled. Then began the chase, and as in other cases later on, if the pursuers did not overtake the party before reaching Pickett's at Hayden's (three miles) where the highway entered the plains, five miles from Suffield, the pursuers took the road to Pinemeadow, and out through North street to the old country road, to intercept the party before they got to Suffield, out of the jurisdiction of the Windsor officers. But the sanctity of the Sabbath was not restored, for the public complained because the pursuers "broke the Sabbath worse than the pursued." This ended the enforcement of the Sunday law as applied to Sunday travelers in Windsor. I have not known an arrest in my day. There is a tradition that, when later on, Congress passed an act establishing a Sunday mail, that in Farmington the passengers in a Sunday mail stage were stopped, but the mail stage under United States authority was allowed to proceed.

It is admitted that there were violations of the Sunday laws in my early days. So there were then as now, violations of every law on the statute book from petty theft to murder. But then the "hole" at Newgate sufficed to hold all the state prisoners in Connecticut and the Sunday laws were kept as well as others. I recently read in the files of the Hartford Courant, December 4, 1826, an account of the trial trip of the first steamboat above Hartford, the "Barnet." "Next day she passed Willimanset Falls, then waited till the day appointed for the Massachusetts Thanksgiving should be over and proceeded to Northampton Friday morning." In those days our pastor at Windsor always read with emphasis a clause attached to the governor's Thanksgiving and Fast Day proclamations, "all servile labor and vain recreation on said day by law forbidden." And good citizens as a rule observed that law in Massachusetts as in Connecticut.

Several years ago, some time after there were street cars in Hartford, I learned in the columns of the Hartford Courant, that there was a petition in circulation, signed by numerous worthy citizens, one a clergyman, to "have a car run from the Hill Sundays for the accommodation of the church-going people." A friend of mine said at the time, that if the street cars were suffered to run on that plea, the result would be that there would be ultimately ten passengers on the Sunday cars, on the way to a picnic, or for some unlawful purpose, to one on the way to or from church.

For several years after the building of the railroad between Hartford and Springfield, there were no cars running on Sunday. But about twenty-five years ago I attended the annual meeting of the stockholders of the road, when an old gentleman from Darien protested vigorously against the running of cars on the Sabbath. The officials of the road said that freight was brought to the road and the road would be responsible if it was not forwarded Sunday to its destination. A few years since the Congregational church of Windsor Locks sent a protest to the officers of the road against their increasing Sabbath desecration in our midst, disturbing the quiet of our Sabbath worship, a right which, by inheritance and law, we were entitled to. The president replied that he should be obliged to disturb us more in the future, and kindly reminded us that, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

Not many years ago the railroad applied to the Legislature to modify the Sunday law as applicable to their work, and this petition was granted, leaving the law intact between 10 a. m. and 3 p. m. on Sunday. Soon after this modified law was passed, a minister from another state said to me that a reaction had already set in on the question of the observance of the Sabbath, and said that a law had been passed in this state that trains could not run between 10 o'clock in the morning and 3 o'clock in the afternoon. I told him that the law had before applied to the whole day for



railroads, the same as to workmen on the public highway, in their own fields or in the mills.

And now a bill has passed in the present Legislature (1899) repealing what was before left of the law, and a distressing case is cited in support of the bill—that of a clergyman in Hartford, who had a pressing call on Sunday to take a train at Springfield that afternoon for the West. “No train left Hartford until 6.50 in the evening, but he must go. So he took a trolley to Windsor and then went to a livery stable and hired a conveyance to take him to Thompsonville, and there he took another trolley and made his way into Springfield in time.” Is it the object of the bill to relieve only individuals in such straits as this reverend gentleman? It certainly is not the purpose of the railroad company to run Sunday cars for a single fare, but, like the trolley cars which take the church-goers to and from Asylum Hill to Main street, to take passengers from outside who are going elsewhere for other purposes and to make business profitable. We can now go farther in one day than we could in a week in my boyhood days. Why cannot travelers afford to keep Sunday now as then? The same amount of labor in mills and most other occupations will now accomplish twice as much as then. Why cannot the community afford to keep Sunday now? If the stockholders of the railroads and trolley lines can make it profitable to hire men to work for them Sunday, why may not mill owners ask the same relaxing of the law in their behalf? And, if the progress of the last half century is to continue how long will it be before the Connecticut Sunday laws will be swept from the statute book? And when the majority of the community labor on seven days in the week, the minority will be obliged to labor also or not “live as well as their neighbors.”

The civil authorities in France “abolished the Sabbath” about 100 years ago. A half century later, a friend of mine had occasion to visit London and Paris, and reported on his return, “that the observance of the Sabbath did for London what it required thousands of soldiers to do for Paris.”

## HISTORICAL SKETCH.

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### The Old County Milestones.

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An inquirer of Suffield asks: "Who set the red sandstones about three feet high, oval top, marked 'H. C.,' beside our main highway, one marked '16 m?' Three of said stones are still to be seen in this town."

When "Inquirer" and I were boys, everybody knew that these milestones told the distance from each stone to Hartford. In 1787 the legislature of Connecticut ordered that "towns shall set up milestones on mail routes, marking distances from the county towns, at the expense of the towns."

I have the authority of the late Herlehigh Haskell for saying that these milestones—at least, those in Suffield and Windsor—were set during the time the Hon. Gideon Granger of Suffield was Postmaster-General of the United States in 1802, and by his order probably here and elsewhere within the jurisdiction of Connecticut, under the statute of 1787. When the highway from Hayden's through Windsor Locks to Suffield was opened in 1815, Mr. Haskell set the milestones on that road at his own expense. If my memory serves me rightly, I was told that this great mail route between New York and Boston had milestones set, by order of the same official, the whole distance. These stones were all standing in Windsor so long as the mail stage travelled this route, since which a generation has arisen among whom are individuals "who knew not Joseph," and have indulged in a spirit of vandalism, mutilating or entirely destroying these once-respected milestones. But about half a dozen remain in Windsor and three in Suffield. The statute says that these stones shall mark the distances from the county towns, and the pivotal point of the county towns was the court-house.

The oval-top stone in Suffield, marked "H. C. 16 m.," is doubtless intended to be read "Sixteen miles to Hartford Court-House."

When "Inquirer" and I were a little more than a half century younger, the old state-house in Hartford was not known as the state-house, but the "Court-House"—perhaps because of the relation it bore to all milestones in the county.

The stage route, in the time of Postmaster-General Granger, passed through Hayden's and on across the plains. A distance of five miles lay between the last house at Hayden's and the first house on Christian street, Suffield. These plains were thought so noteworthy by Gen. Washington, who crossed them in his private carriage, October 11, 1789, that he entered in his journal: "Between Windsor and Suffield you pass through a level, barren, uncultivated plain for several miles;" and there were no milestones then.

These milestones, once so useful, standing beside the road through storm and sunshine, telling the stranger (and there were many strangers on the road besides those who traveled on the mail stage—not a few propelled by the tramp's locomotive, others by a dull, or faster horse, at an average speed of five to seven miles an hour), at the end of every mile how great a distance lay between him and his destination.

The milestone at Hayden's was more elaborately inscribed than the others, viz.:

"10 MILES TO  
HARTFORD C. H.  
120 MILES TO BOSTON,  
130 MILES TO NEW YORK."

Alas! this famous milestone was wantonly destroyed by boys, who had no appreciation of its historic value, so long ago that it requires an effort of the memory to tell the story.

## INDIAN GRAVES.

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This sketch was written in 1872, and was printed in *The Advertiser*, a newspaper published in Windsor Locks at that time.

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In the summer of 1871 two Indian skeletons were found by Mr. P. Malone, in the sand bank on South street, opposite the house of Mr. Prouty. There was an unusual number of charms or valuables in the way of trinkets found with them, and it is much to be regretted that a more careful examination of the position of the skeletons, and the disposition of the treasures could not have been made. From the account given by Mr. Malone, I think the bodies must have been buried in a sitting posture, and were about five feet apart. Copper beads were found with one of the skeletons, and sea shells with the other. From the number of rare trinkets found, I conclude that these are the remains of chiefs, or distinguished individuals.

In a former article I said that I believed there were no Indians living within the limits of Windsor Locks at the time of the first settlement of Windsor by the English, but the copper beads afford strong proof that one at least was buried after the Indians had intercourse with Europeans, because the Indians known to the first settlers of New England had not the art of working metals. Recent discoveries on the south shore of Lake Superior prove that the copper mines were worked centuries before the discovery of America. Good authorities think these mines were worked by the Indians, when less degraded than our fathers found them, and so long ago that even the western Indians had no traditions respecting them, or of the mounds which abound at the West, in which copper wristlets or bracelets have been found with the human remains there buried. But it is believed that the burials made in the mounds at the West were made at an earlier

day than were those found in similar mounds or burrows in England, known to have been made more than 1,800 years ago. I find no evidence that copper beads have ever been found in the mounds referred to. These beads may have been procured from the French in Canada, or the Dutch in New York, or from early traders who landed on the eastern coast of Massachusetts with beads and other trinkets to barter for furs brought in by the Indians. Only nine of these beads fell into my hands, and at least two or three times as many were found, most of them by boys who knew little of their value as relics. One man told me that when he learned his boy had a lot of beads and things found where the Indians were buried, he told him to go and throw them away, and threatened severe punishment if he ever went there again. Not one of these could be recovered afterwards. Another article found was a flat stone four inches long, and one inch wide, with two small holes through it. This is supposed to have been used in the process of making fish nets. The first Englishmen visiting the Connecticut river found wild hemp growing here, and from this article it is supposed the Indians contrived to make ropes and twine for their fish nets. Alewives and other fish were so plenty in the river that we can readily believe, that with such nets as Indians could make, they could have supplied themselves from the abundance of fish then found in all the streams.

There was also found one long, glazed and twisted bugle or bead, and three not glazed, with holes through their length; also a shorter glazed one. These were made from a kind of pottery, and are probably of European manufacture, and came from Canada, but may have been made by Indians, for even the New England Indians were able to make a coarse kind of pottery for their cooking pots, porringers, etc. This art was carried to a higher degree of perfection by the Indians of the southwest. There is also one round bone head about an inch in diameter, and a small piece of plumbago or black lead. Was it to be used for war paint in the spirit land?

Five small sea shells about three-fourths of an inch long were saved, and a larger number were shoveled out with the sand. This variety of shell is not found nearer than the southern coast of the United States. They were probably obtained through Indian traffic, far fetched and highly prized. There were three or four very rare articles named by the Hon. J. H. Trumbull, whistles, but one survived the tests applied to them by their finders, the others were broken to pieces. I found some fragments of one which was made of pottery. The one secured is of stone, six inches long, a little more than one in diameter, with a hole through its length, one end of which is as large as it could well be made tapering to the other end, where the opening would hardly admit the end of a pipe stem. By placing the open end in the palm of the hand and blowing into the other end, a shrill blast is sounded which could be heard a great distance through the forest. A stone arrow head and two tomahawks, or stone axes, were also found. The arrow heads need no description, as they are often found in any of our cultivated land and most persons have seen them. These were fastened to the end of their arrows and were often lost in the chase and war. There were probably skilled workmen who made them. When we consider the Indians had no metal tools to work with, and that these arrow heads were made of the hardest stone, we know it must have required much practice to break them out in the desired shape. After the Europeans came, the Indians by degrees procured guns and gradually the manufacture of stone arrow heads became a lost art. It is said there is not a tribe in America which can now furnish a craftsman who can make one of these common articles of the "stone age." Tomahawks or stone axes are frequently found, several have before been found near the same place. They were used as a weapon of war, and in the hands of a stalwart Indian must have been formidable. They are of various sizes, some of them weighing as much as our ordinary axes, the smallest not one-fourth as much. Instead of an eye in which to fasten the

helve or handle as we do, the stone axe has a groove around the outside, around which a withe is wound, the two ends of the withe brought together and tied to each other, forming the helve or handle. Schoolcraft describes a tomahawk made crescent shape, with an eye through it to receive the helve, but if this had been common in Connecticut, we should sometimes find them. This was not only used in war, but was one of the most important tools the Indians possessed. It was of no more use to the Indian for cutting hard wood than it would be to us, and he had no other tools for that purpose. When an Indian wanted to cut a forest tree for a canoe, or a palisade, he built a small fire at the roots of a tree and then cut away the charred wood with the stone axe. This process was repeated again and again until the tree fell. By the same slow tedious method the fallen tree was cut into the lengths wanted for a palisade, a fort, or a canoe. Their canoes were hollowed out by the same process, repeated over and over until the task was completed. The making of a large canoe was a great work. The axes were made of various sizes, to furnish tools corresponding to the strength of the workers, most of whom were women and children.

Poets tell us that these untutored Indians buried with their dead the things they prized while living, for their use in the spirit land. Perhaps so, and yet possibly they were prompted by the same feeling which leads us to strew with our choicest flowers the graves of those we love.

I am told that a skeleton was dug up near where these were found a few years since. Whether any love tokens were buried with it I presume the man who found it took no pains to learn. Thirty years ago a man digging moulding sand on the brow of the hill a few rods southwest of the lower lock of the canal, found a skeleton. About 1856 this town found it necessary to protect the river bank where the river was encroaching upon the road, near the house of the late J. R. Osborn. The earth used in sloping the bank preparatory to covering it with

stone, was taken from the road at a point seldom covered by a freshet. There were about a dozen graves found. I doubt if any one looked for relics. In my boyhood days, one of my father's hired men found an Indian skeleton which had been exposed by the breaking of the river bank about thirty rods below the mouth of Pine Meadow brook. With it he found a little copper kettle or pail. I remember it was somewhat corroded on one side, and would have held when whole two or three gills. The proof that the burial in this case was after the Indians had intercourse with Europeans is of the same character as that afforded by the copper beads. The Pilgrim Fathers found copper kettles among the Indians which had been brought from the French in Canada.

More than half a century ago a skeleton was dug up at Fort Hill, a little west and north of the house of Eli Horton. This conical hill was said to have been an Indian fort. The peculiar form of the hill may have suggested the tradition. But Fort Hill and its garrison have melted away and passed into history. Fort Hill is scattered throughout the village, and in every mud hole of its roads, and not a relic of it marks the spot where it stood, or tells that it ever existed. The Indians who once defended it occasionally whisper to us through the shells, the whistles, and the implements of toil and war, which were laid beside them in their graves.

It will be observed by those who know the localities I have named, that the Indians chose the banks of the river or the brow of a hill for their burial places.





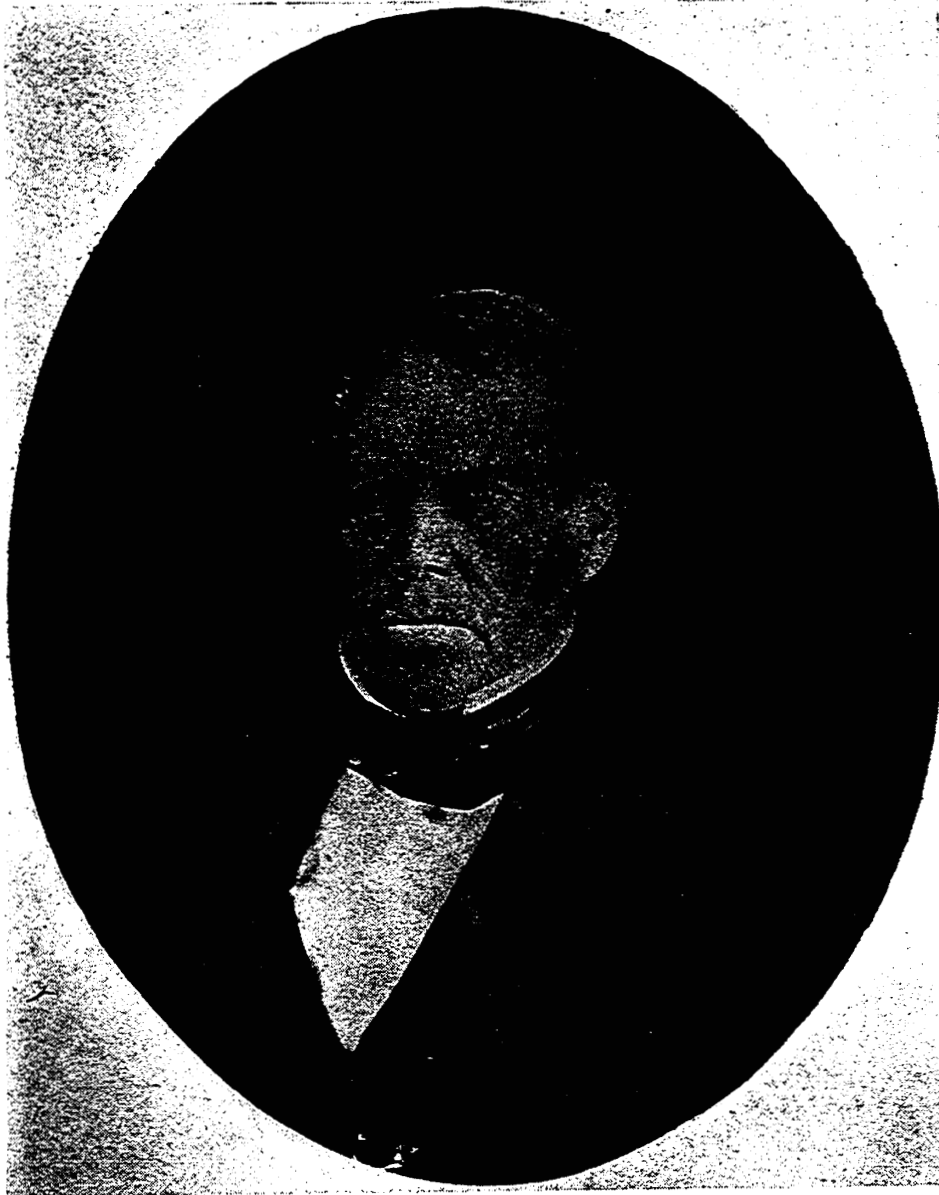
## CHURCH HISTORY.

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The Congregational church of Windsor Locks is a direct offshoot of the Congregational church at Windsor, the oldest Puritan church in New England, organized at Plymouth, England, in 1630, by a goodly company of men, women and children, who had come together from adjoining counties. On a day set apart by fasting and prayer, and while awaiting the sailing of the ship that was to take them to New England, they, with the assistance of Rev. Mr. White, the Puritan minister of the English church at Dorchester, England, organized a church. Two of their number, Rev. John Warham and Rev. John Maverick, were installed as pastor and teacher. On the 20th of March, 1630, pastor, teacher, church and people, set sail, and arrived in New England, May 30th of the same year, "having," says Captain Clap, one of their number, "preaching or expounding of the word of God every day for ten weeks together."

Soon after Governor Winthrop with many others of the Massachusetts company arrived and settled in and around Boston. This was ten years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, and two years after the settlement of Salem. Our company settled at Dorchester and remained there five years. Then Mr. Warham, (Mr. Maverick having died) with his church and people removed to Windsor, where the church remains to this day, the oldest evangelical church in New England, and the oldest in America except one, the Reformed Dutch church in New York city, organized in 1628. The Plymouth and Salem churches of earlier organization than the Windsor church have long since entered the Unitarian fold.

While Windsor Locks was included within the parish of Windsor we were a part of that church and people, and her history is ours down to our separate organization in 1844. A change in the location of the meeting-house produced so much



HARRIS HASKELL

- Born Sept. 8, 1782.  
Died April 29, 1849.

dissatisfaction that a new church and society was organized on the north side of the river in the present town of Windsor. This occurred in 1761, and the separation continued until 1794, when a reunion took place, and the present meeting-house in Windsor was built by the united societies.

Except during the thirty-three years from 1761 to 1794, Pine Meadow, now Windsor Locks, was included in the first society down to 1844—the time of the organization of this church.

In those days there were less than twenty houses within the present limits of Windsor Locks, scattered from the Birge place on North street to the Jacob Russell house below the pumping station on Center street, the Gaylord place west of the meadow, the Haskell house, (at Memorial hall) and the Denslow house at the ferry. There was a schoolhouse at the corner of Center and Elm streets, where the Rev. Mr. Rowland, pastor of the Windsor church, occasionally held a preaching service, and as early as 1820 a neighborhood meeting held there once in two weeks conducted by Dea. Eleazur Gaylord, assisted by Herlehigh Haskell, who read the sermon.

Three members of the church, who had come down from the Revolutionary era, were still living—three eminently godly women—the widow of Seth Dexter, the widow of Jabez Haskell, and the widow of Eleazur Gaylord. Not less than twenty of their descendants are or have been members of this church—two sons, two daughters, seven grandchildren, and nine of a later generation, besides a much greater number who have united with other churches. Mrs. Dexter died in 1830, aged 87. Mrs. Haskell lived to witness the revival of 1833, which numbered among its converts two of her sons and a goodly number of her neighbors and friends. She died in 1833, aged 85. Mrs. Gaylord died in 1839, aged 84.

In 1829 the canal had been completed, and Asa B. Woods came here from Hartford to take charge of it. He was a professor of religion, as was his wife, who came from Clinton, N. Y.

Both united with the church in Windsor. Deacon Gaylord had previously removed to Amherst, Mass.

In 1831 several Christian women, who held a prayer-meeting for women only, talked of the expediency of opening a Sabbath school. With a good deal of persuading, Mr. Woods consented to serve as superintendent. A Sunday-school was organized at the schoolhouse, May 1, 1831, with A. B. Woods for superintendent. The teachers were Mrs. Herlehigh Haskell, Mrs. A. B. Woods, Miss Eliza Denslow, Miss Harriet Dexter, Charles H. Dexter and O. M. Nelson. The school was held after the afternoon service at Windsor, from which Sabbath-school library books were brought. It has been continued without interruption to the present time, sixty-nine years.

Ezekial Williams, who had so far pursued the study of theology as to entitle him to a license to preach, and who had labored a brief time as a missionary in western New York, came here in the employ of his brother, Samuel Williams, who built the first paper mill here, now the Anchor mill, and in the winter of 1832-3 volunteered to conduct an additional Sunday service at the schoolhouse for those who had no means of conveyance to Windsor. Soon after, in the spring of 1833, Mr. Danforth of Hartford, who was engaged in manufacturing here, became interested in the revival which resulted in the organization of the Fourth church, Hartford; and, largely through the influence of himself and Mr. Williams, an evangelist from the state of New York, a Mr. Curry, who had been laboring at Hartford, came here to hold a "four-days' meeting." The result was a very general religious awakening and several hopeful conversions. Mr. Danforth failed in business, and both he and Mr. Williams removed from the place soon after.

Then the question arose: Was it not the duty of those who had been accustomed to attend public service at Windsor to remain and participate in the services here? The question was submitted to the Association, which met at Suffield in August,

1833, which recommended the continuance of the meetings, except on communion Sabbaths.

The next year a chapel was built in front of the present church edifice, and, from that time until the organization of the church, the desk was usually supplied by the senior class or the professors of the Theological Institute, then at East Windsor Hill, with the exception of the year 1841-2, when the Rev. Mr. Hemenway supplied. This chapel is still standing on Main street.

In 1844 it was decided to organize a church. A council was called and those who proposed to become members of the new church met at the house of Mr. Dexter to agree upon articles of faith and a covenant, to be laid before the council. Eleven of us from the old church in Windsor and two from Poquonock laid our letters of dismission and commendation before them and were by the council constituted a Congregational church to continue the work here which had been the charge of the mother church from the coming of Henry Denslow in 1662.

The church was organized February 28, 1844. The original members were Herlehigh Haskell and Arathusa his wife, Asa B. Woods and Elizabeth his wife, Charles H. Dexter and Lydia his wife, Silvia Dexter, widow of Seth, Betsey Fish, wife of Luke, Eliza and Mary A. Pickett and Jabez H. Hayden from the Windsor church, Oliver Hawley and Anna his wife from Poquonock, Myron S. Webb from the First church of Bennington, Vt., and Miss Hannah Allen from Barre, Mass. Eleven from Windsor and four from other churches. The two last failed to receive their letters before the meeting of the council but were admitted at the first communion. The population of the village was at that time estimated at 250 to 300.

I have the original deed, given February 20, 1769, to "Ephraim Haskell and Seth Dexter of Rochester, in the County of Plymouth and Province of Massachusetts Bay in New England," for the consideration of "three hundred and forty pounds money" (\$1700) all the land from about Grove street on

the north to School street on the south, and from the Connecticut river on the east to Center street on the west, "containing about 160 acres more or less (\$10 62½ per acre), with a saw-mill standing on the same." This comprises nearly all the business portion of Windsor Locks to-day and the four church edifices wherein a gospel ministry holds forth the word of life to the nearly three thousand people of this village. This purchase by Haskell and Dexter was made for their sons, Seth Dexter, Jr., who, with his wife, Deborah Haskell, a daughter of Ephraim, came up here in 1770, and Jabez Haskell, son of Ephraim, took a wife here, Elizabeth Bissell of Hayden's, Windsor. Haskell at first lived in a house at the west end of the cemetery, once occupied by Samuel Denslow, deceased, grandson of the first Henry. Within half a dozen years Mr. Haskell built the house which was removed a few years since to make room for Memorial hall.

There were three leading men here from my earliest recollection. They were Seth Dexter and Herlehigh and Harris Haskell, sons of the first Haskell and Dexter who came here in 1770. They were born and reared here, held all the original purchase, with the exceptions before mentioned, together with the grist-mill, built 1784, and the distillery, built by H. & H. Haskell where the silk-mill now stands. Mr. Dexter was the eldest, being past 60 when I came here, in 1838. He had a fine manly form, six foot tall, and was of a retiring disposition, interested in public affairs, but neither wishing for nor accepting any political preferment. A Puritan of the Puritans, like his cousins, Herlehigh and Harris, his Sabbath began at sundown Saturday and ended at the same hour next day. I knew of one occasion when on Saturday he was to drive to East Granby to carry home a dressmaker, he gave orders to have the passenger ready in time for him to go and return before sundown. He always worked in harmony with the Haskells; was one with them in building the chapel in 1834, and liberally contributed in sustaining the services at the chapel to the day of his lamented death in 1841. He was a good man,

above reproach in every relation of life he sustained. He was 64 years of age when his death occurred, which was three years before the organization of this church.

Another man of like spirit was Harris Haskell, whose name stands first on the roll after the original members. My estimate of his character may be unduly biased by partiality. He was a much-loved brother of my mother, and I learned to love him with a child's devotion, a love and honor which increased with increasing years. He had an imposing presence, a calm dignity united with a cheerful smile and winning voice, which attracted the children and secured the respect and esteem of all he met. He paid more for the erection of the chapel, and also more for our first church edifice, than any other man, and when on his deathbed (1849) he called Charles H. Dexter to him, and they made plans for the payment of the \$1,600 debt remaining—one-half of it to be paid from his estate. To no man's opinion respecting any measure proposed for the benefit of this church and people was more deference paid than to his. He was always in his place at prayer-meeting. He was a fine singer, and I think all who heard Harris Haskell lead us in prayer will agree with me that no man could so reverently and so humbly bear us and our needs to the throne of grace. His patient submission to all God's will concerning him during his last sickness, especially the last night of his life, was characteristic of the man—when, though suffering much bodily pain, his mind was calm and not a shadow seemed to obscure his faith. His age was 66.

Immediately after the organization of this church, Asa B. Woods was appointed deacon, and remained sole deacon until his death, ten years after. He died at the age of 60. His was a more impulsive character, but he labored harmoniously and earnestly with his brethren, and was highly esteemed for his work's sake, and his sudden death by paralysis was a great loss to this church and was deeply lamented.

In 1846, when the membership had increased to twenty, Rev.

Samuel H. Allen was called to the pastorate, which he held with great acceptance for sixteen years. During that time 113 were added to the membership, 36 dismissed to other churches, 14 died, and two were excommunicated— a gain of 61. It was during that pastorate that the revival of 1858 occurred, when the membership of this church was doubled. Not less than eleven of the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the aforesaid three “mothers in Israel” were among the converts. In 1863 Mr. Allen resigned, broken in health.

During the revival of 1858 (the public exercises of which he was unable to participate in because of infirmity), Herlehigh Haskell died. His name stands first on our records, as he was at the time the oldest. He was three years younger than Seth Dexter, and Harris Haskell six. These brothers built the distillery several years before their father’s death, at a time when the general sentiment of the community was well expressed by their pastor, Rev. Mr. Rowland, when he said he was “very glad the Messrs. Haskell had gone into the business; it would make a market for the farmers’ grain.” But twenty-four years after, when the public interest was aroused to stem the tide of intemperance, and the religious sentiment of the community protested against the manufacture of alcoholic spirits, they closed the doors on a lucrative business, never to be opened again for the purpose for which it was built. Herlehigh Haskell was a man of great energy, a strong mind and good judgment. He seemed to have an intuitive opinion already formed on almost any subject. It was said of him that he would give a well-considered answer impromptu to almost any question. He was a good counselor, and his advice always tended to peace. He exerted a wise and salutary influence in this church from its organization to the day of his death—1858. He was the oldest male member at its organization, and left by will \$2,000 for a fund. He was for a time a trustee of the Theological Institute, now of Hartford, and left that institution, his residuary legatee, \$7,000. He died in the house where he was



born, having never lived elsewhere. During his early childhood there was no other house save the Dexter house (still standing) east of Center street and north of Elm street, and but eight or nine houses within the present limits of the town, and the church was four miles away. He lived to see a thriving village grow up around him and a church before his own door. There were no one-horse road-wagons in use when he was a boy. Could he have been told, in those boyhood days, that he would live to see highways on all sides, business and pleasure carriages of novel construction, beautiful in design and finish, drawn by petted horses trained to speed, and that before his own door there would run a great thoroughfare shod with steel, over which hundreds of travelers passed daily in gorgeous carriages in long procession, drawn by iron steeds breathing fire and smoke, hasting on with the speed of the wind, while lightning dashed before them to herald their coming from city to city—surely it would have seemed to him as marvelous and as brilliant as a page from the Arabian Nights.

Charles Haskell Dexter, son of Seth, like the generation which preceded him, was born, bred and died here, and from childhood he also attended church at Windsor, and with others united with it, soon after the revival of 1833, when 23 years of age. Ten years later he was one of and (except myself) the youngest of the male members that brought letters to the council at the time our church was organized, 1844. Mr. Dexter was by occupation a manufacturer. He built and ran successfully the Dexter paper mill until the day of his death. He was treasurer of the Ecclesiastical society from the first, and never let the pastor's salary remain in arrears a single day. He was associated with the Sunday-school from the opening session (1831) either as superintendent or teacher, and was a leading member of the choir. His talent for leadership was discreetly exercised and was cheerfully recognized by his brethren. On him devolved the larger share of the personal supervision and labor attending the affairs

of this church and society. He was elected one of the deacons on the death of Deacon Woods, 1854, and served till his death, 1869.

Mr. Hawley was the next to die, at the age of 71, in 1870. He had less pecuniary means, and his occupation as a mechanic gave him less time or means to devote to the temporal affairs of the church, but while he was able he was regular in his attendance at the prayer-meeting and the Sabbath service. He was a useful member of the church, loved and respected by all.

Mr. Webb did not receive his letter from the church in Bennington, Vt., in time to lay it before the council, but united with the church at its first communion. He was appointed to the office of deacon, made vacant by the death of Mr. Dexter. He was a farmer by occupation. His quiet habit of life and his greater distance did not favor so active a participation in the direction of the church's affairs as some others, but he always did well whatever devolved on him, and was esteemed for his candor and abilities. He died in 1871, aged 61.

Of the original and early female members of this church I have only room to say that they were worthy co-laborers with the brethren in the early years of the church, and with those brethren are entitled to grateful remembrance by the present generation.

Sabbath services have always begun at 10.30 a. m.; afternoon services usually at 2 p. m. At present the Sabbath services are at 10.30 a. m. and 6.30 p. m. The weekly prayer-meeting has been sustained since the organization of the church, as it had been some time before. At the breaking out of the war of the Rebellion, 1861, a weekly prayer-meeting for the soldiers was established and maintained through the war.

Our church furnished four soldiers to the army: S. W. Skinner, surgeon of First Conn. Heavy Artillery; Captain Rowland Burbank, of the same regiment; Captain S. S. Hayden, of Twenty-fifth Conn., who fell at the battle of Irish Bend, Louisiana, 1863,



Born Sept. 19, 1810.  
Died Aug. 29, 1869.

CHARLES HASKELL DEXTER

and William DeWitt, of the Seventh Conn., who fell at an assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina, 1863. Maj. Joseph Converse, who fell at Cold Harbor, 1864, and several others, belonged to our congregation.

When I came here, in 1838, the desk in the chapel was supplied by the Senior class of the Theological seminary at East Windsor. Individuals pledged a given sum per week, from which the students were paid \$3 per Sabbath. A pastor was called in 1846, and the same year a new house of worship was commenced, the first cost of which was \$5,000, of which sum \$1,600 remained a debt until 1849. During the sickness of Harris Haskell, he urged the importance of paying the debt at once, and left directions that half of it should be paid from his estate. The balance was subscribed by other members, and since that day, 1849, the cost of any new enterprise has been subscribed before the expense was incurred. We at first paid \$500 salary to our pastor; this sum was increased in 1853 to \$600, and 1867 it had reached \$1,200, and the use of the parsonage. From 1874 on we paid at the rate of \$1,300. We pay now (1900) \$1,500 and the use of the parsonage.

An organ was purchased in 1852 at a cost of \$1,000, paid by subscription. The parsonage was bought in 1866 at a cost, with improvements, of over \$4,000, and was furnished in 1869 at a cost of \$1,000. In 1875 a barn was built.

The church edifice was destroyed by fire in the year of 1877. Repairs were being made, and fires kept up in the furnaces day and night, and at 5 o'clock a. m., January 3, the fire broke out. When first discovered, it had burned through into the vestibule directly over one of the furnaces, from which the fire doubtless originated. We received \$11,500 from the insurance companies, and raised by subscription enough more to erect and furnish a new house, at a total cost of \$23,000. Of this sum \$2,500 went for the organ. First services in chapel, Sunday, October 14, 1877. Dedication services, November 22; sermon by Rev. Dr.

Burton of Hartford. While the new building was being erected a Bible service and Sunday-school was held in Mather's hall in the morning, and a preaching service in the afternoon at the Methodist church.

The half-century anniversary of the church was adjourned from February 28, and was celebrated March 28, 1894, when a very interesting gathering was held, attended by many former pastors and members who had gone out to other fields to labor.

The present membership of the church is 156.

Those who have served this church as pastors are:—

Samuel H. Allen, ordained and installed April 27, 1846; dismissed July 15, 1862.

Charles C. McIntire, installed Nov. 4, 1863; dismissed June 4, 1865.

P. M. Bartlett, installed Jan. 2, 1867; dismissed Feb. 3, 1869.

J. Wickliffe Beach, ordained and installed July 28, 1870; dismissed June 4, 1874.

Thos. S. Childs, D. D., acting pastor Nov. 1874; engagement ended Feb. 6, 1878.

John H. Goodell, installed Feb. 6, 1878; dismissed July 3, 1888.

Joseph Danielson, installed Oct. 3, 1888; dismissed Sept. 24, 1890.

Richard Wright, acting pastor, Oct. 1, 1890; installed Oct. 7, 1891.

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The following notes regarding the origin of the other churches in Windsor Locks are added by the publisher.

#### METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

The first account of a Methodist society in Windsor Locks is found in 1850. At that time a class was formed. Crossing the river in a boat, the people attended morning preaching service at Warehouse Point. Having no place of worship here, social meetings were held from house to house.

For some time the financial support of the society was given to the Methodist church at Warehouse Point. So the plan continued until Major Brown offered them the use of his hall. The offer was accepted, and worship was held in what is now Coogan's hall, until the present church edifice was built.

Desiring a place for special meetings, Messrs. White, Morey and Walden bought and presented a chapel to the society. It was located on ground now occupied by L. H. Barrett's livery stable, and was used for the purpose which it was purchased several years, and was finally removed and placed on property owned by the society, and now stands in the rear of the present church edifice. In 1865 the present church edifice on Church street was begun, and was completed and dedicated in 1866. A few alterations have been made on the interior of the church since then, but with these exceptions, as it was when built. A well-appointed parsonage stands near by, the parish home of the society.

#### ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Catholicity in Windsor Locks dates back to 1827 when for the first time a priest, in response to the request of one of the very small number of Catholics here at the time traveled all the way from New York for the purpose of making a sick call. In the year just mentioned the canal along the Consolidated railroad was being constructed and among the laborers employed in the work of construction were a few Catholics. One of them, an Irishman, was badly injured while at work and his comrades sympathizing with his desire to receive the last consolation of his church, set about to attain the desired end before death claimed the unfortunate victim. At that time there were but four priests in New England. Rev. John Power, D. D., of New York, seemed to be within nearest reach. Accordingly a messenger was dispatched to New York, Dr. Power arriving in time to administer the last comforts of the church. This was in August, 1827, and

during his visit Dr. Power celebrated mass in the open, under a great tree near the headquarters of the shad fisheries, coming two months later for the same purpose.

Services were continued here by various priests at regular intervals until the coming of the first resident pastor, Rev. James Smythe, in June 24, 1852. The corner stone of the church was laid September 14th of the same year, and on Christmas day following the church was occupied for the first time. A fine toned organ was placed in the church in 1869, and from time to time the church has been improved and remodelled to meet the needs of the growing parish. The rectory stands adjoining on the west, which was built in 1879. St. Mary's school, a fine brick building, standing on Grove street, was completed in 1889. Connected with St. Mary's church is the Sacred Heart church of Suffield, built in 1886.

#### ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

On the 15th of October, 1854, the Rev. Prof. A. Jackson, at the instance of the Convocation of Hartford, came to this place and held services morning and afternoon. A considerable number of persons attended the services and a desire was expressed to have Prof. Jackson come regularly, which he did every other Sabbath until July, 1st, 1855, when Rev. Wm. Cook took charge of the mission. In June, 1856, a parish was organized under the name of St. Bartholomew's church, but was never admitted into the Diocese. Funds were raised toward the building of a church, but were not used for this purpose, as in the autumn of 1856, some of the prominent members thought it would be best to unite with the parish at Warehouse Point, which was done, and the enterprise was abandoned.

Services were held here intermittently for varying periods, until the year 1870, when St. Paul's church was organized on the 22d of August, the rector in charge at that time being the Rev.

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Mr. Wilkins. The church building was dedicated the 7th of May, 1872, and the services have been maintained until the present time. By the will of the late James B. Colton of Warehouse Point, the parish came into possession of funds for the purchase of a memorial bell and a pipe organ, which were installed in 1895 and 1896 respectively.





## REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS.

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Extract from a paper read before Abigail Wolcott Ellsworth Chapter, D. A. R., at  
Windsor, Conn., 1898.

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In my boyhood days Revolutionary soldiers were mingling in the affairs of the community in greater numbers than are now the soldiers of the war of the Rebellion. The three nearest houses to my childhood home, (the most distant little more than a stone's throw away) were owned and occupied each by a Revolutionary soldier, all of whom lived until I reached adult years, and with a boy's interest from my earliest recollections I had listened to their war stories. In 1824, when Lafayette visited America, he was everywhere received with enthusiasm by the soldiers and citizens alike. This was forty-one years after the close of the war, and the soldiers then living had become veterans in years and in bearing. Among the thousands of citizens who assembled in Hartford to welcome Lafayette, stood four hundred old soldiers drawn up in line to receive him. I was then a lad of a dozen years, and I too was there to add my boy voice to the enthusiastic cheering which went up for Lafayette.

The nearest Revolutionary soldier to my boyhood home was Abner Squier. He was a cooper by trade. Mr. Squier's front steps were a place of frequent resort for the neighbors on pleasant summer evenings, and there the news of the neighborhood, tales of the past with an occasional war story were rehearsed. The event of events in Mr. Squier's soldier life was the surrender of Burgoyne, which occurred in October, 1777. William Jacobs lived in the next house, a carpenter and joiner, an industrious worthy man and neighbor. After a time he went to live with his son in the state of New York, and died a few months after. The next house belonged to Phineas Pickett of the once famous Pick-

ett's tavern. Mr. Pickett was engaged in the battle of Long Island in August, 1786, when the American army was driven back, and the enemy rested on the battle field, supposing they had the Yankees hemmed in for the night between themselves and the East river. But all that night the Yankees were plying their boats across to New York with muffled oars, while Mr. Pickett was standing guard to prevent the boats being overloaded by soldiers too eager to escape. When the morning broke on Brooklyn Heights, and the British appeared hurrying to capture the Yankees, the last boat with Mr. Pickett among the passengers was putting off from shore and before the regiment of horse could dash down upon them the boat was beyond the reach of their pistol shots.

In the next house but one, not forty rods from my home lived my grandfather, Levi Hayden. He was a trooper, and served in Major Sheldon's regiment. He died when I was ten years old. The next house was occupied by the family of his brother, Capt. Nathaniel Hayden. He died before my day, but I well remember at least two of the twenty-three militia men who sprang to arms and followed Capt. Hayden when the "Lexington Alarm" reached Windsor in April, 1775. These were Ezra Hayden and Lemuel Welch, both of whom with six others of the company lived at Haydens. I distinctly remember Esq. Ezra Hayden, though he died before I was eight years old. He worthily filled the office of the justice of the peace with credit to himself and dignity to the office. He lived at Haydens, at the original Hayden homestead. Mr. Welch also lived at Haydens about fifty rods farther down the street. There was also still another Revolutionary soldier in the Hayden district, Remembrance Sheldon. Mr. Sheldon was a shoemaker, but like others of his craft he worked for his neighbors in the field during the busy season, and returned to his shoemaker's bench in the early autumn, ready to live with and ply his trade among the families of his neighbors.

Besides the seven Revolutionary soldiers already mentioned

at Haydens, with whom I was personally acquainted, there were not less than thirteen others who had died before my recollection, of whom I had heard much from those who had known them. Capt. Nathaniel Hayden, Capt. Ebenezer F. Bissell, Lieut. Thos. Hayden, Oliver Hayden and Daniel Bissell, the spy, who at the request of Washington, followed the martyr, Hale, within the British lines, to learn if possible the plans for the next movement of the British army. The thrilling story was told me by his sisters and others of his escape, on his return. Three others who went from Haydens are entitled to mention, because of their peculiarly sad fate. They were Hezekiah Hayden, Nathaniel Lambertson and Wm. Parsons. They were made prisoners at the battle of Long Island, and in my boyhood days it was said that they were thrust into the old Jersey prison ship, which was anchored at the Wallabouts, now Brooklyn, where they died of starvation.

Such is a brief record of the Revolutionary service rendered by the soldiers of the little district of Haydens, a number about equal to the number of houses there. Other parts of the town of Windsor were probably as well represented, certainly Pine Meadow, where there were but nine families, and at one and the same time in the summer of 1776, only one family was unrepresented in the army, and that was the family of Silas Coye, and he enlisted the next year, and died in camp. All these soldiers were dead before my recollection except one, Jabez Haskell. Through my mother and others I learned about as much about those who died before my day at Pine Meadow as I had learned of like soldiers at Haydens. Seth Dexter was an ancestor of Mrs. Julia Dexter Coffin. Capt. Martin Denslow was an ancestor of Miss Mary Webb. Capt. Denslow was the only commissioned officer among them. He sustained an honorable position in his rank, and after the war was given the distinction of membership in the Society of Cincinnati, an organization composed of officers of the Revolution, Gen. George Washington being its first president.

Jabez Haskell's war record I had from my mother and other

members of his family. He was drafted with the rest of his neighbors that summer, 1776, when ten thousand Connecticut soldiers were under arms in New York. About two weeks after the battle of Long Island, the American army retreated from New York before the British army. Jabez Haskell had been detailed to care for some of his disabled comrades, and when the hasty retreat commenced he could get no orders from his superior officers to move his invalids. So without orders, he secured the services of a man with a horse cart, placed two or three of his men who were unable to walk in it, together with the guns and knapsacks of others who were unable to carry them, and joined the disorganized army, which was retreating towards Kingsbridge. On arriving at that point a pass was demanded. Bringing his musket to the position of charge bayonet Jabez Haskell shouted, "here's my pass, stand out of the way," and hurried his stragglers across the bridge and beyond pursuit.

Judge Samuel Woodruff was a pensioner in that part of Windsor which comprises East street, East Granby. He was nearly four-score years old when I knew him. He told me that he was a lad of seventeen attending an academy when the news from the northern army, which reached there from time to time, so stirred the blood of the boys that several of them, himself among the number, left their school for the scene of the conflict, where they arrived in time to participate in the battle of Saratoga, on Bemis Heights. There were several other soldiers in Windsor besides those at Haydens and Pine Meadow with whom I was more or less acquainted. Roswell Miller, an old soldier who lived a mile and a quarter north of the bridge in Windsor, once told me that there came a time during the war, when the pressing need of supplies was so urgent, that officials were sent through Windsor, and took account of the grain in the hands of the citizens, and after deducting a given quantity for the subsistence of each member of the family, took the balance for army supplies. These officials also stripped every clock of its lead weights to make

bullets for the soldiers to shoot the British with, and Mr. Miller told me that "there was not a clock running in Windsor."

Oliver Mitchell, a mulatto and an old soldier, lived on the river bank at Bissell's Ferry. When a boy I remember calling at his house to inquire if it was safe to cross the river on the ice. Not long after Mr. Mitchell went down to Hartford in his row boat, to draw his pension and set out on his return with it in his pocket; but before he reached home eight miles distant, toiling against the stream, the oars ceased to play, the boat drifted to the shore and lodged—the colored soldier and citizen was dead. Dr. Elisha N. Sill was an old soldier and prominent citizen, and was a long time town clerk of Windsor. Farther down the street and out on the road leading west from the Doctor Pierson place lived a Revolutionary soldier and pensioner, Andrew Mack, the Hessian. When he transferred his allegiance from the British to the American army, I know not, but he became a pensioner of this country, with the same standing as our native soldiers. "Old Hendrick," one of his fellow countrymen, lived in my boyhood days at Hayden. His story was that he was seized by government officials while at work in the field, hurried to a rendezvous, when the men were organized into regiments, and shipped to America. Rev. Frederick Chapman served six months in the army, was a pensioner, and outlived nearly all his fellow soldiers. He had a large fund of stories and traditions relative to Windsor of the olden time. Mr. Chapman became a Baptist minister and supplied the meeting house which stood at the junction of the roads half a mile north of the old mill. Daniel Porter, a pensioner lived next north of the road leading to Bissell's ferry about three-fourths of a mile north of the old bridge. I do not remember that I ever spoke with him. He died when I was about a dozen years old. Samuel Mather was a pensioner and lived next south of the Bissell's ferry road.

Elihu Benton lived farther down the road on the corner of the road leading to Sandy Hill. He served six months in the

army when he was eighteen years old. He was the only man in town who cultivated the mulberry tree, and his family the only one engaged in the production of silk. I was a schoolmaster sixty-seven years ago, in the old mill district and "boarded round." It was my privilege to have several interviews with Deacon Daniel Gillett, an old soldier well versed in military lore. He lived near the present residence of Strong Barber.

The Danbury Alarm occurred in 1777 when a detachment from the British army attacked and burned Danbury, Conn. Volunteers hastened to their assistance, among them Daniel Gillett, then a young man, in company with Daniel Phelps, an old man of fourscore years. They mounted their horses and rode nearly to Danbury, when learning that the enemy had done their work and had escaped, our volunteers then set their faces toward home via. of Litchfield, where they had friends. Reaching there late in the evening, the old man was so exhausted that he was obliged to be helped from the saddle and died a few days after. Daniel Gillett was drafted in 1776 and served at New York. In private life Deacon Gillett was an estimable man. Daniel Ware was a soldier and lived on the old mill road. Philip Halsey was a pensioner. I knew him by sight but remember no interview with him. I was told that he escaped to Windsor from South Hampton, Long Island, when a detachment of the British Army was quartered in that vicinity. Eleakim Marshall, a soldier lived, on Pigeon Hill. He died in 1831. Increase Mather, another soldier I knew, lived on the Island. I have a letter written by Hezekiah Hayden from the Roxboro camp in January 1776, in which he speaks of his brother-in-law, Increase Mather, and Nathaniel Lamberton. Loomis Warner lived below Stony Hill. I do not remember speaking with him, but always saw him in his place at church. Dea. Elijah Mills and Lemuel Drake lived on Clay Hill or Mills Town. Their faces were familiar ones at church. Dea. Mills worthily filled the office of deacon in the old church. He was accidentally killed while driving his oxen with a load of wood.

Elijah Denslow, a pensioner, I remember having seen. He lived on the road running west from the Doctor Pierson place.

The following list of pensioners I copied from the books of the Pension Office at Hartford. It comprises all who received pensions in Windsor, all or part of the time, between 1835 and 1842. The amount of each pension is also given. Some, as Remembrance Sheldon, who had received pensions under the act of 1818, had died before 1835. In such cases the widow's name appears on the pension roll. I had more or less acquaintance with most of these pensioners.

Ebenezer F. Bissell, Jr.,	\$46.66	Moses Wilson,	100.00
Frederick Chapman,	46.66	Loomis Warner,	40.00
Elijah Denslow,	80.00	Charles Allen,	60.00
Lemuel Drake,	26.66	Abel Barnes,	33.33
Moses Filley, Bloomfield,	53.33	William Frances,	96.00
Philip Halsey,	27.77	William Blanchard (War 1812)	240.00
William Jacobs,	20.00	Nathaniel Swan, (War 1812)	80.00
Oliver Mitchell, (Colored)	46.66	Elisha Drake,	96.00
Increase Mather,	73.33	David Eno,	96.00
Andrew Mack, (Hessian)	35.00	Elizabeth Standard, widow,	28.66
Elisha N. Sill,	43.33	Esther Warner, widow,	20.00
Judge Samuel Woodruff,	25.47	Anna, widow of Eliakim Marshall,	33.33
Ethan Barker,	33.33	Nabby, widow of Geo. Warner,	40.00
David Colvin,	30.00	Submit, widow of Calvin Wilson,	40.00
Samuel Bronson,	41.55	Phebe, widow Remembrance	
Isaac Day, Poquonock,	120.00	Sheldon,	80.00
David Gibbs,	120.00	Anna, widow of Gideon Drake,	34.66
George Lattimer, Bloomfield,	80.00	Eunice, widow of Alpheus	
Roswell Miller,	80.00	Munsel,	53.88
Samuel Mather,	40.00	Hannah, widow of Elisha Moore,	126.66
Philander Rowley, Bloomfield,	20.00	Deborah, widow of Austin	
Silas Rowley, Bloomfield,	46.66	Phelps,	83.33
Timothy Soper,	39.16	Mary, widow of Elijah Phelps,	43.33
Abner Squier,	43.55	Prudence, widow of Stephen	
		Taylor,	29.33

## NOTES.

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At the time of the first settlement of New England, the English people began the new year on the 25th of March—Annunciation Day. Any dates between January 1st and March 25th appearing on the original records of those times should have one year added. Later a new form of designating the new year was adopted. The first time it was used by the General Court of Connecticut was “this 20th day of March, 1649–50” (1650, by our present reckoning). This style prevailed about one hundred years, and the date of all the months of the year should be carried forward, between 1600 and 1700, ten days; between 1700 and 1752, when the English government changed their dates from old style to new style, there should be eleven days added. In 1752 the Parliament of Great Britain made September 3d the 14th.

The title by which the settlers of Windsor held their lands deserves mention, and something may as well be said here for the Indians. The Indian deeds for the land lying south of Hayden Station were recorded as early as a record book was procured, but there is no record of land in this town until 1687. Then we have a deed of confirmation by Quashebeck, widow of Coggeronosset, of Poquonock. The deed sets forth that her father, Nehano, sold the land “about the time of the Pequot war,” 1637, to George Hull, Humphrey Pinney, Thomas Ford and Thomas Lewis, for the inhabitants of Windsor, and that “her father received full satisfaction therefor,” and that “she is his only child,” and makes over her right to certain representatives of the town, and his son, Aushqua, confirms the same. The tract bounds “north by Stoney brook opposite the great island on the falls,” “east by Connecticut river, south by Gunn’s brook at a place called New Brook [Hayden Station], and west by the west side of the mountains.” “The great island at the falls” was supposed to be included in this purchase, and the General Court gave it to Rev. Mr. Huit, who died 1644, and returned it by will “to the country.” But Quashebeck and her children sell it to Thomas Lewis, soon after confirming her father’s sale, for £3. I feel confident that not an Indian family lived in this town when the first settlers reached Windsor.

There was a time when Pine Meadow, as other river meadows above and below, was cultivated by the Indians. Corn was their principal crop, and this received only the rudest cultivation. About thirty years ago the encroachment of the river on its west bank in the “great meadow” in Windsor exposed one or two bushels of charred corn. It had been buried two or three feet deep, probably by the grave of some one. It was probably charred to prevent its decay. The kernels were very many of them like those growing on a stalk standing by itself, where there is not enough of pollen that reaches the ear to



fill the cob. Many of the kernels of that charred corn were rounded on one or both sides, showing that the kernels grew separately or in patches on the cob. It must have been a starved field of corn that did not furnish tassel enough to produce full ears. Of course there was no plowing for corn, for the Indians had neither plows nor teams to draw them. They had no steel or iron for spades or hoes. The squaws cultivated the ground, and they probably had nothing better to work with than sharpened sticks, and they had no edged tools to sharpen them with.

The first distribution of land among the settlers is said to have been based on the proportion individuals had contributed to the general fund raised by "the adventurers," before they left Massachusetts, to meet the cost of transportation of their effects by water, and other expenses incident to their removal to Connecticut. Gov. Haynes, who, on his arrival in Connecticut, settled at Hartford, had possibly contributed to the Windsor company's expenses, for he had a "house lot" and several outlying lots in Windsor. But it is more probable that he obtained his title by purchase. The record reads: "John Haynes, as bot of George Hull, hath granted from the plantation a house lot," etc. George Hull does not appear on the record as a land-owner. The probability is that he died or removed before 1640, the earliest date of the land records, and that Gov. Haynes bought not only the house lot but also the share to which George Hull had been entitled.

The name Pine Meadow was applied to all this part of the then town of Windsor. It became the name of the school district, and was the name of the village down to the establishment of the post-office, about 1831. The original distribution of Pine Meadow, beginning on Pine Meadow brook, was to Gov. John Haynes of Hartford "about 10 acres bounded south and west on the brook;" next, John and Thomas Hoskins, 45 rods on the river; Nicholas Denslow (father of Henry), 33 rods on the river, 80 rods to the west; Thomas Ford, 400 rods to Kettle Brook, 80 rods to the west; Thomas Ford, 200 rods north of Kettle Brook, 80 rods to the west.

When such lands had been set out to the first settlers as they needed for cultivation, for fuel and timber, the undivided lands or "commons" were held in common by the town. From time to time, during nearly a century, as additional lots were wanted for cultivation, they were granted by vote of the town. For some reason this course proved unsatisfactory, and Windsor and many other towns transferred the title of the commons to the proprietors. The proprietors were all the inhabitants or tax-payers in the town, and the share of each proprietor, his heirs and assigns, was in proportion to his or her tax-list. I think it was the tax laid on the assessment of 1722. I remember once finding an appeal to the board of relief of that year, by an individual who claimed that his assessment was not as high as it should be. A few lots south of Miss Webb's, lying west of the 80 rods originally laid out next the river, had been set out by the town, but none of these lots extended as far west as

Center street. In 1752 a committee of the proprietors set out nearly all the remaining land in this town to the original proprietors or their heirs.

It is not known what Kettle Brook took its name from. It first appears on the Colonial Records in 1636, marking the north bounds of Windsor. Subsequently one boundary-line was carried north, where it now remains, separating it from Suffield, which for many years remained under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts. The line between the colonies was not definitely fixed for about a century after the settlement of Pine Meadow. One survey by the Massachusetts authorities struck the river about half a mile below Hayden Station.

During King Philip's war, 1675 and 1676, the Council, consisting of the Governor and assistants, had frequent meetings at Hartford, and issued orders for the defense of the colony. Saturday, May 25th, 1676, they order Major Treat to take about 100 of his men "and make the best of your way to Norwich." On Monday, May 27th, they recall him, because "they having received intelligence of a party of Indians that, the last Sabbath day, did do dispoyle there, and on Sabbath night burned great part of Simsbury." Another note in the record, not dated, but probably the 27th, speaks of "Major Treat being called back with his company upon the intelligence of Simsbury being burnt, and a man carried away from Windsor by skulking parties of Indians." Further on, August, 1676, an Indian prisoner is examined before the Council, who is asked: "Who killed Henry Denslow?" He named seven Indians, and adds, "and these are those who burnt Simsbury." The carrying away of the man from Windsor and the burning of Simsbury being coupled together as the cause of recalling the troops, and the Indians being occupied in plundering Simsbury on Sunday, and burning it that night, has led me to the conclusion that Henry Denslow was captured Saturday, March 25th, O. S., to which date add ten days to reduce it to our present "new style," and we find with reasonable certainty that the anniversary of his capture and probable death is April 4th.

The site of his house was definitely fixed in the summer of 1876 by excavations which uncovered the lower portion of the cellar wall at each of the corners, and a gray flint boulder of more than a half ton's weight (found on his own farm) was placed over the northeast corner, with the following inscription:—

1663.

1676.

1876.

THIS STONE MARKS THE SITE  
OF THE FIRST HOUSE IN  
PINE MEADOW, BUILT 1663 [?]  
BY HENRY DENSLOW, CAPTURED  
HERE AND KILLED BY THE  
INDIANS APRIL 4TH [?], 1676.

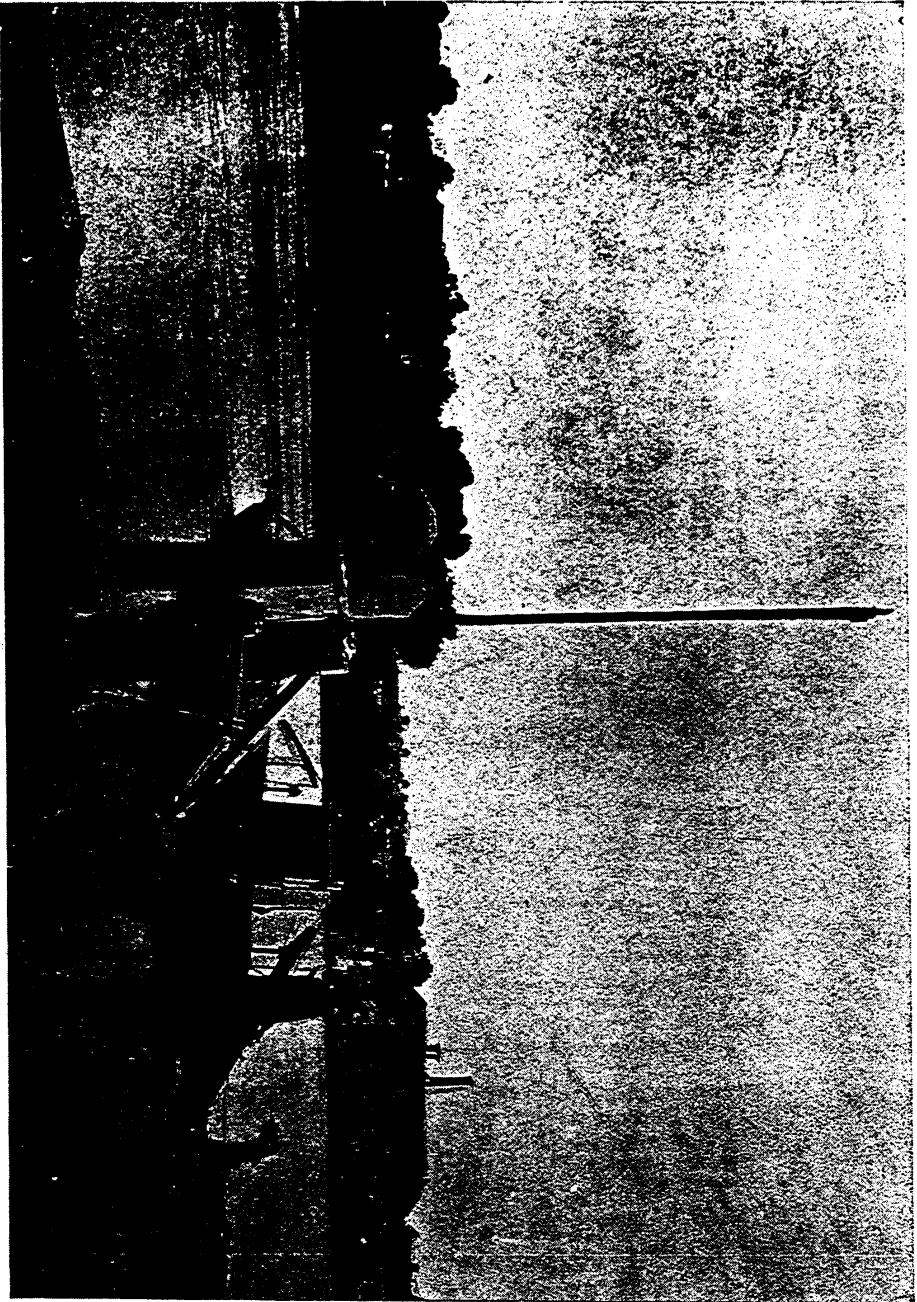
The title-deed given Nathaniel Gaylord is a unique one, containing family history, report of overseers, or guardians, and their authority, besides telling us that the portion of the lot lying in Pine Meadow was fenced, and that lying without was wooded. The lot was fenced before any one lived here—showing what we get hints of elsewhere, that the meadows on the Connecticut were open to cultivation when the English first came to Windsor.

The charter of Charles II, which was granted in 1662, contained provisions for the transfer of the royal title in the soil of Connecticut to the inhabitants thereof. Previous to 1686 the General Court (Legislature) had granted patents to the inhabitants of the several towns already settled, which secured to them the lands within their borders, and, fearing their charter would be taken from them, they gave over, in January of that year, all the western lands, not already set off in townships, to the inhabitants of Windsor and Hartford. The threatened demand for the charter was made by Andross, and, though he failed to get possession of it, he assumed the office of Governor, which he held until the revolution in England the next year. That revolution left him without authority and support from the mother country. The Charter Oak now gave back its hidden treasure, and the government under the charter was restored, and continued down to 1818.

Windsor and Hartford raised taxes "to extinguish the Indian title to our western lands;" but before these lands were wanted for occupation another generation arose who denied the justice of the title held by the inhabitants of Windsor and Hartford. A compromise was effected, by which the Windsor claimants were to receive 45,903 acres and those of Hartford the same. From Windsor's share the towns of Torrington, Colebrook and Barkhamsted and half the town of Harwinton, and from Hartford's share the towns of New Hartford, Winchester and Hartland and half the town of Harwinton, were organized. The first distribution of "western lands" made to the Windsor people was in Torrington, 1733, when each inhabitant had as many acres as the number of pounds sterling his or her estate was assessed on the grand-list.

Another distribution in 1737 and still another in 1742. The first settler there was in 1737, but during the next twenty years some member of many a Windsor family had taken his portion in western land, to build up a name in Torrington. On comparing the church records of Windsor and Torrington, a parish in Torrington, a few years since, I found the relative number of original Windsor names as great on the Torrington as on the Windsor catalogue. Abraham Dibbs's list stands recorded £31 11s. 6d. This would give for the three distributions a farm of nearly one hundred acres, and I have little doubt that it was to occupy this land that his son Thomas left Pine Meadow and went to Torrington in 1752.

Roads which at first were barely passable were located where they could be most easily built. Streams which needed bridging, or swamps, were



*From photograph taken in 1885.*

**Windsor Locks and Warehouse Point Ferry.**

avoided at the expense of distance. The records of Windsor, under date of 1656, define the street or road running north from the Palisado as "four rods wide as far as any house-lots are laid out, viz., to the upper side of William Hayden's lot." The serpentine course of that road is not because of swamps, but as each of the first settlers north of the Palisado built his house and barn near the brow of the meadow hill, the road was built to accommodate the settlers rather than the generations of travelers who were to succeed them. At this point (Gunn's Brook at Hayden Station chapel) the road left the river to avoid bridging the streams, turned west through what is now known as Pink street, and on across the plains, through Christian street and Crooked lane, Suffield (which town remained without settlement nearly half a century because it had no river meadows), and on to Springfield and beyond. This was called the Old Country Road, and continued to be the great thoroughfare and mail route to and from the north down to about 1820. It was but a trail through the woods at first, used by parties on foot or horseback in single file. It was probably years after the settlement of Springfield before the trees had been cut away to make a path for wheeled vehicles. In 1729 this road across the plains is again described beginning "near Pine Meadow Gate," the upperside of William Hayden's lot. It shall be "three rods wide through the lots" (the lots set out to individuals and probably under cultivation), but on the Commons, about half a mile beyond, it should be "ten rods wide." In 1752 it was made four rods wide. The "Half Way Tree" was afterwards known as the "Smoking Tree," and was so designated in the layout of 1729. Near the "Smoking Tree" there appears to have been a house of some sort standing in 1752, belonging to Jonathan Alvord. The Proprietors' Committee mention it in their description of the lot set out to Edward Griswold. There were no pre-emption laws in those days, and he probably disposed of his house if it had a marketable value. Half an acre was reserved "around the Spring for a convenient watering-place." "Smoking Tree" was widely known during at least three generations. It stood until about 1810.

The Pine Meadow road left the country road at Gunn's Brook, followed its present course, making a long detour to the east to avoid a swamp which lay in a direct line, continued thence north in or near the present highway nearly to Broderick's house, when it bore to the west and crossed the brook a few rods below where the railroad now crosses it. The stones now lying in the brook were a part of the "Stone Bridge," which was in use and good repair within my recollection. After Henry Denslow settled here the town ordered that the owners of lots in Pine Meadow "should agree among themselves where the road should run through their lots to Henry Denslow's at the higher end of Pine Meadow."

The upland road, Center street road, was first defined "from the county road to Suffield," as far up as the "Pine Meadow path," the present roadway

to the Gaylords; thence it bore more easterly eighty rods to about the north-east corner of Nathaniel Fox's home lot. Then the land previously granted, and owned by the Gaylord family, was reached, and the Proprietor's Committee, who had laid it thus far on "the Common," were not authorized to go farther. From the end of this road a trespass road led across Lieut. Nathaniel Gaylord's lot to Dibble Hollow, through which, and beyond, it reached Abraham Dibble's house, thence nearly north to the house of Joseph Denslow, thence to Samuel Denslow's, at the west end of the cemetery. Thence passing east and down the hill near the present entrance to the cemetery, it reached the sawmill and the fording-place on the river at the mouth of Kettle Brook.

Very early a road branched off near the house of Abraham Dibble, running out into the common to the northwest. It passed several rods south of Miss Webb's house, thence more northerly through the present woods, where this path is still open, on and across Add's Brook at "the old rock" and intersected with "Saw Mill Path," near the south end of West street. Traces of the road are still visible on both banks of the Add's Brook. There is little doubt that before 1752 a road had been opened from near the house of Abraham Dibble, running southwest until it passed the head of the first spring, thence more southerly until it entered the present Center street road near John Fowler's house, and thence where the present road runs into "Pine Meadow Path," where it connected with the laid-out highway, and the old road across Dibble Hollow was discontinued. The road through the meadow was continued from the original Henry Denslow house north until it formed a junction with the road from Abraham Dibble's house to the sawmill and fording place. This road was kept open until the road from Hayden's through our Main street was opened to Suffield in 1815-16.

When the Proprietors' Committee laid out our present Center street, preparatory to dividing the Commons, they rested the south end on the road then running from near Dibble's to and past the "Old Rock." The north end rested as now on our North street. All the lots on the first tier, lots lying next west of Center street, were bounded east on highway between our present North street and the south side of Miss Webb's garden. South of this point the lots on the first tier extended about forty rods further east and bounded east by lots owned by Denslow, Dibble, Gaylord and others, and a reserve was made in each grant for "a highway near the east end," until the highway at Pine Meadow path was reached.

After the new road had been opened and that part of the old lay-out for a road where Miss Webb's house stands had been discontinued because no one had occasion to use it, Captain Martin Denslow built that house (about 1790), and he set it partially in the old highway to bring it forward to the traveled path. This explains the reason why, following the original lay-out of Center street, we run directly through the front end of Miss Webb's house. Ten years before Center street was laid out, Samuel Denslow, who owned all the

land within eighty rods of the river between School street and Dr. Burnap's, sold one-half of his sawmill and privileges in the deed for a right-of-way out to the Commons to get logs for the mill "between the two brooks" (Kettle and Add's). This path went up the hill farther south than it now runs, but followed Elm street, west of Center street, and when the Proprietors' Committee divided the commons, the first lot north of Elm street, extending from Center to West street, was bounded "south on Sawmill path." The significance of "Sawmill path" is better understood by an extract from the record-book of the Proprietors of the Commons, or undivided lands, dated sixteen years before the date of this deed, when the proprietors appointed a committee "to license persons to cut timber on the commons:" "Persons who shall own they intend the boards and timber they get out for the use of the inhabitants of this town." Another paragraph provides that "persons making coal or tar shall pay the treasurer two shillings a load for wood put into a kiln or kilns, to be paid back for so much as he shall make it appear he has delivered the coal to smiths working in this town."

This sawmill path was declared a public highway, two rods in width, from Center street west to the old county road. From the north end of Center street another highway running west, nearly parallel with Sawmill path, our present North street, also extended to the county road. A reserve for a two-rod highway, extending south from North street, was made between second and third tiers and between third and fourth tiers. These north and south highways have never been more than partially opened. A few rods between third and fourth tiers are now traveled on the road to Poquonock. A two-rod highway was laid through the second tier, and a reserve through the first tier on the lot south of Mr. Gandy's, to intersect with Center street road.

When the Proprietors' Committee had laid out Center street, there remained a strip of land between it and the eighty rods in width next the river, which had been set out to Thomas Ford more than one hundred years before. The Denslow family had long held possession of that land, but in 1752 all north of School street was owned by Daniel and Isaac Hayden, and the strip of "the commons"—305 rods in length, 33 wide at the south end and 16 at the north end—was set out to Daniel and Isaac Hayden. South of School street a corresponding addition was made to the land of the heirs of Joseph Denslow. It has been stated already that different individuals and families were entitled to different proportions of the commons. The following list gives the names of the original owners of the land lying west of Center street and east of West street, beginning on Center and North streets. The first lot was set out to John and Isaac Griswold, forty-six rods wide on Center street, bounding north on highway (now North street), east, highway (Center street), south, on Darius and Philander Pinney, and west on second tier, now West street; then comes:—

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Darius and Philander Pinney, 5½ rods on Center street.				
Isaac Pinney, . . . .	29	"	"	"
Nathaniel Pinney, . . .	19	"	"	"
Enoch Phelps, . . . .	36	"	"	"
Jos. Barnard, . . . .	25	"	"	"
Daniel and Isaac Hayden, .	80	"	"	" Bounded south on Saw-
mill path (Elm street).				
Thomas Griswold, . . . .	50	"	"	" Bounds north and east
on highway.				
George Griswold, . . . .	45	"	"	"
Francis Griswold, . . . .	40	"	"	"

Matthew Griswold's lot comes next and runs 40 rods farther east, bounds east on Jos. Denslow's heirs, with a reserve for a road through it near the east end. This second tier continues on to within about half a mile of Pink street. The land between North street and Suffield line was called "the half-mile tier." The second tier, between North and Elm streets, was set out to the following persons:—

Josiah Bissell, in width on first tier (now West street),				
52 rods north on North street.				
Noah Griswold, . . . . .	50	"	"	"
Aaron Phelps, . . . . .	17	"	"	"
Josiah Phelps, 4th, . . . .	12	"	"	"
Josiah Phelps, 2d, . . . .	27	"	"	"
Moses Phelps, . . . . .	23	"	"	"
"Common," . . . . .	8½	"	"	"
Epaphias Shelding, . . . .	8½	"	"	"
Josiah Phelps, . . . . .	27	"	south on Elm street.	

In the general distribution of 1752 a lot of forty-four acres on the third tier, lying north of Kettle brook, was left in "commons." This tract lay until 1787, and was the last piece deeded by the Proprietors' Committee.

Samuel Denslow was a son of the second Samuel, who built and lived in the "Old House at the head of the Spring," west end of our cemetery. He built the house about 1732, and probably died there. His death occurred in 1762. The third Samuel bought five lots on the second tier from the parties to whom they were set by the Proprietors' Committee, 1752. The first bears date December, 1759, the others early in 1760; in all, ninety acres, at an average price of about \$4 per acre. He probably built his house soon after. The premises constituted his "home lot" in 1762. In 1785 the property passed into the possession of his son-in-law, Martin Pinney. The old house was taken down recently and a new one built on its site. This place and farm were owned by the late Samuel McAuley.



Ezekiel Thrall's house stood on the site of the present Congregational parsonage, corner of Center and Elm streets. He bought the lot of Isaac Hayden in 1765. It extended on Center street from Elm to about the north line of C. A. Porter's lot, and on Elm to West street. He probably built immediately after—was certainly living there 1769. After the death of his wife in 1776, he sold to a Mr. Bolles, who sold to Daniel Ela, 1781. The house, originally one story, had another story added by Mr. Ela about 1800, and when the parsonage was built by Talcott Mather the old house was removed and remodeled, and now stands next west of the parsonage.

Samuel Coy bought his lot in 1776, and probably built his house at once. The names of himself and wife appear the same year on the church record. He "died in camp," 1778. His place was sold, 1783, by Seth Dexter, administrator to Jabez Haskell. The family removed to Massachusetts.

Ephraim Haskell and Seth Dexter, of Rochester, Mass., bought the land lying east of Center street, and from School street on the south to Grove street on Main, and still further north on Center street—160 acres—for £340 (\$7.08 per acre), including the sawmill and "old house." The eastern portion of this lot was originally set to Thomas Ford, who sold it in 1663 to Henry Denslow. From thence it passed into the possession of his son Samuel and his grandson, Samuel, who sold to Daniel Hayden half the sawmill and the privilege of turning a little stream into the millpond to add to it, called "Add's brook," in 1742. Soon after—1774—the land north of Kettle brook had been sold to Daniel and Isaac Hayden, and, before 1752, all south to School street. After Center street had been set out—1752—the commons lying east of it was added to Daniel and Isaac Hayden's lot. Haskell and Dexter bought of Isaac Hayden and the creditors of Daniel Hayden. Haskell and Dexter divided their purchase, Haskell taking two-thirds of the sawmill, all the land south of Elm street and east of the west line of the Oliver Hawley place, and all north of the south line of the present Harris Haskell place. Ephraim Haskell deeded his share to his son, Jabez Haskell, who came up the same year, and in November married and occupied the old house—the Samuel Denslow house. In 1776 he completed and moved into the house on the corner of Main and Elm streets that was removed to make room for Memorial hall.

Seth Dexter bought of Ezekiel Thrall, in 1770, the water privilege, "with right to repair dam, and room near the road for mill and shop, and convenient room around them," for £5 (\$16.66). This was on the site of the present Holbrook mill. In 1770 Mr. Dexter deeded his interest here to his son Seth, who was also a clothier, and who set up the first "clothier's works" in this vicinity. He moved his family here August 17, 1770. In 1773 he exchanged a small lot on the corner of Center and Elm streets, for more accommodation around the mill. His first house, in which he lived about eighteen years, was built near his mill, in connection with his shop or finishing-room. About 1788 he built

the old "Dexter house," now occupied by the family of the late William Anderson. Seth Dexter died in 1797. The business was continued by his family until 1817, when it was sold, with the house and land on Center street, to Timothy Mather. The third Seth Dexter, grandfather of E. D. Dexter, retained his father's interest in the sawmill, gristmill, and the lands now held by the family, and also land south of Elm street and west of the Hawley place.

Jeremiah Birge, of Windsor, bought a lot of land on the "half-mile tier," north of North street, in 1766, and some time before 1772 had built a house on it and was living here. Horace Birge, his nephew, said that his uncle Jeremiah became so homesick after he came here to live that he offered such inducements to his father, Peletiah Birge, that they exchanged places, and Jeremiah went back to the old homestead in Windsor, the late Roswell Miller place. Soon after, a Mr. Carter (?) began a house near the present tenant-house of James Coogan, on West street, but he abandoned it, and Peletiah Birge bought it and enlarged his house with it. The old Birge house was pulled down in 1876.

Samuel Wing and his wife Joanna (sister of Jabez Haskell and Mrs. Seth Dexter), from Rochester, Mass., were living at Hayden Station as early as 1767, probably. In 1769 Mrs. Wing died there, and he afterwards married Lydia, widow of Martin Moses, of Simsbury. In 1775 he bought of Joseph Barnard the lot set out to him on the first tier by the Proprietors' Committee in 1752. It was twenty-five rods wide, and extended from Center to West street. Mrs. Horton occupies the east end. The houses west of hers, on the south side of Spring street, all stand on the Wing lot. Mr. Wing built his house on West street, a little to the rear and west of the present house of John Cashman. He died in the army August 14, 1777. Moses Wing, son of the above Samuel and Joanna Haskell, married Hannah, daughter of Samuel Denslow, and built a house and shop on the east end of the above-described lot, known of late as the Luke Fish house, recently removed from the corner of Center and Spring streets. I remember his little shop standing in the street nearly in front of Mrs. Horton's house. He was called a goldsmith. He made brass clocks (some of which are still excellent time-keepers), silver teaspoons, knee-buckles, shoe-buckles, etc. His first wife died in 1792, and he married a daughter of Captain Martin Denslow. About 1805 he removed to Worcester. Mrs. Oliver Woodford, of Hartford, is a daughter of his, and he has a son and other descendants living in the western states.

Elihu Denslow, son of Samuel, on West street, was taken with "the camp distemper" (dysentery) in New York. His father, learning that he was sick, went to his assistance. He drove his own team of two horses, taking such articles with him as the camp would not afford; but his nursing proved unavailing. Rev. Mr. Hinsdale enters his death in the church record under date of September 9, 1776, "in the camp at New York."

"Feb. 7, 1777, Ensign Samuel Wing, at Danbury, in the service."

"1778, Samuel Coy, in the camp."

Matthew Grant came to Windsor in September, 1635. He was one of the original members of the church, and kept its records. About 1674 he copies items from "the old book, there not being room to set them in order to find them," and adds, probably from the town records, the births, marriages and deaths, arranging the families in alphabetical order during the first forty years. It contains a catalogue of the members of the church after the secession, omitting those who had "joined the other society," and those who "were dead, or had gone to other places." He gives us many details which can be found nowhere else, and tells that he thinks it unnecessary to record what "the Elders" have a record of. It is much to be regretted that he did not tell us all he knew, as his is the only record which has been preserved, and the preservation of this has been remarkable. It is doubtful whether this book was ever the property of the church. It was evidently retained in his own family. It probably went into the family of Matthew's oldest son, Samuel, who was settled in East Windsor. From thence some of the family carried it to Ellington. On a blank leaf some one recorded all the deaths in Ellington the first generation of settlers, beginning 1740. From thence it was brought back to Windsor, and probably by Mary Grant, wife of Peletiah Birge, who lived several years in the Molly Birge house before coming to Pine Meadow. About 1800 the "Old Molly Birge House" was pulled down. Oliver Ellsworth, Jr., picked up among the rubbish a manuscript book which had been thrown aside, and carried it to his father. Forty years afterwards I heard that there was a book giving an account of a great flood, and many other things which occurred during the early years of the settlement. No one knew where it went to, but it was afterwards traced from the possession of Judge Ellsworth to the Rev. Mr. Rowland. At his death it passed into the hands of his son-in-law, Dr. Sill, and he loaned it to another party. I have a copy of it containing all that could be read. Another copy, made by a son of Mr. Rowland, is in the town clerk's office, Windsor, and the original is in the library of the Connecticut Historical Society.

Mantua-making as a fine art was practiced to some extent, as we see in the few fine dresses which have been handed down to us. A tailoress was brought into the family a few days each autumn to make up the winter's stock of clothing for the men and boys, especially for their "go-to-meeting clothes." It must have marked an era in the progress in the art of domestic manufactures when Seth Dexter brought up from eastern Massachusetts the art of cloth-dressing. The shoemaker was also brought into the house to make up the shoes for the family. For some whimsical reason this industry was called "whipping the cat." I distinctly remember that when I was a child my father went to Pine Meadow to bring Francis Fox to make us some new shoes.

We are inclined to think that "well-to-do gentlemen" were relatively

more extravagantly dressed for special occasions than were the ladies. Their knee-breeches, skirted vests, ruffled shirts and cocked hats seem to have been designed more for ornament than for convenience, and the dresses and bonnets of our grandmothers which have been handed down to us show that considerable skill and labor were expended upon them. There was far more difference between the extremes of society in the matter of dress than now. When I was a boy, a grown-up Pine Meadow girl was accustomed to come to one of our neighbors, at Hayden Station, and have her calico dresses "cut and basted." The usual price was twelve and a half cents; and this was all the cash it cost a girl for the making of a calico dress less than eighty years ago.

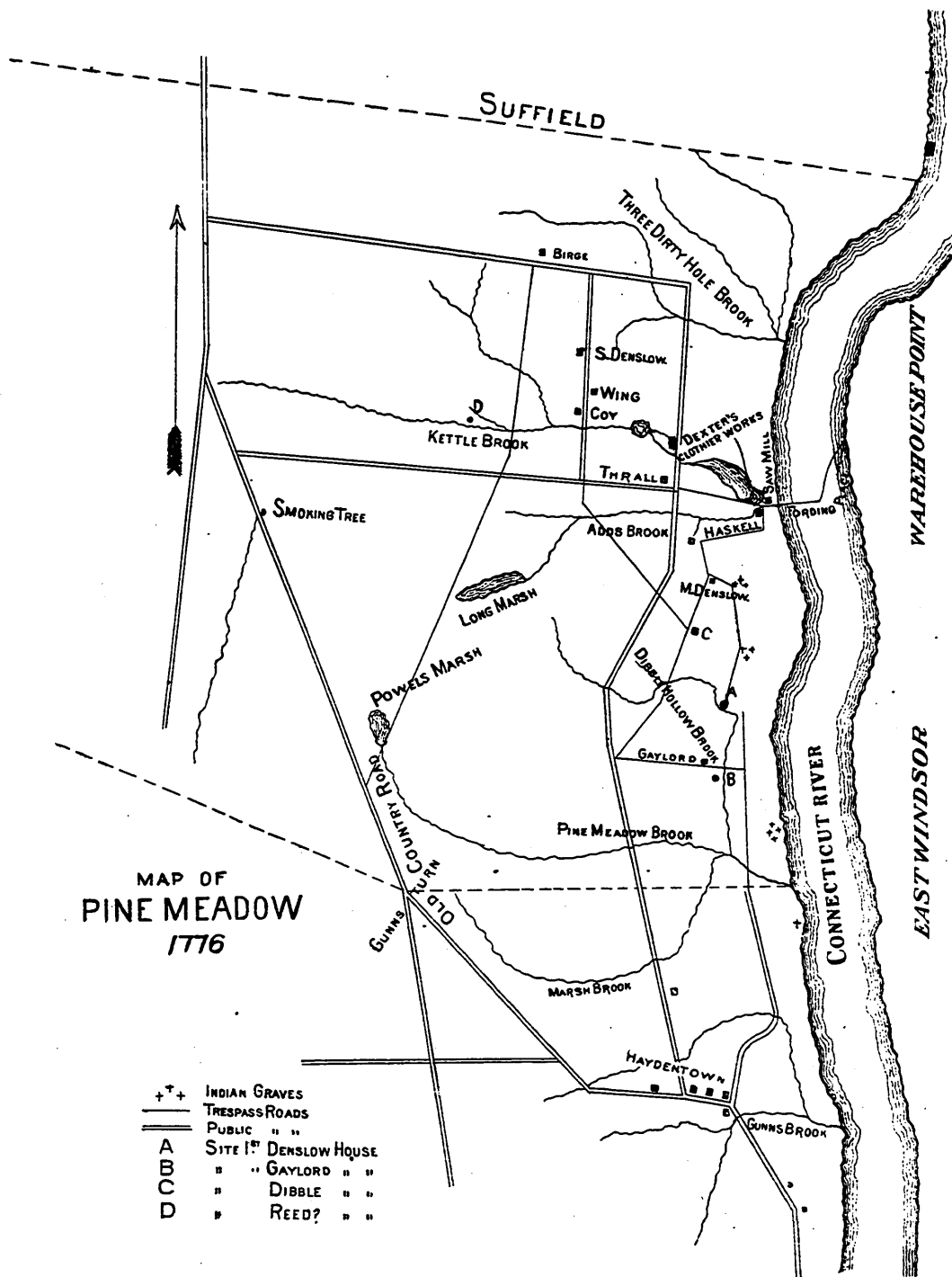
Shad were formerly very abundant and cheap. I find, under date of 1781, on an old account book, fifty shad charged at 2d. ( $3\frac{3}{4}$  cents) each, and, ten years later, single shad at 6d. (8 cents) cash. Certain anecdotes which have come down to us indicate that shad were not esteemed a luxury in the olden time. Mrs. Haskell, born 1748, told of a dispute between two school-girls in Windsor, when she was a child, where one girl taunted the other with the poverty of her family, who "ate shad."

My grandmother Haskell, born 1748, daughter of Dr. Daniel Bissell of Windsor, once said in my hearing that the first potatoes she ever saw were three small ones her father brought home in his saddlebags. My great grandfather, who died 1803, aged 94, never learned to like potatoes. He told my father that when they were first introduced it was said that if a person ate freely of potatoes he would not live over two years.

The first house built here after 1776 was probably "the old Gaylord house," in 1780. It is still standing on Elm street, between Center and West streets. The lot was originally set out to Daniel and Isaac Hayden, and extended from Center to West streets. They sold the lot to Ezekiel Thrall in 1765, who built a house where the Congregational parsonage now stands, and in 1773 sold the west part of the lot to Eliakim Gaylord, who in 1789 deeded the lot to his son Eleazer, "with the house standing thereon." The house had probably been built several years. In 1780 he is charged on Jabez Haskell's account-book to sawing oak for frames and joists, boards, clapboards, etc., probably used in this house.

In 1781 Elijah Higley sold to Alexander Allen "the house, barn, and shop partly built" and "half the gristmill, the other half belonging to Ensign Eliakim Gaylord." The site of the gristmill was for a number of years occupied by English's paper-mill, and after the death of the owner, William English, was transferred to the Windsor Locks water company, whose works are now situated there. This property passed into the hands of Jacob Russell about 1785, thence, about 1812, into the possession of Gideon Drake.

The lot on which the Denslow house stood was bought of Jabez Haskell in 1782 by Oliver Chapman and James Steel, "10 rods square for £10." The house stood near the north end of the Medlicott mill, "the same distance



from the water as the old ferry-house, which stood on the opposite side of the river," and was burned some years ago. The land was bought the same year that James Chamberlain petitioned the General Assembly to grant the ferry. In 1785 James Chamberlain bought the land, "with a store standing thereon," and the same year sells "the lot and store" to Samuel Denslow for £45. This was the fourth Samuel (his father lived on West street); he had lived in the miller's house, and "tended" the gristmill for Haskell and Dexter, until 1793. Samuel Denslow's account-book, under date of 1794, has a charge against Martin Moses, son-in-law of Jabez Haskell, for the "rent of his store." The late Miss Eliza Denslow has a tradition that there was a family lived there before her father bought it, but nothing respecting them has been preserved.

"The Jefferson flood," 1801, the highest then known—though exceeded by the flood of 1854—came into the chamber of the Denslow house, and the family moved out; but Mrs. Chamberlain, who lived in the ferry-house on the opposite side of the river, thought there had been a higher flood, because she remembered when her andirons floated out of the fireplace, and they did not in 1801. In the spring of 1811 or 1812 the ice crushed in the basement story of this house, the family flying in the night to the miller's house, or Mr. Haskell's—the only houses east of Center street at that time. The upper part of the house was then moved back to the present east end of the canal bridge. When the canal was dug it was removed to the northwest, on the ferry road, and I think was again removed to its present position. Samuel Denslow was drowned 1820. From his youngest daughter, Eliza, who lived in Suffield, I learned many items of interest relating to Pine Meadow.

The house where the family of the late Hiram Bennett live, in the south part of the town, on Center street road, was built by Azariah Mather about the year 1790.

There were two other houses or cabins that have not been mentioned—both temporary structures—one built before the revolution, the other during that period, or soon after. The first was on Kettle brook, west of the farm of the late Capt S. S. Hayden. The cellar-hole remains. The late Mr. Birge thought the occupant's name was Reed. He said that Samuel Denslow, born 1759, told him that when a boy he went there to get his shoes mended. The house was gone before Mr. Birge's remembrance.

The other was built by the Samuel Denslow who lived on West street, for his hired man, Hendrick Roddemore, a Hessian soldier. It stood on the southwest corner of the late Samuel McAuley's farm, about fifteen rods north of Spring street and ninety rods west of West street. Roddemore continued to live in it until his wife died, December 25, 1790. He then removed to Windsor, south of the little river, where he married again, and with his wife united with the church, 1792. A memorial of the "Old Hessian" remains in the

name of the brook, on the north bank of which his cabin stood. It is still called Hendrick's brook. This man belonged to a Hessian regiment which was captured at Bennington, Vt., 1777, a little before the surrender of the British general, Burgoyne.

Two other Hessian soldiers lived in Windsor, after my recollection. One them, also called "Old Hendrick" Squeers, who died in Pink street, said that he was seized while at work in the field, by order of his prince, and his services sold to the king of England, and he was sent to America to fight against the independence of the colonies.

A charter for the ferry was granted by the General Assembly, in 1783, to James Chamberlain. In 1793 the title passed to James Chamberlain, Jr., and in 1801 it was sold to Samuel Denslow. At the same time Ebenezer Collins, who had "improved the ferry," relinquished his claim to it. In 1806 the ferry was sold to Jabez Heath for \$50; in 1815, to Solomon Terry, with two scows, mortgaged for \$300; 1816, to Erastus Reed and Daniel Stocking for \$300, with boat mortgaged; 1819, to Epaphras and Charles Phelps for \$325. Since that time Mr. Chapin owned and ran the ferry many years, and from his care it passed into the hands of the late B. M. Douglass. In 1885 the ferry franchise was sold to the Windsor Locks and Warehouse Point Bridge and Ferry Company for \$20,000. A fine suspension bridge was built that year at a cost, including the ferry franchise, of \$93,000. It accommodates a large traffic, and has proved a paying investment to the stockholders.

In 1788 Jabez Haskell gives a deed of land for a road, 1½ acres, for £25, "to begin for the southeast corner, at the northeast corner of Capt. Chamberlain's store, at his ferry, on the west side of the Connecticut river." This road bore away northwest; its track is still visible across the lot on the north corner of Church and Main streets; it crossed Spring street near the head of Chestnut street, and entered Center street a little north of Oak street; a trespass road was continued from Center to West street, opposite the farm-house of Samuel McAuley. The same year the road from the Congregational parsonage to the Haskell house, and a pent way from there to the river, was made a public highway. A road was probably made public from the ferry to intersect with this last, but we find no record of it. When the road from Hayden Station to Suffield was laid through, twenty-four years after, but one rod of land in width was bought, from the mill dam to the ferry, proving a public road was there.

When the sawmill was built (1742, or before), the bed of Kettle brook was so deep that it was not practicable to draw the timber growing on the north side of it to the south side. The mill was built on the south side, and an earth-dam built, doubtless, broad enough to draw a team across it. When a public road from the ferry became necessary, it was laid along the river bank,—say

three-fourths of the distance to the sawmill—when to save the cost of an expensive bridge, they were allowed to cross on the milldam.

In 1812 a highway was laid from Hayden Station through our Main street to the top of Clay Hill; thence to Suffield line. The cost to the town was to be so great that but one man in the whole town advocated the building of it. The road was laid along the river bank, except at a single point to and beyond the ferry, when it turned westerly and on a single course ran to the top of Clay Hill. The road as laid and traveled twelve to fifteen years did not pass over the hill, where the writer now lives, but ran between the river and the distillery, then standing where the silk-mill now does, leaving this lower terrace and gaining the higher ground at the east end of the canal bridge. The direct course was to run east of the sawmill, where the canal now runs; but for the same reason that the ferry road had crossed the milldam, the new road also made a detour around the sawmill, the committee making a reserve of the milldam, which, if they had condemned for public use, would probably have been more expensive than a bridge, "reserve to the said Haskell and Dexter the right to alter or repair the flume in their milldam." Herlehigh Haskell, who was an advocate for the road, once told me that the opponents of the road used that reserve argument against the acceptance of the committee's report, "because the road ran over private property and the travel would be liable at any time to be obstructed."

Seventy or eighty years ago the school-house was moved from the south corner of Elm and Center streets to the north corner, where it stood until about 1844, when the village was divided into two districts, and so remained about twenty years, when they were again consolidated and our present school-house was built, accommodating six schools. There was also a primary school kept in the south part of the village for a time. We have now about 750 children between the ages of four and sixteen; about half of these attend the parochial school connected with St. Mary's Catholic Church. The annual expense to the town for the public schools is about \$4,700.