

for their motive-power a steam-engine and the waters of Beaver Brook, producing annually about 230,000 yards of goods, consisting mainly of beavers and cloakings.

It is a fact of peculiar interest in regard to this establishment that the little village which clusters about it is almost entirely occupied by the employés of the mills, and is almost wholly the property of Mr. Collins himself, having been erected by him for the special accommodation of his workmen. The village is very appropriately called "Collinsville."

It is highly to the credit of Mr. Collins that these tenements, about forty-five in number, have been constructed with the benevolent purpose of securing the domestic welfare and comfort of the tenants. Nor has his generosity stopped with furnishing his workmen with pleasant and comfortable dwellings. He has erected a church at his own expense, in which religious services are held every Sabbath. Though himself an Episcopalian, these services are those of the Catholic Church, in deference to the prevailing religious preferences of his workmen. This little community sustains a temperance society, and much is done to promote the moral purity of the village.

Mr. Collins has no ambition for civil office, though he is a member of the School Board of the town. Outside of his own domain he is known as a generous supporter of every good cause. He takes a lively interest in the general welfare of the town of Dracut, which is greatly benefited by having within its borders so thriving a manufactory conducted upon such liberal principles. Mr. Collins enjoys not only the esteem, but the affection of his fellow-townsmen.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### BILLERICA.

BY REV. HENRY A. HAZEN.

#### THE BEGINNINGS.

BILLERICA began life as Shawshin, taking its name from the small river which ran more than twelve miles through the entire length of the early town, reaching the Merrimack in Andover. The displacement of this unique and beautiful Indian name was a misfortune.<sup>1</sup>

The first mention of the place is found in the Colonial Records, 1635-36, March 3d, when the Governor, Deputy-Governor and John Winthrop, Sr., Esq.,

"or any two of them, are intreated to vewe Shawshin, and soe to inform the next Gen'l Court whether or noe it may not be a fitt place for a plantacon."

Concord had been settled in 1635, and this "governor" was John Haynes, who went the next year with Hooker's company to the settlement of Hartford, Ct. Shawshin was not quite remote or attractive enough to turn the Cambridge emigrants aside from their projected Connecticut colony. But it was heard of in England, and in 1636 Mathew Cradock, the Medford founder, and the early but never-resident governor of the Massachusetts Company, mentions "a purpose to apply myself to tyllidge, . . . having had recourse to a plase called Shawe Shynn, where I hear none comes but myselfe," and asks his correspondent's aid in securing a grant of 2000 acres.

In 1637 (Aug.) another deputation was sent by the Court to "vewe Shawshin," but the report, which would have been so interesting, fails to appear. It may have been made and influenced two important grants. Nov. 2, 1637, "The Deputy, Mr. Dudley, hath a thousand acres granted him, wheare it may not piudice any plantation granted, nor any plantation to bee granted, w<sup>th</sup>out limiting to time of impv<sup>t</sup>." "The Governo<sup>r</sup>, Mr. John Winthrope, Senior, hath graunted him a thousand acres of land upon the same tearms as Mr. Dudley hath his." The governor's grant was increased, later, by 200 acres, and they proceeded to a location of their grants, which the Court confirmed. Mr. Winthrop tells the story in his "Journal:"<sup>2</sup>

"Going down the River [from Concord] about four miles, they made choice of a place for one thousand acres, for each of them. They offered each other the first choice, but, because the deputy's was first granted, and himself had store of land already, the governor yielded him the first choice. So, at the place where the deputy's land was to begin, there were two great stones, which they called the Two Brothers, in remembrance that they were brothers by their children's marriage, and did so brotherly agree."

There are modern writers who depict the "quarrel" of these eminent men, but this picture of them, standing on the banks of the Concord, thus graphically outlined by John Winthrop, refutes such calumnies.

The "Two Brothers" still lie conspicuous on the banks of the Concord, the earliest landmark in town. They are, perhaps, 50 rods south of the brook, where the later line between Billerica and Bedford begins. From them a line was run slightly northeast one mile and a quarter, and another, parallel with this, was run from the river two miles and a half below. Between these Mr. Dudley's farm, increased by the Court to 1500 acres, was located. The north line runs through the south part of the village, Charn-

<sup>1</sup>Danforth and all the early clerks of Billerica, spell "Shawshin" uniformly as here given, with "i" in the last syllable. The new name is that of a town in Essex County, England, about seventeen miles north-east of London. A "y" has been added in England, but the Massachusetts town has probably preserved the earlier form. It is variously mispronounced "Billérica and Billeréca." The first syllable should have the accent, and all the others remain obscure.

<sup>2</sup>Winthrop Journal, vol. 1, p. 264.

staffe Lane being a section of it, and extending just across Ash Swamp. The land running from the Boston Road to the ancient Tompson place is a part of the east line of the "Farme." Winthrop's farm, in the other direction, extended to the old Concord line, the Main Street in Bedford, being parallel with and sixty-four rods north of it. The east line of the farm crossed the west end of Bedford Street, where it divides into two roads, and ran to a point not far west of the Bedford Springs. It was sold entire, in 1664, to Job Lane, of Malden.

A larger grant was made in 1640,—3000 acres, to "Mrs. Winthrop," the wife of "our late Governor," which was located "about the lower end of Concord Ryuer, near Merrimack," occupying the west part of what is now the town of Tewksbury. And smaller grants were made on the west side of Concord River, of 500 acres each, to Increase Nowell and Mr. Thomas Allen, and 533 acres to Mr. Thomas Welde, pastor of Roxbury. Meanwhile Cambridge was taking note of Shawshin with increasing interest. A second disruption of the town was threatened, by the proposed removal of Mr. Shepherd and a large part of his flock, whom Hooker and his company sought to draw after them to the Connecticut. To prevent this, 1641, June 21st, "Shawshin is granted to Cambridge, provided they make it a village, to have 10 families there settled w<sup>th</sup>in three years, otherwise the Court to dispose of it." Later, as it appeared that Cambridge was not ready to effect a new settlement so far "in the wilderness," the restriction was removed, and 1643-44, March 7th, "Shawshin is granted to Cambridge w<sup>th</sup>out any condition of making a village there, & the land between them & Concord is granted to them . . . provided the church & present elders continued at Cambridge." This was successful, and the mother town was saved from a second dismemberment.

Cambridge could now take her time, and in spite of some efforts of Woburn to secure a part of Shawshin, she made no haste. Four years pass, and 1648, April 9th, she sets aside 1000 acres for a church farm and votes that sundry of her citizens who have "no house right in town" may have "farms at Shawshin." Among others, President Dunster and Daniel Gookin received 500 acres each, and Mr. Mitchell, the minister; and in 1652, she granted more than a hundred lots, varying in size from ten to 450 acres, and a total of 9800 acres, to her citizens. A few months earlier, 1651-52, February 28th, Governor Dudley had sold his large farm to four Woburn men, and after ten years of negotiation and effort the way is at last open for settlers in Shawshin. There are hints of an early "trucking" house near Vine Brook, which may have preceded the actual coming of settlers in 1652. The death of an infant daughter of Henry Jeft's, May, 1653, is the earliest event noted in the records. The first birth, of Samuel, son of George, Farley, occurred the last week in March, 1654, and in October follow-

ing Shawshin has settlers enough to petition the Court for enlargement on the west side of Concord River, and that the "name of Shawshin henceforth may be cal<sup>d</sup> Billericay." Of the fourteen signers of this petition, only Gookin, Champney and Robert Parker were probably not then living in the town. The other eleven are worthy of record here, as fathers of the town. They are: William and John French, John and James Parker, Ralph Hill, father and son, George Farley, Henry Jefts, Jonathan Danforth, John Sterne(s) and William Chamberline.

The purchase by Woburn men of the Dudley farm and the lease of the church's farm to John Parker, gave Woburn a leadership in the beginning of the town, seven of these petitioners being from Woburn. Stearns was from Watertown, and Danforth and the Frenchs only from Cambridge.

Four hundred acres in the heart of the town, bounded west by the river and south by the farm, were appropriated "by the Church in Cambridge for a Township." It was located north of the Dudley farm, Charnstaffe Lane being the line between them, and the lane leading east from the Lowell road to the old Bridge-Farmer place is very near its north bound. The east line crossed Andover Street between the Kimball place and that of Eben Baker. House-lots of twenty to thirty acres were granted "upon the Township" to most of the early settlers and "they upon the township" held by agreement a prior claim over "those on Mr. Dudley's farm," in the future distribution of the common lands. This grant fixed the site of the village from the beginning—a site well chosen.

The earliest settlers whose house-lots were on the common land, not on the township or the farm, were William Hamlet and William Tay, in 1656. The grant to Hamlet exhibits the common form used, with slight variations, in case of all the early settlers; and I quote:

"They have granted to him and assigns forever, one tenne-acre lot, or one single share; that is, one hundred and thirtene acres of upland and twelve acres of meadow land, together with all towne privileges, after additions and divitions of lands and meadows made or to be made, or granted by the towne, according to any their towne orders, covenants, or agreements, to any free denison amongst them, according to y<sup>e</sup> proportion of a ten-acre lot, and on this account are the following grants."

His first grant is of fifty-six acres, more or less, "on the North-East corner of bare hill, and on y<sup>e</sup> south of hogrooten meadow." This meadow of unsavory name lies southeast of the Tompson or Tufts place, and the hill is between the Boston and Lexington Roads, southeast of the village, and east of Dr. Noyes' house. Hamlet's house must have stood near the Crosby place. Tay was on the west of the same hill, at Dr. Noyes' place.

A Braintree company came soon after, and, by 1660, had well occupied the line south and east of the village, along Loes' Plain as far as Fox Hill. North

<sup>1</sup>Framingham, in England, the native town of Danforth, was in



from the township ran another line of the earliest farms, Paterson, Hubbard, Bird, Durrant and Haile, who was near the Great Bridge, or Fordway, with Toothaker at the extreme point, the old Rogers place of a latter day by the canal.

The allotment of the common lands to the settlers began promptly, and it was almost 100 years before this land fund was exhausted. The earliest assignments were made to several of the township proprietors in Loes Plain; but the first general distribution was of meadow land, which was specially important and valuable, before clearing and culture had made higher grounds productive of the needed supply of grass for winter use. The farm settlers did not share in this first meadow distribution, which was intended to equalize the privilege of the township men with these farm purchasers.

Jonathan Danforth was the early surveyor, as well as for many years the careful town clerk. His handwriting, still beautiful and wonderfully legible, is for the period most remarkable; and the two early volumes of "Land Grants"—the earlier and finer almost entirely written by him—afford ample material for pursuing the details of the land distribution of the town. His record of "Births, Marriages and Deaths," a small and well-preserved parchment-bound volume, is believed to be the most complete and convenient record of the kind which any town in New England has to show for that century. His skill as a surveyor brought his services into requisition in all the region, and very many of the early surveys of towns and farms, preserved in the State Archives and elsewhere, come from his hand. He was the younger brother of the eminent deputy-governor, Thomas Danforth, and of the Rev. Samuel Danforth, colleague, of John Eliot, of Roxbury. He was the intimate and lifelong friend of Rev. Samuel Whiting, the first pastor, and it is hardly too much to say that he still deserves recognition as the "first citizen of Billerica."

Billerica had also certain land-grants and dealings beyond her own bounds which furnish an important chapter of her early history. The small grants made by Cambridge in the bounds of Shawshin, numbering more than 100 and embracing 10,000 acres, were not easy to dispose of in a way that would not embarrass the settlement. They were not valuable and attractive enough to draw many of these Cambridge families here to occupy them; but the owners would naturally seek to make as good a sale of them as they could. While these rights were thus held in suspense, the chance that they might be enforced in some unwelcome form would make the rights in Billerica less attractive to persons who might otherwise purchase and settle here. As a measure of relief from this difficulty, application was made to the General Court

for a grant of lands elsewhere, which met with favor, as follows:<sup>1</sup>

"In ans<sup>r</sup> to the petition of the inhabitants of Billirrikey, this Court doth graunt the toune of Billirrikey eight thousand acres of lands, for the ends desired, in any place or places that are free, and not capeable of making a toune, provided that the said lands be laid out before the next Court of Election, and that the inhabitants of Cambridg doe accept thereof & disingage the lands desired at Billirrikey, & also that the toune of Billirrikey be seted w<sup>th</sup> twenty families at least w<sup>th</sup>in three yeares, y<sup>t</sup> the ordinances of God may be settled & encouraged in the said place of Billirrikey; & it is ordered, y<sup>t</sup> Major Willard, Capt. Edw. Johnson, Mr. Edward Jackson, or any two of them, w<sup>th</sup> Thomas Danforth, or any other surveyor, shall lay y<sup>e</sup> same out at the peticoners charge, making retourne to the next Court of Election."

The survey was made by Jonathan Danforth. As described and approved by the Court,<sup>2</sup> it was located as follows:

*Ancient Maps and Plans* (in State Archives). Vol. ii, Index, "Billerica."

"Layd out to the vse of the inhabitants of Billirrikey, eight thousand acres of land, lying vpon Merremacke Riuer, on both sides thereof, taking in the trucking howse now inhabited by J<sup>no</sup>. Cromwell, the said land being layd out about sixe thousand three hundred acres, on the East side the riuer, and about seventeene hundred and fivety acres on the west side the said riuer, and is bounded by the wildernes surrounding the same, as is demonstrated by a plott thereof, taken and made by Jonathan Danforth, survejor, and exhibited to this Court by Major Symon Willard and Capt. Edward Johnson, appointed by this Court, Octob. 14, 1656, to lay out the same.

"SYMON WILLARD.

"EDWARD JOHNSON."

This survey was the earliest ever made, it is safe to say, in the Merrimack Valley beyond Chelmsford, and is the starting-point in the history of Dunstable. The location was in a part of the valley commonly called Naticook, spelled by Danforth "Naticott." The grant began at the Penichuck Brook, which forms the north bound of Nashua, and extends on the west of the river as far north as the Souhegan River. Then it follows the Souhegan, and for nearly a mile the Merrimack, passing two islands, the larger of which received the surveyor's name "Jonathan;" then runs eastward two or three miles and southward five or six, returning to its starting-point. This Naticott grant remained for a year in the hands of Billerica, when John Parker received authority to dispose of it. (*Grants*, page 7.)

"9th, 6m., 1658. It is jointly agreed by vs, the inhabitance of Billerica, That John Parker hath given to him (by the towne) full power to make sale and give assurance of that eight thousand acres of land granted to us, and for our use, by the Honor<sup>d</sup> Generall Court, which land lyeth at Natticott, upon merimack River. And we do hereby, fully, clearly, and absolutely give up our whole interest, right, and title in the same unto the aforesaid John Parker, to make sale of and dispose of as he shall see good for himself & his assigns. *Provided always*, that the aforesaid John Parker shall purchase, for y<sup>e</sup> vse & behoofe of the Towne of Billerica aforesaid, all the severall lotts, to the value of eight thousand acres (granted by the towne of Cambridge to their inhabitance), which grants are already entered in their towne booke, which land lyeth within the bounds and limits of our town. . . . And in case any of y<sup>e</sup> proprietors of the aforesaid alotments shall refuse to sell or give them, then the said John shall retourne vnto the towne of Billerica six pence per acre for so many acres as shall remain unpurchased, to y<sup>e</sup> value of (or short of the number of) eight thousand acres, which money shall remain to Public Towne use."

"Loes Hundred." He gave the name to the plain and a meadow south of Fox Hill, and extending as far as the Church Farm.

<sup>1</sup> *Colonial Records*. Vol. iv, part i, p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> *Colonial Records*. Vol. iv, part i, p. 302.

A month later Parker had sold the land to William Brenton, a Boston merchant and leading business man, who soon after removed to Rhode Island, and was Governor of that Colony in 1666-68, and died in 1674.

In 1661 the town received another grant of 4000 acres, which was sold to Parker and Danforth. The proceeds were applied to the completion of the meeting-house, to Mr. Whiting's salary and to the purchase of the Weld farm west of Concord River.<sup>1</sup>

The progress of population was not rapid. Beginning in 1652, probably with three or four families—in 1659 the number had reached twenty-five. Four years later the minister's rate implies that nearly fifty were in town, but for the twelve years following the increase was small.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### *BILLERICA—(Continued).*

#### THE INDIANS AND INDIAN WARS.

The relations of Billerica with the Indians were intimate and important. The Shawshin territory was a favorite resort of the red men. The Pawtucket tribe occupied the vicinity of the mouth of the Concord River, on both sides of it, as their headquarters. From this place they went forth; to this they returned; here they planted their corn. Wamesit, or Weymesit, was originally the name of the eastern angle, between the Concord and Merrimack Rivers, around Fort Hill and the modern "Belvidere" of Lowell. Here many, if not the majority, of the Indians lived, giving ancient Billerica a large Indian population, though the town never probably exercised civil jurisdiction over them. This Indian settlement confronted the fathers of Billerica as they looked northward. Their road down the Concord River was the road to Wamesit.

This Indian reservation, specifically granted by the General Court, was surveyed and described by Danforth in 1664, April, as follows:<sup>2</sup>

" . . . There is laid out unto the Indians, who are the inhabitants of Waymesick, five hundred acres of land on the east side of Concord Riuer and joyning to the sajd riuer and to Merremack Riuer; it runnes upon Concord Riuer about one mile & three quarters, which reacheth to Bacon Brooke, & bounded by the sajd brooke on the south fower score poole; it runnes from the mouth of the Concord Ryuer doune Merremacke Riuer two hundred & fifty poole, where it is bounded by a red oake marked; from thence it runnes according to the bound marke trees w<sup>th</sup> two angles, unto Bacon Brooke; all which doe more plainly appeare by plott of it under written. This five hundred acres is part of that three thousand w<sup>ch</sup> was layd out to M<sup>r</sup>. Winthrop formerly, only in the returne of sajd three thousand there is mention made of one hundred acres allowed in that farme, in reference to land the Indians had im-

proved w<sup>thin</sup> the bounds of it. This worke was done by the Committee appointed to y<sup>e</sup> same by this Generall Court

"SYMON WILLARD,

"JOHN PARKER,

"JONATHAN DANFORTH, Surveyor."

In place of this four hundred acres taken out of Mrs. Winthrop's farm, her heirs were granted six hundred acres elsewhere. The mouth of Bacon Brook, which bounded this Indian plantation southerly, is a few rods south of the Salem Railroad bridge. The present boundary of Lowell on the east of Concord River falls a little below the lines of the Indian survey. There is no evidence that these Pawtucket Indians were ever troublesome or unfriendly neighbors. In common with other tribes, their numbers had been greatly reduced by a desolating pestilence not long before the period of the English colonization; and the wise and Christian missionary labors of Eliot and Gookin among them did not fail to bear important fruit. Had the Indian policy of the country been moulded in later years by the same spirit of benevolence and justice, the nation would have been saved much disaster, expense and reproach.

John Eliot, pastor of Roxbury, 1632-90, began to devote himself to labors among the Indians about the time that the Shawshin settlement became a practical question. Beginning at Nonantum and Natick, the success of his efforts encouraged their extension, and he soon sought out these Wamesit Indians. Passaconaway, the aged sachem, became friendly, if not Christian, and, in 1660, in a farewell speech to his children and people, he "warned them to take heed how they quarrelled with their English neighbors, for though they might do them some damage, yet it would prove the means of their own destruction." His death did not follow immediately, for, in 1662, he asked and received from the General Court a grant of land "about Naticot, above Mr. Brenton's lands, where it is free, a mile & a halfe on either side Merremacke River in breadth & three miles on either side in length." "Mr. Brenton's lands," here mentioned, were the early grant of eight thousand acres to Billerica, which the town had sold to that gentleman, and this grant to the sachem was beyond the Souhegan, near Manchester.

In 1670 Wannalancet had succeeded his father as sachem, also inheriting his peaceful spirit. He yielded to Eliot's faithful persuasions and avowed himself a Christian, 1674, May 5th. The account given by Captain Daniel Gookin of Wamesit and its population and the conversion of this chief is interesting.<sup>3</sup>

The picture of this faithful magistrate and friend of the Indians, accompanied by his "brother" Eliot, on his annual visit to Wamesit, dispensing justice and the Gospel to the red men there, is full of suggestions, and the conversion of Wannalancet might furnish a

<sup>1</sup> For fuller details of these and other land grants and transactions, see the present writer's "History of Billerica," *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> *Colonial Records*. Vol. iv, part ii, p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> *Massachusetts Historical Collections*. First series. Vol. i, p. 186.

painter with an attractive subject. Its interest to Billerica would be increased by the presence in it of Mr. Daniel, an "English gentleman," who for ten years resided here with his "noble" wife, and then returned to England.

Wannalancet is credited with building the fort from which "Fort Hill" takes its name; and traditions which seem trustworthy fix the site of the log chapel, in which Mr. Eliot preached to the Indians, very near the fine edifice of the Eliot Church.

In the summer of 1675, when the alarm and peril of King Philip's War assailed the Colony, these Indians retired to the wilderness at Penacook (Concord, New Hampshire,) to avoid being involved. Still, they were suspected, and in September a company of 100 men was sent to ascertain the position of Wannalancet in regard to the war. On their approach the Indians concealed themselves in the woods, and their deserted wigwams were wantonly burned. But, though thus sorely tempted to join Philip in retaliation, the sachem did not forget his father's counsel, and restrained his young warriors, who were eager to attack the whites. He soon after went farther, to the head-waters of the Connecticut, and there spent the winter. The next year the Indians were allured to Dover and unjustly imprisoned; but they were soon set at liberty and returned to their Merrimack home. After the conclusion of the war the sachem visited the Reverend Mr. Fiske, of Chelmsford. To his question, whether Chelmsford had suffered much, the clergyman replied that they had not, and devoutly thanked God. "Me next," said Wannalancet, implying that he had restrained the Indians under his control. Billerica perhaps owed her security during those dark days to the same friendly sachem.

But the Indian occupation of Billerica was not confined to Wamesit. The frequency with which their arrow-points and other articles are found, shows how numerous they once were. Graves and the site of a wigwam are still shown north of Jaquith Brook, near Concord River; and the north shore of Nutting's Pond was so distinctively theirs as to be sold by them in 1665. The hill north of this pond was known as Indian Hill. In May, 1665, the town granted to Henry Jefts "four acres of land, lying at the Indian Hill on the north of y<sup>e</sup> Indian field at Nuttins pond."

Danforth records the death of his Indian servant, John Warrick, 1686; and, in 1681, James Speen, Indian, receives "eight pounds due to y<sup>e</sup> Indians for four wolves heads," and other records occur of the same sort. These dusky forms must have been frequently seen in the early homes of Billerica. Did their coming excite fear or confidence, repugnance or pleasure? Whatever it was, the sensation was a familiar one. And, however they had learned to trust their Wamesit neighbors, as they observed the labors of the saintly Eliot among them and the fruit they bore, the fathers could never be long forgetful of the

darker fringe of savage humanity beyond, the working of whose policy or passion might at almost any moment involve them in peril or ruin. This danger hung over the pioneers of Billerica for more than fifty years, and their slumbers were likely to be broken by a war-whoop. In our estimate of their faith and courage in planting the town, this fact should be remembered.

The earliest indication of this danger afforded by the Records occurs in "1667, 9<sup>m</sup>, 11. At a meeting of the selectmen. It is agreed concerning fortification in this Town, That ther shall be a house built of stone & brick w<sup>th</sup> a chimney at y<sup>e</sup> west end of it, y<sup>e</sup> dementions of y<sup>e</sup> house to bee twenty-six foote in length, twenty-two foot wide from outside to outside, with a doore three foot wide on y<sup>e</sup> south side, near y<sup>e</sup> west end, & two windows, one at y<sup>e</sup> east end & y<sup>e</sup> other on y<sup>e</sup> south side, being each window three foot wide & two foot & a half in height, all in y<sup>e</sup> clear; y<sup>e</sup> walls of y<sup>e</sup> house shalbe nine foote in height from y<sup>e</sup> floore to y<sup>e</sup> under side of y<sup>e</sup> plate; also, a floore, lying one foot below y<sup>e</sup> plate, with crosse runners, y<sup>e</sup> long girt lying cross y<sup>e</sup> house; also, ther shalbe iron barres in each window & one window at y<sup>e</sup> gable end on y<sup>e</sup> east; y<sup>e</sup> rooffe of y<sup>e</sup> house to be sawne stuffe, covered with bords, chamfered & after shingled. And for y<sup>e</sup> effecting of y<sup>e</sup> premises, we do agree that hands shall forthwith be employed to digge clay and stones, & y<sup>e</sup> rest of y<sup>e</sup> work to be carried on with as much convenient speed as may be, according to y<sup>e</sup> order of y<sup>e</sup> gen<sup>l</sup> Court.

The order of the General Court was passed in May, 1667, requiring every town to erect, "either inclosing the meeting-house, or in some other convenient place, a fortification, or fort, of stone, brick, timber, or earth, as the place maybe most capable, of such dimensions as may best suit their ability, where women, children & the aged maybe secured in case of sudden danger, whereby the souldjers maybe more free to oppose an enemy."

But this fortification never was built, whether because the tax was too great, or the alarm less, we can only conjecture; but this description is interesting in depicting the house the fathers would have built for such a purpose.

Eight years passed, and the peril came in earnest, the most critical hour, perhaps, in the history of New England. The Indians, alarmed at the growing numbers and strength of the settlements, and incited by resentment for fancied and, perhaps, some real injuries, rose in a determined effort to exterminate the colonists. Philip, chief of the Pokanokets, was the leader, enlisting the Narragansetts and as many others of the natives as he was able. They fell upon Swanzey, and soon after Brookfield suffered. Deerfield was burned and Hadley attacked. Springfield, Northfield, Lancaster, Medfield, Weymouth, Groton and Marlborough were successively the victims of savage assaults; and where the next blow might fall



was an ever-present dread in every hamlet and home. Had the Wamesit Indians joined in the fray, Billerica would probably have been among the first to suffer. The town, and perhaps the Colony owed its salvation to their friendly neutrality. Eliot and Gookin had such reward as they did not foresee for their benevolent labors. Other reward they had, too, in the suspicion and bitter denunciation of many of the people, because they would not turn away from the friendly Indians, when the popular feeling included all red men in a common conspiracy and malignity.

The alarm came unexpectedly upon the town. On the 3d of May the selectmen "order the constables watch to cease this present sumer unless greater need appear." The need did appear, and the succeeding pages of the record suggest how great and urgent the emergency was. Some items must be quoted:

"13. 6<sup>m</sup>. 75. At a publick Towne Meeting.

"The Towne, considering the providence of God at the p<sup>re</sup>sent calling us to lay aside our ordinary ocations in providing for our creatures and to take special care for the p<sup>re</sup>serving of our lives and the lives of our wives and children, the enemy being near and the warnings by gods providence upon our neighbors being very solemne and awfull, do therefore order & and agree joyntly to p<sup>re</sup>pare a place of safety for women and children, and that all persons and teams shall attend y<sup>e</sup> said worke untill it be finished; and account of y<sup>e</sup> wholl charge being kept, it shalbe equally divided upon the inhabitants with other Towne charges. Also they appoint Serj<sup>nt</sup> flosser, Serj<sup>nt</sup> Tompson, Sam<sup>l</sup> Manning & Jonathan Danforth to be overseers of y<sup>e</sup> same."

"8. 8<sup>m</sup>. 75. At a meeting of ye selectmen & comittee of militia.

"In pursuance of an order from the Hon<sup>d</sup> Councill, sent unto them by warrant from y<sup>e</sup> worsh<sup>ip</sup> Simon Willard Esq<sup>ir</sup>, Serj<sup>nt</sup> Major, in reference to the gathering the inhabitants of the towne into severall garrisons according to their best capacity.

"Imprs. They have ordered serj<sup>nt</sup> Hill's house to be a garrison for that end of y<sup>e</sup> towne, taking to it Nathaniel & Jonathan Hill, Tho: Dutton Jun<sup>r</sup>, Lt. Wm. french, Will<sup>m</sup> Chamberline Sen<sup>r</sup>, & Isaac Chamberline, & two soldiers; nine soldiers & five houses.

"4. They order to the Reverend Mr. Samuel Whiting, his house Thomas Dutton Sen<sup>r</sup> & his son John, Daniel Shed Sen<sup>r</sup> & his son John Shed, John Durrant, John Rogers Sen<sup>r</sup> & his three sons, John Thomas & Nathaniel Rogers, and two soldiers; eleven soldiers & six families; & this to bee y<sup>e</sup> maine garrison & y<sup>e</sup> last refuge in case of extremity.

"7. Whereas severall at y<sup>e</sup> north end of y<sup>e</sup> towne have already departed their own Habitations & severall of y<sup>e</sup> vnwilling to returne to y<sup>e</sup> againe at y<sup>e</sup> present, Hence they order them to be entertained in y<sup>e</sup> body of y<sup>e</sup> towne.

"9. They order that y<sup>e</sup> p<sup>er</sup>sons ordered to each garrison shall dispose of their corne (according to y<sup>e</sup> order of y<sup>e</sup> Councill) neer unto their owne garrisons, unless they can els where better secure the same.

"10. They order that every p<sup>er</sup>son afores<sup>d</sup> shall equally contribute in labour or otherwise to fortify each house of garrison to which they are appointed and seasonably to attend y<sup>e</sup> same, according to y<sup>e</sup> Councill's order, both p<sup>er</sup>sons & teames to attend y<sup>e</sup> same as in y<sup>e</sup> order of highway worke is required untill y<sup>e</sup> worke be done. Only in case Mr. Daniel and Mr. Laine fortify themselves (they being very far from neighbours) they shall then be freed from fortifying y<sup>e</sup> garrisons to which they are appointed. And are also impowered to keepe a watch at their owne and to examine p<sup>er</sup>sons as other watches may do.

"11. They order that the Comitee of militia & selectmen, each person that do pertaine to any garrison, shall order & regulate y<sup>e</sup> worke of y<sup>e</sup> same as overseers, & Serj<sup>nt</sup> Kidder is appointed overseer of Mr. Whiting's garrison, Joseph Tompson of Thomas Patten's, & Jonathan Danforth of James Paterson's garrison, & that any three of y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Comitee & selectmen may determine what shalbe done in reference to the fortifying each garrison & to determine any difference that may arise respecting y<sup>e</sup> same.

"12. They order that all brush & underwood near y<sup>e</sup> aforesaid garri-

sons shal be cutt up and cleared away, according to the Councill's order, each person to attend y<sup>e</sup> same both for time & place as they shall have after order. Also they order each inhabitant to attend their severall watches, as formerly, untill further order."

"14. 8<sup>m</sup>. 1675. At a meeting of y<sup>e</sup> Hon<sup>d</sup> major Willard, The Select men, & Committee of militia. These severall orders were read before y<sup>e</sup> Hon<sup>d</sup> Major afores<sup>d</sup>, considered and allowed by him, & y<sup>e</sup> inhabitants enjoyned to attend y<sup>e</sup> same.

"Also, it is ordered that the severall soldiers sent hither to garrison shall assist in fortifying y<sup>e</sup> severall houses to which they are appointed, as also to clear away such brush as is near such houses appointed for garrison, as they shall be ordered from time to time.

"Also, it is ordered that no listed soldier of the Troop, or of y<sup>e</sup> foot company, shall remove their habitations & abode out of the town without liberty first had & obtained from the Major of y<sup>e</sup> regiment or Committee of militia & selectmen of the town, on y<sup>e</sup> peril of such a fine as shalbe imposed on them by such authority as shall have power to determine y<sup>e</sup> same.

"Neither shall any soldier afores<sup>d</sup> absent himself out of the towne about any private ocations of his owne without leave first had and obtained from y<sup>e</sup> master of the garison to which they belong, vnder the penalty of five shillings p day for every such defect, to be levied by y<sup>e</sup> Clark of y<sup>e</sup> band, as other fines for defect in training days are levied.

"And further, it is ordered, in case of an alarme every soldier shall repair to y<sup>e</sup> garrison vnto which he is appointed.

"And in case any garison house be set upon by y<sup>e</sup> enemje, Then y<sup>e</sup> garrisons next to them shall send reliefe to them as they are capable, not leaving their owne garrison without competent security for the time.

"And in case of need, the women & children shall be conveyed to y<sup>e</sup> maine garison, if it may bee with safety, that so there maybe the better supply in case of need, the cheife officer to order and regulate the same, where there may be time so to do.

"Also, it is ordered, that every p<sup>er</sup>son that shall shoot off a gun, small or great, without leave from a comander or in case of offence or defence against an enemje, shall pay as a fine two shillings & six pence, or set off so much of their wages if they be garison men.

"Also, Job Laine was allowed to fortify his owne house, and to have two soldiers for garrison men to defend his house, in case y<sup>e</sup> country could spare them.

"All this is allowed & confirmed by me,

"S<sup>r</sup>: WILLARD, Serj.-Major."

It does not need a lively imagination, reading between the lines of this record, to depict something of the tumult, hardship and peril through which Billerica was passing. Families fled from their homes to the garrison-houses, or the greater security of the lower towns. The labors of the field gave place to fortifying, scouting and watching. The corn must be removed to safer receptacles. They organize a military company with Jonathan Danforth, lieutenant, and James Kidder, ensign. Some of their own brave sons enlist in the service of the Colony and march to peril and death. Timothy Farley was killed at Quaboag, August 2d, in the assault on Lieutenant Wheeler's company, and John French carried through life the effect of the wounds received there. And two mothers approaching their confinement sought comfort and safety in Charlestown—the wives of John Marshall and of the pastor; nor is it too much to infer that the anxiety and hardship they had suffered may explain the death, in a few days, of the sons born to them there.

Forty-eight families are enumerated in the list of assignments to the garrison-houses. Rev. Samuel Whiting's house, the main garrison, was north of

Charnstaffe Lane and just west of the brook. How much labor was spent in fortifying we may gather some idea by gleaning from the record the fact that the work done on this house, under the charge of Peter Bracket, employed thirty men, with several cattle, a little more than two days each, and the amount credited was eight pounds, six shillings and nine pence. But the blow so long dreaded and guarded against did not fall, and the town was mercifully spared more than its common share in the burdens and losses of Philip's War. That share was sufficiently trying, and bore heavily upon the inhabitants.

It is suggested by items like these: Samuel Whiting is enrolled among the troopers; Job Lane is impressed, and Daniel Rogers, from December to February, 1675. And when, fifty years after, Massachusetts rewarded the soldiers in this war somewhat tardily by land-grants, the following Billerica men or their heirs shared in these "Narragansett" grants, proving that they had been in the service: Samuel Hunt, John Needham, James Patterson, Nathaniel Rogers, John Shed, John Sheldon, John Stearns, Joseph Tompson.

The position of the Christian Indians at Wamesit and other "praying towns" was one of especial embarrassment and hardship during these dark days. Gookin was their candid judge, as well as their true friend, and his estimate of their attitude was amply vindicated by later developments.<sup>1</sup> They were honestly friendly, and desired to act on the former advice of Passaconaway. Gookin wished that advantage be taken of this fact, and that their forts at Fort Hill and elsewhere should be manned by a few English soldiers, who could direct and use the activity of the Indians in the public defence. But the excited imaginations of the English, generally, could appreciate no distinction of friendly and hostile Indians, and every red man was a foe to be dreaded and distrusted, if not shot at sight; and Captain Gookin's wise plan of defence stood no chance of being accepted. The hostile Indians, of course, sought every opportunity, and found many, to foment this jealousy, if they could not win the Christian Indians to their side.

Wannalancet, the Wamesit sachem, had retired, at the beginning of the war, to the vicinity of Penacook (Concord), and subsequently to the region of the upper Connecticut, resisting overtures from the English to induce him to return. A portion of the tribe remained at Pawtucket. James Richardson, of Chelmsford, was for a time in charge of them; and a barn or haystack belonging to him was burned by skulking hostile Indians, as were two or three houses in the same town. The unfortunate Wamesits were falsely charged with these acts; and a party of fourteen Chelmsford men, under pretence of scouting for

Philip's forces, went out to assail them.<sup>2</sup> Calling the unsuspecting Indians from their wigwams, two of the party fired. Five women and children were wounded and one boy was killed. The others were restrained from their murderous purpose, and the outrage was severely condemned by the better part of the English. The murderers were tried; but the juries, swayed by the popular feeling, would not convict them. The Indians saw that however friendly they might be, their lives were in peril, and fled to the woods for safety. The Council sent Lieutenant Henchman to persuade them to return, but at first without avail. After three weeks of great suffering for want of food, most of them, however, did return. The Council directed Major Henchman to treat them kindly, and sent Rev. John Eliot, with Majors Gookin and Willard, to encourage them and try to persuade the Chelmsford people to treat them better.

It is not easy to determine the order of events, and the following incidents were probably concurrent with or prior to some of those above-mentioned. The Court, as well as the Chelmsford men, undertook to punish the Wamesits for wrongs of which not they but others were guilty. They were summoned and brought down to Boston, convicted on no good evidence, of the Chelmsford fires, and for a time imprisoned. Most of them were soon liberated and sent home under conduct of Lieutenant Richardson. But a military company was encountered at Woburn on their way, and one of the soldiers, against orders, fired and killed a young brave. The murderer was acquitted by a jury. The Indians, alarmed by these repeated wrongs, again fled. They left behind six or seven persons too old or invalid to accompany them, and the wigwam in which these unfortunates were left was set on fire by inhuman white men and consumed with all its inmates. The wretched remnant of the Wamesits, convinced at last that there was no peace for them in their Pawtucket homes, finally joined their chief in the depths of the forest, and did not return until the war was over.

It would not be strange if, in retaliation for their wrongs, some of the Wamesits were responsible, as was charged, for later assaults. Mr. Hubbard, in his "Indian Wars," records the burning of a house in Andover, and wounding of one Roger Marks, and adds: "Two more houses about Shawshen, beyond the said Andover, were burned about March 10; also they killed a young man of the said Town, April 8, the son of George Abbot. And another son of his was carried away the same day, who yet was returned some few months after almost pined to Death with Hunger." Mr. Abbot lived on the Shawshin, in the west part of Andover, and the inference which has been drawn from Hubbard's language, that the houses "about Shawshen" which were burned were in Billerica, has no good foundation and is improbable.

<sup>1</sup> See his account of the Christian Indians, in *Archeologia Americana*, vol. ii, p. 411.

<sup>2</sup> *Felt's Annals*, vol. ii, p. 578.

Joseph Abbot, of Andover, was slain on April 8th. The next day, which was the Sabbath, a special alarm occurred in Billerica, and troops from below were summoned to the defence of the town. Increase Mather tells us: <sup>1</sup> "This day, being the Lord's Day, there was an alarm at Charlestown, Cambridge, & other towns, by reason that sundry of the enemy were seen at Billerica, and (it seemeth) had shot a man there." A letter from John Cotton is also quoted, saying: "the Indians beset Billerica round about, the inhabitants being at meeting."

Read Mather's doubtful statement about "a young man murdered there," in the light of Hubbard's record that Joseph Abbot was killed at Andover the day previous, and it becomes clearly probable that the trouble and bitterness of that anxious day were not intensified by the actual death of any one here.

Another glimpse of this Sabbath alarm is seen in the fact that twenty troopers were sent by Major Willard, impressing horses and men in Woburn to the relief of Billerica.

From the close of Philip's War, in 1676, a period of peace with the Indians ensued for fifteen years. These years were not, however, free from anxiety and frequent alarms. The most interesting incident in the Indian history of Billerica during this period was the procuring an Indian deed. It bears date June 5, 1685. Whether the motive which led to the acquisition of an Indian title at this late day was purely benevolent may be doubted. A conflict of claims as to the bounds of the town on the west side of Concord River had arisen. The bounds of the grant from the General Court were obscure, and, in 1684, the Bloods had obtained an Indian deed to quite a large tract, claimed also by Billerica, in the vicinity of the present Carlisle Village. The line described in the deed to Blood included meadows which Billerica had granted to her own citizens twenty years earlier, and to which her right was confirmed, in 1700, by the General Court. When Billerica obtained her Indian deed, it was probably felt to be prudent to secure whatever title the natives could give, and not leave the benefit of it to the unjust claim of the Bloods.

With the increase of English neighbors, the Indians at Wamesit found their home there less satisfactory, or the prices offered for their lands more so, and gradually sold their reservation. "Wanalanset, Sachem," and others sell to Jonathan Tyng, 1687, December 2d, two parcels, of which one was on the east of Concord River, and is described as containing "the old Planting ground, which the Indians, who were the former proprietors thereof, and their associates, used to employ & improve, by planting, fishing, & Dwelling thereon, for many years past." With this sale, the Indian titles in Wamesit were probably terminated.

In the abortive expedition of 1690 against Quebec, Billerica was represented by Captain Danforth, and when the Indians fell upon Dunstable in 1691, the alarm and the fugitives came to Billerica. At last 1st August, 1690, the assault so long dreaded and guarded against fell upon the town, and two homes were made desolate, those of Benjamin Dutton and Zachary Shed. They were on the plain, a half-mile south of North Billerica. In each, the mother, with her eldest and youngest child, perished at the bloody hands of the savages. Mrs. Dutton was thirty-six years of age, one of the earliest natives of the town, *nee* Joanna Jefts, and widow of John Dunkin. Her daughter Mary Dunkin was sixteen, and her son Benoni, "son of her grief," was less than two, born two months after his father's death. If Mrs. Shed's age were the same as her husband's, she was also thirty-six; her daughter Hannah was thirteen, and Agnes was a child of two years. None seem to have been made captives in this assault. Four families at least were living as far north, or beyond, which were for some reason spared by the savages.

Three years followed of anxiety and burdensome public service, diversified by witchcraft excitements—when the second massacre fell upon the town, 1695, August 5th. The town clerk, who rarely turns aside from official record to mention incidents, gives four lines to this massacre: <sup>2</sup> "This day received that awful stroke by the enemy of fivetene persons slain & taken, more sad than that we met withall three years before, when we mett upon the like occasion."

The blow fell upon four families, who were also in or near the present village of North Billerica. The home of John Rogers stood about eighty rods due north of the late Governor Talbot's house. The cellar and brick from its chimney may still be seen. He was fifty-three years old and his wife was not living. He was killed and two of his children were taken prisoners. Thomas Rogers, his brother, lived near the present site of the village hall. He perished with his eldest son, while his wife and two children escaped. John Levistone lived farther east and lost five of his seven children.

There was one other victim of that bloody day, whose case was, if possible, more tragic. She was the wife of Dr. Roger Toothaker, and her home stood at the point where, in later years, the Middlesex Canal left the Concord River. Tradition says it is still standing, as the ell of the old brick Rogers house. Her personality and trials deserve special notice. Her name was Mary Allen, and she was sister of that Martha Allen who married Thomas Carrier and was a victim of the witchcraft delusion at Salem three years before. Not only was Mrs. Toothaker's sister thus fatally involved, but her husband, with more freedom and folly, neglecting the claims of his family and disregarding the appeals of the selectmen to return to his duty,

<sup>1</sup> *History* (Reprint of 1862), p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> *Records*, Vol. II, p. 58.



left wife and children to the charity of his neighbors. Trials like these were mingled in the bitter cup of Mrs. Toothaker, with the Indian alarms and the massacre of her neighbors. At last the war-whoop of the savages sounded her death-knell, at the same time that her youngest daughter, Margaret, was borne into captivity. If the remembrance and sympathy of later generations could afford any compensation for the sorrows of such a life, we might search far to find a person better entitled to them than Mary Allen Toothaker.

Of the agitation and alarm which ran through the town, as the tidings of this bloody work spread, we can form slight conception. The day was Monday, not, as some traditions affirm, the Sabbath. The "garrisons" would be soon filled with excited women and children; the men would prepare for defence and attack, for pursuit of the retreating foe was the first impulse; every nook, every tree and bush would be watched for a concealed foe; and for many days the dread of another and deadly blow must have shaken their hearts. There is no evidence that either of these attacks were preceded by any warnings, or that any other towns suffered at the same time.

The insidious foe chose to fall upon some unsuspecting settlement and beat a hasty retreat before neighbors could rally to the rescue. Three weeks passed and the alarm continued. Colonel Lynde, of Charlestown, was commissioned to pursue the foe, and his report discovers to us glimpses of what Billerica was passing through:

"Aug. 23, 1695. Receiving commission from the Honorable William Stoughton, Lieutenant-Governor, Commander-in-Chief over all the province of Massachusetts, with instructions for his Majesty's service in the county of Middlesex: pursuant whereunto I went that night to Billerica, where I found about three hundred men in arms from Woburn, Reading, Malden, Medford, Charlestown, Cambridge, Watertown, under conduct of Major William Johnson, Major Jeremiah Swaine, Major Wade, Capt. William Greene, Capt. John Greene, Lt. Remington, Lt. Homan, Capt. Gerfield, Sergeant Bond and Mr. Sherman.

"That night we marched to the river of Merrimack, guarded the fords, there being three between Andover and Chelmsford, with about forty men at each ford, and with about one hundred men encamped that night at Prospect Hill, that lies between Chelmsford and the river, on the northern side of the great swamp; leaving the remaining forces to guard the town. As soon as it was light, on the 24th of August instant, we sent men to the top of the said hill, where we had a view of the said swamp and the country far about, but could discover no fire anywhere. Thence we proceeded to range the woods between Andover and Chelmsford, but finding no sign of our enemies, we rendezvoused at a place called Sandy Pond, about eight miles from Billerica eastward; from whence about eleven of the clock that day we went to the great swamp, dismounted half our men, the other half taking their horses. We caused the men on foot to pass through the swamp in a rank, each man at a distance as much as was convenient; appointed to rendezvous again at Prospect Hill; Major Johnson, with about forty men, compassing the swamp on the west side, and myself with the rest of the soldiers on the east side. Our men on foot, with much difficulty having got through the swamp, gave us account that they saw a new track and smelt Indians in one place, but did not judge by their track there were above two; having again rendezvoused about four o'clock, afternoon, near Prospect Hill, having before noon ranged the woods belonging partly to Andover to the eastward of Prospect Hill, we proceeded to range the woods towards Chelmsford; rendezvousing again near the time of sun setting at the chief fording place on the Merrimack below Hunt's garrison, where I advised with all our officers. Having no prospect of

doing service against the enemy, considering the evil that had accrued by drawing off all forces at once, I left a guard of ten men to guard that ford, under the direction of Hunt and Foster, of Billerica, until the 29th day of August instant, at night, and then to be dismissed without further order. Marching then up to Billerica town in diverse parties, we rendezvoused at the Ordinary, where paying off the army with thankful acknowledgments for their ready and willing service, at their request I dismissed them according to their desire, to make the best of their way home, which without doubt they attended; though with difficulty by reason of the darkness of the night.

"So concluding, I am, sir,

"Your servant,

"JOSEPH LYNDE, Lt.-Col.

"Dated at Charlestown, Aug. 25, 1695.

"P. S. We have left about five hundred of bread in the hands of Capt. Danforth, who was not so prudent in the disposal of some of what was spent as, in my way home I was informed, he should have been. I directed him at my coming away to preserve what was left until further order. Yours, as above. J. L."

Eight months later, we read the situation in the following from the Town Records:

"April 6, 1696. Training day evening. At a meeting of the commission officers, both of horse and foot, by virtue of a warrant from our Major, we new erected our watches and ordered the repairing of garisons, and appointed the masters of them and the number of souldiers belonging to them, and other persons & families.

"At the same meeting the comition officers with the selectmen ordered that the remainder of the old powder be dispersed among the severall garisons according unto the number of souldiers appointed unto them, to be eaqually distributed, and the master of the garison or the masters of the severall garisons unto whom the powder is distributed to become responsible for it, and to secure it and return it, or the value of it in money, except there be occation for to make use thereof in their own defence.

"The same day the selectmen compounded with our drummers, John Shead & Samuel Frost, To pay forthwith unto John Shead twenty shillings, to clere with him while that day; & to pay to Samuel Frost ten shillings, & to clere with him while that day; but it had not been attended."

Account was taken in July of the ammunition stock in the hands of Captain Danforth. It consisted of a barrel of powder, 110 pounds; part of an old barrel, sixty-eight pounds; lead, 120 pounds; flints, 130; bullets, thirty-eight; and match "sufficient."

These Indian alarms and sorrows were incidents of the long conflict between France and England for supremacy in America, which ended only in the victory of Wolfe at Quebec, in 1759. Treaties would bring short periods of dubious peace, and the conflict would break out anew. And while there is no evidence that the Indians ever came again to Billerica, the records show abundant activity of her citizens. Colonel John Lane became a prominent military leader, often called to service. In the famous Lovewell expedition Billerica had two representatives, Jonathan Kittredge and Solomon Keyes, while Chaplain Frye had been a teacher in the town, and Seth Wyman, Lovewell's brave and skillful lieutenant, had a Billerica wife, and was of that family which, living just over the line in Woburn, was often and intimately connected with Billerica.

In 1743 Pepperell's expedition against Louisbourg included more than ten brave Billerica men, and in the defensive military operations on the Connecticut River of this period, soldiers from Billerica had a share, and in one disaster were the principal

sufferers. Fort Dummer, in Brattleborough, was the earliest post established above Northfield, in 1724, and twenty years later a fort was built at "No. 4," which was the origin of Charlestown. Around these posts very vigilant and useful scouting and some brave fighting were done, under the command of Capt. Josiah Willard and Capt. Phineas Stevens. In the muster-roll of a company which served under Captain Willard from February 10 to October 6, 1748, at Ashuelot (now Hinsdale), New Hampshire, the following Billerica names are found: Josiah Crosby, Jonathan French, John Frost, Samuel Hill, Benjamin Osgood and Joseph Richardson, and probably Daniel Farmer.

On June 16th a squad of fourteen men set out from Ashuelot for Fort Dummer by way of Colonel Hinsdale's fort.<sup>1</sup> The party was waylaid opposite the mouth of Broad Brook by a large company of Indians. The surprise was complete and disastrous. Three men were killed and scalped, and, by a singular fatality, they were all from Billerica,—Jonathan French, John Frost and Joseph Richardson. Seven were taken prisoners, of whom one was killed at the first encampment, William Bickford, and his body buried a month later. Four escaped across the river, one of whom, Daniel Farmer, was severely wounded. In response to the great gun from Fort Dummer, a relief party went up the next day from Northfield. They found and buried our Billerica dead, scoured the country and found "great signs of the enemy," showing that a large Indian force had been in ambush around the forts for several days.

Of the captives, Benjamin Osgood, of Billerica, and William Blanchard, of Dunstable, reached home October 15th; Henry Stevens, of Chelmsford, November 12th, and Joel Johnson, of Woburn, early in October. They all suffered great hardships, were imprisoned till August 29th, and Osgood with most of the others had to run the gauntlet. All were feeble and emaciated on their return, and Osgood died soon after from the effect of his sufferings.

Josiah Crosby was one of the four who escaped; and of his experience we have an interesting account in a letter from John Farmer to Hon. Nathan Crosby.<sup>2</sup> It differs somewhat from Mr. Temple's narrative outlined above.

"In 1748 he was a soldier on Connecticut River. He, with fifteen more, commanded by a lieutenant, was ordered from Fort Dummer to Fort Hinsdale, about four miles, and when they were within one mile of Fort Hinsdale they fell into an ambush of one hundred and twenty Indians and French, who rose and fired. The commanding officer ordered each man to take care of himself. Two men escaped by secret-ing themselves; one reached Fort Hinsdale. Crosby ran up the river towards Fort Dummer followed by

an Indian, who, coming up within a few rods of him, discharged his piece at him. The ball passed near his right ear; he then turned and fired at the Indian, who fell, and he saw no more of him. He pursued his way up the river until he came opposite Fort Dummer, where he attempted to swim the river, but before he could reach the opposite shore his strength failed him, and he sank to the bottom and was taken out by men from the fort." So narrowly escaped the only one of the five sons of Billerica known to have been in that fatal encounter. Few days have brought as deep and sudden sorrow to so many families in the old town.

The "History of Billerica" (pp. 147-9) has a list of 212 soldiers from the town, enrolled in the various expeditions and campaigns of 1745-62. This number exceeds by fifty the enrollment of the town in the War of the Rebellion, though the population was less,—probably less than 1000. And while the average length of service and loss of life was not as great, the patriotism of the people and hardships borne in that French and Indian War are vividly suggested by these facts.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### BILLERICA—(Continued).

#### RELIGIOUS HISTORY.

In the petition to the General Court, 1654, mention is made of Rev. Mr. Miller, but the movement to secure him as a minister failed. May 11, 1656, Mr. Samuel Whiting is admitted as a freeman. Two years later the town entered into a permanent engagement with him as its minister, stipulating as follows:

"1. Wee do agree to give Mr. Samuel Whiting, Junr., (our minister,) that house which is now vpon y<sup>e</sup> towneship, comfortably finished, for him, and his heirs, if he continues amongst us during his life. But if he shall remove from amongst us, then the said house with all the acomodations of the same shall return againe to the towne, to be at their dispose; or, if Mr. Whiting shall dye with vs, then the towne shall have the refusing of the said house and all other acomodations aforesaid belonging to the same, if Mrs. Whiting do sell y<sup>e</sup> same.

"2. We do promise to give to him y<sup>e</sup> sume of forty pounds per year, for his maintenance, for the first two years of his settling with vs, and for the third year fifty pounds, and for the fourth year sixty pounds, and for afterwards we do promise and ingage to better his maintenance as the Lord shall better our estates.

"3. We do Joyntly pmise to cary at o<sup>r</sup> owne charge, from year to year, so much of the pay (as doth amounte to twenty pounds) as shall be brought in to him in wheat or in other graine, or porke; to deliver the same either at Mistick mill or at Charlestowne, which Mr. Whiting shall appointe, and to deliver the same as such prizes as such pay shall or doth at such times pass fro man to man, vnless Mr. Whiting and the Towne shall make any other agreement concerning the same.

"4. We do promise to pvide his firewood & to bring it home to his house, from year to year, at our owne charges.

"5. We do promise to fence him in a paster for to keape his horse in, as convenient as we may.

"*ult.* for his acomodations, we do promise to lay to y<sup>e</sup> said house, a ten-acre lot, for his house-lot and twelve acres of meadow, with other acomodations convenient to the same, i. e. to grant to him all other diuisions of lands and meadows, with other lots of y<sup>e</sup> like quantity.

<sup>1</sup> See "History of Northfield," by Rev. J. H. Temple, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> "A Crosby Family," p. 11. This volume is a record of Josiah Crosby's descendants.

"The persons subscribing to the premises, who were then the inhabitants, were:

"RALPH HILL, Senr.	JOHN PARKER,
WILL <sup>m</sup> . FRENCH.	JAMES PARKER.
JOHN RODGERS, Senr.	WILL <sup>m</sup> . TAY.
GEORGE FARLEY.	WILL <sup>m</sup> . CHAMBERLINE.
WILL <sup>m</sup> . PATTIN.	JOHN TRULL.
SAM <sup>l</sup> . CHAMNE.	JAMES PATTERSON.
JOHN STERNES.	JOHN MARSHALL.
JONATH. DANFORTH.	JOHN SHILDON.
RALPH HILL, Junr.	HENERY JEFFS.
	JOHN BALDWIN."

"Also, at a towne Meeting of ye inhabitanee, ye 16, 10<sup>m</sup>, 1661.

"It is agreed, That whatever charges Mr. Whiting shall be at, in making his house and land more convenient for his comfortable sustenance and livelihood amongst vs, in erecting any more building, fencing, or breakeing of land, or clearing of meadows, and the like; That in case the providence of god so orders it that afterwards he shall remove from us, and so (by our former agreement) leave all his accommodations to the use of the Towne, the towne do promise that what the whole premises shall be the better, at his leaving it, by reason of his cost and charges upon it, It shall at that time be returned to him by the towne, as it shall be adjudged by men indifferently chosen."

It speaks well for the courage and faith of these founders of the town that, numbering only nineteen men, they were ready to put their hands to such an instrument and assume all its responsibility. It speaks well for the young Harvard graduate, of good birth and sterling ability, that he was ready to identify himself with the rising town and make his home in this wilderness, when not even the little meeting-house of logs and thatch was yet erected.

Where Mr. Whiting preached for the first two years, we can only conjecture; perhaps at John Parker's, where early town-meetings were held; perhaps in his own house. A year later, the following vote appears:

"It is agreed, by the major prt of the Towne, that Mr. Whiting shall have 50 p. for this year, for his maintenance, and caring down corne, and making a well and hovell for his catell; which is 10 p. more than agreement for his yerely maintenance; the caring his corne or other pay downe to towne and getting his firewood included, to be done at Mr. Whiting's own charges."

When the earliest families had been five and six years in town, when their number had increased to thirty and they had secured a minister, they were at length prepared to grapple with the serious problem of a house of worship:

..09, 9, 59. it is Agreed by the major prt of the Towne, that there shall be a meeting house built this winter folling; thirty foote Longe and twenty and foure foot wide, and twelve foot high; the studs to be 3 foot asunder. the Committee apoynted to agree with workmen, to bild and finish the said house, are Ralph Hill, Senr., George Farley, Jonathan Danforth; it is agreed, also, that the sides and ends shall be covered with bords and the Roof with thatch."

This primitive meeting-house stood south of the centre of the present common, having its length east and west. Probably the inhabitants contributed labor and lumber liberally to its erection, but John Parker was the principal builder, as appears from the following:

"16, 10, 61. The town doe apoynte Will<sup>m</sup> Tay, Will<sup>m</sup> Hamblet, & Jonathan Danforth, as a Comitee to examine the aconts about ye bldinge and finishing the meeting house, and to consider some way to propose to the towne for satisfying John Parker for his disbursements,

what they in their judgment shall see meet, and in their best understanding shall conseive ritasly due to him for the work done."

"6: 11: 61. the comitee abovesaide did meet together with the Townsmen, and examined the aconts, and they make this return followinge: to the Towne, we doe finde that accordinge to his aconts (which we judg to be Just and equall) there is due unto him The Just sume of eightene pounds, fifteen shillings, three pence, we say, 18: 15: 3, and in consideration of the nature of the pay disbursed by him, exceedinge the quality of the pay received by him from the Towne, we Aprehend that the Towne may do well to make up the former sume full Twenty poundes.

"this was excepted and granted by the Towne."

We have already seen that the proceeds of the land grant received in 1661 were used in part to pay Mr. Parker.

No church was yet organized, and the citizens of Billerica sought occasional church privileges with neighboring churches. The Rev. John Fiske, pastor of Chelmsford,<sup>1</sup> mentions such courtesy to Ralph Hill and George Farley, and the case of Jonathan Danforth is given at length. The latter is too interesting an account of the way the fathers felt and acted on such questions to be abbreviated:

"Jonathan } He, about 7 of 12, '56, proposing himselfe to this ch.  
Danford. } for fellowship. It was concluded to answer him as follows: Jonathan Danford, his desire being proposed to this ch., [? 7 of 12], to joyne himself in fellowship wth vs, it was considered of, and agitated, and in fine determined by joynte assent to returne him this answer, in effect as followeth: Namely,

"That in case ye ch at Cambridge shall graunt him a permission so to doe, yielding vp what right they have in him vnto this ch, and we shall receive satisfactions touching his being meetely qualified for ye enjoymt of all church Priviledges, we shall willingly attend his desire to ye receiving of him: otherwise we know no Rule of orderly proceeding with him, in this way; he being by vertue of his father's covenant vnder the immediate inspection and charge (as we conceive) of ye ch. of Cambridge.

"Afterward, ye Elders of Cambr. Ch., writing to vs as from themselves their apprehensions as to this effect, they conceived we might notwithstanding, receive ye said Jonathan without offence to that ch."

"vpon 22 of 1<sup>st</sup> { 56-57. It was returned thus: Jonathan Damford, his desire being vpon this day a 2<sup>d</sup> time proposed to this ch. with L<sup>rs</sup> from ye Elders of Cambr. Ch. The result of our ch. agitation amounted, in effect, to this, viz: that we supposing he may be fitt to enjoy all ch. priviledges, can not otherwise but sympathise wth him; and therefore, as ye case to vs appears at present, we are not apprehensive we are orderly called as yet to satisfy his desire, for our parts, conceiving he belongeth to them whose we think he is, either plainely to disowne him or to dismisse him; and, in case neither of these maybe, we know no rule or reason why he may not firstly joyne himself in personall covenant with that ch, and afterward, as just cause is offered, to be either recommended or dismissed, or both, vnto vs. Or else, if by reason of his distance from that ch, this be refused, whereas yet there are, as we suppose, members of ye said ch residing nigher to him than any of ours, he seems called, for his owne parte, to sit still a while & wayte till God more fully shew vp his way."

Almost three years pass and the case is reopened.

"In 7, 59, 11<sup>mo</sup>, Jonathon Dafford brings L<sup>rs</sup>, from ye ch of Cambr., wherein they resign vp all their right in him vnto vs to proceed with him.

"After some long agitation, at 3 several times, and divers qu. in poynt of order proposed, ye case at length came to be stated, and ye case as touching order vpon several grounds, concluded; and thereupon ye whole ch. agreed to send a l<sup>r</sup>. to ye Brethren at Billerica, to take off occasion of offence, and to cleere more fully our way, as followeth:

<sup>1</sup> MSS. Record, now in possession of Mr. David Pulsifer, at the State House. For permission to make extracts from this Record, I am indebted to the courtesy of Rev. H. M. Dexter, D.D., who has a copy of the obscure original, which was made for him by Mr. Pulsifer.



"Ye Lr to } To o<sup>r</sup> BELOVED BRETHREN, &c. AT BILLERICA, &c. :  
Billerica } Bel. Br. Whereas,

"Jo : Danf: an Inhabitant amongst you, hath, for some time since proposed himself as desirous to joyne w<sup>th</sup> vs in ch. fellowship, and hath obteyned Liberty from y<sup>e</sup> ch at Cambridge so to doe, as by L<sup>rs</sup> to vs from that ch is manifest to vs. And whereas we have been in some doubt about it since that time, as being hopefully persuaded that y<sup>e</sup> longing desires of their soules, after y<sup>e</sup> enjoying of y<sup>e</sup> Ordinances of X. amongst yourselves, would have set them vpon y<sup>e</sup> worke of Gathering a ch and ordeyning an Officer in yr place; and that y<sup>e</sup> experience and observation of y<sup>e</sup> said Jonathan would have led you to have encouraged him in his desire after y<sup>e</sup> Ordin: in taking him amongst you in y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> worke and vnto the same : or otherwise, in case of personal exception ag<sup>st</sup> him, as regularly unmeete for fellowship, to have cleered y<sup>e</sup> selves in the matter. But perceiving that neither this nor that is attended by you, so as we, for o<sup>r</sup> parties, are ready to apprehend, had we been in y<sup>e</sup> case, it had concerned vs ; Therefore, we have thought fitt to write vnto you, to desire you would speedily and with the first oportunity enforce vs of these two things: First, whether indeed you bee, or doe intend soone to be, in hand w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> worke of gathering a ch. and within what space of time there is an intendment or likelyhoode of accomplishing the same? and whether you doe intend to accept of y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Jonathan amongst you vnto the worke? and, if not this or not that, then, if we maybe so far in y<sup>e</sup> favor, we should look at it as an act of Brotherly Love, to be enforced from you, of the grounds wh<sup>ch</sup>, if we may apprehend Just, you shall have vs (thro' y<sup>e</sup> grace of Christ) in a readiness to strengthen y<sup>e</sup> hands in what may concern vs. If otherwise, we shall desire to act o<sup>r</sup> owne apprehensions as in what we shall conceive o<sup>r</sup> duty, and in particular in reference to s<sup>d</sup> Jonathan, without just cause of offense to you, in case you doe not lay before us grounds of conviction to the contrary. How meete we may find him for Fellowship, we can not yet determine. To rob you of him, in case meete, far be it from vs. To receive him, you regularly judging him unmeet, and so to retayne him to vs, when once you have a ch amongst you, be it as far from vs as y<sup>e</sup> other. Testimony from amongst you, we doe (in part, at least) expect : and on y<sup>e</sup> other side, as you will approve y<sup>e</sup> selves faithful to Jesus X., and to the soule of y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> Jonathan, we doe looke you should, and hope you will, orderly remove matters of just offence, if any there be, or seasonably and regularly enforce us.

"Seriously we doe desire you would not slight (as we dare not conclude you will) this o<sup>r</sup> Adresse vnto you, by a silent Answer, or by retarding a returne to vs from you, but that you would let us, within a short time heare from you, and for the interim we commend you to y<sup>e</sup> Guidance of y<sup>e</sup> good Spirit of God and rest. Y<sup>e</sup>rs &c.

"CHELMSFORD, 29 of 11, '59."

"12 of 2, '61. Also about Jon : Dafford : when voted that we should proceed to tryal with him, in order to his joining. A Testimony vnder Mr. Whiting's, W<sup>m</sup>. French, Jam : Parker's hand being Redd." A month later, "12 of 3, '61. On this day Jonath. Dafford joynd in covenant with this ch, promising to attend y<sup>e</sup> Rule & order of y<sup>e</sup> Gospel, as touching joyning the ch at Billerica, if once gathered, or else to remove his station to this or some other Towne where a church shall bee." Mr. Danforth kept his promise and took letters of dismission to the church in Billerica, "15 : 11 : 65 :"

The formation of a church was felt by the fathers of New England to be serious business, not to be lightly or hastily undertaken ; and the importance of membership was viewed in the same light. We cannot read this record between the lines without suspecting some difference of opinion among these Billerica men, and that the delay of the church organization is partially explained by that fact. To the valuable record of the Chelmsford pastor we are indebted for fuller light on this subject. This fortunately preserves the story of a hitherto mysterious council, held in April, 1663, and mentioned in an item of the town treasurer's record, which makes it clear that Billerica was agitated by the question, so seriously disturbing the churches of the day, respecting the relation of baptized children to the church,

and whether they could acquire, by infant baptism alone, the rights of citizenship in the State.

Mr. Fiske's record is as follows :

"Billerica's case.

"On 12 of 24, 63, we received let<sup>s</sup> from M<sup>r</sup> Whiting & y<sup>e</sup> Breth<sup>n</sup> for y<sup>e</sup> Pastor & Brethren to joyne with y<sup>e</sup> other messengers of X<sup>s</sup> in counsel to be given y<sup>m</sup> about y<sup>e</sup> proceeding to X<sup>s</sup> state. Bro. Burge being chosen with y<sup>e</sup> past<sup>r</sup>, Attendance was accordingly thr given on 27<sup>th</sup> of 24, as appointed, wh<sup>r</sup> met us the messengers of y<sup>e</sup> X of Ooburne : but Cambr & Watertowne messengers ca not, being as seemed by L<sup>rs</sup> Hindered by Prvd. The messengers of y<sup>e</sup> 2 s<sup>d</sup> X<sup>s</sup> before<sup>d</sup>, being p<sup>r</sup>sent were desired by y<sup>e</sup> Breth of Billerica, notwithstanding, to hr y<sup>e</sup> case & if possibly to help y<sup>m</sup> ; Accordingly, it was Attended upon the desire, & on the 2d day, being the sitting day, Mr. Whiting & the rest, on both apprehensions, met. But we could not co to state y<sup>e</sup> qu between them till the Afternoon. So after we had made many assaies with them together & apte. At length finding: 1. That y<sup>r</sup> was a willingness & desire on both p<sup>tes</sup>, to joyne together in y<sup>e</sup> worke of gathering a X and carrying on of y<sup>e</sup> ordin : amongst them, notwithstanding y<sup>e</sup> difference of y<sup>r</sup> App<sup>r</sup>ensions about Children's state in y<sup>e</sup> X concerning y<sup>e</sup> [?] 2. That y<sup>e</sup> dissenting brethren to Mr. Whiting's p<sup>r</sup>te had declared thereof:

"1. That y<sup>e</sup> child<sup>r</sup> of parents in full coion were to be Baptized.

"2. y<sup>e</sup>s children, being baptized, are vnder the care of y<sup>e</sup> Church, w<sup>ch</sup> is to see to y<sup>r</sup> pious [nurture?] in y<sup>e</sup> heart & feare of God, & to be catechized, &c. Onely so' of y<sup>m</sup> would not have y<sup>m</sup> vnder y<sup>e</sup> pow<sup>r</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> X to be censured, tho so' of y<sup>m</sup> yielded it y<sup>r</sup> [?] now members, & might be exco'icated if deserving, only y<sup>e</sup> could not convey any right of membersh to y<sup>r</sup> Child<sup>r</sup>, nor could thr child<sup>r</sup> be reputed mem<sup>brs</sup>, vnless y<sup>r</sup> imediate p<sup>nts</sup> were in full coion vpon this account. The following question being drawne vp & p<sup>r</sup>posed, was consented to, on all hands, to be The Question."

"The Copy of y<sup>e</sup> qu : & Answer given by y<sup>e</sup> Counsel to the Billerica Brethren is as follows : 28 of 24, 63, Billerica.

"Qu. Suppose an equall number of persons differing in thr opinions about childrens intereste in the Church (both Infants & Adult) & both willing to practice their Opinion : How may such p<sup>sons</sup> Joyne together according to a Rule & live together in church state according to a Rule?

"A. We conceive as followeth :

"1. That the two dissenting parties doe each of them choose equally (suppose fower), each of y<sup>m</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> owne App<sup>r</sup>ensions, to be the matter of y<sup>e</sup> foundation. 2. That these all mutually & joyntly doe take & give satisfaction, each to other, touching there meetnes vnto this greate worke, as in all other Respt<sup>s</sup>. 3. That if there app any just cause of laying by any one of these vpon the fores<sup>d</sup> account, that then One oth<sup>r</sup> p<sup>son</sup> be chosen, according to y<sup>e</sup> first p<sup>r</sup>posal, in his Roo<sup>me</sup> : 4. That each trouble not the Other as to the matter of there app<sup>r</sup>ension about the question betweene them, otherwise than by a Meeke, Brotherly & modest resoning out the case of difference by the Word of God, as occasion is offered, for the mutual help one of another. 5. That the matter of difference as to the case of children simply beco no barr or lett to any, otherwise fitt to be received in, or added to them.

"Postscr. And we doe hope, thro the Lord's help, that if you can thus joyne in all Brotherly love & goe on together in the due exercise of the same Love, forbearance & Tenderness ; you may longe continue together with the Lord's blessed p<sup>r</sup>esence in the midst of you, cleering up his will & way more fully to you in his owne season : wh<sup>ch</sup> we shall pray for on y<sup>e</sup> Behalves.

"Subscribed :

"JO : FFSKE,  
THO : CARTER,  
EDW. JOHNSON,  
JOB. BURGE."

The men who were interested in and moved by such questions as these had mental powers of no mean order. It is not easy for us fully to understand their position, but it does not become us to underestimate them or smile at their difficulties. They were dealing at first hand with fundamental problems of church and state, and they had not the light of two hundred and fifty years' experience to guide them. This possible church, outlined by the April council, smacks suspiciously of Presbyterian eldership and

authority. It can hardly be the same as the foundation which was actually laid six months later. Again the Chelmsford record aids us :

"11 of 9, 63, Billerica.

"Messengers fro y<sup>e</sup> ch. attended y<sup>e</sup> ch. gathering at Billericay where they all made a Relatio of y<sup>e</sup> worke of grace & consented in a written profession of faith; & Mr. Whiting ordained pastor. y<sup>e</sup> day comfortable."

The assembling of this council and its proceedings have formed a notable day in the lives of the fathers. It will help us revive the memory of the scene if we recall the names of those who were likely to have composed it.

Roxbury was certainly represented by its junior, pastor, Samuel Danforth. He was the colleague of John Eliot, the devout and active Indian missionary, whose marvelous translation of the Bible into the language of the Indians was printed that very year. His labors among the natives at Wamesit must often have led him through Billerica, and it is pleasant to think that he also was probably present. Lynn must have sent her pastor, Samuel Whiting, Sr., the father of our candidate. And the mother church at Cambridge, with her pastor, Jonathan Mitchell, would not fail to share in the joys of the day. Chelmsford, which had received as settlers a church already organized, with its pastor, John Fiske, gave gladly the hand of fellowship to a nearer sister. Concord, Woburn and Andover would complete the circle of neighboring churches, and their pastors were Peter Bulkley, the cousin of Mr. Whiting's mother, Thomas Carter and Francis Dane. The first minister of Boston, John Wilson, may have been present with his church; and Thomas Shepherd, who had been Mr. Whiting's classmate at Harvard College, as pastor of Charlestown. Malden, Reading and Watertown would make up twelve churches, and their pastors were Michael Wigglesworth, the poet, John Brock, the devout, and John Sherman, the eminent mathematician.

Whether all these were present or not it was a grave and reverend council which convened here on that November day. Our old town perhaps never had a more notable assembly. The candidate was most carefully examined in his doctrine and experience. He would have occasion to exercise all the logical skill acquired in his Harvard training and displayed in his graduating thesis on the question "An detur Maximum et Minimum in Natura." There was at least one sermon, and the organization of the church at the same time may have required another; and if the custom of a later day then obtained, the candidate preached his own ordaining sermon. The possible duration of these public services is suggested in the Woburn experience. There, when the church was organized, Mr. Symmes introduced the services and "continued in prayer and preaching about the space of four or five hours." What would follow such an introduction we may imagine! What-

ever the order or length of the services, the little, thatched meeting-house was well filled by a congregation too much interested, as well as too devout, to betray weariness or to thank their descendants for sympathy.

Mr. Whiting remained the pastor of the church until his death, 1712-13, February 28th. He was son of Rev. Samuel Whiting, of Lynn, who was also minister of Lynn Regis, in England, and at Skirbeck, where his son Samuel was born 1683, March 25th. His mother was of a noble family, the daughter of Rt. Hon. Oliver St. John, a member of Parliament. Her brother Oliver married a cousin of Oliver Cromwell, and was one of the first lawyers and most progressive men in England.

This first pastorate of fifty years, or rather of fifty-seven, was a vital element in the planting and moulding of the town. Mr. Whiting brought to it his heritage of high thought and ardent sympathy with the new life which was pulsating in England, Old and New; his Harvard training and his thorough scholarship and piety, and the testimony is clear to his quality as a preacher and a pastor. The influence of such a man carrying the respect and love of those around him for almost two generations is measureless.

During his ministry the primitive meeting-house gave place, in 1694, to a new one. In 1698 his health made assistance necessary, and the question of a colleague was considered. But the town did not feel able to support two pastors, and probably Mr. Whiting became stronger again.

In 1707 Samuel Ruggles was employed by the town and was ordained May 19, 1708.

The venerable senior pastor was spared for five years longer, rounding out, in serene age, one of those pastorates which constitute an epoch in the history of any community. His parish was wide, extending with the town from Concord and the modern Acton to the Merrimack and Andover. For fifty-six years he preached the gospel to hearers who came five or six miles to listen. They heard two sermons, and we may be sure they were not short ones. The modern demand for a sermon not over half an hour long would have surprised these fathers as much as would the railroad, the telegraph or a daily newspaper. They sought at church not merely spiritual food, but much of the intellectual and social stimulus which their children draw from other sources, and hence would listen without weariness and eagerly, and go home to discuss sermons which a modern audience would not tolerate. The demands of such a ministry Mr. Whiting satisfied with honor to himself, "holding forth the word of light," and winning souls to his divine Master. He baptized the children and buried the dead; but he did not always, probably not often, perform the marriage service. The fathers thought that it smacked of popery for the minister to marry them, and went to the magistrate instead.

Casting in his lot with the young town, and meet-

ing patiently and bravely the hardships it involved, he reaped his reward in the respect and affection which surrounded his old age. His influence was stamped upon the character and history of the town. At last his work was done. Jonathan Danforth, companion and friend of many years, died in September, 1712. Then, on February 15th, the dearer companion of all his joys and sorrows was taken away. Without her the good man could not live, and death separated them but thirteen days. On the last day of February, 1712-13, the faithful shepherd went to his rest. Cotton Mather tells us, and we may thank him for the item, that he died "an hour before Sunset." And, not for their poetry, but their truth, we may repeat the lines:

"Whiting, we here behold, a starry light,  
Burning in Christ's right hand, and shining bright;  
Years seven times seven sent forth his precious rays,  
Unto the Gospel's profit and Jehovah's praise."

The pastorate of Mr. Ruggles continued a few months more than forty years, and was terminated by his death, 1748-49, March 1st. The rapidity with which oblivion covers the lives and deeds of men has a striking illustration in the scantiness of our knowledge of Billerica's second pastor. For more than a generation he lived and labored, a foremost figure in the life of the town, preaching the gospel from week to week in the pulpit and by the way, satisfying so well the lofty Puritan ideal of a pastor that no whisper of dissatisfaction is preserved. Yet what manner of man he was, or what were the characteristics of his ministry, we have no hint. But lives happy and useful are often quiet, sounding no trumpets, and this is the just account of many a rural pastor whose record is on high.

A negative inference is suggested by the absence of Mr. Ruggles' name from all the narratives and testimonies which, in his later years, grew out of the presence of Whitefield in New England, and the controversies which accompanied him. He was not the first or last reformer not always temperate or wise, and good men were divided in their opinion. Testimonies and counter-testimonies multiplied and the lines were tightly drawn on every hand. There were few of the ministers whose names do not appear and whose position was not recorded on one side or the other. Mr. Ruggles was one of the few. This may be partially explained by the fact that the infirmity of age began to tell upon him early. Yet the suspicion is natural that he sympathized with the position of his son-in-law, Mr. Morrill, of Wilmington, of whom tradition relates, that when Mr. Whitefield had an appointment to preach there, he rode all over town and warned his people not to attend the service. The result was natural: a first-rate notice and a great congregation.

The building of the third meeting-house occurred during Mr. Ruggles' pastorate. The raising took place in 1738, May 24th, and March 6th following,

the town voted, "after large debate," to "sell the pue ground in our new meeting-house, under such Restrictions and Regulations as the town shall hereafter see best, which money coming by the sale of the pues shall be improved towards the finishing our new meeting-house." In May it was voted "that when any pue is granted to any man in our new meeting-house, that the man and his family shall sit in said pue if there be conveniency of room in said pue."

The early years of Mr. Ruggles' ministry were signalized by the appearance of a bell. At a meeting, 1710-11, March 9th, it was voted "that the money that the land was sold for to Captain Reed, on the west of Concord River, shall be laid out to buy a bell for the meeting-house." Captain Lane and Lieutenant John Stearns were appointed "a committy to provide a Bell for the Town, not exceeding sixty pounds prise."

This bell was used until 1753, January 23d, when a committee was appointed "to take down the bell and convey it to Boston and dispose of it in the best way they can towards the procuring another; and indent with some Gentleman for another . . . and to Run the hassard of said bell from England to Boston; the bell to be procured by said committee is not to exceed five hundred pounds in weight." At the same time the town voted to sell "so much of the hind seats on the lower floor on the south side of our meeting-house, on each side of the middle or broad alley, as will be convenient for six pues, three on a side, to be sold to the highest bidder . . . in order to purchase a meeting-house bell."

This second bell, it appears, came from England, and was probably the same which was "cracked" by violent ringing on July 4, 1842. The memory of our older citizens recalls the fact that it bore an inscription including the name "Billericay," a form of the word which English workmen would be very likely to use. But known facts do not prove the pleasant tradition that the first bell in town was a gift, suitably inscribed, from the English Billerica, and it is hardly possible that such an incident could have occurred at any later date and left no trace in the records of either town.

The question of a colleague for the pastor came before the town March 3, 1746-47, and a committee reported that Mr. Ruggles was "very free," and "desired that the town would proceed in that affaire." Another committee, of seven, was then directed to "desire Mr. Ruggles to assis with them in calling in some of the neighboring ministers to keep a Day of prayer, to seek divine direction in that affaire." On the report of this committee, April 6th, the question arose, whether "the Town would proceed to hear any Gen<sup>l</sup> to preach upon probation," and "it passed in the negative by a great majority." Plainly the mind of the town was made up as to the call to be given, and a young Harvard graduate, who taught the school in 1746, had won their hearts. It is not



in evidence that the proposed "Day of prayer" was held. The church waived its legal right to the first vote in the choice of a pastor, and, "at a General Town Meeting," April 28th: "The church and town unanimously voted and made choyce of Mr. John Chandler, of Andover, to settle in the work of the ministry amongst us, with the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. Samuel Ruggles, our aged pastor." They promise him, "in a Reasonable time," £600, old tenor, as a settlement, and a salary of £200 while Mr. Ruggles was able to carry on a part of the work, and to add £100 more after Mr. Ruggles' death. The answer of Mr. Chandler was delayed for farther negotiation. He asked that the settlement be paid in two years, and, if he outlived Mr. Ruggles, that the ministry land, which was west of Concord River, might be sold, and "laid out either for mowing or pasturing within half a mile of the meeting-house," he to have the improvement of it, during his ministry, in either location. The town consented. But the uncertain value of the currency still embarrassed them. To meet the difficulty the town voted that the salary should be at a standard of twelve shillings a bushel for Indian corn and sixteen shillings for rye. Mr. Chandler proposed, instead, that the standard be between ten and twelve shillings for corn and thirteen and fifteen for rye, and to this the town assented. They also offered him £20 a year for "fewel for his fire," but, "it appearing that it was more accommodating to Mr. Chandler to have wood in the stead of it," they promised him twenty cords of wood annually. The salary was payable semi-annually.

When these engagements were embodied in a formal covenant, the way was prepared for Mr. Chandler's ordination, which occurred October 21, 1747. "Eight churches came together to carry on the solemnity. The Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. Rogers, of Littleton, began with prayer; the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. James Chandler, of Rowley (brother of the candidate), preached, from John iii: 11; the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Phillips, of Andover, gave the charge and also added an exhortation to the people, wherein he pressed upon 'em the particular duties of a people towards their minister; and the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. Bowes, of Bedford, gave the Right hand of fellowship. No objections were laid in against their proceeding in the ordination by any person whatsoever."

An ordination was a great event in those days. In preparation for this the town appointed a committee to "make suitable and descent provision, at the Town's cost, for Mr. Chandler's ordination, at one or two places, for all the ministers and messengers, and Mr. Chandler's Relations, and for steudants of Harvard Colledg, according to their best prudence." They also reserved the front seats for members of the council, and the front seats in the gallery for the church members.

The pastorate of Mr. Chandler began under bright auspices, and for eleven years was prosperous. He

was a man of ability, and the church was united and happy in his ministry. But a cloud arose, and the end came soon and in trouble. It is due to the truth of history that the facts, condensed from many pages of the church record, be stated. Mr. Chandler's wife died June 28, 1757. It is charitable to suppose that grief for her loss and the absence of her good influence may have prepared the way for a measure of indulgence in "spiritual" consolations which were not from above. That he kept the means for such indulgence, the contents of his cellar, as shown by his inventory, reveal, though it is doubtful if he had more than the best of his neighbors. He was married, January 18, 1759, to Elizabeth White, of Haverhill, a cousin of his first wife. Soon after the church record tells us: "Feb. 18. The Sac<sup>t</sup>. omitted, by reason of some being dissatisfied at y<sup>e</sup> chearful behavior of y<sup>e</sup> pastor at y<sup>e</sup> bringing of a second Wife into his house, when a large concourse of people asssembled. The Pastor stayed the church after services and gave leave for the congregation to stop also; and represented his case to 'em in what he then apprehended its just light, upon which they voted to pass over the offense, sit down satisfied, and that the Sac<sup>t</sup> should be administered to 'em by the Pastor the next Lords Day." This record, like the long account of following troubles, stands in the very neat handwriting of Mr. Chandler himself, who shows throughout a frankness and apparent honesty which wins respect and sympathy for his weakness.

The trouble, however, continued, and was too deep to be so easily disposed of; and, in August, articles of complaint were laid before a council, with specifications of four cases in which the pastor's weakness had been manifested. The council met September 18th, consisting of the First and Second Churches in Cambridge and that in Chelmsford. They found three of the charges sustained; but, in view of a confession, to be read to the church and congregation, they recommended its acceptance, and that "whatever hath been grievous and offensive in y<sup>e</sup> Pastor" be overlooked. They proceed to a frank and faithful statement to Mr. Chandler, and appeal to him tenderly to free himself from reproach by a sober and godly life, and remind the church of the good character he has maintained among them "till of late," and that "the sin which he has fallen into is what you have not . . . so much as suspected him of till y<sup>e</sup> last winter;" for which reason they urge the members of the church to pray and strive together for the recovery and usefulness among them of one who might be so good a pastor. But the evil could not be exorcised, and June 5, 1760, another council convened, and the church with them, when a show of hands so "discouraged the pastor as to tarrying," that by advice of the council he tendered his resignation and it was accepted. Two years later Mr. Chandler died here, at the early age of thirty-eight.

This sad story does not stand alone. Concord had

a similar experience. Nor need the occasional lapse in this way of a minister surprise us. When every cellar was stored with cider, and good Deacon Abbott would be as sure as any other to invite the minister to drink whenever he called, the wonder would be if here and there one did not stumble. But while we give sympathy to the unfortunate young pastor, the bright morning of whose ministry was so soon and sadly overcast, we may also with joy set up a waymark of progress, and deny that "the former days were better than these."

### CHAPTER XXX.

#### BILLERICA—(Continued).

##### LAND DISTRIBUTION—DISMEMBERMENT.

THE use of the common lands, and their equitable distribution, long and often engaged the attention of the town. The adjustment of important lines, west of Concord River, by appeal to the General Court in 1701, prepared the way for extensive divisions of the commons. But a new question arose: Could the original rights, in which the purchasers of the "Dudley" and "Winthrop" farms had no share, still hold exclusively the common lands? or had Colonel Lane and other "farme" proprietors, by sharing for a generation in the common burdens and duties of the town, acquired a claim to share also in future distributions of land? After much debate and agitation, appeal was taken to the General Court, which affirmed the equity of their claim, and on this basis, in 1705-08, the largest distributions of the remaining commons took place, leaving little for later division. Small items here and there claimed attention for another generation, and the last record occurs, 1755, February 3d, when report was made that there were £60 in bank, and the treasurer, Josiah Bowers, was instructed "to pay out to each proprietor two shillings and two pence, Old Tenor, upon an acre Right."

So ended, almost exactly a century from its beginning, the town's care for, and distribution of, its common lands. The questions involved in this charge had been many and delicate, and the wisdom of the fathers in dealing with them should be recognized. They were not lavish or parsimonious in the use of their land fund, but employed it in a proper and generous "encouragement" of such as bore the burden of laying the foundations, while they guarded it from any unjust appropriation by individuals. The record proves them true and honest men.

The town was large, nearly twelve miles long and eight wide, the rivers making the width, for practical purposes, as great as the length, and as the population increased in the more remote parts of the town, questions of division naturally arose. Convenience of

public worship was the controlling principle in shaping the early towns, and the same principle demanded new adjustments. But the demand was one which would naturally be unwelcome, and met with debate and opposition. After seventy-five years the process began, and did not cease until the old town was shorn of more than half of her ancient territory. The earliest movement towards this end was made, 1725, December 4th, in "a petition of Jonathan Bowers, Samuel Hunt, and divers others, Dwellers on the Land called Wamesick Purchase and Winthrop's farm, w<sup>c</sup> lands ly adjacent to Billerica, between Pautucket and Chelmsford Line, praying for reasons therein assigned, to be erected into a separate and distinct Town." This petition was referred to the next session of the General Court, but there is no record of action upon it.

The General Court, 1729, April 9th, however, considered favorably a bill to establish Wameset Parish, with bounds including "Wamasset, or the Whole Indian Purchase;" but it failed of final consummation.

BEDFORD.—In the opposite direction the movement was more successful. The General Court received, 1728, June 18th,<sup>1</sup> "the petition of Andrew Watkins, John Wilkins and John Wilson, and a considerable number of others, setting forth their great difficulties by reason of their distance from the meeting-houses in Concord and Billerica, to which they belong, and that they have been necessitated to get a minister among them for the winter season, and therefore praying that they may be set off a separate Township." The petition was referred to the next session, with order of notification to the towns of Billerica and Lexington. In July the Court, on farther petition, directed a committee, already sent to examine the lines of the proposed Wameset Parish, to extend their labors and go over the proposed bounds of Bedford.

Billerica had heard of the proposal, and as early as May 14, 1728, voted, that they "will act no farther at this time on the petition of the southerly part of the town as to their being set off as a Township." The matter came up again, January 27th, and the town chose a committee of eleven, who were "Impowered to manage the affair Referring to our brethren, the petitioners of the southward part of our Town, according to their best discretion, in agreeing with said petitioners at home concerning the line between the Town and them (if they can), but if not, then to draw up what they think proper by way of petition to the General Court and to choose two men out of said committee to manage S<sup>d</sup> affair at said Court." This committee was not able to agree upon the line of division, and petitioned the Court, 1729, April 2d, "praying that the new town, proposed to be erected in the

<sup>1</sup> *Massachusetts Records*. Vol. XIV, p. 91. Mr. Shattuck ("History of Concord," p. 255) mentions a petition, dated 1725, as if it related to Bedford. But he probably referred to the petition quoted above, mistaking the identity of the "Winthrop's farm" there mentioned, which was in fact the farm near Wameset.

County of Middlesex, to be called Bedford, and which is principally taken out of the town of Billerica, may not be extended according to the lines set forth for making said Town, but that some of the families may remain in the town of Billerica." The petition, however, was dismissed, and Bedford was incorporated, 1729, September 23d. The line of separation began at the Two Brothers, on Concord River, either following the Winthrop Farm line or more probably diverging a little to the north of it, and thence extending nearly as at present to Woburn, (now Burlington). It was changed, by consent of the two towns, in 1766, so as to transfer Edward Stearns and his farm to Bedford.

The claim that Bedford was principally taken out of Billerica has been overlooked, but is correct. The old line with Concord was parallel with the present Main Street in Bedford, and sixty-four rods south of it. It is still easily traced, nearly touching the railroad at the curve east of the station. Its easterly point is shown in the record of a committee, February 11, 1699-1700. They "began at Concord southeast corner, which was a stake and stones about it, standing on the southeast of Shawshin River about forty poles from it." This point would be very near an ancient Page house, standing on the old road south of the main road to Lexington, and on the County Atlas of 1875 marked by the name of Brennan. Westward of the cedar swamp, where the marks could not be found, the committee ran, by mutual agreement, north fifty-three degrees west to Concord River. This line includes about three-fifths of Bedford. Of the families transferred no list is known to remain. Of the first church members Mr. Shattuck,<sup>1</sup> with sufficient probability, credits these names to Billerica: Obed Abbott, Jonathan Bacon, Thomas Dinsmore, Samuel Fitch, Jacob Kendall, Benjamin Kidder, Job Lane, John Lane, Christopher Page, Nathaniel Page and Israel Putnam; and Josiah Fassett should doubtless be added. Of other citizens there was John Wilson, and probably more than as many others, younger members of the same families and of other families. Of the division of the property of Billerica we have an approximate assurance. The Province tax assessed in 1729 amounted to £125 5s. 8d., of which the part belonging to Bedford was £18 12s. 3d. Samuel Fitch was the first town clerk, and Israel Putnam was the first constable of the town and the first deacon of the church.

TEWKSBURY.—The success of the Bedford petition encouraged a renewal of the movement in the north part of the town, but Chelmsford held all west of the Concord River so firmly that the proposal took a turn farther eastward. The consciousness of separate interests appears frequently in references to the inhabitants of Winthrop Farm. In 1731 they prepared a draft and laid it before the town of a road which they

desired, and received favorable answer. In 1733, May 13th, they asked the town to "erect a meeting-house in the center of the town, or so as to accommodate the northerly part of the town, upon the Town's cost, or set them off, so that they may maintain preaching among themselves." This the town was hardly ready to grant; but they had discovered that it was useless to oppose the separation, and a town-meeting was held, December 19th, at which the above request was renewed, or, as an alternative, that the town would "please to set them off, with two-thirds of the land lying between Andover and Billerica meeting-house, from Wilmington line to Concord River, for a Township." Others desired that the organization should be a "Precinct, for their better accommodation in public worship." At this meeting a committee was appointed to "view the land" and report, which they did, January 9, 1733-34, and the town voted, "that the northerly and northeasterly part of the Town, according to their petition, be set off as a Township, Granting them two-thirds of the land from Andover line to our meeting-house, by a parallel line with said Andover line, extending from Concord River to Wilmington line (if the inhabitants on the southeasterly side of Shawshin River be willing to join with them)."

This final condition called out a petition from Samuel Hunt and others to the General Court, "praying an absolute grant of this Court for their being made a Towne with these bounds," or the appointment of a committee to examine and report. The latter was done, with the result that Tewksbury was incorporated December 23, 1734. The new town was taken wholly from Billerica, receiving, in round numbers, 9000 acres of the 25,000 which remained after the separation of Bedford, which had taken nearly or quite 4000. The following list of families included in Tewksbury is imperfect, but will have interest:

Joseph Brown, William Brown, Richard Farmer, Thomas Farmer, John French, Thomas French, Daniel Frost, Edmund Frost, Joseph Frost, Richard Hall, Samuel Hall, Samuel Haseltine, Stephen Haseltine, Jeremiah Hunt, John Hunt, Joseph Hunt, Peter Hunt, Samuel Hunt, Ephraim Kidder, Daniel Kittredge, Daniel Kittredge, Jr., Francis Kittredge, James Kittredge, James Kittredge, Jr., James Kittredge, Dr. John Kittredge, John Kittredge, Jr., Joseph Kittredge, Thomas Kittredge, William Kittredge, John Levestone, Seth Levestone, Eliphalet Manning, Thomas Manning, Thomas Marshall, John Needham, Stephen Osgood, John Patten, Kendall Patten, Nathaniel Patten, Samuel Peacock, Andrew Richardson, Nathaniel Rogers, Nathan Shed, Abraham Stickney, Samuel Trull, John Whiting.

To these forty-seven names enough should probably be added to make the number sixty. They include all then on our list of the names Hall, Haseltine, Hunt and Kittredge. The latter family had become so numerous in that part of the town exclusively that it is not strange they have been credited with original settlement there. In fact, their ancestor, John Kittredge, lived and died southeast of Bare Hill, in Billerica.

WILMINGTON received the next segment taken from Billerica. That town was incorporated Sep-

<sup>1</sup> "History of Concord," p. 263.



tember 25, 1730, consisting of the north part of Woburn. The line on the west included "the farm" of Abraham Jaquith, which was partly in Billerica. In March, 1737-38, Billerica received a "Petition of several persons, on the southeasterly side of Shawshin River, to be dismissed from the Town of Billerica, to be annexed to the second precinct in Woburn, in order to be Erected into a Township." On the question of granting this petition, "it passed unanimously in the negative." Two months later the General Court received the petition of John, Ebenezer and Jacob Beard, Jonathan Baldwin, Peter Cornell and Richard Hopkins, saying that their farms were convenient to Wilmington, and that they had attended worship in the meeting-house there since its erection, as it was two miles nearer than Billerica, and at some seasons they could not cross the Shawshin. They refer to the petition to be set off which Billerica had refused, and ask that their request be granted without reference back to Billerica. To this petition the House, in June, refused to consent; but in December, 1737, the Council gave a favorable hearing, and voted that the petitioners be annexed to Wilmington, provided they should pay their proportion of charges for the meeting-house which Billerica was building. The house concurred, and this section of 600 acres was transferred to Wilmington.

CARLISLE.—After these losses on the south, north and east, it remained only to complete the circuit in the west; but although the movement there began early, it was not consummated for more than a generation. At the same meeting, in March, 1737-38, when the town refused the Wilmington petition, it postponed one of similar tenor from "several persons on the westerly side of Concord River," who desire to be set off "to Joyn with part of the Towns of Concord and Chelmsford, to be erected into a Township." After debate, the town, May 11th, "voted their willingness (when it was the Hon<sup>ble</sup> General Court's pleasure to erect them into a Township) to set them off by the bounds following: . . ." But sixteen years passed before the General Court incorporated Carlisle,<sup>1</sup> April 19, 1754, as a district of Concord. In 1755 Billerica refused the consent once given to the separation, and the elements seem to have been inharmonious, or the location of the meeting-house a knotty problem, for after struggling with their difficulties until January, 1757, the people in Carlisle were granted a dissolution of the district. In their request for this they say<sup>2</sup> that only a small majority originally favored the district, and that after many trials in various ways to come to some amicable agreement for building up the place all means fail, and they apprehend the utter impossibility of ever coming into any further agreement.

The dissolution of the district did not bring peace,

and a petition to the Court followed, June 1, 1757, bearing fifty-one signatures, of which Timothy Wilkins' is the first, asking to be incorporated as a township or district, to include one-half the land between the meeting-houses of Concord and Chelmsford, the new meeting-house to be at the centre point of a line connecting the two.

In March, 1760, the subject was again before the town, which voted to set off the inhabitants on the west side of Concord River. The new meeting-house was begun at this time, but not finished for several years; and the town itself was only a name and an endeavor for some years longer. The subject was revived by petition to the General Court, June 1, 1772. The petitioners say that the desired bounds include about seventy-six families,<sup>3</sup> and that they have erected a meeting-house.

But Carlisle's long struggle for life did not end in success until 1780, though Billerica again gave her consent, March 1, 1779.

After forty-two years of various action on the subject, she seems at last to have given her youngest daughter a hearty send-off. Here ceased the process of dismemberment of ancient Billerica. After the lapse of a century it is fair to hope that it will not be resumed.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### BILLERICA—(Continued).

#### BILLERICA IN THE REVOLUTION.

IN the contest of the Colonies for independence Billerica bore her part. Her minute-men were at Lexington, and the first soldier who fell at Bunker Hill was Asa Pollard, one of her sons. As early as 1731, September 14th, the underlying principle of the national contest found expression in a vote, "that it is our opinion that our Representative hold fast all our charter privileges; and, in particular, that he give his voice in no supply of the Treasury, that deprives the house of their privilege in passing accounts before payments." In 1766 "the late troubles" in connection with the Stamp Act came before the town, on the question of recompense to the sufferers, and "it passed in the affirmative," with a reference to the discretion of their representative.

December 21, 1768, a town-meeting "took into Consideration the present Distress and Impoverished State of this Province, That some effectual measures might be agreed upon to promote Industry, Oeconomy, & Manufactures, thereby to prevent the unnecessary Importation of European commodities, which threaten the Country with poverty & Ruin." Resolutions were unanimously passed, favoring home

<sup>1</sup> Shattuck's "History of Concord," p. 321.

<sup>2</sup> "Massachusetts Archives," vol. cxvii., 204 and 290.

<sup>3</sup> "Massachusetts Archives," vol. cxviii., 624.

manufactures and disapproving the use of imported articles, of which a long list is named, beginning with loaf-sugar. A committee reported a form of subscription, pledging those who signed to promote these objects. "The late regulations respecting Funerals" are specially emphasized, and the signers agree that they "will not use any Gloves but what are manufactured here, nor procure any new Garments upon such an occasion but what shall be absolutely necessary;" to all which the patriots of Billerica, it is quite certain, generally agreed. This non-importation action became very general, and produced no little effect on the popular mind.

In September, 1768, resolutions from Boston were responded to; and, "taking into Consideration the Critical State of our public affairs, more especially the present Precarious situation of our Invaluable Rights and Privileges, Civil and Religious," the town voted to choose "one person a committee for <sup>s</sup>d Town, to meet at Boston at Funel hall, the 22<sup>d</sup> inst., to act for them in a Convention, with such as may be sent to join them from the several towns in this province, in order that such measures may be consulted and advised as his majesty's service and the peace and safety of his majesty's subjects in the province may require." William Stickney, Esq., was chosen delegate to this convention. In this way the towns furnished the basis for effective discussion and action on the vital problems which stirred the Colonies; and it is not strange that the English Ministry were alarmed and incensed at the activity of these miniature republics. They were, in fact, the palladium of our rising liberties. A town-meeting was held in 1773, February 1st, and its action took shape thus:

"The Inhabitants, having deliberately Considered the Critical and alarming Situation the Colonies upon this Continent are Reduced to, by reason of the unconstitutional proceedings of the British Ministry and parliament of late years; & also the expediency of their, as well as the Inhabitants of every other town, Adopting some method to Communicate their Sentiments in Regard to the Disputes Subsisting between Great Britain and the Colonies, more especially on account of the late change in the American Department, that his Lordship the present Secretary of State for the said Department may be Convinced that a General Uneasiness prevails throughout the Country in Consequence of the late measures of the British Administration, notwithstanding any Reports to the Contrary, & may thereby be Influenced to use his best Interest and endeavours to procure a Removal of the causes thereof, and a Restoration of that peace & Harmony which so long Subsisted Between the Mother Country & her Colonies, & are undoubtedly Necessary to the political Happiness and welfare of each: Unanimously Voted and Resolved—

"1. That the late Acts of Parliament for raising a Revenue in the Colonies; the establishing a Board of Commissioners with exorbitant powers; the granting of such extensive powers to the Court of Admiralty; the fixing a salary on the Governor of the province, and on the Justices of the Superior Courts, Independent of the Grants of the General Assembly; the extending to America the late Acts of parliament, Entitled an Act for better preserving his Majesty's Dock yards, &c.; the Stationing fleets and armies to enforce a Compliance with Ministerial & parliamentary measures, together with many other things that might be mentioned, are Repugnant to the principles of the British Constitution, Subversive of their Charter Rights and privileges, & therefore Intolerable Grievances.

"2. That those Reports which Represent the Inhabitants in General, in the Country, as acquiescing in and ready to Comply with the late measures of Administration, are, as far as they Respect them, false and groundless.

"3. That they will heartily Concur with and faithfully assist their brethren in the common cause, throughout the Continent, in all prudent, legal, and Constitutional measures that shall be Adopted, to obtain a Redress of their present Grievances & a Restoration of their Just Rights and Privileges; and will also at all times Unite with them in Zealously and Steadfastly Asserting their Rights and Vigorously maintaining their freedom.

"4. That they would take this Occasion publicly to Declare their Cordial Affection & unfeigned loyalty to his present majesty George the 3<sup>d</sup>, and to express their Sincere wish that the Union Between Great Britain and her Colonies may never be broken, but be preserved upon Such an Equitable foundation as Shall Conduce to the prosperity & Advantage of both. Wherefore,

"5. That they Commit in trust to our Representative in the General Court, to use Such measures as his prudence & wisdom Shall Dictate, to obtain in a Constitutional way a Redress of all Grievances.

"6. That the foregoing votes be Recorded in the town Book, and that the town Clerk transmit a Copy of the same to the Committee of Correspondence of the town of Boston."

Billerica responded, 1774, June 6th, to an appeal from the Boston committee as follows:

"The Inhabitants, having taken into Consideration the oppressive Measures, adopted and prosecuted of late, by the British Ministry and Parliament against the Colonies; and more especially having Considered the very alarming and vindictive act passed for the Blocking up of the harbour of Boston and putting a stop to the trade, unanimously came into the following Resolves:

"1. That a Right in the British Parliament to Tax his Majesty's American Subjects and to make laws Binding upon them in all Cases, without their Consent by Representatives, effectually deprives them of those Rights and Privileges which as men and as British Subjects they have a Just Claim to; and has no better foundation in Reason & Equity than the unlimited Prerogative, contended for by those arbitrary and misguided Princes, Charles the first and James the second, for the which the one lost his life and the other his Kingdom.

"That the Colonies are as Justifiable in opposing this unrighteous Claim of the British Parliament & all Acts Resulting from it, with all the attempts to Carry the same into execution, as the people of England were in opposing Charles & James, & setting William, Prince of Orange, of ever Glorious Memory, upon the Throne in the Room of the latter, Since the measures of those Arbitrary Princes were not more Inconsistent with the Liberties of the People of England than the late measures of the British Parliament, in consequence of the above-mentioned claim, are with the Liberties of the People in America.

"3. That our Vigorous Contests for our Liberties, in Opposition to the said Claim of Parliament and the Oppressions with which we have been loaded in Consequence thereof, Cannot Consistently be Denominated Faction and Rebellion by any who are friendly to the Principles of the Revolution upon which his Present Majesty's Right to the Crown Depends; and therefore there is Reason to Suspect that those who call our many Struggles for Liberty Opprobrious names are disaffected to the Hannoverian Succession, & aiming to Restore the Race of the Stuarts.

"4. That the act for Blocking up Boston Harbor is Hostile, Arbitrary & Cruel, and a Solemn Alarm, Sounded to all America, to Unite as one man and Stand more firm than ever in Defence of its Liberties, as it Discovers implacable Resentment in the British Ministry and a fixed Intention to treat these Colonies as Rebels, without even the formality of a trial, and to condemn & punish then unheard if they Do not yield a tame Submission to their Sovereign Mandates, which is a mode of proceeding against Real offenders Scarcely to be paralleled by any instance in the most arbitrary & tyrannical Reigns.

"5. That we consider the Blow Struck at Boston as aimed at the Province in General, and as a Prelude to something further, Equally Vindictive, yet in Store for this and the other Colonies, and as we have a fixed Reliance upon the Virtue of our Brethren in Boston to persevere in the noble Cause of Liberty, which they have hitherto maintained with Such laudable fortitude and Resolution, and, looking upon our Selves as Bound to animate and encourage them, we hereby promise & Declare our Readiness to Support and Strengthen them in the present conflict to the utmost of our power, and to joyn with them in any measures that shall be Judged expedient for our Common Safety and Defence, and for Defeating every vengeful machination of those that would punish us for Shewing our Selves men, and Dragoon us into Slavery because we Disdain patiently to take the Yolk upon our Necks at their Bidding,

"6. That, if the Respectable Body of Merchants throughout the Colonies might come into an agreement to import no British Goods and carry on no foreign trade whereby the merchants in England should Receive any Greate Benefit or Emolument, we humbly Conceive that a plan would be laid for the Speedy Removal of our Difficulties; and that we should have nothing to Do but to Sit Still and See the Salvation of our Country. We therefore Ardently Recommend this measure to them, promising that nothing shall be wanting upon our part for the Encouragement of the Same.

"Lastly. That as it would be an Indellible Disgrace and a Violation of the Sacred Obligation we are under, to God, to our Country, to our Selves, and to Posterity, for us tamely and Pusillanimously to give up these invaluable Liberties, which our worthy Ancestors purchased for us at Such Vast Expense of Blood & Treasure, We are Determined to use our utmost efforts to maintain them, and not part with them at a Cheaper Rate than they were at first obtained."

It was also voted to choose a Committee of Correspondence, which consisted of Mr. Ebenezer Bridge, Mr. Joshua Abbott, Capt. Josiah Bowers, Mr. Ralph Hill, Dr. Timothy Danforth, Mr. William Tompson and Mr. Solomon Pollard.

On June 27th, after considering two covenants sent from Boston "The Town, after Serious Deliberation upon the Difficulties & Distresses in which the Province, as well as the Colonies in General, are involved at the present Day; also upon what Method will have the greatest tendency to Cause a Suspension of all Commercial Intercourse with the Island of Great Britain (that being adjudged a Measure the most Salutary and Prudent that can be adopted, and most likely to effect the end proposed), Voted, That the Inhabitants of this Town come into an Agreement, faithfully and Religiously to be observed, that they will not buy, purchase or Consume, or suffer any person by, for, or under them, to purchase or Consume, in any way or manner whatsoever, any Goods, wares or merchandise that shall arrive in America from Greate Britain afcresaid, from and after the 31 Day of August next ensuing, for and until such time as they shall have Received the Result of the Continental Congress, upon whose wisdom, Prudence and Integrity they Rely, & to whose Determination they shall Readily Conform. Voted, That if any person or persons shall Discover such a want of regard for the Interest and Good of the Country, as to import any kind of merchandise from Great Britain afcresaid, after the aforesaid 31 Day of August until the publication of the aforesaid result, they will not purchase of them any article of British goods whatever, when or howsoever imported. Voted, That a Covenant comprising the Spirit and intention of the foregoing Vote be forthwith Subscribed to by the Inhabitanace of the Town," and a committee was appointed for the purpose.

September 12th it was "Voted, that the Town Justifie the Committee of Correspondence for their Going to Concord to join with the committees of the other towns of this County to Consult upon measures proper to be taken at the present important day," and "that the town fully accept of the Resolves passed at said meeting in Concord." At the same time the town voted to choose two persons "as a committee to attend at the Provincial Congress to be

held at Concord on the second Tuesday in October." William Stickney, Esq., and Mr. Ebenezer Bridge were chosen. Already the First Continental Congress was in session at Philadelphia, and the active union of the Colonies was taking practical form. Two weeks later Mr. Stickney was also elected Representative to the General Court, "to be held at Salem," October 5th; and he was instructed "to pay no Regard to the King's new mandamus Council, as a Council, nor proceed to act with them;" and, "if the Governor Should Dissolve, prorogue or adjourn the Court, that our Representative joine the House in forming themselves into a provincial Congress," and, in the latter case, Mr. Bridge was also to attend it.

The progress of sentiment and action was swift, but not unanimous. A vital step was taken when the constables were instructed, 1774, December 19th, to pay the Province tax to Henry Gardner, Esq., of Stowe, appointed receiver-general by the Provincial Congress. But, about the same time, the town says, in resolutions adopted: "It is with most painful Sensations we see the supineness and inattention to our Common Interest, that seems to prevail in the minds of many people in this town: we are sorry that there is so much uneasiness in the minds of some people in Regard to settling the militia." But the organizing and training of this militia was pushed to good purpose.

It was stimulated by an incident which a few days later occurred in Boston, and has made the name of a young man from Billerica famous in the history of these days. Thomas Ditson, Jun., being in Boston, was seized by the British troops, March 8th, on the pretence that he was urging a soldier to desert; without any examination kept a prisoner until the next day, when he was stripped, tarred and feathered, and dragged through the principal streets on a truck, attended by soldiers of the Forty-seventh Regiment, led by Colonel Nesbit, to the music of Yankee Doodle, the original words of which, it is said, were then first used. The outrage produced great indignation, and the selectmen of Boston sent a letter reporting the case to the selectmen of Billerica, who presented a remonstrance to General Gage, and submitted the case to a town-meeting, on March 20th. The town thanked them "for the wise and prudent measures" they had taken, expressed its dissatisfaction with the reply of General Gage, and instructed them to carry the case to the Provincial Congress.

Debates and events were becoming very serious, and the drilling of train-bands and minute-men foreshadowed the work before them. The stern resolve of the patriots expressed itself in a vote, the same day, "to look up the old Bayonets;" and, April 14th, four days before the Lexington and Concord alarm, they voted to "furnish the minute-men with Bayonets and Cartridge Boxes." It was also voted that "as every method ought to be pursued which may tend to promote the arts & manufactures of the

Country, especially that of wool, The Inhabitants of this town Shall not Kill any lambs for the market till after the first Day of August next; and also that no one ought to sell any to any Butcher or Petty Chapman, at any time whatever." "Voted, That the Inhabitants of this Town will, on the Death of a friend or Relative, Conform to the 8<sup>th</sup> article of the American Association, & go into no further mourning than such as is therein Recommended, and will entirely Discontinue the Giving of any Gloves whatever at Funerals."

To prevent the troops in Boston from being supplied with materials for hostile operations, the town voted not to permit any team "to Load in, or, after loaded, to pass through, the Town, with Timber, Boards, Spars, Pickets, Tent-poles, Canvas, Brick, Iron, Waggon, Carts, Carriages, Intrinching Tools, Oats," etc., without satisfactory certificate from the Committee of Correspondence, as to load, destination and abode.

When the day of Concord and Lexington came, Billerica was ready to do her part. The midnight riders spreading the alarm, probably reached this town by two o'clock. The Ditsons on the Woburn Road would be among the first to receive the summons, and very ready to respond to it after their recent experience. Colonel Thompson and Lieutenant Stickney, would be promptly notified; and Ebenezer Bridge, who was captain of the minute-men. There was hurrying to and fro, and in the early dawn, when the first encounter took place at Lexington, few families, if any, had not heard the call to arms. Muskets and accoutrements were hastily made ready and donned; the alarm-list no doubt turned out as well as the train-band and the minute-men; and gathering at the Common for muster and orders, they hurried off towards Concord. Meanwhile, the British had pushed on to Concord, and after the fight there found reason for hurrying back towards Boston. They had not gone far when, at Merriam's Corner, the Billerica troops came and joined in the assault and pursuit of the retreating foe. They came under the command of Colonel William Thompson. Some Billerica men were naturally in the Bedford company and arrived earlier, and when Captain Jonathan Wilson was killed, the command devolved upon his Billerica lieutenant, Edward Stearns. Nathaniel Wyman, of the same company, was killed, who was probably from Billerica, although his name is also credited to Lexington. No other man from this town was killed, but John Nickles and Timothy Blanchard were wounded.

The day of Lexington and Concord decided the issue of war, and in the rapid mustering of provincial forces, Billerica furnished her share of men.

The Committee of Correspondence was reconstructed, William Stickney, Esq., taking the place of Colonel Bridge, who was absent in the army. Other members were "Joshua Abbott, Col. W<sup>m</sup>. Thompson, Capt. Daniel Stickney, Capt. Josiah Bowers, Dr.

Timothy Danforth, Dea. Joshua Davis, Lt. John Parker, Mr. Henry Jefts, Mr. Isaac Foster, and Mr. Benj<sup>n</sup>. Lewis." Powers and duties are fully defined and very extensive, and the exercise of them was by no means nominal. Very much was due to the vigilance and discretion with which these committees discharged their various and delicate functions.

At a meeting, May 23d, the town voted "to send another Representative this year," and chose Colonel Thompson. It then adds a resolution which showed the progress of public sentiment after a year in the school of war, and that they were finding out that loyalty to Great Britain could not much longer be made consistent with the defence of their rights. "The Question was put whether the Town will, in Conformity to a Resolve of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> the House of Representatives of this Colony, advise our Representatives that, if the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Congress Should for the Safety of the Colonies Declare them Independent of Great Britain, they the said Inhabitants will engage with their lives & fortunes to Support them, and it passed unanimously in the affirmative." They were patriotic men who were ready for this action. With such leaders as Dr. Cumings and William Stickney, we may be sure it was not taken without intelligent consideration of its significance and what it was likely to cost them.

The battle of Bunker Hill was fought on June 17th, and in that battle the company from Billerica served in the redoubt under Prescott. Its former captain was now Colonel Bridge, and Lieut. Jonathan Stickney was in command. Asa Pollard, whose home was near the "fordway," was the first soldier killed, and was buried on the field. Samuel Hill was also killed, and probably Benjamin Easte, who was reported as dead soon after; and Timothy Toothaker died a few days later of wounds received. Colonel Bridge was wounded on the head and neck by a sword-cut, and was one of the last to retreat. In the severe scrutiny which followed, he did not escape charges of misconduct, in seeking too cautiously the cover of the redoubt. He was tried, but acquitted on the ground of indisposition of body.<sup>1</sup>

The town adopted, October 14th, resolutions urging the speedy erection of a State Government, and in 1777 sent Rev. Dr. Cumings delegate to the convention, which framed the first Constitution of Massachusetts. Until this was adopted, the towns acted on a theory of their semi-independence; for instance, "the Question was put whether the town will heartily Submit to the Reagulating bill, & it passed in the affirmative."

As the war went on, and the calls for troops were repeated, the people found it more difficult to respond. The country was poor and the tax of maintaining the contest in both men and money was severe. 1777, March 10th, the town chose "a committee of five per-

<sup>1</sup> "Siege of Boston," p. 176.



sons to Indent with persons to Inlist into the Continental service," and the records abound in details, showing the activity and embarrassments of this and similar committees to the end.

The pecuniary embarrassments became more and more serious as the Continental currency depreciated, and persons with fixed incomes suffered most. This appears in a vote, 1777, December 1st, "that the selectmen make Mr. Jonathan Kidder, our school-master, an addiquate reward for his services in some measure, as things have risen." The extent of this inflation is illustrated in the salary of Dr. Cumings. This was £80. But for the year ending in July, 1779, he received £380; for the next half-year, £830; and for the year 1781, £9000. In other words, this "Continental currency" had fallen to less than one per cent. of its face value. It had become too attenuated to be reclaimed, and the unfortunate holders of it, soldiers as well as citizens, suffered greatly in its utter loss. In 1782 the taxes were raised in specie, and the pastor's salary was again £80.

In 1778 the proposals for the Confederation came before the town, January 23d; and they say, "although they apprehend some things therein Contained are not so agreeable, yet, considering the vast Importance of the whole for the well being & Happiness of the united States of America, Voted & agreed to the whole of s<sup>d</sup> Confederation, and that Col. W<sup>m</sup>. Tompson, our Representative, be and he is hereby Instructed to Joyne with the honorable house of Representatives in any measures they Judge best, in order to forward the same to Congress."

Another call for recruits, in 1778, was met by the town's offer of £30 to such able-bodied men "as shall Inlist themselves to Joyne Gen. Washington's army for the space of nine months, except sooner Discharged, in order to fill up the Continentall army;" and £60 to such persons "as shall Inlist themselves as militia-men to go to the North River for eight months." In October, 1778, we have a glimpse of the hopes which cheered them during these trying years in the report of a committee, appointed to estimate the back services in the war, who say: "That considering the many services done since our appointment and the Difficulty of estimating them Separately, and the hopeful prospect that this sumer's campaign will put a finall end to services of this sort, it is our oppinnion that one Committee Consider the whole." Whereupon the town appointed a committee of seven, "to estimate the back services since they went to Ticonderogue, since the war rate was made in 1777, having Reference to the former settlement Respecting some grievances that some persons sustained in said settlement, according to their Discretion." This committee made a report in December, which was adopted, 1779, January 4th, as follows:

" May, 1777.	Two months to Rhode Island, set at . . .	£2	0	0
July, 1777.	Six months to Rhode Island . . . . .	6	0	0
August, 1777.	Three months and a half to Bennington	15	4	0

October, 1777.	Forty-one days to Saratoge . . . . .	9	10	0
February, 1778.	Three months to Boston . . . . .	9	10	0
April, 1778.	Three months to Cambridge . . . . .	9	10	0
July, 1778.	To Rhode Island; all hired men . . .			
July, 1778.	Six months to the Hill . . . . .	16	10	0
August, 1778.	Six weeks to Rhode Island . . . . .	11	0	0
September, 1778.	Three months to Boston . . . . .	9	10	0"

If we had the names of the men employed in these various services, the record would have greater interest; but it is safe to assume that the town was represented in all.

More men were needed in 1779, and, June 22d, a committee were appointed to secure the town's quota, "to go into the Continental army and to Rhode Island." July 5th, a tax was levied, of "thirteen thousand dollars," for the purpose of paying and securing the needed men—the first use of the word "dollar" in the records. As prices rose and the value of the currency became more doubtful, men had reasonable fears as to enlisting and trusting promises of future payments. A State Convention was held, and resolutions were passed "for the Retrieving the Credit of our Currency," which Billerica adopted, also appointing delegates to a County Convention, August 5th, at Concord, "to regulate the prices of produce and manufactures," whose proceedings were also adopted; and a committee of fifteen was "chosen of Observation to see that the Resolves and Recommendations of the State and County Convention be punctually complied with." But the task laid upon them was much more hopeless than that of finding men whose patriotism would respond to the call of Washington; and although a week later the selectmen and Committee of Correspondence were united with this one, and "Impowered and directed in the most Vigorous Manner to see that there be no breaking over or evading the doings of the said Convention, and that the breakers thereof be proceeded against according to their offences; and more especially to see that there be no bartering in Gold and Silver, to the Ingury of our paper Currency," prices continued to rise, the regulations could not be enforced, and the end came in the utter worthlessness of the paper currency they strove so resolutely to sustain.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### BILLERICA—(Continued).

#### EDUCATION.

In 1647 a free school was made compulsory in any town having fifty householders.

Billerica could not at once meet this requirement. But, "1, 5, 61. The Townsmen doe agree y<sup>t</sup> Lieftenant Will ffrench and Ralph Hill, senior, doe take care and [examine] the seurl famelies in or Towne, whethr there children and servants are Taught in the precepts of relidione, in reding and Lerninge their

Catechism." How this duty was discharged is suggested in the record by the selectmen: "10, 9<sup>m</sup>, 68. they apoint y<sup>e</sup> next seconday to go y<sup>e</sup> rounds to examine y<sup>e</sup> teaching of children & youth, according to law." If we could accompany these selectmen on that annual examination, we should learn something of education under difficulties: and might gain respect for the fathers, with appreciation of the fact of progress in two centuries.

Mr. Whiting's name first appears in this record, "19 March, '74-5. In reference to the catechising of y<sup>e</sup> youth of y<sup>e</sup> towne and examining them concerning their reading, a duty imposed on y<sup>e</sup> select<sup>m</sup> by y<sup>e</sup> Hon<sup>rd</sup> Court, to take care that children and youth be instructed in both. The selectmen doe order, that all children and youth, single psons from eight years old upward, their parence and masters shall send such their children and servants to y<sup>e</sup> Reverend Mr. Samuel Whiting, at such times as shalbee afterward appointed by him, to be examined of both, as hoping this might be a good expedient for y<sup>e</sup> encouragement of all superiours and youth."

We may well believe that such an examination, by the pastor, would be no small incentive to study on the part of the "youth" who must appear before him. But many of the parents could give but little instruction, and another step in advance greatly needed was taken when, "19, 11<sup>m</sup>, 79, Ens. Tompson was chosen school-master, to teach such to read and to write as shall come to him to learn." Joseph Tompson, Billerica's first school-master, was the son of a minister, and, with the possible exception of Danforth, was the best educated man in town. He continued to be the school-master for more than thirty years. Of the studies pursued we are not informed, nor of the "times and seasons;" but the culture of the town owes much, we may be sure, to Ensign Tompson's school, and we may remember with interest the place to which the children of two hundred years ago wended their way for the instruction he had to give them. His house was in the southeast part of the village, at the end of the lane leading east from the Boston road. Whether the services of Mr. Tompson were gratuitous or he had a tuition fee does not appear; but no item is found among the town charges until 1710, when he received one pound as school-master, and another the next year.

About the same time the question of a new school-master was raised. We may hope that the reason was not because Captain Tompson found occasion in his age to charge something for his services. Perhaps after thirty years his methods had become too old-fashioned, and a younger man was called for. In the autumn of 1709 one object of a town-meeting was "to incoridg a schoole-master for Reading and Writing;" and, judging from the records of Mr. Needham, the new town clerk, there was need of a school-master. But four years later a master was still needed, and, November 16, 1713, "it was voted, that the se-

lectmen shaill mak yous of their best descrastion in providing a scoull-master for a quarter of a yeare;" and, January 18th, the selectmen were instructed "to se out for a schoolmaster against March Court, and to provide a house." Towns were frequently complained of for neglect to provide good schools, and the last record implies that Billerica had been thus charged, as it had been at least once before, in 1692, "for want of a schole." Probably Mr. Tompson's labors were occasionally suspended and resumed. The same presentment was made in 1718, and answered by Captain Whiting, at Charlestown.

The first appearance of a successor to Mr. Tompson is in 1715, when Mr. Shattuck is paid £8 13s., and the town voted, that he "shall keep the school another half-year." In 1716 Mr. Isaac Branch was employed, receiving £10 for two quarters and £22 for the year 1717. The germ of the system of school districts then appears: "The Town Impowered the selectmen to order & appoint in what parts of the town the school shall be kept & how long at a place." In November, 1718, the town votes "to hire our present schoolmaster for another quarter, Provided he move to the several Quarters of the town;" also, "to give but four shillings p. week for the schoolmaster's board for the future." This master was John Graham, and he boarded with Mr. Ruggles. December 29, 1718, it was voted, that "for about five months the school should be moved to accommodate the outskirts of the Town, and the Rest of the year to be kept in the middle of the town;" and a committee of five was to order the places where it should be kept. It was also voted "to give Mr. Grimes, our present schoolmaster, forty pounds for one year, Provided that he board himself and keep a moving school." In March the selectmen gave leave to John Hartwell's wife "to keep a school to Instruct children to Read." Mr. Joseph Houston was master for three or four years from 1719, and was succeeded by Benjamin Ruggles, the pastor's brother. Then for a short time the master was Jonathan Fry, of Andover, the ill-fated young chaplain of Lovewell's expedition. The next year the town paid Mr. William Smith for services, and also Nicholas Bowes, the future pastor of Bedford. Then comes Mr. Isaac Abbott, who was master for six years, who was also employed to copy the early volume of records of "Births, Marriages, and Deaths," in a new book. Benjamin Bowers follows, 1736-39; Jonathan Stedman, 1739; Joseph Manning, 1740; Robert Cutler, 1741-45, who found his wife here, and became pastor in Epping, New Hampshire; and John Chandler, in 1746, who was thus introduced to his future pastorate here. Joseph Bean succeeded, and then came Jonathan Kidder, in 1753, who served the town for a generation, and whose fame lingers still among the traditions of our older people.

The sections of the town where schools were kept were at first and long called squadrons; and a divi-

sion of the school money to the squadrons began to be made about 1760, with attending questions and jealousy as to the division. A school-house is mentioned in 1766, but had perhaps been built earlier, as the town in 1725 voted grants of land to the squadrons for school-houses, to be located by the selectmen. In 1742 a committee reported that the school be kept six months in the centre of the town, two in the east squadron (one of which should be east of the river), two on the west side, and one in the south squadron.

But the squadron school-houses were still wanting, and, 1791, September 12th, a committee on the location of such houses made a report which was adopted. Wards which chose not to build might draw the interest of the sum allowed the said ward, to hire places to keep their school; but the latter privilege was not to extend beyond two years; and the committee was to settle disputes as to locations not yet decided on. When the district system of schools displaced the earlier squadrons is not clear; but for two generations districts had charge of their own schools, locating and supporting as they pleased. Within a few years the town has reassumed the entire charge, seeking more harmonious and efficient management.

The employment of school "dames" is mentioned as early as 1680, and in March, 1718, John Hartwell's wife had leave "to keep a school to instruct children to Read;" but it is not clear to what extent females were thus employed, and it is only within a few years that most of the schools have passed into their hands. Before the Revolution, only English text-books were to be had, which were sometimes reprinted, but always costly and ill-adapted to use in this country. After that, improvement, sure if not rapid, was made, and has contributed much to the usefulness of the schools.

It was a notable day in the history of Billerica when Mr. Pemberton, who had been for eight years the first principal of Phillips Academy, at Andover, came from that position to Billerica, and in 1794 established a school, which is properly known as the Pemberton Academy. He was one of the notable teachers of his time, and counted such men as James Madison and Aaron Burr among his pupils. Here he conducted a school fourteen years, which was highly successful, numbering at times sixty pupils, many of whom graduated at Harvard College and became eminent. At first a training-school for boys, its scope was enlarged and girls were received; and Deacon Samuel Whiting assisted in the instruction.

After an interval of some years a private school was established by Mr. Bernard Whitman and his sister Bathsheba, their brother being the colleague pastor of the church. It was kept in a hall of the old hotel. But, in 1820, the Billerica Academy was established, and Mr. and Miss Whitman assumed the charge of it. The school was good and useful, but it lacked the pecuniary foundation needful for permanence, and its career closed in 1836. From that time, until 1852,

the only opportunity for higher instruction in the town was a private school, taught for some years by Reverend Mr. Stearns, in the vestry of the Congregational Church, of which he was the pastor.

Dr. Howe, near 1850, set about a more substantial foundation; and the results of his benevolent plans remain, and must long endure, in the Howe School. The design had occupied his thoughts before his death, in 1857, and the lot was selected and purchased by himself. By his will, a board of trustees, to be incorporated, received the bulk of his estate, and were charged with the duty of carrying his plans into execution. The building was erected in 1852, and dedicated with an address by Mr. Whitman, who remained until 1875, the diligent and faithful secretary of the trustees.

The school was opened at once under the charge of Mr. William C. Grant. He was succeeded, in 1855, by Mr. Stephen Gilman, and, in 1864, by Mr. Francis Gorman. The present principal, Mr. Samuel Tucker, assumed his charge in 1868. Tuition was free at the beginning, but in recent years the income of the fund, somewhat more than \$20,000, has not been sufficient alone for the support of the school, and a small tuition fee has been charged.

Early in 1879 Professor M. C. Mitchell removed his Boys' School from Elgartown to Billerica. For eight years he occupied the fine building on the corner of Main and Andover Streets, which was burned in January, 1888. A large stone building was promptly built on the Bedford road, and the school continues prosperous.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### BILLERICA (*Continued*).

#### RELIGIOUS HISTORY.

THE dismissal of Mr. Chandler left the church for the first time without a pastor; and the devout fathers set apart a day of fasting and prayer, 1760, October 2d, "to supplicate the throne of grace for divine direction in the choice of a minister." A town-meeting was held, 1762, November 18th, and this is the record: "The church of Christ in this town having at their meeting on the 25 Day of August, 1760, Voted to give up their Right and Privilege of Choosing a Gospel minister by themselves, and to act in conjunction with the Town in this Important affair; and the Church and Town Having mett together upon this occasion, . . . and the meeting being opened by a prayer to god for his Gracious Influence, guidance, & Direction, The question was put whether we would proceed at this Time To the Choice of a Gentleman to settle with us in the work of the Gospel ministry, and it was voted in the affirmative. Then

the members of the Church & the Inhabitants of the Town were desired by the Moderator to Bring in their votes conjunctly, in order to the choosing such a minister, which being done and the votes examined, it appeared that Mr. Henry Cumings was chosen by all the votes. Then the town voted to the said Mr. Henry Cumings, as an Incouragement to settle with us, for his settlement Two Hundred Pounds Lawfull money, one Hundred to be paid" at the time of his ordination, and the remainder a year later. His salary was to be eighty pounds, paid annually, and he was to have the use of the "Parsonage pasture." The question of acting on "the article of wood" passed "in the negative," and ministers have since been permitted to furnish their own wood. In paying Dr. Cumings the promised "settlement," the town appropriated £73 17s. 11d., which had been received from the State for the care of the French neutrals. The ordination took place, 1763, January 26th.

Henry Cumings was born in the part of Dunstable which soon became Hollis, New Hampshire, 1739, September 16th. He graduated from Harvard College 1760 and studied theology with his pastor, Rev. Daniel Emerson, who was a man of character and spiritual force, and a powerful preacher; and many young men went from Hollis under his influence to take high positions in the pulpit and at the bar. He had been in ardent sympathy with the Great Awakening and the labors of Edwards and Whitefield, and Mr. Cumings brought the tonic of this training to his ministry in Billerica. He brought also a fine physical manhood, a culture and a piety, which gave him good equipment for his office; and for almost two generations he led his people a good example of the old-time pastor, holding their respect and love with a rare force to the end. He was a diligent student, wrought out his sermons with great care, and preached them with effect. Then he was a man of the people. He had known in his own early experience what poverty and trial were, and was prepared to sympathize with the trials through which the people were passing. The testimony is abundant how heartily he shared in the patriotic discussions and action which bore fruit in the independence of the States and establishment of the Union. He was a leader in the patriot councils, and the action of the town was often shaped by him. His election as a delegate to the Convention which framed the Constitution of Massachusetts, in 1780, was only the proper and natural recognition of his standing among his townsmen. He was often called on councils, far and near, and to preach on public occasions, in a way to show that his merits were appreciated beyond the bounds of his rural parish. But if he was ever called, in the modern fashion, to leave his chosen field, the temptation did not move him, and he was content to live and to die among the people who gave him in youth unanimously their confidence and love, and continued it to the end.

A new and more commodious meeting-house was found necessary and was erected in 1797. It stood near, but a little southeast of, the place to which it has been moved, and then faced the north. By some accident the first steeple fell, and the builder received \$500 compensation from the town. The cost of this house was provided for by sale of the pews, the sum received being \$8504.50.

The church continued united and prosperous during the long pastorate of Dr. Cumings. A just estimate of his theological attitude, in relation to the questions on which the separation among the churches, about the time of his death, took place, is not easy to reach. A characteristic tendency of his preaching is to limit his statements of the doctrines of the trinity, of sin, of redemption and retribution to the language of the Scriptures, seldom interpreting them in phraseology of his own. His sympathies were with the Arminian, rather than with the high-Calvinistic opinions of his time; but when his colleague was ordained, in 1814, it was understood by the council that he held evangelical opinions. On the other hand, it is to be remembered that the church, with substantial unanimity, accepted the views of the "liberal" party, under the lead of Mr. Whitman, and that Dr. Cumings' influence, negative if not positive, must have contributed to this result. He is named with Unitarian ministers in the histories of the period; and whether any injustice is done to him in this classification is a question on which opinions will differ.

In February, 1813, Dr. Cumings preached his Half-Century Sermon. On account of his age and infirmity, he requested a colleague, and the church at once took measures which resulted in the ordination of Mr. Nathaniel Whitman, on the fifty-first anniversary of the day when Dr. Cumings had been himself ordained, 1814, January 26th. The life of Dr. Cumings was spared for almost ten years longer, and his pastorate extended to nearly sixty-one years, his death occurring 1823, September 6th.

To the last Dr. Cumings held the respect and love of the people, and, when the end came, he was buried by the town with reverent affection, the third and the last pastor to whom the town has rendered this service.

Mr. Whitman brought high character, scholarship and piety to his new position. He was two years an usher at Phillips Academy, Exeter, and there began the study of theology with Dr. Buckminster, of Portsmouth, completing his course at Cambridge. He was received with great cordiality and considerate kindness by his venerable colleague, and a warm friendship grew up between them. His ordination was attended by a multitude of people, and the hospitality of the town was full and generous. Mr. Whitman was a good preacher and active pastor. He established a Bible Society and a Peace Society, as well as the first Sunday-school in town, and he used his influence effectively in improving the common schools.



His pastorate, however, fell upon a period of agitation and disruption among the churches, when influences which had been gathering force, some of them for a hundred years, came to a head; and it is scarcely any fault of this worthy man that they culminated in his day and disturbed the peace of his ministry. The discussions which preceded and attended the separation of the Unitarian Churches were not the only and scarcely the most serious of the influences which threatened the peace of the local pastors. The practical union of Church and State, which had been naturally inherited from England, and illustrated in all our previous history, as the constable gathered the pastor's salary, was out of place in the free air of America. With independence the demand for a change grew stronger and stronger; but it involved considerations so serious and was so startling to good but conservative men, that the resistance was long, and many pastors were unsettled in the process. The age of Dr. Cumings and the honor in which he was held delayed its coming in Billerica, and the town collected the salary of Mr. Whitman until 1834. In that year the usual article in the warrant was "passed" by the town and was not again inserted. The parish was then called to meet, and raised somewhat less than the salary, \$700, which Mr. Whitman had received. He remained a year longer, and, in 1835, resigned and removed to Wilton, New Hampshire.

It may be doubted whether the doctrinal discussions and ecclesiastical separations had as much to do with terminating Mr. Whitman's pastorate; but they form a vital part of the history of that period. Here, too, Dr. Cumings' position, while he lived, held the restless spirit somewhat in check which broke forth so soon after his death. Theological questions were debated with great feeling and often with bitterness. Good men sometimes forgot the possible honesty of those who held opinions differing from their own and the charity to which they were entitled, and neighbors were at times estranged. The friends of the old order could not appreciate the force of the convictions which sought change, and those who were striving for change were not always considerate of the feelings or the reasons of those who wished to perpetuate the order of things they had inherited, and which had worked so satisfactorily for almost two centuries. The efforts to establish another church in the town were met by a protest, which Mr. Whitman embodied in a fast-day sermon, which was printed, and must win respect and sympathy for its author even from those who are not fully persuaded by its argument. He was contending with the inevitable; and, had he now the opportunity, he would not probably desire to replace the ecclesiastical order, which was giving way around him, to his discomfort and alarm.

Mr. Whitman was dismissed March 30, 1835, and was succeeded by Rev. William E. Abbot, who was ordained February 8, 1837, and dismissed February 10, 1839. Mr. Abbot was graduated at Bowdoin Col-

lege, 1830, and at Harvard Theological School in 1833. The next pastor was Rev. Theodore Haskell Dorr, a graduate of Harvard College in 1835, and Theological School in 1838. He was ordained May 28, 1839, and dismissed May 28, 1843. Succeeding ministers have with one exception received no formal installation. Their names and dates of service are as follows: James Thurston, November 15, 1844, to May 15, 1850; Samuel Pettes, June 16, 1850, to May 14, 1855; Nathaniel O. Chaffin, June 17, 1855, to May 10, 1857; Norwood Damon, 1857 to 1860; Livingston Stone, 1861 to 1862; James Gallaway, installed January 28, 1863, dismissed in 1865; Christopher Coffin Hussey, October 1, 1866, who is still in charge.

In 1844 the meeting-house was moved, and turned half around to face the east; but it was allowed to retain its primitive structure and graceful spire, which form a landmark visible from afar. The longer ministry of Mr. Hussey has witnessed improvement in several directions. In 1879 a fund of \$10,000 was contributed by several members of the society, the interest of which only can be used to support preaching. The conditions of the gift are that the minister's salary be kept at a specified rate, and that the preaching be distinctively Unitarian. In 1881 a house was bought for a parsonage, and so fully repaired as to make it substantially a new, as well as pleasant and convenient, home for the minister.

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH was the earliest separate organization, after the First Church had for one hundred and and sixty-five years existed alone in the town. There were Baptists here at an early day, William Hamlet at least and probably George Farley; and a letter from Hamlet relating to the early troubles is published by Backus, the Baptist historian. But the number did not increase until after the Revolution, when the tendency to resist payment of "minister's rates" had influence in increasing the number of Baptists. Not long after the death of Dr. Cumings they had become numerous and strong enough for organization. Meetings were first held in the school-house near the Fordway, in the spring of 1828. A church was organized, 1828, September 30th. It consisted of twenty members, of whom thirteen were dismissed from the South Chelmsford Church.

The list of its ministers is as follows, omitting students and others who served for shorter periods:

Otis Wing, March, 1829, to March, 1830.  
 Jedediah W. Sargent, ordained January 14, 1835, to January, 1837.  
 Jonathan E. Forbush, March, 1837, to August, 1838.  
 Warren Cooper, October, 1838, to October, 1839.  
 George W. Randall, ordained February 18, 1841, to May, 1842.  
 Benjamin Knight, May, 1842, to April, 1849; and February, 1857, to January, 1860.  
 Benjamin Putnam, June, 1845; died December 21, 1850, aged 62.  
 Zenas P. Wilde, April, 1851, to April, 1853.  
 Homer Sears, January, 1854, to January, 1856.  
 Thomas C. Russell, August, 1860, to March, 1863.  
 John D. Sweet, ordained October 21, 1863, to March, 1868.  
 Clifton Fletcher, February, 1869, to July, 1875.  
 William H. Fish, ordained December 30, 1875, to June, 1877.

Robert M. Neil (alias O'Neil or McNeil), October, 1877, to July, 1878.  
 "Dismissed from the fellowship of the church and ministry."  
 Edward T. Lyford, May, 1879 to 83.  
 L. B. Lawton, 1884-1887.  
 E. O. Taylor, 1887-89.

The first meeting-house stood on the east side of Concord River, very near the middle bridge. The frame was raised, 1830, November 30th, and the house was dedicated, 1831, September 14th. In the spring of 1844 it was removed to its present location in the village, on Bedford Street. A bell was procured in 1872, and in 1877 it received an addition of a convenient chapel.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH was organized, 1829, April 30th, a society having been formed January 17th. This was a more direct result of the theological controversy, and of the ecclesiastical separations, which were still agitating the Massachusetts churches; and the presence of Dr. Lyman Beecher, as moderator of the council which organized the church, was a significant expression of the general interest in this and similar movements. The unity and strength of the First Church was, however, less affected by the separation, in Billerica, than in many towns. The number of its members who did not sympathize with, or yield to, the Unitarian position of the church was small. Two women, Huldah Blake and Martha Bowers, entered a protest, 1820, October 8th. They affirm their belief in the true and proper deity of Jesus Christ, in the atonement, in the entire depravity of unregenerate men, and their need of supernatural grace to fit them for the happiness of heaven; and generally in the doctrines of the Westminster Confession and Catechism. With these views they believed their pastor and many of their brethren in the church did not agree; and they therefore asked the favor of a regular dismission. This the church, affirming the right and duty of each individual to be guided by his own conscience, granted. No other dismissions for this reason are recorded, and not more than four or five members of the First Church ever joined the new Congregational Church, which began with twenty-five members. The meeting-house, on Andover Street, 60×40 feet, was raised October 28th, and dedicated, 1830, January 13th. It was extensively repaired in 1885. The record of its ministers has been as follows:

John Starkweather, ordained April 22, 1830; dismissed Aug. 2, 1831.  
 Isaac Jones, acting pastor July, 1832; April, 1834.  
 Joseph Haven, installed June 8, 1836; dismissed September 27, 1840.  
 Benjamin Ela, ordained April 29, 1841; dismissed May, 1842.  
 Jesse G. D. Stearns, ordained May 29, 1843; dismissed May 8, 1867.  
 John P. Cleveland, D.D., acting pastor 1867-70.  
 Everts B. Kent, acting pastor 1870-71.  
 John M. Lord, acting pastor 1871-72.  
 Henry A. Hazen, installed May 21, 1874; dismissed May 4, 1879.  
 John Haskell, acting pastor May, 1879, to October, 1881.  
 Charles C. Torrey, acting pastor November, 1881, to 1882.  
 Frederick A. Wilson, ordained October 26, 1882; installed September 23, 1885; dismissed June 25, 1889.  
 Augustus H. Fuller, acting pastor 1889.

The long and faithful pastorate of Mr. Stearns de-

serves especial recognition. A scholar of exceptional diligence and culture, modest and devout, and active in every good word and work, he commended himself to the citizens of the town as well as to his own charge.

A UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY was formed January 10, 1842, and a meeting-house erected the same year. It stood on the north side of West Street, where the school-house now stands. In 1868 it was sold to the Roman Catholics and removed to North Billerica, where it is still in use by that society. The ministers of this church were Rev. Varnum Lincoln, ordained September 8, 1843; Rev. L. P. Landers, of West Cambridge, 1845-47; Rev. George Proctor, 1847-53, and again, 1855-63; Rev. P. Hersey, 1853-55; and Rev. R. M. Pyram.

A ROMAN CATHOLIC SOCIETY was organized and purchased the Universalist meeting-house in 1868, removing it to North Billerica. It has prospered and the number of its communicants is large. The priests who have been in charge came from Lowell, and no record of their names or dates of service has been furnished.

The youngest church in the town is the Baptist Church at North Billerica, which was organized May 14, 1869, receiving twenty-two members from the Centre Church. Its pleasant meeting-house was a gift from the Hon. Thomas Talbot; built in 1870, and dedicated January 19, 1871. Its pastors have been William M. Ross, June 2, 1869; Nathaniel L. Colby, ordained July 2, 1872; and William A. Farren, ordained September 24, 1879-1887; J. B. Robinson, 1887.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### BILLERICA—(Continued).

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

THE early roads were often called paths, and the name describes them. Carts could pass over the better roads, but many were passable only on horseback or on foot. Wagons were unknown. The earliest chaise was owned in town not much, if any, before 1800, and marked the aristocracy of the few who could afford such luxury.<sup>1</sup> The first great improvement in the means of transportation was the Middlesex Canal. This first important canal in America passed through Billerica, and its path is still to be seen at many points. The company was incorporated in June, 1793, to connect the Merrimack with the Mystic and Charles Rivers, and save the trade of New Hampshire to Boston. The preliminary surveys consumed more than a year, and ground was first broken at Billerica

<sup>1</sup> See "Lowell Contributions," etc., vol. i. p. 254.

"Mills" in the spring of 1795. The canal was twenty-seven miles long, thirty feet wide, and three feet deep. It was navigable to the Charles River in 1803; but its income was absorbed for years in alterations and repairs, and no dividend was declared until 1819. The total cost of the canal was \$1,164,200. From 1819 to 1843, dividends were paid, amounting to \$504 per share. The receipts then fell below the expenses; in 1851 the charter was surrendered, and in 1852 the canal was sold in sections, owners of adjoining lands being generally the purchasers. The charter was farther declared forfeited in 1859.

The Middlesex Turnpike was an enterprise of significance in its day, chartered in June, 1805. Its route extended from Tyngsborough to Medford and Cambridge. The line at first was to pass Billerica meeting-house; but, in 1806, the route was changed, by permission of the General Court, from a point in Bedford, crossing Nutting's Pond, to Buiset bridge in Tyngsborough. Some lack of friendly co-operation in Billerica may have influenced this change, and the managers were ambitious to make their great road as near an air-line as possible. Hills and ponds must not stand in their way, and they accordingly followed a route straight through the town, crossing Concord River a mile above the centre bridge, and leaving the village as far one side. This line would attract very little local travel and support, and experience soon proved that the visions of a great through travel and traffic were delusive. The canal and the railroad left little for the turnpike, and its charter was repealed in 1841.

The stages also entered largely into the life of that period. "The first stage-coach passed through Billerica about 1795. It was a two-horse, covered vehicle, owned and driven by Mr. Joseph Wheat, and ran from Amherst, N. H., to Boston and back again, once a week. It stopped at Billerica over-night, making the trip in about four days. The same team performed all the journey."<sup>1</sup> The business increased. In 1803 the stage from Boston to Amherst set off from King's Inn every Wednesday and Saturday, leaving at 5 A.M. and arriving at 7 P.M., returning Mondays and Thursdays at the same hours. For several years before the opening of the railroad from twelve to sixteen stages passed daily through Billerica, Sundays excepted. After work was begun on the new mills at East Chelmsford, in 1821, Mr. Richardson, who kept a hotel at the "Corner," sent a hack Mondays and Saturdays to accommodate gentlemen who wished to connect with the Amherst stage at that point. Lowell could hardly be served in that way now! All this staging and teaming made a demand for taverns, which were numerous and busy. There were two, and sometimes three, in the village: one or two at the Corner, and the Manning Tavern on the Chelmsford Road; and these were not all. Men and

beasts must be provided for, and this provision often suggests Falstaff's "intolerable deal of sack," as one reads the items in old ledgers.

But canal and turnpike gave way to a more revolutionary improvement. The Boston & Lowell Railroad was chartered in June, 1830, and opened June 25, 1835. But the benefit which the railroad brought to Billerica has been much less than it would have been if it had followed a more direct line, through Woburn, and passing between the village and Fox Hill. Such a route would have made the pleasant high lands on which the village is located a very accessible and attractive suburb of Boston, and with the growth of both Lowell and Boston, Billerica might have shared. But some feared and repelled the railroad; others, more sagacious, saw its benefits and sought its location on a more northerly route; and the growth of the village has been hindered by its distance from the stations. Relief for this difficulty was sought in 1876, by the building of a narrow-gauge railroad from Bedford to North Billerica. It was opened with its two-foot track and two locomotives, in the autumn of 1877. The novelty of its narrow track and cheap construction attracted much attention. For a few months the village had railroad connection with the cities. As a mechanical experiment the road was a success. But it soon struck financial rocks. Burdened with debt at the first, it was thrown into bankruptcy and sold out, its equipment being sold to a Maine company.

The roadway was secured in 1884 by the Boston & Lowell Railroad, which laid out a route with better grades west of the village, and re-opened the road of standard gauge, giving the town facilities more permanent and satisfactory, under the stimulus of which, business and population are increasing.

John Parker built the first mill in town, on Content Brook, about 1660, and the mill at the falls of the Shawshin is mentioned in 1707. But the water power at North Billerica was first granted in 1708, to Christopher Osgood, and all later owners get their title from him.

He built and maintained a grist-mill and saw-mill. Thomas Richardson was its owner after the Revolution, and the Middlesex Canal Company purchased of him, 1794, March 25th, the title, which was held for the use of the canal until 1851, September 22d, when it was sold for \$20,000 to Charles P. and Thomas Talbot. These gentlemen were released, by vote of the town, 1864, March 7th, from the obligation to maintain a grist-mill, contained in the Osgood grant, the town judging, no doubt correctly, that the use of the water-power in their extensive manufacturing would be a greater public benefit than the grist-mill.

Prior to this action the owners of the water-power had prosecuted successfully before the Legislature a contest with the towns of Wayland, Sudbury, Concord, Bedford and Carlisle, and the owners of meadows

<sup>1</sup> "Bi-Centennial," p. 152 (note).;

above, on the river. The latter had petitioned the Legislature, in 1859, claiming that the dam had been raised and was maintained at a height which damaged the meadows and reduced their value, and they asked for redress. A joint committee heard both parties at length, and the petitions, arguments and documents were published in a report (*House Doc.*, No. 100, 1860). The general conclusion was that "the dam at North Billerica is not the only nor the chief cause of the wet state of the meadows above. The bars across the stream, especially the Fordway bar; the weeds filling the channel in many places, often for long distances; the discharge into the river during the summer of water stored in reservoirs and mill-ponds upon the Sudbury and Assabet and their tributaries, in their combined effect, do far more damage to the meadows than the Billerica dam." They say that the effect of the dam becomes appreciable at Robbins bar, and its entire removal would not affect the upper meadows; that effectual relief could come to the meadows only by reducing the dam thirty-three inches or more, cutting out the Fordway and other bars, deepening the shallow places, straightening the channel at some points, and keeping the river free from weeds. This programme was more extensive than the Legislature felt itself called upon to undertake, especially as it was proved that similar trouble and complaint had been chronic from the first settlement of the country.

In 1811 Francis Faulkner came from Acton and began the manufacture of woolen goods. It was the second enterprise of this class in New England, Abraham Marland being the pioneer, at Andover, in 1810. Mr. Faulkner soon purchased of the Canal Company the secondary water-privilege. He could draw water until it was "three-quarters of an inch below the top of the dam and flash-boards," when he must close his gates, under a penalty of one dollar for every half-hour they were left open. By his thrift, skill and enterprise Mr. Faulkner made his business very successful, and transmitted it to his sons. The firm-name is still J. R. Faulkner & Co., and his grandson, Mr. Richard Faulkner, is the agent now in charge of its business. From a modest beginning, with a single set of cards, the business has increased until the monthly pay-roll is about \$2500.

Charles P. Talbot came to Billerica in 1839 and was soon joined by his brother, Thomas, in laying the foundations of their extensive and successful enterprise. The dyewood-mill was their earliest undertaking, for which they hired a building of the Canal Company. In 1844 they bought the saw-mill of Nathaniel Stearns, on the northeast side, and used it for a dyewood business until it was burned, in 1853. They then sold this site to Mr. Faulkner, having purchased the prior and larger rights of the Canal Company on the other side of the stream. There they rebuilt the dyewood-mill, which is still in vigorous operation; and, in 1857, they built their woolen-mill.

This at first had eight sets of cards; six were added in 1870 and as many in 1880. Two hundred hands are now employed, and the monthly pay-roll is \$7000. In 1849 the Messrs. Talbot began their chemical works, which were at first in a building near the depot, but removed later to their present location, sixty rods farther east, by the railroad. These now employ sixteen hands, and produce a daily average of five tons oil of vitriol, one ton of blue vitriol and as much muriatic acid.

The next most important manufacturing enterprise was begun soon after 1830, in the south part of the town, by Jonathan Hill, Esq. Its specialty was, and still is, a useful machine for splitting leather, invented and patented by Samuel Parker. This machine has had a very wide sale in this and other countries, being almost indispensable in the manufacture of leather. The business was sold, in 1853, to Charles H. Hill, who continues it with much success. In 1875 the value of the work done was \$28,000.

In the east part of the town, where there had long been a saw-mill, on Content Brook, Theophilus Manning had also a grist-mill. He sold both, in 1825, to Dea. Aaron H. Patten, who began, in 1845, the manufacture of cabinet-work. The business grew to considerable proportions, and Pattenville became a definite local name in town. The business reached a value of \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year, and was continued by his sons; but, in the financial depression of 1874-78 it suffered, and the shops were sold, in 1879, to Walter J. Pettingell, who carried on business, making tanks, until the mill was burned, January, 1882.

Most recent is the growth of an extensive glue factory, which was commenced in 1867 by the Jaquith Brothers, near the old bridge of the Middlesex Turnpike. It has been quite prosperous, doing a business amounting to nearly \$15,000 annually. For many years the Winnings maintained a saw-mill on the brook running from Winning's Pond; and there has long been a saw-mill, now owned by Mr. John O. Richardson, on Content Brook, near the railroad station at East Billerica.

LIBRARIES.—Billerica instituted the first "Social Library" in 1772, one of the earliest in Massachusetts, and a second was incorporated in 1807.

But it had long been felt that the provision for the needs of the town in this respect was inadequate; and in 1880 the generous munificence of Mrs. Joshua Bennett laid the foundation for their better supply. A handsome building standing just north of the First Church, has been erected at her expense and deeded to the Bennett Public Library Association; and her daughters, Mrs. Holden and Mrs. Warren, have contributed \$2000 to its furnishing and the purchase of books. A fee of five dollars is received for membership, and twenty-five dollars constitutes a life member of the association; but the use of books, without other privilege, is granted for the annual payment of one



dollar. The building contains a library, with capacity for ten or twelve thousand volumes, which may be doubled by the use of alcoves; a reading-room, a committee room, and a handsome entrance hall and cloak-room. The reading-room is ornamented with a wide fireplace and beautiful mantel of unique design, contributed by William W. Warren, Esq., and the front of the building is enriched by a fine rose-window, the gift of Mr. Joshua Holden, Mr. William H. Osborn, of New York, also gave the lot on which the library stands. The town owes much to Mrs. Bennett and her family for this timely and good foundation. It must exert a stimulating influence, and give a most generous culture to the coming generations who shall enjoy its privileges; and will contribute much to the prosperity and attractiveness of the town.

A similar service has been rendered at North Billerica by the Messrs. Talbot; although the library which they have founded is intended primarily for their own employees, and its management is in their hands; but its use for a small fee is open to all. They erected, in 1880, a building connected with their factory, the second story of which is devoted to the library and reading-room. It is supplied with more than a 1000 volumes, a number which will be increased and well used under the judicious care of the Talbot Library Association.

It is proper that record be made here of two historical incidents. In 1855 the town formally and fitly celebrated the two hundredth anniversary of its foundation. The Rev. Joseph Richardson, of Hingham, a loyal son of the town, gave a historical oration, which was published, with other proceedings of the day, in a valuable pamphlet. The celebration had no little influence in awakening and stimulating the interest in the early life of the town, which has found expression in its repeated later action.

A similar event was the celebration held, 1876, July 4th. The centennial year of the United States naturally awakened renewed interest in historical subjects and led to many local commemorations. The Rev. Elias Nason responded effectively to an invitation of citizens to give a historical oration in Billerica; and the day will be long remembered by those who shared in the festivities in the beautiful grove southeast of the middle bridge. This oration also, with other record of the day, has been published.

That the contributions of Billerica to the population of the country have been large and valuable, is suggested by the fact that all families bearing the names of Farmer, Jefts, Kidder, Kittredge, Pollard, Shed and Toothaker, whose lines in this country go back to 1700, find their American progenitors in Billerica. Not less numerous or important are the branches here found of the Crosby, Danforth, Farley, French, Frost, Hill, Manning, Parker, Patten, Richardson, Rogers, Stearns and Whiting families; while to enumerate the significant names of families simply

less numerous would be to repeat most of the names from the pages of the Genealogical Register. Any just presentation of this subject would develop facts of which the town might be proud. She has never been populous; but her sons and daughters abroad are many.

The list of Billerica graduates from colleges and professional schools is as follows:

David Abbot, H. C., 1794; Henry Blanchard, M.D., H. C., 1834; Andrew Bowers, H. C., 1779; Rev. Benjamin Bowers, H. C., 1733; Benjamin F. Bowers, M.D., Y. C., 1819; Rev. James Bowers, H. C., 1794; Josiah Bowers, M.D., Y. C., 1816; Josiah Bowers, M.D., Philadelphia, 1854; William Bowers, M.D., H. C., 1769; Rev. Thaddeus H. Brown, Y. C., 1860; Oliver Crosby, H. C., 1795; William Crosby, H. C., 1794; Henry Cummings, H. C., 1795; George Faulkner, M.D., H. C., 1844; Joseph F. Hill, H. C., M.D., 1830; Henry B. Judkins, Law Department H. C.; Jonathan Kidder, H. C., 1751; Rev. Joseph Kidder, Y. C., 1764; James Lewis, D. C., 1807; Daniel Parker, B. C., M.D., 1833; Frederic A. Parker, M.D., H. C., 1813; Rev. Abel Patten, D. C., 1827; George H. Preston, H. C., 1846; Rev. Joseph Richardson, D. C., 1802; Artemas Rogers, H. C., 1809; Micajah Rogers, H. C., 1817; Rev. Thomas Skilton, H. C., 1806; Rev. Benjamin A. Spaulding, H. C., 1840; Rev. Josiah Stearns, H. C., 1751; Rev. Timothy Stearns, A. C., 1833; Augustus Whiting, H. C., 1816; Rev. John Whiting, H. C., 1885; Joseph Whiting, H. C., 1690.

The record of the legal profession in Billerica is brief: William Crosby, 1800, Samuel Dexter, Timothy Farnham, Joseph Locke, 1801-33, Marshall Preston, about 1820-49, George H. Whitman, 1849. Of course, in the absence of lawyers who were such by profession, other well-informed citizens have often been called to aid their neighbors in legal matters. So much of this service devolved upon some of them that practically it would be just to mention, in this connection, such names as Jonathan Danforth, Joseph Tomson, Oliver Whiting, Joshua Abbott, William Stickney.

PHYSICIANS.—Benjamin Atherton, 1739; Josiah Batchelder; Hezekiah Bickford, 1851-61; William Bowers, 1820; Thaddeus Brown, 1839; Frank E. Bundy, 1864-66; Timothy Danforth, 1792; Joseph Foster, 1810; Samuel Frost, 1717; William Grey; Joseph F. Hill, 1849; J. W. Hood; Charles E. Hosmer, 1874-89; Zadok Howe, 1857; Wm. H. Hubbard, 1877; Isaac Hurd 1778-?, in Concord, 1844; Jacob Kittredge, 1800-15; John Kittredge, 1714; John Kittredge, 1756; Rufus Kittredge; Albert C. Lane, 1879; — Manning; Augustus Mason, 1844-54, in Brighton, 1882; George A. Munroe, 1866-77; Daniel Parker, 1840-89; Roger Toothaker, 1745; Roger Toothaker, 1759; William Wilkins, 1789-1807.

The first post-office in Billerica was established October 7, 1797. The postmasters, with date of their appointment, have been:

Jonathan Bowers, October 7, 1797; William Richardson, May 26, 1824; Marshall Preston, January 11, 1826; John Baldwin, Jr., October 16, 1849; William H. B'anchard, June 11, 1855; William Blanchard, April 4, 1857; Benjamin L. Judkins, April 27, 1859; Charles H. Parker, May 8, 1862; Bernard M. Cann, September 21, 1866; Franklin Jaquith, Jr., July 15, 1867; Charles H. Parker, June 5, 1873.

North Billerica.—Joseph A. Burt, January 26, 1852; James Faulkner, July 26, 1855; James Whittemore, May 25, 1866; Hiram C. Brown, March 25, 1878.

East Billerica.—Peter B. Bohonan, December 21, 1877.

South Billerica.—George W. Hill, March 4, 1878; Mary E. A. Libby, December 13, 1878.

The population of the town at different periods is a subject of interest, but the material for estimates at first is scanty. In 1659 there were twenty-five families;

four years later the number had nearly doubled; but for the next twelve years there was small increase, except as children multiplied in the homes already formed. The tax-list for 1679 has only forty-seven names, but that for 1688 has seventy-three names, showing that a new impulse had followed the anxieties of Philip's War, and, in spite of the Indian perils of the time, the progress continued, and, in 1707, the number of polls was 140.<sup>1</sup>

The tax-list for 1733 includes 228 names, but, in 1735, when Tewksbury had been taken out, the number was only 187, which, in 1755, had increased to 206. In 1765 a careful enumeration was made, showing for the first time the exact population, when this town had 1330. Only seven towns in Middlesex County then exceeded Billerica. In 1776 a census gave Billerica a population of 1500, and the tax-list for the same year contained 273 names. In 1778 there were 286 polls, but, in 1781, they had fallen to 271 polls, a decrease more than explained by the loss of the Carlisle names, in 1780. Assuming an equal number of polls and names on tax-list, and that the proportion of this number to the whole population in 1776 was the same in 1687, 1733 and 1755, we reach this estimate for the periods named, the decades after 1790 being supplied by the United States Census, and the years 1855, 1865 and 1875 by the State Census.

1688, 401; 1707, 769; 1733, 1252; 1735, 1028; 1755, 1132; 1765, 1332; 1776, 1500; 1790, 1191; 1800, 1383; 1810, 1289; 1820, 1380; 1830, 1368; 1849, 1632; 1850, 1646; 1855, 1772; 1860, 1776; 1865, 1808; 1870, 1833; 1875, 1881; 1880, 2000; 1885, 2161; 1890, 2369.

The fact is significant that after 1800 there was no increase for more than thirty years; and it seems to confirm the opinion that the Middlesex Canal, by preventing the use of the water-power, exerted an unfavorable influence upon the progress of this town. A similar result has followed the deflection of the railroad line so far from the centre of the town.

A census taken in 1754 brings out the curious fact that Massachusetts had 2717 slaves. Of this number Billerica had eight, of whom five were females. In 1880 the census reports nine colored persons; but they are not slaves.

Other details of the census are interesting, and a summary of them follows. The details of the census for 1890 are not yet available.

The 2000 inhabitants of the town in June, 1880, were grouped in 449 families, who lived in 436 houses. There were 1662 over ten years of age, of whom 46 could not read and 56 could not write; of the latter, 51 were foreigners. The nativity stands thus: Native born, 1552; foreign, 448; born in Massachusetts, 1237; New Hampshire, 133; Maine, 73; Vermont, 56; other States, 53; British America, 67; Ireland, 226; England, 118; Scotland, 20; other countries, 17.

This sketch may fitly conclude with.

**BILLERICA IN THE REBELLION.**—Of the part which this town took in the War of 1812, and in the Mexican War, the town and State archives contain no record. Probably Billerica had soldiers in both, but the number was small, and the scenes of action were too remote to leave any distinct impression. Far otherwise was it in the great Secession contest. When the life of the nation was assailed by the Southern uprising, the people all felt the blow and the danger, and the towns asserted their vital relations to the conflict as they did in the Revolutionary contest, to the disturbance of British councils. No one who experienced it can ever forget the thrill of patriotic emotion which went through the North when Sumter was assailed and President Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand volunteers to defend the Union. Public meetings, enlistments, and aid societies and labors engrossed the public mind. In Billerica the town hall was thrown open, the church bell, aided by the drum and an old ship-gun, sounding the call to meetings for action and organization. John A. Burrows and Charles N. Fletcher were the first soldiers mustered from Billerica. The number increased rapidly. Richardson's Light Infantry, of Lowell, afterwards the Seventh Light Battery, and the first three years' company in the field from Massachusetts visited the town for a reception and a drill; as did a rifle company. Albert E. Farmer, who was taken prisoner at Bull Run and died in Richmond, was the first soldier from Billerica to fall. In 1862, after the defeat of McClellan, the call for troops was responded to by a town-meeting and the offer of a bounty for enlistments. They were easily obtained, and the town's quota was mustered into the Thirty-third Regiment. An interesting meeting was held in the town hall the night before their departure. A call for nine months' men followed, and after the supposed quota had been filled it was found that more men were needed, and town-meetings and bounties were again called into requisition. In the summer of 1863 came the first draft, with but small results from this town. In the autumn efforts for volunteers were renewed, and a considerable number of veterans, whose three years' term would expire in 1864, re-enlisted "for the war." These brave men, who after so long and severe a term of service were ready to rededicate themselves to the great work, should be held in especial honor, and their names can be traced in the list below. In the summer of 1864 came a second draft quite as meagre in results as the first, for only two men from Billerica were accepted. Other calls were filled by such volunteers as could be secured in town or beyond, and large bounties were paid. The town was represented in army and navy by 173 men, whose names are recorded in the "History of Billerica."

The news of victory and peace filled the land with joy in the spring of 1865, and though a deep shadow followed with the assassination of the beloved Lincoln, the substantial fruits remained. The returning

<sup>1</sup> Collections: American Statistical Association, pp. 146, 150, etc.

veterans were welcomed on the Fourth of July at a picnic in the grove by Concord River, near the middle bridge. The exercises were hearty and impressive, including an address of welcome by Dr. Frank E. Bundy. In farther testimony to the valor of her soldiers and the memory of her dead, the town has erected an appropriate monument. It stands upon the Common, a shaft of white granite, six feet square at the base and twenty-five feet high. The shaft is crowned with the figure of a soldier, in easy position, with musket at rest. In raised letters are inscribed the names "Petersburg," "Gettysburg," "Newbern," "Lookout Mountain," "Bull Run," "Chancellorsville," "Baton Rouge" and "Cedar Mountain." A carved eagle surmounts a shield, and upon the pedestal is the inscription: "Billerica to her heroes, in grateful recognition of that steadfastness of purpose, devotion to principle, loyalty to country, and trust in God, which enabled men to die for Liberty and Union." On the east and west sides are the names of twenty dead soldiers:

"Edward A. Adams, Dennis Buckley, William S. Collins, James F. Edmonds, Albert E. Farmer, Charles N. Fletcher, George C. Gilman, Reuben J. Gilman, Franklin Hanaford, William Hayes, Edwin W. Huse, Ward Locke, Thomas H. Maxwell, Stephen H. Parker, Asa John Patten, Joseph F. Richardson, Charles A. Saunders, James Shields, Pollard R. Shumway, John C. Stewart."

Four other names would properly have been inscribed with their comrades' upon the monument. It is due to them that they be honorably mentioned here:

Hiram E. Davis, Henry Newbury, Edward H. Persons, Calvin G. Tuttle.

The monument was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies and in the presence of a vast assemblage, Wednesday, 8th October, 1873. Hon. Thomas Talbot presided; the prayer of dedication was offered by Rev. Mr. Hussey, and an oration given by Col. Russel H. Conwell, of Boston. Governor Washburn, Hon. E. R. Hoar, of Concord, ex-Gov. Onslow Stearns, of New Hampshire, a son of Billerica, and others participated in the exercises, which were held in a mammoth tent south of the monument.

The "History of Billerica" records the names of 173 soldiers and sailors who represented the patriotism and sacrifices of the town in this great contest for our national life.

## BIOGRAPHICAL.

### GOV. THOMAS TALBOT.

Thomas Talbot was born in Cambridge, Washington County, New York, Sept. 7, 1818. He was a lineal descendant of John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury. His grandfather came from Ireland to America in 1807. His father, who was a practical woolen manufacturer, died when the son was only four years of age, leaving a family of eight children. In 1825 the

family removed to Northampton, Mass., where Thomas, at the age of twelve years, found employment in a woolen factory. At the age of seventeen years he became an employee in the broadcloth factory of his elder brother, Charles, in Williamsburg, Mass., and after a service of three years he was made an overseer in the establishment. It was while employed in the latter position that for two winters he attended the academy in Cummington, Mass. At the age of twenty-two years (in 1840) he entered into a partnership with his brother Charles in the dye-wood business in North Billerica, where he resided during the remainder of his life.

So rapid and so remarkable was the success which crowned their first enterprise that the firm, from time to time, greatly extended their operations. They became very largely engaged in the manufacture of woolen fabrics, and also of oil of vitriol and other chemicals used in the arts.

These various enterprises, conducted with the energy and skill which distinguished the men, brought them an ample fortune. Few manufactories in the State have been managed with so much ability, or have met with so great success, or have gained for their owners so honorable a name.

The flowage of the meadows along the Concord River, deemed by the owners to have been caused by the dam belonging to this firm, brought on a long and bitter contest before the Legislature of the State. In this protracted and perplexing altercation, in which the firm were the victors, Thomas Talbot displayed a mental power, a firmness and manliness of character and a knowledge of men and of business, which gave him a high reputation and laid the foundation of his subsequent political advancement. From this time he took rank among the foremost men of the State. Political honors came to him. He was repeatedly elected to the State Legislature. From 1864 to 1869 he was a member of the Governor's Council. In 1873 and 1874 he was Lieutenant-Governor of the State. In the latter year, Gov. Washburne having been elected United States Senator, Mr. Talbot became Governor of Massachusetts.

Governor Talbot was a firm supporter of the prohibitory liquor law of the State, and his veto of the legislative act repealing that law cost him the loss of many of his political supporters. On account of this veto and other similar acts of independence, he failed of re-election in the following year. But in 1878 popular favor returned and he was chosen Governor of the State by a large majority. After one year of highly honorable service he refused to accept further political honors.

But though Governor Talbot filled the chair of political office with dignity and grace, it was not in public life that the true nobleness of his character found its highest exhibition. It was as a high-minded man of business, as the liberal patron of enterprises of benevolence, as the benefactor of his



Engr. by A. B. H. White

*Joshua Bennett*



town, as the generous friend of the poor and unfortunate, that his character shone most brightly. His treatment of the numerous workmen in his employ is above all praise. He took delight in making them happy. He paid them the highest rate of wages. He built for them convenient tenements, each with its garden for vegetables and flowers, and demanded for them only the lowest rent. Though not a Catholic, he generously aided the Catholics in his employ in securing a house of worship. He was so charitable as to believe that any Christian church was a blessing to the community. Though not a Baptist, he, at his own expense, erected for the small Baptist society of the village a very tasteful and commodious church. Though himself a Unitarian, he found in his generous heart a place for every Christian man.

There is something very touching and tender in the love with which the employees and neighbors of Governor Talbot cherish his memory. He has left a very honorable name on the roll of the statesmen of Massachusetts, but a far more precious record in the hearts of his fellow-men.

While in the enjoyment of vigorous health, having before him a fair prospect of a prolonged life and a cheerful old age, he was suddenly arrested by a painful disease, of which he died on October 6, 1885, at the age of sixty-seven years.

#### JOSHUA BENNETT.

Joshua Bennett was born in Billerica, Mass., Nov. 27, 1792, and was the son of James Bennett, a prosperous and respectable farmer of that town. He passed his boyhood upon his father's farm, obtaining his education in the common schools of the town and in the academy at Westford, Mass. When about twenty-four years of age he engaged in teaching a grammar school in Dorchester, Mass. Although always fond of books, he relinquished the work of teaching at the end of three years, and entered upon a business career in which few men have shown equal sagacity and few have met with equal success. Even while a teacher he devoted his evenings to trade.

As the leading partner of the firm of Bennett & Felton, in Boston, he early laid the foundations of his future success and fortune. His active mind found many sources of wealth. He became a very extensive dealer in hops, a business in which his father had preceded him. He had transactions with most of the hop-growers and brewers of the country. He became an exporter of hops and a distiller. It is told of him, as an interesting incident, that in 1849, being in London at a time when the hop trade was depressed, he actually purchased a large lot of hops which he had himself exported, and sent them back to America, thus making two profits upon the same goods.

It was by the skillful use of the property early acquired in trade, that Mr. Bennett amassed most of

his ample fortune. He was a very shrewd and a very successful dealer in real estate, making his investments with distinguished sagacity. He became the possessor of a large amount of property in the city of Lowell, and of a much larger in Boston.

Mr. Bennett was not a politician, and he only accepted those offices which his compeers in the business world bestowed upon him on account of his acknowledged ability to fill them with honor and success. He was a director of the Providence and Worcester Railroad, and was on the first board of directors of the Old Lowell Bank, the earliest of the discount banks of Lowell, having received its charter in 1828. This board consisted of men of high character, among whom were Kirk Boott and Samuel Batchelder, two of the most distinguished founders of American manufactures, and Josiah B. French and Nathaniel Wright, both of whom subsequently became mayors of the city. After a service of thirty-three years as director, Mr. Bennett was, in 1861, elected president of the bank. This office he filled with great ability through the entire period of the Civil War, resigning it on account of failing health, only a few months before his death. As a bank officer he was conservative and sagacious, and was esteemed the highest authority upon the question of investing the funds of the institution. An excellent portrait of Mr. Bennett, the gift of his grandson and namesake, Joshua Bennett Holden, Esq., of Boston, adorns the directors' room of this bank.

As a citizen Mr. Bennett gained his highest honor by his patriotic conduct in the early days of the Rebellion. When others faltered and held back he stepped boldly forward. Not only did he proffer to his country his own wealth, but he exerted his great influence as a financier to bring to the rescue the monied institutions with which he was connected. He had full faith in his country, and freely intrusted to her his wealth. It was the noble conduct of men like him who, in that hour of peril and alarm, inspired new hope and courage in the national heart. Throughout the war his patriotism never faltered. To every soldier who enlisted from his native town of Billerica he gave, from his own wealth, a special bounty.

Mr. Bennett resided in Boston in his early business life, but in his later years his favorite residence was upon his farm in Billerica. Notwithstanding his intense and life-long devotion to business he was wont to take due time for national recreation, having made one visit to Europe and being accustomed to spend several weeks of each summer at Saratoga and Sharon Springs. In the culture of his farm of fifty acres he also took a special pleasure.

In his will he gave \$25,000 to the Washingtonian Home in Boston, an institution in which he was greatly interested. He also gave \$3000 to each church of the various denominations in the town of Billerica, as well as small legacies to their respective pastors.

It is greatly to the credit of his heirs that, though this will was not signed, all the legacies for benevolent purposes were honorably paid in accordance with the known wishes of the testator.

On October 8, 1815, Mr. Bennett married Eleanor, daughter of Ebenezer Richardson, of Billerica. She still survives him at the great age of ninety-six years. Of his two children, Ellen, the older, became the wife of George Holden, Esq., of Boston, and Rebecca became the wife of William Wilkins Warren, Esq., of Boston. The widow of Mr. Bennett, in honor of her husband, has given a library to the town of Billerica, erecting for it a substantial brick edifice.

Mr. Bennett died August 6, 1865, in the seventy-third year of his age, and was buried at Mt. Auburn.

#### ALEXANDER COCHRANE.

Alexander Cochrane was born in Neilston Parish, Renfrewshire, Scotland, August 11, 1813, and died at Swampscott, Mass., August 11, 1865. He was the son of John Cochrane and Isabella Ramsey, of Glanderston House, and grandson of Hugh Cochrane and Bethia Douglas, daughter of Francis Douglas and Elizabeth Aucterlonie, of Inch Abbot. His family had been long settled in this country, and Crawford states in his "Description of the Shire of Renfrew," Edinburgh, 1710, that the name is of great antiquity in this shire. They had been among the earliest to engage in manufacturing in its infancy in this part of Scotland during the latter half of the last century, and it is stated by Taylor, in his "Levern Delineated," Glasgow, 1831, that Bailie Cochrane, owner of part of the lands of Ferguslie, and great-grandfather of the subject of our sketch, had built a flax or linen-mill called Fereneze, on the River Levern, in 1798. The name of this worthy Bailie appears on the fine monument in Paisley to the memory of the Covenanters, erected during his magistracy. About the same time, 1798, Hugh Cochrane, son of the latter, built Glanderston Bleachery, and planted additional trees about the house, and his son John, the father of Alexander, continued the business and died there in 1832.

Alexander lived with his mother and the family in Glanderston House until the failure of his elder brother, Robert, necessitated their giving up the place. There is a print of this ancient mansion in the "Levern Delineated" and it illustrates the tenacity of custom and the resistance to change even in modern Scotland, that although long in ruins, this house still carries with it the right to occupy one of the two cushioned pews which are permitted in Neilston Church.

Thrown upon his own resources for support, he, in company with one of his brothers, essayed the new process of making starch from potatoes, but this created great alarm and disturbance among the peasantry and poor people, who feared an advance in the price of one of their chief articles of food, and this

feeling resulted in an attack on and partial destruction of the works by a mob. With our ideas of to-day an occurrence of this kind seems to belong in the Middle Ages, but it only serves to show the rapid strides we have made since these beginnings of modern manufacture; the old has passed and the new has come, in hardly more than a short hundred years. He had opportunity to observe, and, it is apparent, early took an interest in such chemical changes as took place in his father's works, and it is related that the ancestor of the since famous Tennant family here made some of his early experiments with bleaching chemicals. He took advantage of all this to enlarge his knowledge of chemistry, then just coming forward as one of the most useful of the sciences, and he more especially investigated its practical application in the manufacture and decoration of textile fabrics. He subsequently mastered processes for making Muriatic, Nitric and Sulphuric acids, Aqua Ammonia, Sulphate of Copper, Extract of Indigo, Gum Substitutes, and learned the secret of making and using various mordants. Some of the information collected at this time and still extant among his papers is more curious than useful. Empirical and rule of thumb methods still had a firm hold, and the element of secrecy still lingered in chemical processes, allying them to Alchemy, their predecessor.

Amusing stories are told of the devices resorted to in getting knowledge of one works from another, much of which would excite only smiles of compassion from the well-instructed student of to-day.

He was in the neighborhood of Manchester, England, in 1846-47, in charge of a branch of textile fabrics, but while there still kept up his interest in and added to his knowledge of chemistry.

He was engaged to come from there to the United States to take charge of a similar industry, and arrived in New York September 27, 1847. He remained in charge of this work for rather more than a year, when he finally got an opportunity to put into practice what he had been so long preparing for. April 1, 1849, he entered into business with C. P. Talbot & Co., of which firm the late Governor Thomas Talbot was the junior partner. They wished to add chemicals to their manufacture of dye-stuffs, in North Billerica. He was to plan and build a chemical works, and take the conducting and management of manufacturing the chemical products, and for this he was to receive one-third of the net profits. He was in Billerica more than half the portion of his life spent in this country, and he entered fully into the life of the New England village, half farming, half manufacturing, in which his lot was cast. He assisted in the schools and in the church; being Scotch, he naturally took an interest in the religious life of the community, and although, like all his family, he belonged to the Church of Scotland, he here found himself acting with the sect that would best harmonize the somewhat scattered elements; the minister filling at



*Abi Lockman*

times the double rôle of schoolmaster during the week and preacher on Sunday. His relations with his workmen were of the most friendly character even for those days of close contact between employer and employed, when he who gave the opportunity of work was looked upon for that very reason as the friend of the workman, and as a manifestation of interest which they valued more than money, he gave an entertainment for them once a year in his own house. He kept up his connection with Europe by correspondence and by occasional visits, which in those days were still an event, and when he landed from those early side-wheel Cunarders, the "Canada," "Asia" or "Africa," it was subject for congratulation no longer thought of in these days when the Atlantic has become a ferry. The relations with the Messrs. Talbot while he was with them were mutually satisfactory, and it does them both credit that their personal regard stood the strain unusually well when he afterward became their active competitor; as an evidence of this Governor Talbot offered one of his family a position of high trust on one of the State boards, which for personal reasons was declined.

During his residence in Billerica the business of manufacturing a general line of chemicals gradually increased, and the articles produced early obtained the highest rank for standard quality, including Muratic, Nitric and other acids, Sulphate of Copper, Extract of Indigo, Aqua Ammonia and many other articles. When the Roxbury Chemical Works, whose tall chimney was so long a landmark in that part of Boston, gave up business, there was more room for competition, and in 1859 Mr. Cochrane erected works in Malden and began business for himself and laid the foundation for the business subsequently carried on by the corporation which bears his name. His business grew very slowly, as his products were largely the same as were already produced, but without going into the details of the hard work involved in building up a business, which is so much alike in general characteristics in all fields of enterprise and effort, suffice it to say that all these difficulties had been surmounted, and the business, which has since become the largest of its kind in New England, was successfully established before his death at the age of fifty-two, at Swampscott, where he was spending the summer with his family. An account of the events of a man's life is incomplete without some hint as to the personality that marked him. Mr. Cochrane was tall, of fine presence, unassuming in manner, and in character was simple, sincere and kindly, winning and retaining affection and esteem. His generosity was proverbial and laid him open to imposition on this side of his character.

Although genial in feeling, he always preserved a touch of austerity that did not invite undue familiarity, and was an inheritance of his early training in the atmosphere of the Kirk; as an instance of which he used to recall the line of children who, on Sunday,

walked from the house to Neilston Church under his father's eye, who always brought up the rear that no youthful escapades should interrupt the solemnity of the day. With no reading allowed on that day but the Bible and a few other books of religious character, it gives point to the observation that the Scotchman is the New Englander of Europe.

His life, like so many other lives, was spent in the day of small things, in sowing seed for others to reap; and the parable of the sower was selected as best illustrating his life, when his family placed a window to his memory in Trinity Church. In a somewhat trying battle with fortune both in the Old World and in the New, he did what his hands found to do with true Scotch courage and perseverance.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### TYNGSBOROUGH.

BY CHARLES C. CHASE.

TYNGSBOROUGH is a small agricultural town, having for its northern boundary the State of New Hampshire, and upon the other sides the towns of Dracut, Chelmsford, Westford, Groton and Dunstable, and the city of Lowell. It is pleasantly situated on both sides of the Merrimack, and presents to the traveler, as he passes along the winding banks of the stream, an attractive panorama of rural beauty. The fertile soil, the well-tilled fields, the many signs of thrift and enterprise which meet his view, add to the natural charms of the scene, while the graceful iron bridge which spans the Merrimack completes a picture of no ordinary loveliness. The placid scene, however, which meets the eye in these latter days of peace and abounding prosperity, was, during the long years of Indian warfare, the theatre of many an act of bloodshed and cruelty, of dwellings from which the inmates have fled in terror, of households clothed in sackcloth for a father or a brother slain. When we add to these historic memories the fact that this rural town has been honored as the birthplace of many distinguished men of our country, its history becomes one of peculiar interest.

Its territory claims our attention. As the St. Lawrence is the outlet of a chain of magnificent lakes, so, in primeval ages, as geologists aver, the Merrimack bore to the ocean the waters of a series of lakes, only a few of which, like Lake Winnipiseogee, any longer remain. By some convulsion of the titanic forces of nature their barriers have been burst and their basins are now the fertile meadows which lie along the stream. One of these primeval lakes, in whose basin were the fruitful fields of Tyngsborough, found its outlet at Pawtucket Falls. Perhaps the same convulsion which rent asunder the barriers of