

VARIOUS

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The Bay State Monthly
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Hon. MARSHALL P. WILDER, Ph.D

BY JOHN WARD DEAN, A.M

**[Librarian of the New England
Historic Genealogical Society.]**

The editors of THE BAY STATE MONTHLY, having decided to begin in its pages a series of articles devoted to the material advancement and prosperity of Massachusetts, and the record of her past greatness, have selected the Honorable Marshall Pinckney Wilder as a representative man, and have decided that his memoir shall be the initial article in the series, and also in this periodical. He has as a merchant won for himself

a high position, and by his enterprise has essentially advanced the business of the city and the State. He has also been active in developing our manufacturing industries, while his name is first on all lips when those who have increased the products of the soil are named. His life affords a striking example of what can be achieved by concentration of power and unconquerable perseverance. The bare enumeration of the important positions he has held and still holds, and the self-sacrificing labors he has performed, is abundant evidence of the extraordinary talent and ability, and the personal power and influence, which have enabled him to take a front rank as a benefactor to mankind.

MARSHALL PINCKNEY WILDER, whose Christian names were given in honor of Chief-Justice Marshall and General Pinckney, eminent statesmen at the time he was born, was the eldest son of Samuel Locke Wilder, Esq., of Rindge, New Hampshire, and was born in that town, September 22, 1798. His father, a nephew of the Reverend Samuel Locke, D.D., president of Harvard College, for whom he was named, was thirteen years a representative in the New Hampshire legislature, a member of the Congregational church in Rindge, and held important town offices there. His mother, Anna, daughter of Jonathan and Mary (Crombie) Sherwin (married May 2, 1797), a lady of great moral worth, was, as her son is, a warm admirer of the beauties of nature.

The Wilders are an ancient English family, which The Book of the Wilders, published a few years ago, traces to

Nicholas Wilder, a military chieftain in the army of the Earl of Richmond at the battle of Bosworth, 1485. There is strong presumptive evidence that the American family is an offshoot from this. President Chadbourne, the author of *The Book of the Wilders*, in his life of Colonel Wilder gives reasons for this opinion. The paternal ancestors of Colonel Wilder in this country performed meritorious services in the Indian wars, in the American Revolution, and in Shays' Rebellion. His grandfather was one of the seven delegates from the county of Worcester, in the Massachusetts convention of 1788, for ratifying the Constitution of the United States, who voted in favor of it. Isaac Goodwin, Esq., in *The Worcester Magazine*, vol. ii, page 45, bears this testimony: "Of all the ancient Lancaster families, there is no one that has sustained so many important offices as that of Wilder."

At the age of four, Marshall was sent to school, and at twelve he entered New Ipswich Academy, his father desiring to give him a collegiate education, with reference to a profession. When he reached the age of sixteen, his father gave him the choice, either to qualify himself for a farmer, or for a merchant, or to fit for college. He chose to be a farmer; and to this choice may we attribute in no small degree the mental and physical energy which has distinguished so many years of his life. But the business of his father increased so much that he was taken into the store. He there acquired such habits of industry that at the age of twenty-one he became a partner, and was appointed postmaster

of Rindge.

In 1825, he sought a wider field of action and removed to Boston. Here he began business under the firm-name of Wilder and Payson, in Union Street; then as Wilder and Smith, in North Market Street; and next in his own name at No. 3 Central Wharf. In 1837, he became a partner in the commission house of Parker, Blanchard, and Wilder, Water Street; next Parker, Wilder, and Parker, Pearl Street; and since Parker, Wilder, and Company, Winthrop Square, having continued until this time in the same house for forty-seven years. Mr. Wilder has lived to be the oldest commission merchant in domestic fabrics in active business in Boston. He has passed through various crises of commercial embarrassments, and yet he has never failed to meet his obligations. He was an original director in the Hamilton (now Hamilton National) Bank and in the National Insurance Company. The former trust he has held for fifty-two years, and the latter for forty years. He has been a director in the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company for nearly forty years, and also a director in other similar institutions.

But trade and the acquisition of wealth have not been the all-engrossing pursuits of his life. His inherent love of rural pursuits led him, in 1832, to purchase his present estate in Dorchester, originally that of Governor Increase Sumner, where, after devoting a proper time to business, he has given his leisure to horticulture and agriculture. He has spared no expense, he has rested from no efforts, to instil into the public mind a love of

an employment so honorable and useful. He has cultivated his own grounds, imported seeds, plants, and trees, and endeavored by his example to encourage labor and elevate the rank of the husbandman. His garden, greenhouses, and a forest of fruit-trees have occupied the time he could spare from business, and here he has prosecuted his favorite investigations, year after year, for half a century, to the present day.

Soon after the Massachusetts Horticultural Society was formed, Mr. Wilder was associated with the late General Henry A.S. Dearborn, its first president, and from that time till now has been one of its most efficient members, constantly attending its meetings, taking part in its business and discussions, and contributing largely to its exhibitions. Four years since, he delivered the oration on the occasion of its semi-centennial. One of the most important acts of this society was the purchase of Mount Auburn for a cemetery and an ornamental garden. On the separation of the cemetery from the society, in 1835, through Mr. Wilder's influence committees were appointed by the two corporations, Judge Story being chairman of the cemetery committee, and Mr. Wilder of the society committee. The situation was fraught with great difficulties; but Mr. Wilder's conservative course, everywhere acknowledged, overcame them all and enabled the society to erect an elegant hall in School Street, and afterward the splendid building it now occupies in Tremont Street, the most magnificent horticultural hall in the world. It has a library which is everywhere acknowledged to

be the best horticultural library anywhere. In 1840, he was chosen president, and held the office for eight successive years. During his presidency the hall in School Street was erected, and two triennial festivals were held in Faneuil Hall, which are particularly worthy of notice. The first was opened September 11, 1845, and the second on the fiftieth anniversary of his birth, September 22, 1848, when he retired from the office of president, and the society voted him a silver pitcher valued at one hundred and fifty dollars, and caused his portrait to be placed in its hall. As president of this association he headed a circular for a convention of fruit-growers, which was held in New York, October 10. 1848, when the American Pomological Society was formed. He was chosen its first president, and he still holds that office, being in his thirty-third year of service. Its biennial meetings have been held in New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Boston, Rochester, St. Louis, Richmond, Chicago, and Baltimore; and it will hold its next meeting in Detroit. On these occasions President Wilder has made appropriate addresses. The last meeting was held, September, 1883, in Philadelphia, when his last address was delivered. In this address, with his usual foresight, he proposed a grand reform in the nomenclature of fruits for our country, and asked the co-operation of other nations in this reform.

In February, 1849, the Norfolk Agricultural Society was formed. Mr. Wilder was chosen president, and the Honorable Charles Francis Adams, vice-president. Before this society his

first address on agricultural education was delivered. This was a memorable occasion. There were then present, George N. Briggs, the governor, and John Reed, the lieutenant-governor, of the State, Daniel Webster, Edward Everett, Horace Mann, Levi Lincoln, Josiah Quincy, president of Harvard University, General Henry A.S. Dearborn, Governor Isaac Hill, of New Hampshire, the Reverend John Pierpont, Josiah Quincy, Jr., Charles Francis Adams, and Robert C. Winthrop,—of which galaxy of eminent men, the last two only are now living. It was the first general effort in that cause in this country. He was president twenty years, and on his retirement he was constituted honorary president, and a resolution was passed recognizing his eminent ability and usefulness in promoting the arts of horticulture and agriculture, and his personal excellence in every department of life. He next directed his efforts to establishing the Massachusetts board of agriculture, organized as the Massachusetts Central Board of Agriculture, at a meeting of delegates of agricultural societies in the State, held at the State House, September, 1851, in response to a circular issued by him as president of the Norfolk Agricultural Society. He was elected president, and held the office till 1852, when it became a department of the State, and he is now the senior member of that board. In 1858, the Massachusetts School of Agriculture was incorporated, and he was chosen president; but before the school was opened Congress granted land to the several States for agricultural colleges, and in 1865 the Legislature incorporated the Massachusetts

Agricultural College. He was named the first trustee. In 1871, the first class was graduated, and in 1878 he had the honor of conferring the degree of Bachelor of Science on twenty young gentlemen graduates. He delivered addresses on both occasions. In 1852, he issued a circular in behalf of several States for a national meeting at Washington, which was fully attended, and where the United States Agricultural Society was organized. Daniel Webster and a host of distinguished men assisted in its formation. This society, of which he was president for the first six years, exercised a beneficial influence till the breaking out of the late Civil War. On Mr. Wilder's retirement he received the gold medal of honor and a service of silver plate. He is a member of many other horticultural and agricultural societies in this and foreign lands.

Colonel Wilder, at an early age, took an interest in military affairs. At sixteen he was enrolled in the New Hampshire militia, and at twenty-one he was commissioned adjutant. He organized and equipped the Rindge Light Infantry, and was chosen its captain. At twenty-five he was elected lieutenant-colonel, and at twenty-six was commissioned as colonel of the Twelfth Regiment.

Soon after his removal to Boston he joined the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. In 1856, he was chosen commander of the corps, being the one hundred and fifty-fifth in command. He had four times previously declined nominations. He entered into correspondence with Prince Albert, commander

of the Royal Artillery Company of London, founded in 1537, of which this corps, chartered in 1638, is the only offspring. This correspondence established a friendly intercourse between the two companies. In June, 1857, Prince Albert was chosen a special honorary member of our company, and twenty-one years later, in 1878, Colonel Wilder, who then celebrated the fiftieth or golden anniversary of his own membership, nominated the Prince of Wales, the present commander of the London company, as an honorary member. Both were commanders of the Honorable Artillery Company of London when chosen. The late elegantly illustrated history of the London company contains a portrait of Colonel Wilder as he appeared in full uniform on that occasion.

In 1839, he was induced to serve for a single term in the Massachusetts Legislature, as a representative for the town of Dorchester. In 1849, he was elected a member of Governor Briggs's Council, and the year following a member of the senate and its president, and he is the the oldest ex-president of the senate living. In 1860, he was the member for New England of the national committee of the "Constitutional Union Party," and attended, as chairman of the Massachusetts delegation, the national convention in Baltimore, where John Bell and Edward Everett were nominated for President and Vice-President of the United States.

He was initiated in Charity Lodge, No. 18, in Troy, New Hampshire, at the age of twenty-five, exalted to the Royal

Arch Chapter, Cheshire No. 4, and knighted in the Boston Encampment. He was deputy grand master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and was one of the six thousand Masons who signed, December 31, 1831, the celebrated "Declaration of the Freemasons of Boston and Vicinity"; and at the fiftieth anniversary of that event, which was celebrated in Boston two years ago, Mr. Wilder responded for the survivors, six of the signers being present. He has received all the Masonic degrees, including the 33d, or highest and last honor of the fraternity. At the World's Masonic Convention, in 1867, at Paris, he was the only delegate from the United States who spoke at the banquet.

On the seventh of November, 1849, a festival of the Sons of New Hampshire was celebrated in Boston. The Honorable Daniel Webster presided, and Mr. Wilder was the first vice-president. Fifteen hundred sons of the Granite State were present. The association again met on the twenty-ninth of October, 1852, to participate in the obsequies of Mr. Webster at Faneuil Hall. On this occasion the legislature, and other citizens, of New Hampshire were received at the Lowell railway-station, and were addressed by Mr. Wilder in behalf of sons of that State resident in Boston.

The Sons celebrated their second festival, November 2, 1853, at which Mr. Wilder occupied the chair as president, and delivered one of his most eloquent speeches. They assembled again, on June 20, 1861, to receive and welcome a New Hampshire regiment of volunteers, and escort them to the Music

Hall, where Mr. Wilder addressed them in a patriotic speech on their departure for the field of battle.

The two hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the settlement of Dorchester was celebrated on the Fourth of July, 1855. The oration was by Edward Everett; Mr. Wilder presided, and delivered an able address. On the central tablet of the great pavilion was this inscription: "Marshall P. Wilder, president of the day. Blessed is he that turneth the waste places into a garden, and maketh the wilderness to blossom as a rose."

In January, 1868, he was solicited to take the office of president of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, vacated by the death of Governor Andrew. He was unanimously elected, and is now serving the seventeenth year of his presidency. At every annual meeting he has delivered an appropriate address. In his first address he urged the importance of procuring a suitable building for the society. In 1870, he said: "The time has now arrived when absolute necessity, public sentiment, and personal obligations, demand that this work be done, and done quickly." Feeling himself pledged by this address, he, as chairman of the committee then appointed, devoted three months entirely to the object of soliciting funds, during which time more than forty thousand dollars was generously contributed by friends of the association; and thus the handsome edifice at No. 18 Somerset Street was procured. This building was dedicated to the use of the society, March 18, 1871. He has since obtained donations, amounting to upward of twelve

thousand dollars, as a fund for paying the salary of the librarian.

In 1859, he presided at the first public meeting called in Boston, in regard to the collocation of institutions on the Back Bay lands, where the splendid edifices of the Boston Society of Natural History and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology now stand. Of the latter institution he has been a vice-president, and the chairman of its Society of Arts, and a director from the beginning. General Francis A. Walker, the present president of the Institute, bore this testimony to his efforts in its behalf at the in banquet to Mr. Wilder on his eighty-fifth anniversary: "Through all the early efforts to attract the attention of the legislature and the people to the importance of industrial and art education, and through the severe struggles which so painfully tried the courage and the faith even of those who most strongly and ardently believed in the mission of the Institute, as well as through the happier years of fruition, while the efforts put forth in the days of darkness and despondency were bearing their harvest of success and fame, Colonel Wilder was through all one of the most constant of the members of the government in his attendance; one of the most hopeful in his views of the future of the school; ever a wise counsellor and a steadfast ally."

He was one of the twelve representative men appointed to receive the Prince of Wales in 1860, at the banquet given him in Boston, Edward Everett being chairman of the committee; also one of the commissioners in behalf of the Universal Exposition in Paris, 1867, when he was placed at the head of the committee

on horticulture and the cultivation and products of the vine, the report of which was published by act of Congress.

In 1869, he made a trip to the South, for the purpose of examining its resources; and in 1870, with a large party, he visited California. The result of Mr. Wilder's observations has been given to the public in a lecture before the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture, which was repeated before the Boston Mercantile Library Association, Amherst College, the Massachusetts Agricultural College, Dartmouth College, the Horticultural Society, the merchants of Philadelphia, and bodies in other places.

His published speeches and writings now amount to nearly one hundred in number. A list to the year 1873 is printed in the Cyclopaedia of American Literature. Dartmouth College, as a testimonial to his services in science and literature, conferred upon him, in the year 1877, the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

The Honorable Paul A. Chadbourne, LL.D., late president of Williams College in a recent Memoir of Mr. Wilder remarks: "The interest which Colonel Wilder has always manifested in the progress of education, as well as the value and felicitous style of his numerous writings, would lead one to infer at once that his varied knowledge and culture are the results of college education. But he is only another illustrious example of the men who, with only small indebtedness to schools, have proved to the world that real men can make themselves known as such without the aid of the college, as we have abundantly learned that the college can

never make a man of one who has not in him the elements of noble manhood before he enters its halls."

In 1820, Mr. Wilder married Miss Tryphosa Jewett, daughter of Dr. Stephen Jewett, of Rindge, a lady of great personal attractions. She died on a visit to that town, July 21, 1831, leaving four children. On the twenty-ninth of August, 1833, Mr. Wilder was united to Miss Abigail, daughter of Captain David Baker of Franklin, Massachusetts, a lady of education, accomplishments, and piety, who died of consumption, April 4, 1854, leaving five children. He was married a third time on the eighth of September, 1855, to her sister, Miss Julia Baker, who was admirably qualified to console him and make his dwelling cheerful, and who has two sons, both living. No man has been more blessed in domestic life. We know not where there would be a more pleasing picture of peace and contentment exhibited than is found in this happy family. In all his pursuits and avocations, Mr. Wilder seems to have realized and practised that grand principle, which has such a bearing and influence on the whole course of life—the philosophy of habit, a power almost omnipotent for good or evil. His leisure hours he devotes to his pen, which already has filled several large volumes with descriptions and delineations of fruits and flowers, proved under his own inspection, and other matters pertaining to his various relations in life.

Colonel Wilder has shown us by his life what an individual may accomplish by industry, perseverance, and the concentration

of the intellectual powers on grand objects. Without these, no talent, no mere good fortune could have placed him in the high position he has attained as a public benefactor. He has been pre-eminent in the establishment and development of institutions. Few gentlemen have been called upon so often, and upon such various occasions, to take the chair at public meetings or preside over constituted societies. Few have acquitted themselves so happily, whether dignity of presence, amenity of address, fluency of speech, or dispatch of business, be taken into consideration. As a presiding officer he seems "to the manner born." His personal influence has been able to magnetize a half-dying body into new and active life. This strong personal characteristic is especially remarked among his friends. No one can approach him in doubt, in despondency, or in embarrassment, and leave him without a higher hope, a stronger courage, and a manlier faith in himself. The energy which has impelled him to labor still exists.

Mr. Wilder is now president of the New England Historic Genealogical and Society, the American Pomological Society, and the Massachusetts Agricultural Club. He is senior trustee of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, and senior member of the State Board of Agriculture, and of the executive committee of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. He is senior director in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Hamilton National Bank, the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company, and the Home Savings Bank. He is an honorary member of the Royal Historical Society of Great

Britain; a corresponding member of the Royal Horticultural Society of London, and the Société Centrale d' Horticulture of France; and a fellow of the Reale Accademia Araldica Italiana of Pisa.

Well did Governor Bullock on a public occasion speak of Mr. Wilder as "one who has applied the results of his well-earned commercial earnings so liberally that in every household and at every fireside in America, when the golden fruits of summer and autumn gladden the sideboard and the hearthstone, his name, his generosity, and his labors are known and honored." He is also known and honored abroad. The London Gardener's Chronicle, the leading agricultural paper in Europe, in April, 1872, gave his portrait and a sketch of his life, in which is introduced the following merited compliment:—

"We are glad to have the opportunity of laying before our readers the portrait of one of the most distinguished of transatlantic horticulturists, and one who, by his zeal, industry, and determination, has not only conferred lasting benefits on his native country, but has by his careful experiments in hybridization and fruit-culture laid the horticulturists of all nations under heavy obligations to him. The name and reputation of Marshall P. Wilder is as highly esteemed in Great Britain as they are in America."

In closing this sketch, we may remark that complimentary banquets were given him on the eightieth and the eighty-fifth anniversaries of his birth. On the former occasion, September 22,

1878, the Reverend James H. Means, D.D., his pastor for nearly thirty years, the Honorable Charles L. Flint, secretary of the Board of Agriculture, the Honorable John Phelps Putnam, judge of the Massachusetts Superior Court, and others, paid tributes to the high moral character, the benevolent disposition, and the eminent services, of the honored guest of the evening.

The last banquet, September 22, 1883, on his completing the ripe age of eighty-five, was a much more important occasion. The banquet was held, as the former was, at the Parker House, in Boston, and over one hundred gentlemen participated, among whom were some of the most distinguished persons in this and other States. Charles H.B. Breck, Esq., vice-president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society presided, and the venerable Reverend Dr. George W. Blagden invoked a blessing. Mr. Breck addressed Mr. Wilder, who responded. Addresses were then made by a number of Mr. Wilder's friends, among them the Honorable Alexander H. Rice and the Honorable Nathaniel P. Banks, ex-governors of Massachusetts, his Honor Oliver Ames, lieutenant-governor of the State, his Honor Albert Palmer, mayor of Boston, General Joshua L. Chamberlain, ex-governor of Maine, the Honorable Frederick Smyth, ex-governor of New Hampshire, Professor J.C. Greenough, president of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, General Francis A. Walker, president of the Institute of Technology, the Honorable Francis B. Hayes, president of the Horticultural Society, the Reverend Edmund F. Slafter, corresponding secretary of the New England

Historic Genealogical Society, John E. Russell, secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, and Major Ben: Perley Poore, secretary of the United States Agricultural Society, and ex-commander of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. Other societies with which Mr. Wilder is connected were also represented, as the Massachusetts Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, the New England Agricultural Society, the New England Life Insurance Company, the Hamilton Bank, the Home Savings Bank, the Grand Lodge of Masons, and the Second Church of Dorchester. Letters were received from the Honorable Robert C. Winthrop, president of the Massachusetts Historical Society, his Excellency Benjamin F. Butler, governor, and the Honorables John D. Long, William Claflin, and Thomas Talbot, ex-governors of the State, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, the Honorable Dr. George B. Loring, United States Commissioner of Agriculture, and the Honorable Francis W. Bird, president of the Bird Club, The addresses and letters are to be printed in full. A few extracts follow:

Dr. Holmes referred to Mr. Wilder as: "The venerable and venerated friend who has outlived the fruits of fourscore seasons, and is still ripening as if his life were all summer."

Mr. Winthrop wrote: "No other man has done so much for our fields and gardens and orchards. He has distinguished himself in many other lines of life, and his relations to the Legislature of Massachusetts and to the Historic Genealogical Society will not soon be forgotten. But his name will have its most enduring and

most enviable association with the flowers and fruits for whose culture he was foremost in striving, both by precept and example. He deserves a grateful remembrance as long as a fine pear is relished or a brilliant bouquet admired."

Governor Rice said: "There is hardly a public enterprise of the last three generations, scarcely a pursuit in life, or an institution of patriotism, discipline, or charity, that does not bear the signet of his touch and feel the vigor of his co-operation. Why, sir, it may be said, almost with literal truth, that the trees which this great arborist has planted and cultivated and loved are not more numerous than the evidences of his handiwork in all the useful and beneficent departments of life; and all the flowers that shall grow to the end of time ought to bear fragrance to his memory."

Mayor Palmer said: "Time would fail me to recount his great and honorable services to society and the State. It must suffice to say that no name of this century is written more imperishably in the affection and esteem of Boston and Massachusetts than the name of him, our honored guest."

Dr. Loring wrote: "It is with pride and satisfaction that the business associations of the city of Boston can point to him as a representative of that mercantile integrity which gives that city its distinguished position among the great commercial centres of the world."

Governor Banks said: "I can scarcely enumerate, much less analyze, the numerous and important social and national enterprises which make the character and career of our

distinguished guest illustrious."

Governor Chamberlain said: "We rejoice in this honored old age,—this youth, rounded, beautified, and sweetened into supreme manhood; and we rejoice also that it shall remain for after times an example and inspiration for all who would live true lives, and win the honor that comes here and hereafter to noble character."

President Greenough thus spoke:—"The line of buildings which to-day at Amherst graces one of the fairest landscapes in New England, and the sound and practical education which they were built to secure, are to be a lasting monument to his foresight, his patriotism, and his eloquent persuasion."

Mr. Russell said: "To him the agriculture of the Commonwealth owes a debt that can never be paid; the records of our board are a monument of his good works more enduring than brass. And, sir, in view of his venerable years, so lightly borne, his interest in all the active affairs of men, and his continued powers of social enjoyment, I may well repeat the wish of the poet Horace, expressed in one of his invocations to the Emperor Augustus: 'Serus in coelum redeas.'"

Major Poore said: "Mr. President, I am confident that the distinguished gentlemen around these tables will long remember to-night, and recall with pleasure its varied homages to Colonel Wilder, thankful that we have so pure a shrine, so bright an oracle, as the common property of all who reverence virtue, admire manhood, or aspire to noble deeds. Succeeding years will

not dim the freshness of Colonel Wilder's fame; and the more frequently we drink at this fountain, the sweeter we shall find its waters.

'You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.'

THE OLD TAVERNS AND STAGE-COACHES OF GROTON

BY THE HON. SAMUEL ABBOTT GREEN, M.D

It has been said that there is nothing contrived by man which has produced so much happiness as a good tavern. Without granting or denying the statement, all will agree that many good times have been passed around the cheerful hearth of the old-fashioned inn.

The earliest tavern in Groton, of which there is any record or tradition, was kept by Samuel Bowers, Jr., in the house lately and for a long time occupied by the Champney family. Mr. Bowers was born in Groton on December 21, 1711, and, according to his tombstone, died on "the Sixteenth Day of December Anno Domini 1768. Half a hour after Three of the Clock in ye Afternoon, and in the Fifty Eight year of his age." He kept the house during many years, and was known in the neighborhood as "land'urd Bowers,"—the innkeeper of that period being generally addressed by the title of landlord. I do not know who succeeded him in his useful and important functions.

The next tavern of which I have any knowledge was the one kept by Captain Jonathan Keep, during the latter part of the

Revolution. In *The Independent Chronicle* (Boston), February 15, 1781, the Committee of the General Court for the sale of confiscated property in Middlesex County, advertise the estate of Dr. Joseph Adams, of Townsend, to be sold "at Mr. Keep's, innholder in Groton." This tavern has now been kept as an inn during more than a century. It was originally built for a dwelling-house, and, before the Revolution, occupied by the Reverend Samuel Dana; though since that time it has been lengthened in front and otherwise considerably enlarged. Captain Keep was followed by the brothers Isaiah and Joseph Hall, who were the landlords as early as the year 1798. They were succeeded in 1825 by Joseph Hoar, who had just sold the Emerson tavern, at the other end of the village street. He kept it for nearly twenty years,—excepting the year 1836, when Moses Gill and his brother-in-law, Henry Lewis Lawrence, were the landlords,—and sold out about 1842 to Thomas Treadwell Farnsworth. It was then conducted as a temperance house, at that time considered a great innovation on former customs. After a short period it was sold to Daniel Hunt, who kept it until 1852, and he was followed by James M. Colburn, who had it for two years. It then came into the possession of J. Nelson Hoar, a son of the former landlord, who took it in 1854, and in whose family it has since remained. Latterly it has been managed by three of his daughters, and now is known as the Central House. It is the only tavern in the village, and for neatness and comfort can not easily be surpassed.

In the list of innholders, near the end of Isaiah Thomas's

Almanack, for 1785, appears the name of Richardson, whose tavern stood on the present site of the Baptist church. It was originally the house owned and occupied by the Reverend Gershom Hobart, which had been considerably enlarged by additions on the north and east sides, in order to make it more suitable for its new purposes. Mine host was Captain Jephthah Richardson, who died on October 9, 1806. His father was Converse Richardson, who had previously kept a small inn, on the present Elm Street, near the corner of Pleasant. It was in this Elm Street house that Timothy Bigelow, the rising young lawyer, lived, when he first came to Groton. Within a few years this building has been moved away. Soon after the death of Captain Jephthah Richardson, the tavern was sold to Timothy Spaulding, who carried on the business until his death, which occurred on February 19, 1808. Spaulding's widow subsequently married John Spalter, who was the landlord for a short time. About 1812 the house was rented to Dearborn Emerson, who had been possession of it for a few years.

During the War of 1812 it was an inn of local renown; and a Lieutenant Chase had his headquarters here for a while, when recruiting for the army. He raised a company in the neighborhood, which was ordered to Sackett's Harbor, near the foot of Lake Ontario. The men were put into uniforms as they enlisted, and drilled daily. They were in the habit of marching through the village streets to the music of the spirit-stirring drum and the ear-piercing fife; and occasionally they were invited into

the yard of some hospitable citizen, who would treat them to "the cups that cheer but not inebriate," when taken in moderation. William Kemp was the drummer, and Wilder Shepley the fifer, both noted musicians in their day. Sometimes his brother, Moses Kemp, would act as fifer. William is still alive, at the advanced age of nearly ninety-five years, and gives many reminiscences of that period. He was born at Groton on May 8, 1789, and began to drum in early boyhood. His first appearance in the public service was during the year 1805, as drummer of the South Company of Groton, commanded by Luther Lawrence, afterward the mayor of Lowell. He has been the father of nine children, and has had thirty grandchildren, thirty-three great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. Mr. Kemp can even now handle the drumsticks with a dexterity rarely equaled; and within a short time I have seen him give an exhibition of his skill which would reflect credit on a much younger person. Among the men enlisted here during that campaign were Marquis D. Farnsworth, Aaron Lewis, William Shepley, and John Woodward, of this town; and James Adams, and his son, James, Jr., of Pepperell.

It was about the year 1815 that Dearborn Emerson left the Richardson tavern, and moved down the street, perhaps thirty rods, where he opened another public house on the present site of Milo H. Shattuck's store. The old tavern, in the meantime, passed into the hands of Daniel Shattuck, who kept it until his death, which occurred on April 8, 1831. The business was then carried on during a short time by Clark Tenny, who was followed

by Lemuel Lakin, and afterward by Francis Shattuck, a son of Daniel, for another brief period. About the year 1833 it was given up entirely as a public house, and thus passed away an old landmark widely known in those times. It stood well out on the present road, the front door facing down what is now Main Street, the upper end of which then had no existence. In approaching the tavern from the south, the road went up Hollis Street and turned to the left somewhere south of the Burying-Ground. The house afterward was cut up and moved off, just before the Baptist meeting-house was built. My earliest recollections carry me back faintly to the time when it was last used as a tavern, though I remember distinctly the building as it looked before it was taken away.

Dearborn Emerson married a sister of Daniel Brooks, a large owner in the line of stage-coaches running through Groton from Boston to the northward; and this family connection was of great service to him. Jonas Parker, commonly known as "Tecumseh" Parker, was now associated with Emerson in keeping the new hotel. The stage business was taken away from the Richardson tavern, and transferred to this one. The house was enlarged, spacious barns and stables were erected, and better accommodations given to man and beast,—on too large a scale for profit, it seems, as Parker and Emerson failed shortly afterward. This was in the spring of 1818, during which year the tavern was purchased by Joseph Hoar, who kept it a little more than six years, when he sold it to Amos Alexander. This landlord,

after a long time, was succeeded in turn by Isaac J. Fox, Horace Brown, William Childs, Artemas Brown, John McGilson, Abijah Wright, and Moses Gill. It was given up as a hotel in 1856, and made into a shoe factory; and finally it was burned. Mr. Gill had the house for eight years, and was the last landlord. He then opened a public house directly opposite to the Orthodox church, and called it The Globe, which he kept for two years. He was succeeded by Stephen Woods, who remained only one year, after which time this also was given up as a public house.

Another hostelry was the Ridge Hill tavern, situated at the Ridges, three miles from the village, on the Great Road to Boston. This was built about the year 1805, and much frequented by travelers and teamsters. At this point the roads diverge and come together again in Lexington, making two routes to Boston. It was claimed by interested persons that one was considerably shorter than the other,—though the actual difference was less than a mile. In the year 1824 a guide-board was set up at the crotch of the roads, proclaiming the fact that the distance to Lexington through Concord was two miles longer than through Carlisle. Straightway the storekeepers and innholders along the Concord road published a counter-statement, that it had been measured by sworn surveyors, and the distance found to be only two hundred and thirty-six rods further than by the other way.

The first landlord of the Ridge Hill tavern was Levi Parker, noted for his hospitality. He was afterward deputy-sheriff of Middlesex County, and lived in Westford. He was followed, for

a short time, by John Stevens, and then by John H. Loring, who conducted the house during many years, and was succeeded by his son Jefferson. After him came Henry L. Lawrence, who kept it during one year; he was followed by his brother-in-law, Moses Gill, who took the tavern in April, 1837, and kept it just five years. When Mr. Gill gave up the house, he was followed by one Langdon for a short time, and he in turn by Kimball Farr as the landlord, who had bought it the year previously, and who remained in charge until 1868. During a part of the time when the place was managed by Mr. Farr; his son Augustus was associated with him. Mr. Farr sold the tavern to John Fuzzard, who kept it for a while, and is still the owner of the property. He was followed by Newell M. Jewett; the present landlord is Stephen Perkins, a native of York, Maine, who took it in 1880. The house had been vacant for some years before this time. A fair is held here regularly on the first Tuesday of every month, for the sale of horses, and buyers are attracted from a long distance. At one time this property was owned by Judge Samuel Dana, who sold it to John H. Loring.

As early as the year 1798 there was a tavern about a mile from the Ridges, toward Groton. It was kept by Stephen Farrar, in the house now standing near where the brook crosses the Great Road. Afterward one Green was the landlord. The house known as the Levi Tufts place in this neighborhood was an inn during the early part of this century, conducted by Tilly Buttrick. Also about this time, or previously, the house situated south of

Indian Hill, and occupied by Charles Prescott,—when the map in Mr. Butler's History was made,—was an inn. There was a tavern kept from the year 1812 to 1818 by a Mr. Page, in Mr. Gerrish's house, near the Unitarian church in the village. There was also a tavern, near the present paper-mills of Tileston and Hollingsworth, kept for many years (1825-55) by Aaron Lewis, and after him for a short time by one Veazie. It was originally the house of John Capell, who owned the sawmill and gristmill in the immediate neighborhood. Amos Adams had an inn near Squannacook, a hundred years ago, in a house now owned by James Kemp.

Just before and during the Revolution a tavern was kept by George Peirce, in the south part of the town, within the present limits of Ayer. This landlord was probably the inn-holder of Littleton, whose name appears in *The Massachusetts Gazette*, of August 8, 1765. The house was the one formerly owned by the late Calvin Fletcher, and burned March 25, 1880. It was advertised for sale, as appears from the following advertisement in *The Boston Gazette*, September 27, 1773:—

To be Sold at PUBLIC VENDUE, to the highest Bidder, on Wednesday the 3d Day of November next, at four o'Clock in the Afternoon (if not Sold before at Private Sale) by me the Subscriber, A valuable FARM in Groton, in the County of Middlesex, pleasantly situated on the great County Road, leading from Crown Point and No. 4 to Boston: Said Farm contains 172 Acres of Upland and Meadow, with the bigger Part under improvement, with a

large Dwelling House and Barn, and Out Houses, together with a good Grist Mill and Saw Mill, the latter new last Year, both in good Repair, and on a good Stream, and within a few Rods of the House. Said Farm would make two good Livings, and would sell it in two Divisions, or together, as it would best suit the Purchaser. Said House is situated very conveniently for a Tavern, and has been improved as such for Ten Years past, with a Number of other Conveniences, too many to enumerate. And the Purchaser may depend upon having a good warrantee Deed of the same, and the bigger Part of the Pay made very easy, on good Security. The whole of the Farming Tools, and Part of the Stock, will be sold as above-mentioned, at the Subscriber's House on said Farm.

GEORGE PEIRCE.

Groton, Aug. 30, 1773.

The gristmill and sawmill, mentioned in the advertisement, were on Nonacoicus Brook. In the Gazette, of November 15, 1773, another notice appears, which shows that the tavern was not sold at the time originally appointed. It is as follows:—

The Publick are hereby Notified that the Sale of the FARM in Groton, which was to have been sold the 3d Instant on the Premisses, at the House of Mr. George Peirce, is adjourn'd to the house of Mr. Joseph Moulton, Innholder in Boston, where it will certainly be Sold to the highest Bidder, on Wednesday the 1st Day of December next, at 4 o'Clock, P.M.

The following advertisement appears in The Independent Chronicle (Boston), September 19, 1808; the site of the farm was near that of Peirce's inn, just mentioned. Stone's tavern was afterward kept by one Day, and subsequently burned.

A FARM—for Sale,

Containing 140 acres of Land, situated in the South part of *Groton*, (*Mass.*) with a new and well-finished House, Barn, & Out-houses, and Aqueduct, pleasantly situated, where a Tavern has been kept for the last seven years;—a part of the whole will be sold, as best suits the purchaser. For further particulars, inquire of THO's B. RAND, of *Charlestown*, or the Subscriber, living on the Premises.

Sept. 12. JESSE STONE.

About a generation ago an attempt was made to organize a company for the purpose of carrying on a hotel in the village, and a charter was obtained from the Legislature. The stock, however, was not fully taken up, and the project fell through. Of the corporators, Mr. Potter and Mr. Smith still survive. Below is a copy of the act:—

An Act to incorporate the Groton Hotel Company.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

SECT. 1. Luther F. Potter, Nathaniel P. Smith, Simeon Ames, their associates and successors, are hereby made a corporation, by the name of the Groton Hotel Company, for the purpose of erecting, in the town of Groton, buildings

necessary and convenient for a public house, with all the powers and privileges, and subject to all the liabilities, duties, and restrictions, set forth in the forty-fourth chapter of the Revised Statutes.

SECT. 2. Said corporation may hold such real and personal property, as may be necessary and convenient for the purposes aforesaid, not exceeding in amount twenty thousand dollars: *provided*, that no shares in the capital stock of said corporation shall be issued for a less sum or amount, to be actually paid in on each, than the par value of the share which shall be first issued. And if any ardent spirits, or intoxicating drinks of any kind whatever, shall be sold by said company, or by their agents, lessees, or persons in their employ, contrary to law, in any of said buildings, then this act shall be void. [*Approved by the Governor, May 2, 1850.*]

In the spring of 1852, a charter was given to Benjamin Webb, Daniel D.R. Bowker, and their associates, for the purpose of forming a corporation to carry on a hotel at the Massapoag Springs, in the eastern part of this town, but the project fell through. It was to be called the Massapoag Spring Hotel, and its capital stock was limited to \$30,000. The act was approved by the Governor, May 18, 1852, and it contained similar conditions to those mentioned above in regard to the sale of liquors. These enterprises are now nearly forgotten, though the mention of them may revive the recollections of elderly people.

During the first half of the present century Groton had one

characteristic mark, closely connected with the old taverns, which it no longer possesses. It was a radiating centre for different lines of stage-coaches, until this mode of travel was superseded by the swifter one of the railroad. During many years the stage-coaches were a distinctive feature of the place; and their coming and going was watched with great interest, and created the excitement of the day. In early times the drivers, as they approached the village, would blow a bugle in order to give notice of their arrival; and this blast was the signal at the taverns to put the food on the table. More than a generation has now passed away since these coaches were wont to be seen in the village streets. They were drawn usually by four horses, and in bad going by six. Here a change of coaches, horses, and drivers was made.

The stage-driver of former times belonged to a class of men that has entirely disappeared from this community. His position was one of considerable responsibility. This important personage was well known along his route, and his opinions were always quoted with respect. I can easily recall the familiar face of Aaron Corey, who drove the accommodation stage to Boston for so many years. He was a careful and skilful driver, and a man of most obliging disposition. He would go out of his way to bear a message or leave a newspaper; but his specialty was to look after women and children committed to his charge. He carried, also, packages and parcels, and largely what is to-day entrusted to the express. I recall, too, with pleasure, Horace George, another driver, popular with all the boys, because in sleighing-time he

would let us ride on the rack behind, and even slacken the speed of his horses so as to allow us to catch hold of the straps.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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