

HANNAH LANE USHER

Hannah Lane Usher
1877

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A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF
HANNAH LANE USHER

OF BUXTON AND HOLLIS, MAINE,

WITH

HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL
FACTS RELATING TO

THE LANE FAMILY OF BUXTON

BY HER GRANDSON

ELLIS BAKER USHER

OF LA CROSSE, WIS.

PRIVATELY PRINTED

1903

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1903

Of this volume twenty-five copies have been printed.

Of the sketch of my grandfather, Ellis Baker Usher,
printed in 1902, twenty-seven copies were printed
with portraits and ten without them,
thirty-seven in all.

Dec. 18, 1902



Please paste this slip in the booklet upon Hannah Lane Usher, published by me in 1903. Ellis B. Usher, 1136 Wells Bldg., Milwaukee, Wis.

CORRECTIONS.

On page 5. Third line from the bottom, John Gorham, Nathaniel's brother, was Paul Coffin's chum.

On page 21. Col. Isaac Lane's grave had a stone over it. In September, 1911, a boulder, bearing a bronze tablet, was placed over the graves of Captain Daniel and "Molly" Lane, by some of their descendants.

On page 21. Captain Daniel was born in Broad Bay, now Waldoborough. "Waterboro" was taken from the Lane genealogy by the Revs. Chapman and Fitts, which is very unreliable as to the Buxton Lanes.

HANNAH LANE USHER.

In the sketch of the life of my grandfather, Ellis Baker Usher, published privately, in 1902, for distribution among his relatives, brief allusion was made to his wife, Hannah Lane. Her descendents will, I am sure, appreciate a more comprehensive treatment of her life and character, to which I have added some Lane family history that is important as relating to one of the large and prominent pioneer families of the town of Buxton, York County, Maine.

Hannah Lane lived to be almost ninety-four years old and up to within a year of her death she was sound mentally and physically, an unusual and remarkably interesting woman. Until the later months of her life she went daily to her meals in the basement dining room of the old "Brick House," which is reached by old-fashioned, steep and narrow stairs, in a dark stairway. She kept up with the events of the day with an interest in all that went on in the world about her that was intelligent and keen. She did not live in the past although she occasionally remarked that "One compensation for old age was that it gave excuse for keeping out of all the rush and foolishness of the present generation."

Hannah Lane was born near the close of the eighteenth century, January 1, 1795, and died August 22, 1889, almost within sight of the twentieth century. She lived, except for a very few years in early childhood, and died, within a mile of her birthplace.

In person Hannah had the Lane family characteristics. She was fair, with light brown hair, that never turned gray. She was short but straight and sturdy of figure. Her shoulders were rather broad and square and were surmounted by a head of good size, marked with features denoting strong character and good mental poise.

The portrait of her which appears in the front of this volume was taken in March, 1874, when she was past seventy-eight years of age. Two years later she visited the World's Fair at Philadelphia and enjoyed it for several weeks.

Her manners were those of her generation, more formal, dignified and impressive than those of the present day, yet, withal, they were graceful, gracious and easy.

Grandmother was not a great talker but she always spoke to some purpose. Her children were inclined to argument and discussion. She would usually listen in silence, but if she took part it was to inject a remark that corrected misstatement or disposed of the

entire matter. "I have always been like a hen that hatched a flock of ducks," she used to say on such occasions, when she professed to be annoyed by her children, even after they were past middle life. She had a quiet and piquant humor that was without a sting, but very incisive and effective.

Her disposition was gentle and sweet but there was no lack of determination and force.

Her memory was good, and as it covered so long a period, it was often called into service during her later years to fix dates and personal history in the affairs of the neighborhood.

Hannah's education probably consisted of private instruction at home, some at private schools then just coming into existence, and she may have attended a boarding school in Portland, for it is remembered that her younger sisters did so.

She attended the Congregational church long presided over by its first pastor, the Rev. Paul Coffin, who was a gentleman of exceptional learning and culture for that day, in the wilderness. He was one of the early graduates of Harvard College (1759). His wife, Mary Gorham, was his blood relation, as well as the sister of his college chum, Nathaniel Gorham, who, later, presided over the convention that framed the constitution of the United States. Grandmother,

whose mother died before she was old enough to remember her well, recalled with pride Dr. Coffin's assurance that Ruth Merrill was "a perfect lady."

In religious matters Hannah Lane was unusually liberal for one of her time. She once told me that her concern was for good life in this world. No one could be sure of the future after death. She contemplated death and the great unknown beyond, serenely and without superstition.

She was wont to say that her early life was so hard she disliked to think of it, but she had sweet recompense in a calm and beautiful old age that was a gentle benison for all her descendents.



House where Hannah Lane was born, in Buxton, Maine.

HANNAH LANE'S GIRLHOOD.

Hannah Lane's eldest daughter, my aunt, Miss Rebecca Randall Usher, who was born August 21, 1821, has prepared, for my little daughter, a story of her mother's early life, from which I make the following quotations:

"Her name was Hannah Lane. She was the only child of Col. Isaac Lane and his first wife, Ruth Merrill. Hannah was born January 1, 1795, in a small milling village called Salmon Falls, on the Buxton side of the Saco river. The house stood on the top of a hill and looked down from its airy height onto the bridge, which crossed at that point from Buxton into Hollis. It was a low one-storied building with four windows in the front. The chimney, instead of being in the center, was about one third the length of the ridge-pole from the west end, and the front door was placed to match the chimney. There was one medium sized window on the left side of the entrance; next the door on the right, was a large square window resembling a window in a workshop, and beyond that were two smaller windows. The window on the left of the front door looked into the cosy little parlor, which had another window looking out on the west side, and a small bedroom opening out of it. The three other windows lighted the large kitchen, with its huge fire-place, the great logs of wood now half burned out and resting on a heap of red hot coals. A long ell extended out from the back of the house, which furnished sleeping rooms for the family, and a small barn was built at right angles with the ell.

Three large elms sheltered the home from the summer's sun and traced their long, graceful shadows over the snow in winter.

"On this auspicious night of December 31, 1794 and January 1, 1795, my grandfather's mother and my grandmother's mother—the two expectant grandmothers—were gathered in this simple home awaiting the arrival of the first grandchild of the family. They were passing quietly to and fro, from kitchen to parlor, with their gentle offices, or talking earnestly by the great hot fire in the kitchen, when, somewhere near the last stroke of 12 o'clock the child was born. There was always a dispute between the grandmothers whether her birth was on the last day of December or the first day of January, as one grandmother asserted that she was born a few minutes before twelve o'clock and the other was sure she was born a little after midnight.

"Her father was the eldest of eleven children, all born and brought up in the pine forest. When he was twelve years old he ran away from home to Saratoga, and joined his father, who was a captain in the War of the Revolution. He was a handsome man, with a genial face and a manner at once dignified and courtly.

"Her mother was a lovely young girl who, though born and brought up in 'the forest primeval' without educational or social advantages, was endowed with a natural refinement of spirit and manner which high social culture often fails to bestow.

"When Hannah Lane was only five years old her mother died, and her father went to Saco to do business, taking his little girl with him to his boarding house, where she became a pet of the boarders.

"She was a happy, rosy cheeked, musical child, singing through the day. She was sent to the French dancing master to learn

dancing, and was so graceful and took to dancing so naturally, that she soon had the master's good will, and though he would often get angry at the other scholars, and exclaim—'Sacra Fonta!' at them and use other bad words in French, he would carry little Hannah on his shoulder, and then, taking her down and tightening the ribbons that tied her shoulders back, watch, with pride, her sprightly and graceful dancing.

"In a few years her father, (feeling that it was 'not good that man should be alone'), married the Widow Randell, who brought her four Randell children, a boy and three girls, into the family.

"Hannah's stepmother was 'a woman of faculty,' and during the war of 1812, in which her husband was a colonel, she built a saw-mill in his absence, hiring the carpenters, overseeing and directing the work, and going to the store every night to pay off the workmen.

"When Colonel Lane returned from the war of 1812 and found that his wife had built the mill, he was very proud of her achievement, and said she had built it more economically and better than he could have done.

"So little Hannah grew up industrious and prudent, and as the years went on, four more children were born into the family, so she now had a half-brother and three half-sisters, making, in all, nine children in the family.

"In those days of spinning and weaving there was plenty of work for all. Hannah was now blooming into womanhood, with light brown hair and a lovely complexion wherein 'the rose with the lily did vie.' Graceful in motion and figure and with sweetest of voices she went through her daily tasks singing and spinning, as happy as a bobolink on a June morning and as domestic as a robin redbreast.

“She sang long ballads without accompaniment, much to the delight of her listeners. [One of these, “Cupid and the Bee,” was taken down, music and song, from her singing, in 1874, by Charles B. Bush, for the New York Madrigal Club, and by them sung in their concerts.]

“She often visited the city, (Portland,) where her party dress was white muslin, which she varied by putting on a new trimming of ribbon for each new occasion. When her fashionable friends came to return her visits they were glad to lend a hand to help her in her household duties that she might find time to walk with them through the fields and woods and along the banks of the beautiful Saco river.

“In those days there was no ready-made clothing, and trades were brought into the bosom of the family. The tailor came with his goose and was domiciled, for two or three weeks at a time, in the large, commodious kitchen, cutting and making garments for the men and boys. Hannah was his hand-maiden in this work, and as he chanced to be a fine singer, they stitched and sang the long days through, until the garments were made and the songs were ended.

“When the tailor abdicated his place was filled by the shoemaker, who came with his bench and lasts, and Hannah went from tailoring to binding shoes, till the family were made comfortable with new shoes that did not pinch the feet.

“Those were busy days and Hannah had little leisure for reading, but she would occasionally steal away into the garret to pore over one of Richardson’s novels, or Jane Porter’s, the Arabian Nights Entertainments, the Scottish Chiefs, or the story of Eliza Wharton, which created a great excitement, as the deserted lover, (Parson Buckminster,) was a Portsmouth man. Books were not plentiful and they were a great treat when they

could be had. These stolen feasts of literature, hidden away in the attic, were, therefore, among the most delightful moments of Hannah's life. In this seclusion she also read Marmion and The Lady of the Lake, till she knew them by heart, and she often regaled her friends by singing "Young Lochinvar has come out of the West." She also sang many of Moore's melodies, and passages from an opera called 'The Castle Spectre.'"

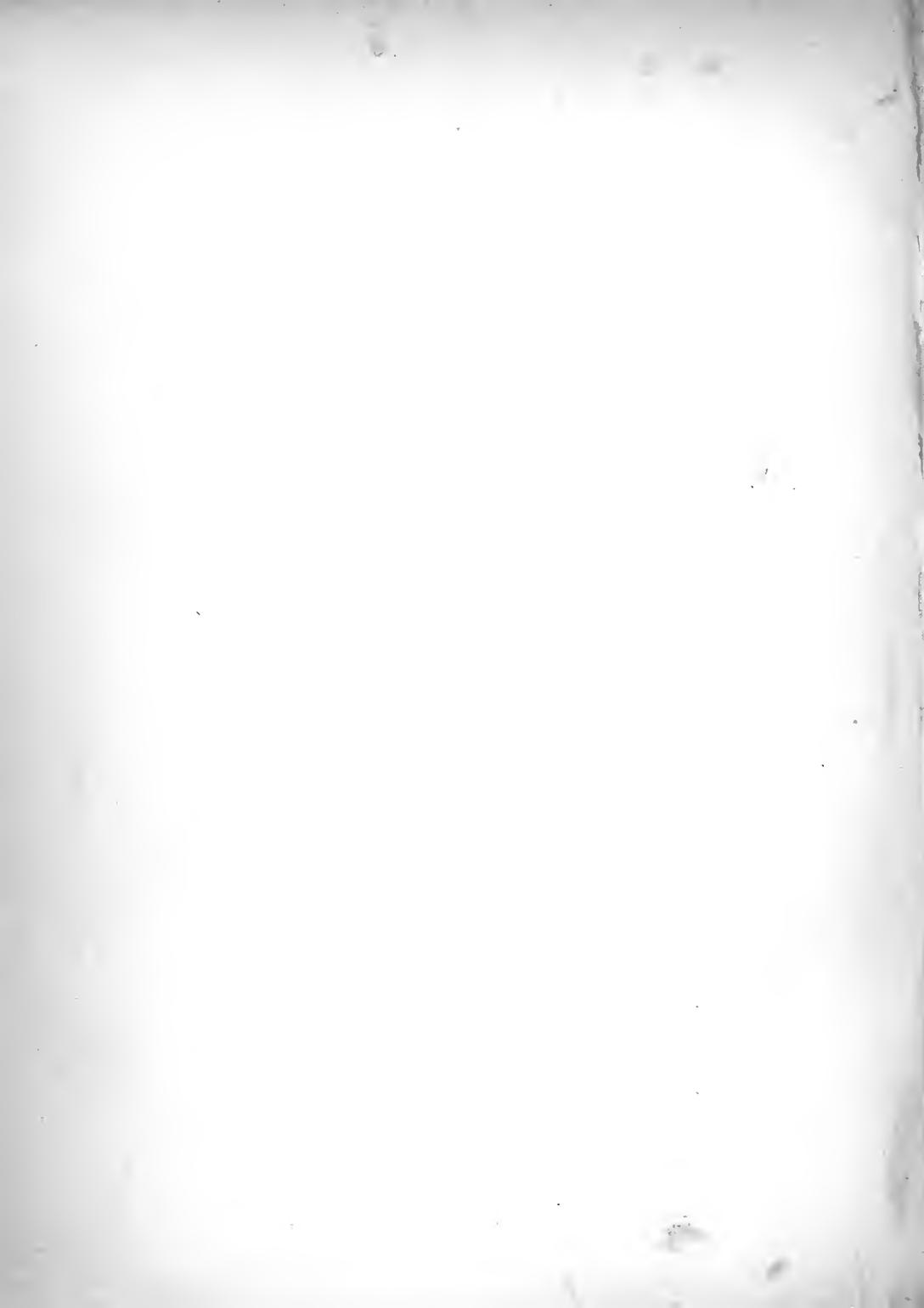


COL. ISAAC LANE



COL. ISAAC LANE





GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL.

Hannah Lane was the daughter of Col. Isaac Lane and Ruth Merrill. Both her parents were descended from long lines of New England pioneers.

Her great-grandfather, Capt. John Lane, was one of the noted Indian fighters of New England and is mentioned in many early historical works and papers. He commanded a company at the siege of Louisburg in 1745. His father before him was Capt. John Lane of Newbury, Mass., who commanded at Fort Mary, Winter Harbor, Maine, (now called The Pool,) in 1717. Capt. John Lane of Newbury is early referred to in the records of the town as "Mr." John Lane. To but few other men is this distinction accorded. Mr. Joseph Dow in his work on Hampton, N. H., says:

"I am unable to trace any connection between this John Lane and the other Lane families living here. The fact that the title of Mr., then so sparingly used, is prefixed to his name in the above record, shows that he was a man of distinction."

In the Hampton records he found but two other instances where the title "Mr." was used.

What was true when Mr. Dow's book was written is still true. No one has been able to connect this

Capt. John Lane with any of the other early Lanes of New England.

There has been a tradition in the family that Capt. John Lane of Newbury, came from Limerick, Ireland. I have been unable to find anything to confirm this tradition, and the fact that he married Joanna Davison, whose father, Major Daniel Davison, was Scotch, and whose mother was a daughter of Judge Peter Coffin of New Hampshire and his wife Abigail Starbuck, does not tend to confirm it. It would rather suggest that he came from England. If, as the tradition has it, he was an officer in the British service, he may have come to New England after service in Ireland. But this is mere speculation.

John Lane, second, after serving at Louisburg, commanded a company at Crown Point in 1756, where he died and was succeeded in command by his son John, who was his lieutenant. Three of his sons, John, Jabez and Daniel, were captains in the Revolutionary War. Hannah Lane's father, Isaac Lane ran away from home and followed his father, Capt. Daniel, to the front, joining his company at Saratoga. On pages 200 and 201 of Goodwin's "Narragansett No. 1," is a muster roll of Capt. Daniel Lane's company, enlisted "for three years or during the war" in which appears the name of Isaac Lane, enlisted January 13, 1777, and he is put down as a fifer.



COL. ISAAC LANE.

From a Silhouette owned by Miss Rebecca R. Usher.

Transcripts of the Massachusetts records, furnished me under seal by the Hon. Wm. M. Olin, secretary of the Commonwealth, under date of Dec. 23, 1895, are as follows:

Isaac Lane appears with rank of private on Continental Army pay accounts of Capt. Daniel Lane's company, Colonel Brooks's regiment, for service from January 18, 1777, to December 31, 1779. Credited to the town of Stoughtonham. Residence, Buxton. Reported discharged Jan. 18, 1780.

Continental Army Books, Vol. 7, part 1, p. 7.

Appears with rank of Fifer on muster and pay roll of Capt. Josiah Davis's Company, Col. Joseph Prime's regiment. Enlisted May 4, 1780. Service 7 months and 5 days. York county regiment raised for 8 months to defend Eastern Massachusetts, by Resolve of March 25, 1780. Residence Buxton.

Sea Coast Defense Muster Rolls, Vol. 35, p. 291.

Appears in descriptive list of enlisted men belonging to Buxton. Age 17 years. Height 5 feet 6 inches. Of light complexion. Light hair. Occupation, farmer. Enlisted Dec. 1, 1781, for 3 years. Joined Captain King's company. Lient. Col. J. Brooks's (7th) regiment. Engaged for Pepperill.

Mass. Muster and Pay Rolls, Vol. 74, p. 113.

Appears with rank of private on Muster Roll of Capt. Zebulon King's company, Lient. Col. John Brooks's (7th) regiment for February, 1782. Enlisted Dec. 1, 1781, for 3 years. Roll dated: "York Huts."

Worcester Rolls, Vol. 51, File 18.

Appears with rank of private on Muster Roll of Capt. Zebulon King's company, Lient. Col. John Brooks's (7th) regiment, for January, 1782. Roll dated, "York Huts." Reported on duty.

Worcester Rolls, Vol. 51, File 18.

It appears from this official record that Col. Isaac Lane served over five years in the Revolutionary War. The date of his birth is usually given as in the year 1765. If he was seventeen years old in 1781, as appears from the above record, he was born in 1764, and that date would make it appear that he was thirteen

years old when he first went into service under his father.

In the war of 1812, Isaac Lane and his brother Daniel, raised a regiment which became the 33d U. S. Infantry of that war. Under date of August 10, 1893, I have the following letter from Col. Geo. D. Ruggles, Assistant Adjutant General of the United States:

"I have the honor to inform you that Col. Lane appears on the records of this office as having been commissioned as Colonel of the 33d United States Infantry, to rank from February 23, 1813; as having accepted his commission March 12, 1813; and as having been discharged, by disbandment, June 15, 1815, on the reduction of the army, under the act of March 3, 1815."

Of the service of this regiment, I have the following from the office of the Adjutant General under date of March 6, 1896:

"The records of the army during that war are very incomplete, but the following has been found regarding the service of the 33d infantry. It was organized and recruited in Massachusetts, under the act of January 29, 1813; part of it was consolidated with the regiment of Light Artillery in May, 1815, and the remainder discharged in the following June, under the Act of March 3, 1815, reducing the army to a peace establishment.

"The regiment was engaged in the battle of Chataugay, Canada, October 26, 1813, suffering a loss of 15 enlisted men killed and 20 wounded; was in action at La Cole Mill, Canada, March 30, 1814, in which Third Lieut. Joshua B. Hartford was wounded; and participated in the siege of Plattsburgh, New York, September 6 to 11, 1814. The casualties of the regiment, except in the action first named, cannot be separated from those of other regiments.

"The regiment appears to have been stationed during its term of service as follows: Three companies at Fort Warren, Independence, and Salem, Massachusetts, June to October, 1813; A detachment at Fort Scammel, Maine, September 13, 1813 to January 14, 1814. The remainder of the regiment up to February 1814, and all of it after that time, appears to have been stationed at Plattsburgh, New York, making occasional incursions into Canadian territory adjacent."

Lieut. Col. Daniel Lane's account of himself, which was deposited by Mr. Cyrus Woodman with the Maine Historical Society, in Portland, says:

"My brother Isaac and myself, at Saco, in the fall of 1812, commenced raising a volunteer regiment, under an Act of Congress, he to be colonel and I lieutenant colonel. When we had got 500 or 600 volunteers together, the volunteer act was repealed, and an Act of Congress passed, in the winter of 1813, authorizing the raising of men by enlistment for one year, and most of our volunteers came forward and enlisted, and we soon had a full regiment. [Colonel Lane failed to get the lieutenant colonelcy until 1814, meanwhile acting as first major.]

"The first duty; I was ordered with eight companies, then at Saco, to Fort Independence, Boston Harbor, the last of June 1813, and to garrison the forts at Portsmouth, Salem and Marblehead. I left one company at each of those places and the remainder took to Fort Independence and Fort Warren with me, the five companies. I had command at Fort Independence and Boston Harbor from the last of June to the 15th of August 1813, when I was ordered to Plattsburgh and the Northwestern frontier."

August 16, 1813, Lieut. Col. Daniel Lane left Boston with his five companies and, waiting at Concord, N. H. for the other companies to join him, marched to Plattsburgh. The regiment then went to Chatauguay and operated for some time between there and Montreal. They wintered at Plattsburgh.

From information obtained from private letters written by some of Colonel Lane's Buxton soldiers, it appears that at Plattsburgh his regiment was divided. A part of it staid on land to hold the Indians in check. Some were detailed to act as marines and others were put into galleys to man oars and act as boarding crews. They served under the famous Macdonough on the

water, and those on shore under Macomb. The Americans were greatly outnumbered but achieved a signal victory.

My maternal uncle, Cyrus Woodman, who did more than any other man to discover and preserve with accuracy the history of his native town of Buxton, used to tell me that—"The Lanes were the fighting family of Buxton." In Goodwin's "Narragansett No. 1" to which Cyrus Woodman contributed much valuable labor and material, and, finally, the money to make its publication possible, are to be found many details of the military history of the Lanes.

Mr. Nathan Goold, writing of the family in the Portland, Maine, State Press, of August 8, 1895, speaks of them as "one of the most notable military families in the early history of our state."

Of the three captains in the Continental army, Daniel, John and Jabez, Mr. Wm. B. Lapham of Augusta, Maine, in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register for July, 1872, p. 237, says:—"They are said to have been splendid looking men, and possessed of great physical powers and personal bravery."

Captain Daniel's journal of his campaign under Wolfe, at Quebec, July 8 to Dec. 14, 1759, was published in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register for July 1872, pp. 236-243.

The story of his son, Lieut. Col. Daniel Lane, in the war of 1812, was written and given to Cyrus Woodman, and is mentioned by him in the genealogical matter he prepared for the Buxton Centennial volume, in 1872.

Of the military services of Col. Isaac Lane more has been printed than of his civil life, so I will leave them with the statement that I own his colonel's commission and the sword he carried in the war of 1812. The fine oil portrait of him from which the photograph in this volume is copied, is the property of his grand-daughter—Mrs. E. R. Wiggin, who presented me with his sword.

In civil life Colonel Lane was as patriotic and courageous as in war. It is related of him that during the embargo on shipping, which was repealed in 1814, he was a considerable owner of vessel property, which lay rotting at the Portland wharves, and when some of his business friends told him he would be ruined and endeavored to arouse him to opposition to the policy of the government, he replied that Isaac Lane was of infinitely less importance than the welfare of the country.

Isaac Lane was sheriff of York county in 1811, and at the same time was a representative to the General Court of Massachusetts.

From 1820 (under Maine's first governor) to 1823 inclusive, and again in 1831 he was a member of the Governor's Council of Maine.

In 1832 he was a presidential elector and cast his vote for Andrew Jackson.

This brief list suggests that he was accorded many honors.

He built the first saw-mill at Salmon Falls, opposite his Buxton home. Later he had a handsome home on the Hollis side of the river.

His first wife, Ruth Merrill, Hannah Lane's mother, was the daughter of Lieut. Samuel Merrill, who fought at Bunker's Hill. Lieutenant Merrill was one of the prominent men of the town of Buxton. Through her grandmother Merrill, whose maiden name was Elizabeth Bradbury, my grandmother could trace her ancestry to Capt. Thomas Bradbury; the Rev. John Wheelwright, a graduate of Cambridge, England, and a friend of Cromwell, who founded Exeter, N. H., and Wells, Maine; to Edward Hutchinson, and to Major Robert Pike of Salisbury, one of the most important men of his time in the colony of Massachusetts Bay.

The Buxton Lanes are worthy of a more thorough and complete history than this can be or than has yet been written. A considerable amount of authentic material was deposited with the Historical Society in Portland, Maine, by Mr. Cyrus Woodman. I have in this volume added something to the published material, and I hope that, some day, the descendants of Captain

Daniel and Colonel Isaac may properly mark the graves of these two distinguished patriots, which lie unmarked, in the burying ground at the Buxton Lower Corner.

HANNAH LANE'S PEDIGREE.

"Mr." John Lane, of Newbury, Mass., Hampton, N. H., and York, Me., also "Captain," m. Joanna Davison daughter of Major Daniel Davison and his wife Abigail Coffin, and had—(other issue.)

Captain John Lane, b. at Hampton, 1702, d. 1756, m. Mary Nowell, daughter of Captain Peter Nowell of York, and had—(other issue.)

Captain Daniel Lane, b. May 11, 1740 at Broad Bay, (Waterboro,) d. in Buxton Sept. 11, 1811, m. Oct. 21, 1762, Mary daughter of Capt. Joseph Woodman, and had—(other issue.)

Colonel Isaac Lane, b. at Buxton about 1765, d. Oct. 9, 1833, m. 1st, April 6, 1794 Ruth Merrill, dau. Lieut. Samuel Merrill and Elizabeth Bradbury, who d. March 2, 1799, and had—

Hannah, b. in Buxton, Jan. 1, 1795, m. Nov. 26, 1820, d. Aug. 22, 1839.

Note—Captain Peter Nowell's wife, Sarah Weare or Ware, was the daughter of Peter Weare of York, Me., and Mary Davis, whose father was said to be Major John Davis, Deputy Governor of Maine.









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