

# Dolly Witter Stetson

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Paul.







DOLLY WITTER STETSON





JAMES ALEXANDER STETSON





# DOLLY WITTER STETSON

A SKETCH OF HER LIFE

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COMPILED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES BY  
HER ELDEST GRANDCHILD

KATE DENORMANDIE WILSON

1907



*This Book has been edited and compiled by*  
*KATE DeNORMANDIE WILSON*  
*and is lovingly dedicated to the memory of her Grandparents*  
*DOLLY WITTER*  
*and*  
*JAMES ALEXANDER STETSON*  
*and published by their eldest son*  
*GEORGE RIPLEY STETSON*

2012392



## FOREWORD.

In writing this memoir of my Grandmother I have used material sent by all the members of the family. My Mother began to take notes from Grandmother herself as she talked of her childhood and early days, and Aunt Mary continued to question her and write of other periods and events.

All narrations which are inclosed in quotation marks are Grandmother's own words.

The genealogical tables and references are as correct as I can make them.

I hope my Mother and her sisters and brothers, who asked me to prepare this sketch for a family reunion celebrating the sixtieth birthday of the youngest brother, will find some pleasure in the result.

Brooklyn, Connecticut, ←  
October twelfth,  
Nineteen hundred and seven.



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DOLLY WITTER STETSON



## DOLLY WITTER

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Dolly Witter was the only child of Ebenezer Witter, III., and his wife Dorothy, or, as she was always called, Dolly Sharpe. She was born July 8th, 1807, into a prosperous, well-regulated home in Brooklyn, Windham County, Connecticut. The family consisted of her father and mother, and her grandfather, Deacon Nathan Witter, all fine, intelligent, good people. Her Grandmother Kezia, a most extraordinary woman, died six months before little Dolly was born.

Deacon Nathan lived until she was fifteen years old, and she said of him: "My grandfather was very fond of me and often took me with him when he went neighboring. He would shake his cane over my head when I did wrong, but I do not think he ever struck me. He was a good man and I feel that my life has been influenced by him."

In a Witter chapter other recollections are recorded, and it will be seen what a rare inheritance of goodness and piety, courage and determination, helped to make my grandmother the wonderful woman she was.

One hundred years ago the home was the center of many industries, like spinning and weaving, which have passed entirely out of the most remote New England households. Nearly every article of dress was made in the home. There was a tannery in the town where the hides of the cattle were prepared, and a shoemaker went from house to house with his kit of tools, to make the boots and shoes for the family. Tailoresses made the men's clothes, and seamstresses the women's and children's. Grandmother remembered well Miss Davison, who made a yearly visit at the homestead, and who thought the family very generous to furnish two candles for her to sew by at night.

The working day was fourteen or fifteen hours, and the pay twenty-five cents.

In every well-to-do family the wife had a silk gown for Sunday and special occasions. The first culture of silk in this country was in Windham County. Dolly's mother raised silk worms, and spun the silk, making thread for

knitting and sewing. My mother still has a pair of silk stockings knit from silk made by her grandmother.

Dolly's mother was a strict disciplinarian and early instilled habits of industry in her child. When very young she learned to sew and knit. One of the teachers when boarding her time out in the family sometimes took Dolly to school with her, and she kept for many years a piece of patchwork Dolly sewed before she was four years old.

The same teacher, Miss Hinckley, was allowed to put a web of cloth into the loom and she would weave before school in the morning, and as late as she could see after school at night. This friendly assistance must have been welcome, for her pay was only fifty cents a week for teaching the district school.

Dolly learned to read when about four. "An Englishman called Master Abbott boarded here after he could no longer teach school, and he taught me my letters and how to read from the old Bible." The first school she went to was about half a mile south of the old homestead. She wore a lindsey-woolsey dress and a flannel petticoat made from wool sheared from sheep raised on the farm, which had been carded, spun, and woven by her mother.

After school, when the candles were lighted, she had her stent of knitting, either a certain length of yarn, or a specified number of times around the stocking. She says: "Some of the happiest hours of my childhood were those after I had knit my stent, when I would climb up into my father's lap as he sat beside the open fire. He would take from his pockets corn or beans and play 'hull-gull, handful, parcel, how many,' or 'odd and even,' or 'fox and geese.' When I grew tired of these, he would take out his silver tobacco box and would set out on the wood-box near by, a feast, the box always representing roast turkey. I think my love of games came from him; even now in my ninetieth year I enjoy a game of whist or backgammon, though there were years of my life when I had no leisure for such pastimes." By the time she was seven she spun linen on the pretty linen wheel, and loved to do it, but she never wanted to spin the tow. Her mother used to put out the tow to women in the neighborhood who would take pay for their work in pork, or corn, or some other necessity.

Her mother taught her all the processes of spinning, both wool and flax, weaving, cooking, and housekeeping. She was brought up in all the good old ways of the good old days. Grandmother said: "I often think I did not



give her the assistance and comfort I ought to, although I always had my allotted task."

I do not know just when the little red schoolhouse was built. It is still standing in sight of the house, and was built on land given by Dolly's father. She was one of its first pupils. At that time the school was filled with children, often as many as forty in winter, when the big boys went. There were several large families, all Americans, now the number of children is very small, and a large proportion of foreign parentage.

Grandmother tells of some of her school life: "I loved to go to school. I went to the district school every term there was one, which was three months in the summer and three in the winter. The summer school was kept by a woman, and I learned to sew. The winter term was taught by a man. Once when I was seven years old I had company, Lucy James, afterwards Mrs. Deacon Newbury, who went to school with me. I was called upon to repeat the rules in Murray's grammar. I failed and was called out on the floor and flogged, right before my guest, to my great distress and mortification. The master's name was Artemus Brown, the grandfather of Nannie Scarborough. I had no idea what a rule in grammar meant, neither was I ever told, and not until I was a woman, busy with my family work, did I ever have any idea, then the sense of it would dawn on my mind."

Notwithstanding her regular duties, and going to school, she had plenty of time to play and enjoy life out of doors. She said: "I always liked to have a stent, for when it was done I was at liberty to do what I pleased. I loved a free out of doors life. I was especially fond of the East Brook, which had a good many little falls. Father always had a boy, whom he took about fourteen years of age and would keep until he was eighteen, when he would go to some trade.

"One boy who lived here, Samuel Robbins, had some mechanical ability, and used to make waterwheels. I helped him place them in the brook and run them. I always wanted to see things free—an imprisoned creature, or a pond appealed to me, and I gave them their liberty if I could. Sam Robbins was as fond of a cat as I was, and we both wanted the cat to sleep with us, so the one who went to bed first had the cat. We often went to bed very early."

I remember hearing grandmother say that she thought she had a good deal of mechanical taste, as she understood

quickly even complicated machinery. She thought her sons got their love of mechanics from her.

She was born with skilful fingers. Generations of workers before her made her deft, and quick to learn, at the same time she was a normal child. She admits to having been "a good deal of a rogne when young." "One time my mother had company and I was made to wait out of doors, so to occupy the time I began throwing wood down the well. At that time the well had only a curb and sweep, and, as the wood was always kept in front of the house, it was a handy thing to do.

"Sarah Paine once came to visit me in melon time; father had a fine patch back of the corn barn. I plugged every one to find one that was ripe and so spoiled them all. Another time I shook every pear off a tree before they were ripe. My mother whipped me with a stick, so that was all paid for, no more need be said about it."

Perhaps her mother was less patient than her father, at all events she did the whipping, and he used 'moral 'suasion,' and, as not unusual, she said she "would rather have her mother whip her than have her father scold her." She had a very tender heart. When the pigs were killed she could not bear to hear them squeal and shut herself up in the tall clock. Her grandfather loved to hear her mother sing, and was particularly fond of "The Babes in the Woods." Dolly would listen as long as she could and then run out of the room to cry.

The living was simple and wholesome, brown bread and milk, baked apples, berries, vegetables, meat from their own animals, mutton and lamb, beef and veal, pork and poultry. No class of people lived better than the farmers, literally on "the fat of the land." The custom of serving wine to guests or customers was universal, and the use of intoxicants much more common than now. Everyone put barrels of cider into his cellar in the autumn for the coming year.

Life even so far out in the country was more varied than seems possible. There were visits to and from friends and family. Dolly often had friends to stay with her, and was permitted to return their visits. It is told of one of these visits to her Uncle George Sharpe as a very little girl that as some one offered to help her, or pass something to her, she made the significant answer: "Dolly can help herself well enough."

The neighbors were always coming for help in time of

sickness or trouble, and there were persons who regularly passed through this part of the country and expected to be given food and drink, and sometimes shelter. All these people were kindly treated and fed at this house, and like Lydia Maria Child, Dolly always "sympathized with the under dog."

A remnant of the Mohegan tribe of Indians used to pass on their way to another tribe in Woodstock. They always wanted a "little more drink of cider." One day one of the Indians came in and said to grandmother: "If you will bring me a mug of cider and set it on the table, I will call it to me." She wanted to see this wonderful trick and got the cider and placed it on the table. Then the Indian called, "Come here! Come here! Come here!" As it did not move he said: "Well, I come to you," and caught the cider and drank it. These Indians were always dirty, crafty and hungry, yet Dolly liked to have them come.

There were traveling musicians, mostly negroes with fiddles. Dancing was very common among all classes, so whenever the musicians came there were impromptu dances.

Another regular visitor was the "darned man." The story is that he was a gentleman who never lost his fine manners. He was engaged to be married and the lady died. He put on his wedding clothes and began to wander about the country. As his clothes wore out he would darn them, sitting by the roadside for hours darning the rips and tears with whatever color of thread anybody gave him. For many years he went by going south in the spring and north in the fall, always calling for something to eat and often staying over night. He finally died by the roadside, having been denied shelter in a house in Canterbury. His clothes were covered with darns.

Another mildly insane man was the "pin man," who came and looked all about the door stones for pins. The front of his coat was covered with pins all neatly quilted in.

Dolly had her favorites among these picturesque people and was petted by them. Master Abbott, who taught her her letters, was always most kind to her, as was "Old York," another Englishman, who went about collecting bristles and rags. He brought in his bag the first crackers Dolly ever saw, and shared them with her, and she liked them very much, although "they came from a bag which I know now was not over nice." She was more fond of "Old York" than of Master Abbott, because he petted her cat, which he always called Toosac. One more naughty

thing little Dolly did which she told about. A tramp came one day and wanted something to eat. She went into the buttery and cut a large piece from a custard pie which her mother had made for company.

One other person had a good deal to do with her early life, Charles Malbone. He was born a slave and brought to Brooklyn by Col. Malbone. Col. Malbone came from Newport. He was a rich man and owned a good many slaves. He bought almost all of the eastern part of the town. He built an Episcopal church, and a glebe house, and set off a portion of land for the curate.

When the state of Connecticut liberated the slaves, Charles drifted into this part of the town and worked a great deal of the time for Dolly's father. "He was fond of me because I used to get cider and tobacco for him. He came on all occasions when needed and was an efficient and ready servant and would do anything for me."

He made the asparagus bed on the lowest terrace of the garden, which is still in the same place. Grandmother used to call it her diamond bed, because in the early morning the sunlight struck into the dewdrops, so that from the north door they would shine with all the colors of the rainbow, and she took great pleasure in watching them glisten.

Charles continued to work for her father many years. When he died he was buried in the little burying ground her father gave to this neighborhood, who erected a stone with his name on it and this simple epitaph: "He was born a slave."

I have repeated all these reminiscences of her childhood to show how free and natural and democratic her life was, and that from childhood she was interested in and sympathized with all sorts and conditions of men.

The Sundays were very long days, beginning Saturday afternoon at three o'clock and not ending until sunset Sunday night. The day was spent at church, with two long sermons and very decorous conversation with the other members between services..

In talking of these Sundays when her Grandfather Deacon Nathan was alive, she said she "used to dread them." She had to sit still and read nothing but her Bible or listen to her grandfather read from the big Bible, and she added that she should be very sorry to have the day as hard and unpleasant to her grandchildren as the Sundays of her childhood were to her. Grandmother remembered many things, among others that in 1816 there was frost



every month of the year. It was so cold very little corn was raised, and the price rose from fifty cents to two dollars a bushel. Nevertheless her father said that the men who worked for him in haying time should receive a bushel of corn for a day's work as usual.

When she was nine years old the Rev. Luther Willson was installed as colleague with Dr. Whitney.

Her mother entertained some of the people who came to the installation, and they remarked upon the early season, as she had picked some currants for tea and it was June.

One source of pleasure, common in those days, was riding horseback. When she was twelve years old her father bought her a horse, a very handsome horse, which she rode a great deal. This is probably the horse which he bought of the Morgans. Aunt Morgan, her father's sister Cynthia, who lived in York state, came with her son to visit at the farm. They had with them a pretty Kentucky saddle horse which her father bought and called hers, and which she rode at any time she wished to. "Nellie" had but one fault, a buffalo robe always frightened her, so that it was difficult to get her to pass one in a wagon or elsewhere. During this visit of the Morgans all the daily duties were performed as usual, and while she spun in the east part of the attic the cousin, lying on a bed near by, read aloud Pope's "Essay on Man," "Lady of the Lake" and other books which had been loaned to her by Priest White.

She went great distances from home on horseback; once to Abington to hear a woman preach. Her name was Clarissa Danforth, one of the "new lights." One sentence made a lasting impression, she was probably a Universalist, for she said, "Jesus Christ made a plaster as big as the wound."

She went to school in the village when she was fourteen, riding back and forth, or staying with Aunt Tyler, her mother's sister Sophia. The schoolhouse then stood where the court house now stands. It was a long, low building with a fireplace in each end.

Her most intimate friends were Sarah Paine, a second cousin, who lived in the neighborhood, and Emmeline Franklin, who lived in the village and used to come out and make long visits. Dolly and Sarah Paine went to school together, and people used to say "Sarah Paine has the handsome face and Dolly Witter the handsome form." Sarah Paine married John Gray, brother of Rev. Frederic Gray.

There was music too in the home. Her mother was a good singer, and even to the last of her life her voice was clear and sweet. She sang the high part, called counter. She taught her daughter to read music and was so anxious to have her learn that she boarded a singing master and his horse for a whole winter that he might take her to his singing school.

At one time the singing was so low in the church, in Dr. Whitney's time, that her mother and one other woman were the only singers, but "they hired a man with a violin, and despite all objections Squire Parrish's nephew, Moses Parrish, played the bass viol in meeting for many years."

When Dolly was fifteen her cousin and mate, Sarah Paine, was sent to quite a famous school in Thompson. Sarah's grandfather, who was Dolly's uncle, Nathan Witter, thought Dolly ought to go too, and have the opportunity for a better education. "He offered to take me to Thompson, find a boarding place and introduce me to Miss Dutch. Father and mother consented and I was soon left among strangers. I do not remember that I was homesick. Two other scholars were boarding at Mr. Whittemore's, but they found another place after a dinner of injured meat, so I had a sleeping room and parlor to myself. Charles Sharpe, a relative of my mother's, lived in the town. He had a family of young people, whom I used to visit occasionally.

Mr. Whittemore, with whom I boarded, had a small store, grocery I think. I was never in it. He had no children. A remark of his amused me so much at the time that I have quoted it often since. He said: "The Bible says a woman can see quickest as far as she **can** see, but a man can see the furthest."

"The school was attended by a number of young ladies from the town, among them the Miss Larneds, and others from Providence and adjoining towns. I guess I was a pretty good scholar and behaved myself for I had the valedictory. (See appendix.) At the end of the year father came for me and was glad to have me at home again."

During the year that Dolly was at school in Thompson, in October, 1822, her grandfather, Deacon Nathan Witter, died at the age of ninety-one.

## THE WITTERS

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Our first Witter ancestor in this country was Ebenezer Witter, who, with his brother Joseph, came from Scotland to Hopkinton, Rhode Island, before 1693. The exact date is not known. Joseph remained in Hopkinton, and I know nothing about him or his descendants, except the tradition mentioned by Asa Witter Allen "that there was a traitor in this family and that he escaped to parts unknown." "Traitor" seems a harsh name to give a man because he was faithful in his allegiance to his king, and loyal to his old world traditions! Ebenezer I. settled in Preston, Connecticut, and married Dorothy Morgan, a daughter of Lieutenant Joseph Morgan and his wife Dorothy Park, who lived in Malden in 1666 when Dorothy was born.

I do not know why or when the Morgans went to Preston, but they were living there when Dorothy and Ebenezer were married, whose first child was born March 31, 1694.

The Witters were pious, thrifty, progressive, prosperous men, shrewd and god-fearing, stern and stubborn, and willing to suffer for "conscience's sake." In this family the strictest religious discipline was maintained generation after generation.

There are three Ebenzers called "Deacon" and doubtless they were proud of the distinction, and worthy pillars of the church.

The second Ebenezer married Elizabeth Brown and had fifteen children. In the "Genealogy of the Allen and Witter families" by Asa Witter Allen he says, "They (Ebenezer II. and Elizabeth) were eminent for their piety and for the training up of their household in the fear of God." "They were good singers, and the children always went to the preparatory lectures to be catechised in the Assemblies Catechism, and that is where many of the children took their first lessons in Theology."

"Ebenezer II. was a strict observer of the Christian Sabbath, and faithful in performance of all the duties God requires of us as parents and children, on this Holy Day.



Punctual in family worship, and even when confined to his bed with a broken thigh, he led the family in prayer morning and evening."

This punctiliousness in devotion continued in his children, and children's children. One of his grandsons says that his "mother began with her children before they could read, to say the catechism after her on Sabbath evening, and if we were sleepy sitting down, we had to stand up, and this was her course until we left the home mansion."

Deacon Nathan Witter, Dolly's grandfather, was a son of Deacon Ebenezer II., and Dolly says of him, "He was a very religious man and read his Bible a great deal. Always had prayers, and said grace at table every meal, always standing. He had all the work stop on the place at three o'clock Saturday afternoon, when he shaved, blacked his shoes, laid out his best clothes for meeting, and then read his Bible. He used to say "Saturday night for preparation and Sunday night for meditation."

He was Deacon of the first Ecclesiastical Society in Brooklyn for fifty years.

Connecticut had particularly strict laws about the observance of the Sabbath; if a man did not go to church when he was able, he was punished. They were just about to whip a man in Ashford for not attending church, when a fine looking man on a fine looking horse rode up and asked what they were doing; when they had told him, he said, "Ye men of Ashford ye serve the Lord as if the Devil was in you," and rode away.

They thought he was a spirit, and there were no more whippings in Ashford.

Ebenezer III., the son of Nathan and Kezia, and my grandmother's father, was a most kind, gentle man whom she "never saw out of temper, tho' he once cuffed the boy's ears for making fun in prayer time."

Another son of Deacon Nathan, also named Nathan, was a very scrupulous man, who denied himself the privilege of the Communion Service because he deemed it "wrong for anyone to partake of the Lord's supper who had not been baptized (that is immersed) and thus regularly admitted to the Church of Christ," and as he "had never been baptized according to his understanding of the ordinance," he, "one of the best men in the Society or the town" refrained from partaking. (See Life of Sam'l J. May.)

Old Dr. Whitney, and Mr. Willson, his colleague, had both declined to rebaptize him, but Mr. May, against all

advice and precedent, took pity on him and immersed him in Blackwell's Brook.

Let us think for a moment of the toil and hardships of those who came into a wilderness, cleared the land, and drew from the soil maintenance for large families; fifteen children to Ebenezer II. and Elizabeth Brown; and thirteen to Nathan and Kezia.

There were troublous times with the Indians, and that great struggle, the Revolutionary War. Who can estimate the priceless legacy of courage, fidelity, industry, and piety from these sturdy men?

Now for a moment let us look at their wives and daughters.

Dorothy Morgan, wife of the first Ebenezer, was the daughter of Lieutenant Morgan, who was a "defender of the peace and order of the colony." She was twenty-five or six when she was married. She had seven children, the last two twins, who were only six years old when her husband died. She saw her four daughters married and settled, two having been chosen by Benjamin and Joseph Brewster, descendants of Elder Brewster, than whom no better person came over in the Mayflower.

We may safely infer that she had brought her daughters up in "the fear and admonition of the Lord," as well as all housewifely virtues.

She married Daniel Brewster when she was sixty-one, having been a widow for fifteen years. She lived to be eighty-four years old, and I warrant she was a keen, thrifty, spry woman to the day of her death.

Elizabeth Brown, wife of the second Ebenezer, was the mother of fifteen children! She must have been a wonder, a ceaseless worker, and cheerful, amiable woman, or she would never have found time to sing!

Economy must have been reduced to a science, and Industry to a fine art, to keep them all fed and clothed, find time for prayers morning and night, and to teach the catechism to them until they were letter perfect for the "preparatory lectures"—and singing as she went.

Kezia Branch, wife of Deacon Nathan—Dolly's grandmother—has for all of us a remarkably vital personality. She came to the Homestead in January, 1754, a bride of nineteen years, full of health and high spirits, nothing daunted by the thought of an unbroken wilderness or the loneliness of the stranger in a new country. She was ready to pitch into the work of clearing the forest, and making a home, no matter how hard the conditions.

Dolly said of her: "Altho my grandmother, Kezia Branch Witter, died six months before I was born, I think an account of my life would be lacking in an interesting personality if some mention was not made of her.

"She was tall and slender and must have been a very strong woman physically, and a very capable woman, for besides all the privations of pioneer life in an unbroken wilderness she was the mother of thirteen children, eight of whom lived to be married.

"She spun and wove all the clothes they wore, and was such a famous weaver that she was sent for in the town, if a daughter was to be married, to weave the best table and bed linen. There are now in the house some blankets and coverlets that she wove, and a pair of pillow-cases marked K. W. to D. W. which are among my treasures.

"She was an excellent housekeeper, and a kind, gentle woman, often controlling her somewhat impulsive husband with a gentle word. It was told of her that she rode to meeting on horseback, carried a child in her arms, and let down fourteen pairs of bars. Notwithstanding she had such a life of hardship and hard work, she seems to have had a great store of humor, and furnished herself and others much amusement by playing practical jokes on the family, and many a hearty laugh has been enjoyed over her quick wit. I remember some of the stories. Once she told her husband that she needed a new bonnet and showed him how shabby hers was, 'not fit to wear to meeting.' But the Deacon said, 'I think that bonnet is good enough; I should just as lief wear it to meeting.' The next Sunday she was very helpful in getting him ready, and deftly pinned the bonnet to his back. When he was riding up the hill nearest the church some one said, 'Why Deacon Witter, you've got your wife's bonnet pinned on your back.' He laughed and said, 'Well, well, that's one of my wife's tricks.' It may have been soon after this episode that he met a friend riding very fast. He called out, 'What's your hurry, is anybody sick?' 'Oh no, but I have my wife's new bonnet and want to get it home before the fashion changes.'

"He was very fond of her and said after her death that he 'was never out of patience with her,' which indicated remarkable Christian grace, for she played a great many jokes upon him.

"Once when she had been out weaving for a neighbor, she came home to find old black Tony, a traveling fiddler, playing and her husband dancing. He was fond of dancing and often led the ordination or dedication balls. She seized

the broom and putting it between his feet tripped him up.

"She did not approve of his junketing so much with Dr. Whitney, and one day when the Dr. rode up on his horse to join his Deacon on the way to Windham, to the dedication of a church, he said: 'Well, Deacon, don't you think some of Mrs. Witter's doughnuts will taste good as we are riding along.' Whereupon grandmother went into the buttery and put up a small bundle and handed it to her husband. After they had ridden several miles the minister suggested eating the doughnuts. They opened the bundle and found—some cobs! 'One of my wife's tricks,' said the good Deacon.

"At one time she had a sister visiting her who looked very much like her. I have heard she was a twin. This sister met a Captain Chapman and made quite a favorable impression upon him. One night when it was nearly dark, grandmother (Kezia) was at the well rinsing the milk pail. Capt. Chapman rode up in all the splendor of his military dress, having been to the Annual Training Day, with his pockets full of that marvelous training gingerbread. He began his love-making asking her to sit down on a log at the woodpile and eat of the gingerbread. She laughed and chatted and ate until the gingerbread was gone. Grandfather came to the door, all ignorant of what was going on outside, and called 'wife, wife; I can't do anything with this child,' whereupon grandmother jumped up and said 'I'll send my sister out,' but the Captain mounted his horse and rode away in hot haste.

"Grandmother was a great knitter, and as she had five sons and a husband who dressed in short clothes, she had a great many long stockings to knit. It was her custom when everybody else went to bed to put a pinch of tea into a little black teapot and set it near the fire, then she turned her back to the fire and sat and knitted the long stockings until late into the night. She usually made a cup of tea at four o'clock in the afternoon: as a boy my father loved tea, so, when he was working in the field with his father, he would watch for the smoke from the chimney which showed that the tea would soon be ready, then he would stop and shout, 'Ma'am?' and grandfather would say, 'Run, your mother wants you!'

"As all the fire there was in the house was in the enormous fireplace in the kitchen, which would take in a cord-wood stick, she often took coals in the warming-pan to warm her side of the bed. Grandfather, who had been sleeping for hours, would cry out, 'Don't burn me.' So one cold night she put the warming-pan out of doors and when he cried



out she rubbed it right down his leg. He jumped out of bed and exclaimed, 'Lackaday, you have blistered me!'

"I think she had great influence over her husband. Mother tells the story that after grandmother was confined to her bed, mother's two brothers and a cousin passed the house Sunday morning to attend the meeting of a company of Separatists in North Canterbury; returning they stopped at our house to dine.

"They were sitting in the East room talking and laughing as only Sharpes with their wit could; this disturbed grandfather, and he took off his glasses, and laid down his Bible, and said, 'I can't have such doings in this house on a Sabba' day'—his wife put her feeble hand on his knee and said, 'Sit down, it is all right,' and so kept him from giving offence.

"She was very fond of my mother, and thought her a good caretaker and housekeeper."

Deacon Nathan held the commission of Ensign of the 5th Company or Trainband in the 11th Regiment in this colony under King George the Third, Oct. 13, 1770.

He was a large, stout man, and dressed in short breeches of black velvet, a satin vest, and a three-cornered hat. He was made Deacon when a very young man. When his wife Kezia heard that he had been chosen Deacon she said, "Well, I should think he was about fit to be a Deacon, for he has only had six horses in the pasture this week." He dealt in horses, and was a successful doctor of horses. He always rode on horseback and had a fine Kentucky horse.

He used to deacon off the hymns with a loud sonorous voice, beginning the first line, then Deacon Davison read the next in a thin, high voice, which made a queer effect in such hymns as

"Lord in the morning thou shalt hear  
My voice ascending high"

He used a cane a great deal for support and emphasis, and used to shake it over grandmother's head. After school was out he did not want any loitering about the place and he would shake his cane at the children and shout, "Haze on boys, haze on." And then grandmother said, "That cane is now the support of my feeble limbs."

I do not know whether Deacon Nathan went to the war as ensign or not, or whether he remained a Tory or became a patriot and fought with the colony. He lived to be ninety-one years old, and had had 154 natural descendants—13 children, 57 grandchildren, 82 great-grandchildren and two



BURYING GROUND



LITTLE RED SCHOOL-HOUSE





great-great-grandchildren, of whom only 22 had died leaving 132 living descendants in 1822.

Ebenezer, the third, was the tenth child and youngest son of Deacon Nathan and Kezia his wife. He was born in this house on the tenth of April, 1775, and lived here all his life, with the exception of a few months, which he spent in Preston, working for his brother Jonah. He also made a journey with his brother Jacob to York state to visit his sister Cynthia before he was married. He did not marry until he was thirty-one. He was like his mother, tall and slender, with blue eyes, a gentle manner and a quiet humor and ready wit. He was a happy man, fond of children, affectionate, but not unduly indulgent, a kind, generous father. He was fond of animals and treated them with great kindness and they loved him.

The summer he worked for his brother Jonah he and the man were sent out one very hot June day to plow for buckwheat. It was so hot Ebenezer would not work the oxen and they did not accomplish much. When they came up to the house Jonah asked if they had finished the plowing. Ebenezer said they hadn't done much, "it was too hot for the oxen." "Humph," said Jonah, "too hot for the oxen! I guess the boys was too lazy to work!" The next day was just as hot, but they kept the oxen working right along until the plowing was done. When they drove them into the barnyard they were nearly dead. Three out of the four died and the other was never able to do anything. Jonah never said a word.

Ebenezer stayed on the farm and took care of his mother and father as long as they lived. When his father, Deacon Nathan, died Oct. 27, 1822, after paying the legacies as provided in the will—which amounted to a good deal—Ebenezer came into possession of the farm, which had doubled in size and to which he added a great many acres. He was a very exact and honest man, always paid for everything when he got it, even paying the doctor after each visit, so his estate was all settled when he died.

Oct. 20th, 1800, he was made Orderly Sergeant of the Ninth Company of the Twenty-first Regiment with authority to collect the military taxes. He was made Lieutenant of the same company April 12, 1803, and Captain April 14, 1806. This means that he had all the pleasure and excitement of the annual training days, as well as the work of drilling the men between times. Election days and train-days were the great high carnivals of the good old times.

He probably met Dorothy Sharpe, who became his wife, through her brother George, who taught the school in this district one or two winters. He gave the land on which the little red schoolhouse stands, and also the burying ground, for which the district returned thanks Sept. 2, 1839.

It would appear that Captain Ebenezer's lines had fallen in pleasant places. He inherited a farm which had supported a family of fifteen and to which he added more land from time to time. His wife was a model housekeeper and a cheerful, intelligent companion, and sweet singer. They had but one child, to whom he was able to give all the advantages of education and society which the vicinity afforded, and later in her first hard time, could assist by putting her husband on his feet again.

He had one hard experience endorsing a note of \$500 for Dr. Colwell, which he was obliged to pay, but I judge that on the whole he had a serene, comfortable, independent life. A little more lenient than his father, perhaps, but still a strictly religious, good man, a kind husband and father.

See appendix for other Witter notes.



MEETING-HOUSE



THE VILLAGE HOME



## BROOKLYN

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Brooklyn, Connecticut, is one of the most beautiful of the old New England towns, with its great trees arching the quiet, peaceful streets, and its big, old meeting-house in the middle of the shady, cool, green Common, and the pretty houses with gardens and lawns all so exquisitely kept. The hills and valleys in and around the town make varied and charming landscapes, and there is a sense of calm and comfort most welcome to those who are fortunate enough to be brought back, and to feel at home in the dear old place.

In my grandmother's young days Brooklyn was very different from what it is now.

It was the shire town of Windham County. The sessions of the Courts brought judges and lawyers, and so large a crowd of litigants that the five taverns were filled, and many of the townspeople let rooms to lodgers who ate at the taverns.

Several lawyers settled in the town, one of the best being Squire John Parrish who always had young men studying with him. Squire Fuller not only had law students, but also young men who were fitting themselves to be teachers.

Two newspapers were published in the town by five young men, and Rev. Sam'l J. May had young men preparing for college, and studying for the ministry. There was no lack of good society. The young people used to have very gay and happy times, the young ladies receiving a great deal of attention. Dancing parties, whist parties, and horseback rides were the order of the day.

A good story is told about two young men, Horatio Webb, a printer, and Asa Bowles, a law student, who went out to call on Dolly Witter. Mr. Bowles' father was a judge in Ashford and had come to Brooklyn for court. The young men borrowed his horse and chaise and drove out to the farm. When they were ready to go horse and chaise had disappeared. The first thought was that they had been stolen, then they concluded the horse had gone

back to the village. However, they saw nothing of it on the way, and it was not to be found in the town. It later appeared that the horse had gone home to Ashford.

Grandmother, in talking of the old days, said: "In my young days Brooklyn was a busy place, very unlike its present stagnant condition. Besides the sessions of court there were the 'General Training' days, which filled the town with confusion, noise, and drunkenness. They fortunately are past, as are the stages which daily brought the excitement of arrival and departure. Two stages passed every day on both routes, one line from Providence to Hartford, the other between Norwich and Worcester.

"After Mr. May came "The Liberal Christian" was published in Brooklyn, making three papers for a time issued in this little town.

"There was business of various kinds. Deacon Newbury employed several men with families in the making of spectacles, silver spoons, etc. His store contained nice goods. My grandfather bought the banjo clock of Deacon Newbury, and my mother has some of the Deacon's spoons. Mr. Wilbur had a harness shop. Mr. Burton, a carpenter shop; there was a bakery and tin shop, and cabinet making by Mr. Clarke."

"In 1824 James Stetson came to town and established the business of chaise and harness making, which employed a number of journeymen and apprentices. His cousin, Mr. Bradburn, came the following spring, but died shortly after. Later another cousin of Mr. Stetson's came, James Alexander, a printer. It was quite a question among the young women which was the handsomer, James Stetson or James Alexander.

"The coming to town of James Stetson was considered an acquisition to the place, and to our society, as he brought a letter from the Unitarian Society of Dedham, Mass., of which he was a member.

"Brooklyn began to decline with the panic of 1837, which was severe. Manufacturers failed and business was terribly depressed."

The court was transferred to Putnam and Willimantic. The newspapers died a natural death, the young men scattered far and wide and the gay life became only a memory.



## YOUNG WOMANHOOD AND MARRIAGE

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Dolly was now sixteen—in July, 1823. She was a mature, dignified young woman, accomplished in all the household arts, a graduate of one of the “select schools of studied elegance,” where she had no difficulty in leading them all, and carrying off the valedictory. She was free to enjoy all the good times, singing, dancing, riding and reading. She had a quick, ready sympathy for everything. She had the example of her mother, who was always prepared to minister to the sick and help those who needed her. All the virtues and graces of the Christian life were her birth-right, she had never known anything but truth and love.

She was gay, but it was tempered by seriousness. She was far older at sixteen than young people are now. She had the “power of doing,” and there is nothing in the world that gives strength and repose to character like knowing “how to do.” She knew nature and animal life, all the processes of sowing and reaping and gathering into barns, and she was mistress of herself.

The November following her return from the school in Thompson she first met Rev. Samuel J. May, the new pastor of the Brooklyn church. His coming added much to her pleasure and growth, and opened new and broad lines of thought and progress.

I do not know why she wished to teach school, it certainly was not necessary for her to; perhaps it was to prove her scholarship, or because it was considered the correct thing for a smart young woman to teach. Whatever the reason, the next summer she went to be examined to teach the school in the little red schoolhouse,—but failed in arithmetic.

She said: “I had taken a ciphering book with me and I was so disgusted because I did not get a certificate that I threw the book into Bassett’s Pond.”

She must have had her misgivings to have taken that unlucky ciphering book with her! It would seem that the

most correct finishing schools for young ladies did not dwell on the most useful subjects in those days any more than they do now.

Notwithstanding this defeat she taught school two summers; one summer in Gericho, a parish in the town of Pomfret, where Uncle George and Uncle Davis Sharpe lived, but she boarded around in the homes of the school children, as was the custom for many years. She was very homesick, and little wonder. She was an only child, and probably knew very little about children, and to find herself, in the beautiful summer time in a schoolroom, with a lot of restless children to control and teach, might well have made her homesick. Uncle George, who had been a successful and popular teacher, visited her school and thought it lacked "order," a very important requisite in those days. Uncle George taught at least one winter in the little red schoolhouse, and it is quite possible that it was through him that Ebenezer Witter met his sister Dolly Sharpe, who afterwards became his wife and Dolly Witter's mother. Grandmother remembered that she was paid five shillings a week, 81 $\frac{2}{3}$  cents, "which," she declared, "was all it was worth," and she invested the whole amount for the summer's work in a piece of lace.

The next summer, 1825, she taught in Griswold and lived with her Uncle Fred Tyler's family.

Women taught the summer schools only, as it required a man to keep the big boys, who went only to the winter school, in order, so Dolly could have all the good times there were in the winter, and there were many with a town full of young people.

Grandmother told the story about one of the young men in Mr. May's family, a Spaniard named Alfaro, who was very gallant and a favorite with some of the young ladies. One Sunday after service she went home with Sarah Paine and remained over night. The next morning on her way home she went into Mr. May's as she often did when she had the opportunity. Everyone seemed surprised to see her down in the village so early, and she explained that she had spent the night with Sarah, and was just starting to walk home. She felt that they were incredulous, and afterwards learned that Alfaro went home very late the night before and when asked why had said he "had to go home with Miss Witter," which, as it was a distance of three miles or more, easily accounted for the lateness of the hour, as they had no suspicion of his veracity they did not know



which to believe. A minister who was there at the time, said: "I believe the young woman spoke the truth." It afterwards developed that Alfaro had been untruthful in many things and that he had told many disagreeable and false stories of the members of Mr. May's own family. The last grandmother ever heard of Alfaro, many years later, was that he was confined in a prison in New York, and that her friend Emmeline saw him there.

We can well believe that grandmother had her full share of attention. She was a charming young woman, tall and straight, with a simple, direct and cordial manner, clever and bright in conversation, with the grace and dignity of unselfishness, and unconscious of her many attractions.

Among them all there was one young man in whom her interests seemed to center. A young lawyer, Lorin P. Waldo, who was studying with his uncle, Squire Parrish. The attraction was mutual between them, but when marriage was proposed, her father was very strongly opposed to it, being prejudiced against the family. In the only talk on the subject her father said: "If you marry Mr. Waldo you shall receive nothing from me. I would rather see you married to an honest mechanic like James Stetson than to a man like Mr. Waldo." Grandmother replied: "Lorin P. Waldo will be in congress yet." Which prediction proved true within a few years. Then, in telling about this she added: "But if any preference for him continued in any way in my mind, the fact that he approved and supported the infamous fugitive slave bill when in congress, quite disgusted me. I yielded to my father's wishes and married the man whose name he had mentioned, although up to that time we had little personal knowledge of each other." She had met Mr. Stetson with the young people in society and at church. In their early acquaintance he played the bass viol and she sang in the choir.

Moses Parrish had played the bass viol for many years in the church, and grandfather paid him five dollars to teach him the art. Grandfather played for seventeen or eighteen years, until they moved to Northampton in 1843.

James A. Stetson contracted for a chaise and harness shop to be ready in October, 1824, and moved into it the following December. His mother and two sisters, Mercy and Kate, came to keep house for him. One year later, on the night of the third of December, his shop was set on fire by a painter whom he had discharged for drunkenness

the previous October. The man vowed revenge at the time and was seen in the neighborhood that night, and no one doubted his guilt. Mr. Stetson had hard luck in that year. His cousin and partner, Mr. Bradburn, died very soon after coming to Brooklyn, which was a double disappointment, as he was engaged to Mercy, "a handsome woman and good as she was handsome." The night of the fire Mercy took cold and died the following February of ossification of the heart.

Mr. Stetson had to borrow money to pay back what Mr. Bradburn had put into the business, and then came the fire.

There was great sympathy felt for his loss. The neighbors were standing about condoling with him, when Jacob Faucet said: "What are you all standing around here for telling him how sorry you are? Why don't you go home and bring him a load of lumber?" Then, suiting his action to his word he went home and hitched up and brought the first load of lumber with which to build the new shop before the old one had stopped burning. At the time of the fire James Stetson owed Daniel Robinson a note of \$75. Mr. Robinson went to him and said: "You needn't worry about what you owe me;" and later, when Mr. Stetson took him the money to pay the note, Mr. Robinson said: "Young man, I guess you need it as much as I do. Keep it."

The townspeople urged him to remain in Brooklyn and they did all they could to keep him. The next day timber and materials began to come in to build a new and larger shop. Subscriptions were made to the amount of seven or eight hundred dollars, more than necessary to rebuild. Mr. John Williams still has a pair of wheels made soon after the fire. Grandmother says, "I was sorry for the young man and spun a pound of linen thread for him, but I never knew that it did him any good, as the thread for his work came on balls and mine was in skeins." I'm not so sure but the 'pound of linen thread' was the beginning of the tie which bound them together for so many years.

They were married, James Alexander Stetson and Dolly Witter, Sunday, May 27, 1827, at eight o'clock in the evening. The groom was in his twenty-sixth year and the bride in her twentieth. Rev. Samuel J. May performed the ceremony. James Alexander was best man and Emmeline Franklin bridesmaid. There were twenty-five guests, among them Abby May, afterwards Mrs. Bronson Alcott and mother of Louisa May Alcott; John Gray and Sarah Paine, who

were married later, and others whom I do not know. She was taken to her new home in a new chaise. Some of the guests had a merry drive and were upset near the ledges, but no harm was done. One incident connected with the wedding day grandmother must tell herself. "One congratulation, or rather benediction, connected with the day of our marriage I have never forgotten. It was from an old colored man, born a slave, Charles Malbone. He had been helping about and when his work was done he put his hat under his arm, extended his hand to me and said: "God bless you forever, Miss Dolly, ma 'am, and Amen to come."

Mr. Edwin Scarborough, then a young man, has told of standing with others the next Sunday by the church door to see the newly married pair come from their home opposite, where Dr. Whitney used to live, the bass viol under one arm and the bride on the other.

So ended the first twenty years of my grandmother's life, care-free and happy years.

The following letter from Angell Colwell is interesting for the style of composition. It was probably written after the announcement of her engagement to Mr. Stetson, perhaps dashing young Colwell's own hopes. It is written in a fine hand with the long s and reads:—

"Permit me to write a few words to answer the lines which I received from your benevolent hand with joy and satisfaction, although I am unqualified to answer any composition which comes from your magnificent hand.

"An ancient father being asked by a sober young man how he should choose a wife, he answered him thus: 'When you see a flock of young girls together, run blind-folded among them and whoever you catch let her be your wife.' The young man told him that if he did so he might be deceived. 'So you may,' cried the old gentleman, 'if your eyes were open, for in the choice of a wife you must not trust your own eyes.' A woman if her husband be passionate and hasty must endeavor to pacify him with mild and gentle expressions, and if he chide, let her be silent, for the answer of a wise woman is silence; let her not tell her mind until his passion is over. No doubt but Mr. S—— will have a kind and loving wife."

## EARLY MARRIED LIFE

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My dear grandmother now entered upon a new and very different life. Grandfather had boarded his workmen since having a home of his own. There were six men, his mother and sister Kate, himself and bride. Without doubt grandmother expected to have his mother and sister remain with them and go on with the housekeeping, but not long afterwards Joseph, the older brother, came and took his mother away, his wife was much out of health, and the Hotel of which he was proprietor needed her. Kate went away not long after the mother's departure. She married George Benson, the only living son of that highly respected and influential family. Grandmother was left to shoulder the burden of this great household. Emmeline Franklin was teaching one of the village schools and lived with them, helping in many ways, and Olive Taylor was a young but much needed help. In the course of the year Mr. Daniel Robinson and clerk, being obliged to leave their boarding place, went to my grandfather's for a time, so the family numbered a full dozen most of the time. Mr. May had leased the Daniel Robinson house, the one on the northwest corner of the Common. His family became so dissatisfied with housekeeping, that grandfather and grandmother decided to take the house off Mr. May's hands. They moved into it the first of April, 1828, and Mr. May and his family boarded at Squire Parish's.

They took Mr. May's study, the southeast room downstairs, for their room and on May 22nd, 1828, their first child was born, "a plump, fair daughter."

The baby had so much hair that the nurse, Lucy Brown, said by way of announcing the arrival, "Jeems, go right down to Deacon Newbury's and get her some side combs." The baby was named Almira Backus for a dear friend, Mrs. Judge Backus, who died a short time before.

Mrs. Backus was a bright young woman, a great addition to their circle of friends. Her piano was the first one ever owned in Brooklyn.

Grandmother had never had the care of a child and says she "made hard work of caring for the baby. She was usually well but directly after Mrs. May's first child, Joseph, died of croup when he was away, our baby was attacked with the same disease when her father was away on business. James Greenwood went to Providence for him and found he had gone to Boston; he followed on, and found he had gone from Boston to his mother's in Walpole. There were no railroads then and Mr. Greenwood drove all that distance. When husband reached home, the danger was over."

Dear grandmother! what a new and different life it was, to be sure. However much her good mother had taught her, she had never had any care or responsibility; whatever she had done to help at home, there were at most four in the family, and the first year of married life had been one of great care, with an enormous family to plan and work for, and at its close a baby, another new proposition and responsibility. It shows at once the fine metal of which she was made. Lucky for her that she had stored up sound health and strength equal to the demand, that she had had the training to help her take the larger task by the handle, and that she had inherited qualities of mind and heart which carried her triumphantly over all the hard places.

I cannot conceive of my grandmother having ever been surprised out of her serene calm and wonderful poise. I never knew anyone so superior to all pettiness; she lived in an atmosphere of such largeness of purpose, full of such vital moral and spiritual interests, that insignificant things did not exist for her. Mr. May said: "She moves like a power."

In a long life of great changes and trials she always held up her end of the work, and carried grandfather over the rough places with her cheerful faith and wholesome philosophy.

In 1829 they moved into a larger house in order to take the minister and his family to board. In this house the second child, Mercy Turner, was born November 29, 1829.

Since the carriage shop burned and grandfather lost everything he had, he had had a hard struggle. He began business in the new shop entirely on credit, and although he had made many chaises and harnesses, he felt at last that the burden was too heavy, and he made an assignment of all his property for the benefit of his creditors. It brought much less than its value, and left him still much in debt.

At this time grandmother and the two children went



out to the farm and stayed until the new house over the shop—where the Davison house now stands—was built. Her father built the house part for her, and helped grandfather onto his feet again, and he continued the work.

While grandmother and the children were at the farm grandfather walked out to see them very often. To keep his mind from his troubles and anxiety, he counted his steps, putting a bean or kernel of corn from one pocket into the other each hundred steps. Her father loved the children, and little Mercy was a beautiful child, who endeared herself to him so strongly that when she died at only a little more than three years of age, he said: "I never want to love another child as I loved her."

Grandmother Witter was a great snorer, and once little Mercy went up to her and woke her, saying: "That isn't a pretty noise for a bangma to make." They may have stayed at the farm a year, more or less. At all events, Mary Sharpe, the third little daughter, was born in the new house over the shop December 8, 1831.

Mr. May continued his great work of reform; beside the Sunday services he had a mid-week meeting at the different houses, when the great questions of the day were discussed, as well as religious topics. When the subject of temperance first began to interest him he gave grandmother a temperance tract, which she read as she was nursing the baby. At her side was a glass of sangaree—some liquor mixed with sugar and water. She picked up the glass and threw its contents out of the window.

After a visit in Boston, where Mr. May heard some stirring temperance addresses, he announced on his return that he would serve no more wine or cider to guests, neither use it himself. The next time the meeting was at his house his sister Abby said as she served the refreshments, "Sam says you can have only cold water to drink, and if you are thirsty you can go to the well."

A few evenings later they met at grandmother's and when it was time to serve refreshments she brought in some cake and a pitcher of water and said: "The water in our well is as good as that in Mr. May's. We mean to follow the example of our minister!" In this as in the other reforms both grandparents were in full sympathy. Every intoxicant was banished from their home; wine was not used in pudding sauce or in cooking, "lest the children might acquire a taste for it."

Grandfather from his youth up was devoted to things military, from being Captain of a band of boys when only nine years old, and trying to run away as drummer in 1812, he had been Corporal in the First Regiment, Second Brigade, and First Division of the Militia of Massachusetts, under command of Capt. Sam'l T. Bird, in 1820, and Sergeant in the Third Company of the First Regiment of Light Artillery, in the state of Connecticut in 1828, and was made Second Lieutenant of the same Company in 1831. He would have been made Captain if his temperance scruples had not stood in his way. Then everybody "treated" and as he could not do that he did not get his commission!

The Anti-slavery Reform excited much bitter opposition, but my grandparents were among the first anti-slavery people in the country. Grandfather helped runaway slaves to escape by carrying them to Woodstock, the next station on the underground railroad. A female Anti-slavery Society was formed in 1832. Grandmother was one of the first Board of Managers, and was President of the Society for four years. It was given up in 1840 because many members had gone away and they had all become so firm in their belief it was not considered necessary to continue the meetings.

In May, 1833, at the time of the excitement occasioned by Miss Prudence Crandall who admitted colored girls to her school in Canterbury, and in consequence was imprisoned in the jail, in a cell just occupied by a murderer, grandfather and grandmother spent the evening with her, and Miss Benson remained during the night. In the morning she was bailed out by Mr. May and Mr. Benson. Grandmother said: "We were never afraid or ashamed to show our colors in all these controversies. It is a happiness that we were in them and shared the society of such earnest, disinterested people."

Their oldest son George writes: "I think that one of the most important of the advantages of our childhood was contact with the character of the men and women whom the reform interests of our parents drew around them and us. My childhood's memory may not be beyond criticism but, in my intercourse with men and society since, I have not met the same devoted, intelligent and pure-minded people as those who used to assemble at our house. Mention any of the early reformers in Anti-slavery, or liberal religious, or temperance work, and their names and personal character were familiar at our family board."

In the midst of all these interests outside the home, in the home was a new baby, the first son Ebenezer Witter, born October 21, 1833. That winter the baby and little Mercey had scarlet fever, and the first sorrow came with the death of little Mercey, February 12, 1834.

There were business troubles, too, things did not run smoothly, and if grandmother was like a mountain with strength in herself to resist all storms, grandfather was like a sensitive plant, and felt the coming storm while the sky was still clear. He was quick to foresee disaster, and failure was pain to him.

Grandmother said of him: "He was a religious man and needed all the strength and comfort it could afford in his long life of many misfortunes and disappointments." It seems as if fate tried him more than necessary.

He was ambitious, not for himself, but for his family. He was a tender, loving father, more demonstratively affectionate than grandmother. His attitude towards grandmother was always loverlike and gallant. After his death, grandmother said: "I always had a lover."

He struggled on with the chaise business for several years, at last paying off all he owed. He had to travel a good deal in connection with his business, and on one occasion when he was going to Philadelphia he took grandmother to Brooklyn, N. Y., to visit Emmeline Ketcham. Myra was then ten years old and took the baby (George) out to the farm to wean. Aunt Jacob came out to see grandmother Witter and watched Myra soothing and nursing the baby, who was very troublesome and unhappy, and then turning to grandmother Witter said: "She is the patientest little critter I ever saw." Myra mothered and cared for the many children almost as much as grandmother did.

There were ten children in all, Myra (Almira), Mercey Turner, Mary Sharpe, Ebenezer Witter, Sarah Frances, George Ripley, James Alexander, Jr., and Luey Dolly were born in Brooklyn, the last six in the house over the shop. James Ebenezer was born in Northampton, and Joseph Benjamin in the old Homestead. Grandmother had a fine, capable helper who lived with her many years named Anna Jack. She was of pure African stock, and had all its good qualities and none of its bad. She did everything; her skill in refitting garments from the older to the younger child would be hard to excel. She was a "mammy" to the children, and most painstaking with their manners and morals. The children loved her and she loved them and made them



visits and sent them goodies after going to Providence to live. She was a devout Christian and a good old soul.

Thanks to Mr. May's untiring efforts there were good schools in the village, and the children had every privilege of education grandfather could possibly give them.

In November, 1840, grandmother's father, Captain Ebenezer Witter, died. He had been a kind, affectionate father and it was a great grief to them all. Her mother was left alone on the farm, which was carried on for several years by farmers who rented it.

In January, 1842, there was serious illness, again scarlet fever came among the children, and James Alexander, Jr., a little more than three years old, died on the 21st.

About this time, through George Benson, his brother-in-law, grandfather became agent for the sale of silk made in Northampton. He had visited the community, and was acquainted with their large plans, and was much attracted by the wonderful opportunity for the education of his children, in the model schools already established in the community.

This appealed to him so strongly that he decided to take his family and join the Northampton Association of Education and Industry, which he did the next year.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

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It was in the spring of 1843 that the family moved to "The Northampton Association of Education and Industry" which had been formed in 1841, and was one of the many attempts made about that time to make ideal conditions for living, and promoting the higher and nobler side of life. \*"The projectors and leaders of the Northampton Association were as prominent in the activities of Anti-bellum days as were the transcendentalists and litterateurs of Brook Farm. Associated with this community as sympathetic friends or members were Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Sam'l J. May, David L. and Lydia Maria Child, Prof. W. M. Adam, George W. Benson, James Boyle, Charles Burleigh,, Samuel L. Hill, David Mack, and others."

The opportunity to purchase just the right place for such an undertaking came when Mr. Whitmarsh, who spent a fortune in the mulberry craze, was obliged to sell a valuable property in the western part of Northampton, called Broughton Meadows, consisting of beautiful land on both sides of Mill river. There were a four-story brick silk-factory, two or three farmhouses, a boarding house, and several other buildings ready for occupancy on the estate. Sam'l L. Hill and George W. Benson and others bought this property and conceived the idea of making a community after the Fourier plan.

They induced several families and some single people to join them, all of fine moral and intellectual character, who were willing to make sacrifices in order to benefit the world.

There were reformers, idealists, liberalists and some cranks. Education was one great object, there were schools with all the newest methods, including a kindergarten, and the finest teachers, among them Prof. Adams, who had taught Oriental languages in Harvard; Prof. Larned, a teacher of history; Mr. and Mrs. David Mack, who had had a private school for girls near Boston; Miss Sophia Fourd, from Dedham; Mr. Porter, a French teacher, and the Misses

\*From article by Olive Ramsey in *New England Magazine*, March, 1895.

Phoebe and Hannah Adam, teachers of music and dancing.

It was this opportunity for the education of his children which decided grandfather, after due consideration, to join the community. I think grandmother was pleased to go; she was social and progressive, and expected to find kindred spirits there.

My mother—Myra—who was fifteen years old at the time, has written the following account of the journey and life there: “How well I remember that journey. We spent the last night in Brooklyn with Mr. Philip Scarborough, who took us to Dayville for the train. He had a son and daughter-in-law in the community. There were so few trains that we had to wait nearly all day in Worcester, taking an afternoon train to Springfield. Before we reached Springfield father was told that the Connecticut river was so high there was no way of getting to Northampton, so we left the train at South Wilbraham and stayed at a little tavern over night. Against the advice of the tavern keeper and others, we started the next morning in a lumber wagon with two horses to drive up the east side of the river to the ferry at the foot of Mt. Holyoke.

“There were father and mother, six children and a driver. Mother and Baby Luey sat on a board across the wagon, the others sat on the little trunk, or on straw in the bottom of the wagon. When we reached the ferry we found they had not dared to attempt to cross in the boat for several days, but after long dickering they were persuaded to try to go over, so we drove onto the boat, and, it seems to me, we went a mile up the river close to the east shore and then the boat was taken down by the current to the landing opposite the starting point. How frightened we all were to be on that raging river that seemed ready to swallow us every minute! After we reached the other side, began what was really the most perilous part of our journey. The meadows had been covered with the flood, which had subsided, but had left pools and ponds of water in the low places. Two men with long poles went ahead of the team, and when they found a safe place for us we drove along, sometimes with the water up to the hubs of the wheels, splashing into the wagon, and sometimes we had to go around a pond. I watched mother’s face to see if she was afraid. I can see now how she hugged the baby and sat like a statue, looking ahead.

It was night when we got into Northampton street, and the driver refused to go any further, but father offered him

more money and he consented to go on. Our trials, however, were not over. When we got to Clay Hill there was a fence across the road, and the sign "dangerous passing," so we had to go back quite a distance and drive around by the paper mill. It was very late when we arrived at Uncle George Benson's, where we remained a long time before our goods came and we could get to housekeeping.

"We first lived in the boarding house with two other families, one of which, the Stebbins family, mother enjoyed.

"The Stebbins family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Stebbins and their two children, Calvin and Amelia, and his two nephews, Horatio and Giles, who had come to prepare for college with Prof. Adam. Horatio Stebbins became a Unitarian minister and settled in San Francisco. Calvin also became a Unitarian minister and Amelia was a noted teacher.

"It was in the fall of this year, November 1, 1843, that my oldest brother, Ebenezer Witter, IV., died. He was ten years old and a fine boy. He was like his grandfather, for whom he was named, tall, blue-eyed and gentle. His death was a great sorrow to my mother.

"As the plans for opening a boarding school for boys and girls included taking the boarding house for the pupils, we took the Mack's rooms in the factory. There we had on the same floor father's sister, Mrs. Richardson and family, the Bassetts from Lynn, the Nickersons from the Cape, the Parkers and some others. We ate at one table and were a happy company.

"We children went to school in the mornings, and worked afternoons.

"The advantages of having such teachers and schools were very great, and although many of the methods were novel, they were interesting and beneficial, giving us broad ideas and teaching a great deal not found in text books. I believe that today none of the older children would exchange those years for any others in his or her school life.

"The attendance at the boarding school was so small that it was given up and most of the teachers went away. We went back to the boarding house and had the girls who worked in the silk mill and several other single people board with us.

"It soon became evident that the association must be given up. The failure of the plans for the school and for raising silk, and for farming, and more than all else, the

failure to get people with money to join, made it impossible to meet the payments on the property and keep it running.

“Father seeing that the end was near, moved our family into Northampton town, where we remained one year, the older children attending the public schools, which were very good.

“In 1847 we went back to Brooklyn, father still remaining agent for the sale of silk for three or four years more.

“Our experience at the community was on the whole pleasant. We met almost all the prominent reformers. The Garrisons spent a summer there, Emerson, Alcott, the Mays, Wendell Phillips, and many others visited us, and mother enjoyed it all.”

Uncle George who was six to ten years old at that period says: “Whether the move to the Association fulfilled the anticipations of our parents I am not certain, but I am convinced that conditions surrounding the children at the Community were infinitely better than the environments which we moved from. I am under the impression that the First Kindergarten in America, or its principles of education, were first applied there.

“A class of boys and girls under Miss Fourd used to be taken out by the river and all the natural formations of the earth were constructed along the river’s bank. I am sure that I had a more definite knowledge in this line at six years of age than many children ever obtain.” Children were made happy. They were required to devote certain hours to work, and study, and everything was made pleasant. Teachers accompanied them in walks, instructing them as they went along in the rudiments of botany, geology, etc. Life-long friendships were formed there, and there were no regrets for having tried the experiment. There was a charm in the life, the memory of which they would not have taken away. Grandfather said: “I have ever been thankful that I went, altho I returned as poor as I went, in money, the advantages to my family were very great in schooling, and in association with the best people I ever knew.”

Grandfather had, from the first, his doubts about the success of the business, owing to the complicated arrangements of the management, and at the end the entire property was in the hands of one man, Samuel L. Hill.

Having been successful as their agent in getting the silk on the market, grandfather continued with them about four years more.



## THE OLD HOMESTEAD

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Ebenezer Witter II. of Preston bought of a Mr. Davidson 100 acres of land in that part of Pomfret called Scaddin, now known as Brooklyn. His son Nathan married Kezia Branch, November 15, 1753, and they came to live on the place his father bought, in January, 1754.

From that day to this the house has been occupied by their descendants without any break, and for one hundred and fifty-three years it has been the home of four successive brides one overlapping the other.

Kezia came in 1754 and died October 25, 1806.

Dolly Sharpe was married May 11, 1806, and died December 9, 1857.

Dolly Witter came in April, 1847; died June 5, 1899.

Mary Clarke came Nov. 26, 1868, and still reigns.

Only four children in three generations have been born in this old Homestead.

Dolly, the only child of Ebenezer Witter and Dolly Sharpe, 1807; Joseph, her youngest child, 1847; Kate De Normandie, her first grandchild, 1855, and George Allen Stetson, her first grandson, 1860.

When Nathan and Kezia came in January, 1754, the weather was so mild that the men with the team took off their coats and walked in their shirt sleeves. There were no roads, nor cleared land, the teams came by cart-tracks, and blazed trees, and the young couple followed behind on horseback. There was a house on the place and a well of fine water. The well has never needed repairs, and has never been dry, altho sometimes in prolonged droughts it has been too low to give a full pail of water at night, by morning it has filled up with enough for another day's supply.

They began to clear the land, and he built the stone walls all around the different lots. One cloudy day when clearing the woods from a piece of land he lost his reckoning. After calling aloud for a long time his wife heard him and answered, and guided him by her voice to the house. Nathan would cut down the trees during the day, and at



1. NORTH DOOR



2. SOUTH DOOR WITH WELL-HOUSE

THE OLD HOMESTEAD





night he and Kezia would trim them up and burn the brush.

He made the terraced garden back of the house, the first one in town; at the foot of it was a deer run, and deer were often seen there.

They found many arrow-heads in ploughing. He must have been a prodigious worker to have wrested from the forest a farm large enough to support thirteen children.

The house consisted of the west part of the present house, including the stairs. No one knows who built it, but it was a well-built house with rooms  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet high. There were no summer-trees in this part of the house. The walls were ceiled, except the living room, which was the only one plastered. There was an enormous stone chimney in the middle of the house with three fireplaces and two ovens. The stones were laid in clay. One fireplace was in the living room, a fireplace and small oven in the northwest room, and the big fireplace and bake-oven in the kitchen, with a wood-hole under the oven.

I was a big girl before grandmother had a cook-stove, and I remember how she used the brick oven, and the kettles hanging on the crane. This fireplace was so large it took in wood six feet long. They used to hitch a horse by chains to a log of wood, and drive into the kitchen, leave the log in front of the fireplace, and then roll it in with skids.

Inside the jamb on one side stood a dye tub, and on the other a wooden block on which the children used to sit.

The fire very seldom went out, but in case it did the tinder-box on the high shelf was ready to furnish the spark.

A high-backed settle with a box-seat, in which various things were kept, stood on the north side of the fireplace, on the other was a round table at which the mother sat to sew or knit, and on which was an iron candlestick and a tallow dip for light, or on rare occasions two.

A pipe-box with a drawer for tobacco, and a deep box for pipes, and the tongs used to take coals from the fire to light the pipe, stood on the high shelf. The same pipe-box now hangs on the wall in the living room.

The east part of the house, including parlor, bedroom and buttery, was built by Nathan Witter, who was grandmother's grandfather. Where the entry closet now is, stood a high dresser, with lockers underneath, and a broad serving place with shelves over it.

There was no partition between the front door and kitchen in Nathan and Kezia's time, they needed all the room there was; but Ebenezer with his little family made

the kitchen smaller by putting a partition the other side of the parlor door, which also made an entrance to the parlor without going through the kitchen. Out of the kitchen was a sink room with a wooden sink and shelves.

The horse block, where they used to mount, has always been where it is, and is still as solid as a rock.

The best pieces of furniture left by Nathan and Kezia were a fine mahogany desk with bookcase top, and drawers beneath and pigeon holes in the secretary part. The back was one solid piece of mahogany. There was a tall clock, a small table, a mirror, the historic warming-pan, and six fiddle-back chairs.

All but the six chairs were in the Homestead within my remembrance.

The story of the fiddle-back chairs in this: After Grandfather Nathan died one of his sons, Jonah, appears not to have wanted the chairs himself as much as he did not want his brother Ebenezer to have them. So one day he came to the house to take the chairs away. Nobody was at home, and he could only find five of the chairs. The sixth one was in the big closet off the northwest room so piled up with bedding that it was completely hidden. That chair remained in the homestead. Jonah, however, did not take the others to his home in Preston, but, after removing the seats, left them in his nephew Nathan's barn loft.

After Grandfather Nathan's death an appraisal was made of the furnishings, and different members of the family bought some of the things at appraisal prices. Grandfather Ebenezer bought the desk and mirror, paying \$100 for the desk. Grandmother inherited these things, and they have always been familiar to me. Other things which I have known all my life are two nice bureaus, a handsome table, the banjo clock which grandfather bought of Deacon Newbury, before he was first married, four ribbon-backed chairs, and the organ bought in 1848 or 49.

The other buildings were put up at different times. Grandfather Nathan built the corn barn and piggery and smoke house. Grandfather Ebenezer built the woodshed and carriage house in 1820, and the well-house in 1838.

My grandfather, James Stetson, built the milk room by the well in 1869, and moved the north barn down from the 'upper place' and built the shed attached to it.

In 1870 he took down the big chimney and made a good room in its place; used first as a kitchen, now as dining room.

He also built the present partition between the entry and kitchen, and put in the closet under the stairs. He also

finished off the east chamber upstairs in 1868, and put in the dormer windows, and partitioned off, from the big attic, the little room for the man.

Uncle Joseph, who has never left the farm, has added one convenience after another, and it is a comfortable, dear old place.

It is a great satisfaction to me that my children came to the farm and knew and loved their great-grandmother. The old homestead is a part of myself, my birthplace, my wedding place, there is no place I love so much.

This then is the homestead to which grandfather and grandmother returned after leaving Northampton in 1847.

NOTE.—See Appendix for deeds of land belonging to the farm which has more than trebled the original 100 acres; and for the present owners of pieces of furniture.

## BACK TO THE FARM

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My grandparents went back to the old homestead in April, 1847. A combination of circumstances seemed to make it desirable. Grandmother Witter had been alone since her husband's death, she was seventy years old and begged them to come there. The farm had been mismanaged by the men who had rented it, and she offered as many inducements as possible. She bought four cows, a yoke of oxen and another horse; and gave them the farm.

Grandfather was away from home a great deal traveling for the silk company, there was a new baby, the tenth, coming, and there would be peace and quiet in the old home.

The salary from the silk business was a great help in starting the farm, and caring for the family. The farm was all run down, and every building needed thorough repairing. Grandfather had never worked a day on a farm in his life. He was the laughing stock of the neighborhood. The first two years all he sold from the farm amounted to \$150. He had to buy hay to keep the four cows, two oxen and a horse,—but he steadily improved the land so that he kept twenty head of stock, and the farm gave them a good living.

Grandfather was never able to do the heavy work of the farm, but he was always busy, and little by little all the buildings were put in good repair, and many improvements made which added to the comfort and convenience of the household.\* He made harnesses and painted carriages for the village livery stable, and was an expert at the business.

He usually worked about the farm in thoughtful silence, but whenever he mounted his harness-stitching horse, a low, soft whistle marked the return of thoughts of the days and work of his youth.

Uncle George was ten years old when the family went onto the farm, and he not only enjoyed its freedom, but was able to add considerable to the working force. Little James, who was three, very soon caught the spirit and wanted his "tiring 'tick." He was a young lad when he undertook to hoe his row and keep up with the man. Grandmother saw

\*See letter in Appendix.



NEARING THE FARM



APPROACHING THE HOMESTEAD





he was getting tired and advised him to stop and rest but James said: "I'll finish this row or die in the furrow." One of those significant remarks which grandmother thought always indicated the character of even a little child.

Joseph, who was born October 12, 1847, and the only one of all the children born in the old homestead, soon took his place among the workers. One day he had been dropping corn and pumpkin seeds until he was tired out, he came in and told his mother he knew what made lockjaw, "it was saying one, two, three, four, five, and a pumpkin seed!"

Grandmother was much depressed before Joseph was born, she was physically tired out, and regretted losing the close contact with the men and women who had stimulated and enriched her life, and whose companionship had been so congenial to her during the community days. However much she had enjoyed, it is equally true that she had borne her full share of the work. She seems to have been the cook for the entire household.

Every new child was received with a glad welcome. Uncle George remembers Joseph's birth and being called in from work to have the youth presented with his mother's admonition to "lead him in the paths of righteousness." He remembers the pride with which his father announced the arrival of the new comer.

For twenty years grandmother "had one foot on the cradle." So ended the second twenty years of her life, years of joy and sorrow, anxiety and care, change and disappointed hopes, and growth.

She was a great reader, a clear thinker and a fluent talker. She always found opportunity in her busy life to keep abreast of the times and to know what was going on in the world.

One of her nephews said of her: "To hear Aunt Dolly talk you would think she did nothing but read, and to see her work you would think she could never find time to read." She used the minutes when things were cooking, or when nursing the babies, and she could knit and read at the same time. On her fortieth birthday as she stood at the north door looking over the lovely hills and country, she said: "The first twenty years of my life were spent here, the second twenty years away. I suppose, if I live as long, the next twenty years will be spent here."

She lived in the old homestead nearly fifty-two years longer.

Myra did not come back with the family from Northampton, but remained there and taught school during the summer of 1847. In the fall she went to Miss Lyon's school in South Hadley to finish her studies, and then taught again in Northampton in the summer of 1848. At the close of the term she went home and was very sick, so she was not able to go back to South Hadley as she had hoped to do. She taught the winter term in the little red schoolhouse, the first woman who ever taught the winter school.

She brought to it many of the new ideas from the model schools in the community, which quite startled the conservative members of the committee, but she conquered their prejudices and continued to teach. Her younger brother and sisters were among her pupils, and I suspect she "kept order." She went back to Northampton, where she taught until she was married, and for two or three years Aunt Mary was her assistant. They came home for the summer vacations and Myra taught the children at home. One day in the summer of 1852, after the new minister was settled, she was having a lesson in the northwest room. When the children saw the minister coming to call they kindly dropped themselves one by one out of the window. They seemed to appreciate the situation, and the next year, on her twenty-fifth birthday, May 22, 1853, Almira B. Stetson and Courtland Y. De Normandie were married on Sunday in the old church after the morning service by Rev. Isaac Coe, minister in an adjoining town. It seemed very fitting that she who was born in a minister's study, and finished her education at Mary Lyon's Seminary, a school famous for furnishing wives for preachers and missionaries, should marry a minister, and a royal minister's wife she has been for fifty-five years!

Aunt Lucy was twelve years old when Myra was married, and she thought her mother was proud because her daughter had married a minister, and felt she was rather superior in consequence.

Grandmother enjoyed the "new minister," and they discussed and argued all things under the sun, religious, political, moral and physical, until Lucy said "they ought to have quotation marks around their mouths." While the new parsonage was being built the minister and his wife lived with grandmother, and the first grandchild was born there on March 13, 1855. That was a great household to be born into! There were two great-grandmothers, a grandfather and grandmother, father and mother, and five uncles and aunts! Joseph, then in his eighth year, was much

puzzled by all the relationships; after studying over it a long time he said: "We're all something to the baby 'cept Myra, she ain't nothin'." (Being only the mother.)

I do not know how many winters the two great-grandmothers, Dolly Sharpe Witter and Polly Alexander Stetson, spent together, but one was this one of 1855.

It was charming to see them together with their gentle, old-fashioned courtesousness, and deference to each other. Each in her way was a remarkable woman. Great-Grandmother Witter was a small, quick-motined woman, always busy and anxious that others should be. Great-Grandmother Stetson was a large woman, although when she was married her husband could clasp her waist with his hands. She had a fine, lady-like carriage and demeanor. She had had a far harder life than the other.

She had had ten children and was left a widow in 1810 with a baby two months old, and forty dollars. She had been a busy, thrifty woman, and had brought up her family well. "They always had a best suit for Sunday and shoes to wear to meeting." She always had a smile and kind act and word for everyone. She liked to feed the cats at table, and would have to drive them away, saying: "Go 'way, go way; stop pricking me." Great Grandmother Witter always said: "If you didn't feed the cats they wouldn't bother you. They never bother me." She lived to be many years older than Grandmother Witter, almost ninety-six.

They had very happy winters together and made bed quilts and knit stockings and chatted, and left a very lasting impression on the children. They were women of force and to be remembered with affection and respect. Perhaps it was about this time that the ladies were invited to a quilting party at the corner house. There had been great preparations, good things to eat, and the quilt in the bars, everything ready when it began to rain. My grandmother was the only guest to arrive, and the poor hostess stood peering out of the window watching for the other guests, or a sign of clearing up, and every few minutes she would say, "I don' know, seems as if it's a leetle more kinder lighter," which came to be an often quoted sentence.

So we see that grandmother still had a big family to look after, at least ten on an average, and dairy work, butter and cheese to be made as well as bread and clothes, and in haying and harvest time several extra men.

There began now to be changes in the household. As we have seen, Myra was married in May, 1853, but she did

not permanently leave the old homestead until 1855. In the fall of that year Uncle George went to Northampton. He was eighteen years old, and wanted to leave the farm and earn some money. He told his father if he would let him go he would pay half the wages of an extra man the next summer, and he kept his promise. For three years he was an apprentice in a machine shop in Northampton and became a master mechanic.

In June, 1856, Aunt Sarah married Nathan Allen, Jr., of Canterbury and went to live in Danielsonville. Aunt Sarah was sweet, gentle and lovable and a handsome woman, twenty-one when married. Grandfather called her "the little white pullet," and grandmother spoke of her as her "summer child."

In September, 1856, my father and mother (Myra) left Brooklyn and went to Fairhaven, Massachusetts, where they remained thirteen years.

Grandmother was a faithful letter-writer, and for years and years she wrote one Sunday to my mother, and my mother wrote the next Sunday to her.

In December, 1857, Grandmother Witter died of pneumonia at the age of seventy-eight. The illness was brief and the end unexpected. Her epitaph is most fitting.

"Life's duties done as sinks the day,  
Light from its load the spirit flies,  
While guardian angels gently say,  
How blest the righteous when she dies."

She was a fine woman in every way and was called "the philosopher." Her family and ancestors were superior people, as the following chapter will show.

## THE SHARPES

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I said that my grandmother's mother had rare blood in her veins, and that is certainly true, but I have not been able to look up the Sharpes and verify the traditions current in the family. Grandmother believed, and her mother must have told her, that the family in this country was a branch of the grandee Sharpes of Bradford, Yorkshire, which was the younger branch of the Sharpes of Little Horton, whose most distinguished son was Granville Sharpe, the abolitionist, of London. See appendix.

Dorothy Sharpe, or Dolly, as she was always called, was the daughter of Robert Sharpe, IV., and Sarah Davis. Her great-great-great-grandfather came to this country from London in the ship Abigail in 1635, aged twenty years. He settled in Braintree first, then went to Muddy Brook, now Brookline, where he and Peter Aspinwall purchased a large tract of land in 1650.

His widow, Abigail, married Nicholas Clap.

The only son of Robert, who came over in 1635, was Lieutenant John Sharpe, born March 12, 1643, whose wife's name was Martha. He was killed in the battle of Sudbury in 1676. There is a letter which he wrote just before the battle. (See appendix.)

His eldest son, Robert, II., born 1665, was killed by Indians in Canada. His second son, William, born 1673, sold his portion of the farm in Brookline to his brother Robert, April 10, 1721, and removed to Pomfret, Connecticut.

There must have been wonderful fertility in Connecticut farms a hundred and more years ago.

William and Abigail, his wife, had ten children, all born in Brookline, and he sold his Brookline land and came to Pomfret. He was Deputy to the General Assembly, 1722 and 1723. John, the oldest son of William and Abigail, born July 14, 1703, married Dorcas Davis of Woodstock, Connecticut, September 12, 1725. They had ten children. Their son, Robert, III., born May 2, 1742, married Sarah Davis, daughter of Daniel Davis of Thompson, Connecticut, December 30, 1772. It was their daughter Dorothy, or Dolly, who



married Ebenezer Witter and was the mother of my grandmother, Dolly Witter. This third Robert was an Ensign in the Revolutionary War. He went from home, leaving wife and children with a boy to do the work. His wife (Dolly's grandmother) had to go with the boy into the woods to get fuel to keep them from freezing, and they were often short of provisions. She was the only woman in the vicinity who could write, and all the women came to her to write their letters, and brought the letters they received to her to read to them. Two sons, brothers of Grandmother Witter, George and Robert Davis—always called Davis,—married two sisters, Lucretia and Syrena Robinson. They were my grandmother's dearest and most intimate uncles and aunts, although Aunt Tyler (Sophia) was very kind to her, having her stay with her when she went to school in Brooklyn village, and was always doing nice things for her.

Uncle Davis Sharpe lived to be nearly ninety, and my first child made the fifth generation living: Great Uncle Davis, born 1790; grandmother, born 1807; mother, 1828; myself, 1855; my daughter Katharine, August 18, 1878.

Grandmother Witter once visited her sisters living in Vermont, taking the long journey on horseback. Either on the way or while there, she took the small pox and was sent to the "pest house" to get over it the best she could. She was not even marked.

It was a strange coincidence that when one of her nieces came from Vermont to visit her on the farm, she also came down with small pox. Of course Grandmother Witter could take proper care of her, as having had the disease she was immune.

Uncle George Sharpe was judge of the county courts. He was a strong Jeffersonian. At one time some people put up a poster saying "George Sharpe is a man not to be trusted." Party spirit ran so high that at a dance when the musicians began to play the tune "Jefferson and Liberty" everybody sat down.

An old historian says of the English Sharpes: "They were people of great intelligence; with a taste for letters and polite studies, well known for their writings, insomuch that it was said to be rare to meet so many learned authors so nearly allied."

The same may be said of the American family, out of which have come men of distinction as patriots, preachers, lawyers, judges, senators and teachers, men who have been eminent in their various callings.



Mr. May says of Hon. George Sharpe and his wife Lucretia: "I had not been preaching many weeks before my attention was arrested by a staid, sensible-looking gentleman and lady who came to church several Sundays, and whose countenances were radiant with the interest they took in what they heard. They were introduced as Squire Sharpe and wife of Abington,—a part of Pomfret,—the Hon. George Sharpe, lately a member of the senate of Connecticut. They were acknowledged of all men to be persons of very sound sense and elevated moral character. When they took a pew it was considered a great acquisition to the society. One day while walking I saw descending a long hill a large charcoal cart driven by a man whose contour and gait seemed to be that of my new friend, the Hon. Mr. Sharpe. I was a city boy and not accustomed to see gentlemen, members of the legislature, honorable senators, dressed in frocks, working like day laborers, especially as colliers. When near enough we saluted each other. I drew off my glove to shake hands. 'Oh! no!' said he with a hearty smile, 'I never give my hand to a friend when it is so dirty. My brother and I wish to clear up a four acre wood lot that we may plant it. The best way to dispose of the wood is to reduce it to coal, and we long since learnt the wisdom of Dr. Franklin's maxim, 'If you would have anything done well, you must do it yourself,' so we have gone into it. It is a dirty job, but we shall get through in three or four weeks and then you must come and visit us.'"

Dorothy, the daughter of Robert Sharpe and Sarah Davis, was born January 30, 1779. She married Ebenezer Witter May 11, 1806, and was the mother of my grandmother, Dolly Witter. The first green grass was seen on their ride to the old homestead and the first peach blossoms they saw were on a tree in their next door neighbor's yard. They came on horseback and my grandmother used the same saddle—it may still be in existence.

Grandmother said of her mother: "She was a woman of much intelligence, fond of reading and interested in religious questions and became a strong Unitarian. She was called 'the philosopher.' she was so calm and well-balanced, seldom having extreme joy or sorrow. She was a sort of encyclopedia for the neighbors, who often came to her with questions to be solved. One quaint old man said: 'Mrs. Witter what do they mean by forefathers? I know about fathers and grandfathers, but I don't know what forefathers are.' She was a smart woman in the best sense of the word.

A good housekeeper, neat, thrifty and industrious. She spun and wove most of the clothing and all the bedding used in the house. There are now in the old homestead coverlets, blankets and sheets which she made.

“She used to buy five-pound packages of cotton yarn and weave cotton cloth and exchange it for more cotton yarn or other commodities.

“She was nurse and often doctor for the neighbors. Once when she was sent for there had been a freshet and she walked over the swollen brook on the stonewall which might have tumbled down. She had little patience or charity for shiftlessness or laziness, but was ever ready to help those who tried to help themselves.

“She was a good woman and a good mother.”

Oh! the joy of an ancestry both able and willing to serve itself, its country and its God, which believed in the dignity of labor, was interested in the real progress of mankind, which lived up to its convictions, and worked loyally in every good and righteous cause.

No wonder that Dolly Witter was the beautiful blossom and perfect fruit of these sturdy, sound roots. She was a noble woman, fashioned to bear hardships, if necessary, without complaint, sorrow, if it should come, without bitterness, joy with a grateful heart, social distinction with a modesty and quietness ‘to the manner born;’ such was her personality, so strong that one felt her as soon as she entered a room.

## FARM LIFE

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As we saw, Grandmother Witter died in December, 1857. It was a shock and a deep sorrow, and following it in April, 1858, my Aunt Sarah died very suddenly. It was a terrible death to witness and grandmother was with her. It completely prostrated grandmother, who did not recover from it for a long time. During this time Mrs. Whitcomb was a dear friend and comforter; often their hands were clasped over each others on the rail which separated their pews in church. When Mrs. Whitcomb died, in 1872, grandmother said she did not care to live longer.

Uncle James was 17 when the war broke out and he wanted to go with Dr. Whitcomb. Grandfather would not allow it, he said "he did not care to have him black the doctor's boots and groom his horse." Uncle James was never reconciled to the decision; he wanted to be a doctor and felt to have been with Dr. Whitcomb, who was an excellent surgeon, would have been a great experience.

In March, 1862, he went to join his brother George, and for fifteen years to a day the two brothers worked together and lived side by side.

His wish to be a doctor never left him, and when he had laid up enough money to carry him through he entered the medical school in Yale College and received his diploma in his thirty-eighth year, a record of which I am very proud, particularly as his practice has proved his ability and special fitness as a doctor.

So one by one all grew up and left the Home, except Uncle Joseph. All were married except Aunt Mary. There were visits to the various homes, and new ties, and new interests brought into the life of my grandparents.

After going back to the farm there was almost never a time that they were without one guest or more. Grandfather's mother or sister Sallie lived there most of the time, and other of grandfather's sisters and nieces made frequent visits.

Grandmother's girlhood and life-long friend Emmeline, with her children, the Ketchams and Ovingtons, spent some

summers at the farm. Uncle George and Uncle Davis Sharpe and their wives were welcomed by everybody and frequent visits were exchanged. Beside Mrs. Whitcomb, there were close and dear friends in the village and the church in the three families of the Scarboroughs and the Conants, the Searles and Davisons, and everybody and everything connected with the church was of interest to both my grandparents.

It was the delight of my life to go to grandmother's—there was so much going on! So many nice people to see! Grandmother was a famous cook. I can taste yet her fricassed chicken and creamed beef, their own beef, cured and dried by themselves, no other ever equalled it in flavor, and the dip toast, the best I ever ate, and the rusk and doughnuts! Was ever anything so good as the curds and brownbread! It was wonderful to see the gallons and gallons of milk poured into the great shining brass kettles, watch the rennet stirred in and then in the morning see the curd cut into such perfect little squares, and have some to eat!

The cheese press was in the little room off the kitchen which was formerly the sink room, and there were rows of big golden cheeses on the shelves in the buttery which were turned every day. Churning days were very exciting, it was such fun to listen for the splash when the butter came, and I was allowed to peep in the churn to see the yellow lump swimming in the buttermilk.

The Thanksgivings were such glad times, everybody came home who could. There were feasts of such good things as only grandmothers know how to provide. One Thanksgiving was particularly gay, in 1859, when Uncle George brought his bride home for the celebration. She was such a pretty bride, Aunt Ellen! She was a Miss Stall of Northampton, and she is still the same sweet, lovable woman she was the first night that she came to the old Homestead.

On all these occasions Uncle Nathan, Aunt Sarah's husband, was always one of the family. He mourned her loss all his life, and it must have been sad as well as pleasant to be at all the jolly reunions.

I am not sure whether it was that Thanksgiving or another later one when there were so many that there was a big turkey at each end of the table, the two carvers were my father and Uncle Nathan. My father cut his bird all up, Uncle Nathan cut his more sparingly, which



THE CORN-FIELD AND NORTH BARN



THE TERRACED GARDEN





was quite fortunate, for the next day it was discovered that Uncle Nathan's was stuffed with a dish cloth!

When wiping the inside of the turkey, to get it ready for the stuffing, grandmother had been called away; someone else sewed it and put it in the oven.

I remember sweet droning summer Sundays with the long lovely ride to church and the beautiful trees throwing flickering shadows and spots of light over and around it; the quiet greeting of friends as they met near the door, the men all standing about outside, and the women talking softly inside the vestibule; and the mysterious lower room with the square pews, and the peace and calm of the service. Aunt Lucy playing the organ, and the choir full of young ladies lead by Mr. Jacob Kimball, who wore his glasses way down on the tip of his nose, which apparently made no difference to his singing.

The noon hour was interesting with its lunch sometimes from a basket taken from under the carriage seat, sometimes at Dr. Whitecomb's or Mrs. Davison's, who made famous mince pies for my father because he boarded with her when he first went to Brooklyn and liked her pies.

I remember going to the Sewing Society, too, with a great basket full of good things, and the pleasure it was to all the other ladies when grandmother entered the room. O, she was a queen, everybody knew it! I can see them now bending over the quilt, and looking up at her as she answered some question. She always made the coffee, and was a devoted worker in the Society, both of them giving out of all proportion to their means to support it. Her opinion upon all questions was eagerly sought and she was often consulted about parish affairs. My sister was at meeting once when some question came up for discussion after the service. The men had been talking but not getting the matter settled, finally Deacon Williams, the chairman, said: "I should like to hear what Mrs. Stetson has to say." Grandmother rose and very quietly and clearly presented a plan so simple and sensible, and entirely different from any other which had been suggested, that when she took her seat it was moved that her plan be adopted, and it was unanimously carried. It made my sister swell with pride to see such deference paid to grandmother, and to hear her natural, dignified, logical reply.

There were grand rides on the loads of hay; and the orchard full of clothes and bees; and delicious ox-heart cherries on the trees at the end of the house. The hand-

somest oleander tree I ever saw stood in a tub by the front-door step. Milking time, too, and going for the cows as I sometimes did, and driving the long string of them into the barn was a great delight. I am sure I was meant to be a farmer!

I was not the only grandchild who loved to be at the farm. George Allen, also born in the old Homestead, spent many summers there. When he was a little boy he was afraid of the pigs, when he got into bed he would look at the portraits on the wall and say, "George Sharpe, Creshy Sharpe, any pigs under my bed?"

Every grandchild loved to be there, the fowls and animals were great wonders to the town-bred little folks.

One little granddaughter wrote home she was afraid of the big gobbler, her little sister replied: "I ain't 'f'aid of a dobbler, I's 'f'aid of a file (fly)."

With all this great family, on an average ten in number, with all the dairy work, and cooking, and sewing, and company, grandmother never said she was tired in a complaining way. She never talked about the work or what she had to do next week or next month, but when the time came she rose to the occasion and accomplished whatever there was to do. Once she made a cashmere or thibet dress in one day, cutting it, and making it and wearing it in the evening to a party at Uncle Davis Sharpe's.

Not the least remarkable thing about her was her ability to carry on all this work without any fuss or hurry. She never did an unnecessary thing, she never hesitated or wondered what to do next. She moved about the house with all the dignity and absolute command of the situation that a General would have, everything she did was well done. "Mrs. Stetson moves like a power," Mr. May said years before.

It was her custom to lie down a few minutes after dinner every day and sleep if she could. She attributed her ability to do her work so easily and her long life of good health and strength, to this daily rest. She always took time to read good things. She read with keen delight, after she was seventy years old, Darwin, Huxley and Spencer, and was interested in every new movement for the uplifting of the people. One winter she and Aunt Lucy, who was teaching in the red schoolhouse, belonged to a Shakespeare club which met once a week at the homes of its members; and they went together to fairs, and several social events in the village. Another winter was varied by bean porridge parties.

But the rare, never-to-be-forgotten occasions were when Mr. May or Mr. Garrison with all the Scarboroughs and Dr. and Mrs. Whitecomb came out to tea. They would tell of their experiences, and discuss the great issues of the day; at these gatherings was a veritable "feast of reason and flow of soul."

One of the great interests in their lives was the church and Society and an account of its life and trials as told by grandmother is most interesting. Some of the other staunch supporters of the church were these same dear friends who were all brought closer together because they had stood firmly for the faith which was in them.

## CHURCH AND SOCIETY

Taken from Grandmother's Own Account.

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When Deacon Nathan Witter was a young man, Dr. Whitney was the minister in Brooklyn. He was a character, wholly independent in his preaching and practice, a great story-teller, always illustrating his conversation with apt stories, but his memory served him so well that he never repeated a story to the same person without prefacing it by "as I have told you before."

Dr. Whitney and Deacon Nathan went to many a dedication and ordination in the neighboring towns, and to settle church quarrels and controversies which were frequent disturbers of church-life long ago. They went so often that Grandmother Kezia did not approve of it.

Dr. Whitney knew human nature pretty well and was a hearty, peace-loving parson. Many stories are told of him. Grandmother particularly liked this one about Cuff Woodward, a slave. When he was dying Dr. Whitney asked him where he expected to go. Cuff replied, "Oh, Pomfret, Woodstock, just where Dr. Whitney pleases to send me," as if the good doctor were the arbiter of the here and the hereafter.

Altho the deacon and the doctor had such good times together they did not always agree and Deacon Nathan sometimes found fault with his minister. He especially disliked his habit of resting his arm on the pulpit cushion whilst he read his sermons, following the lines with his fingers as he read. Grandfather considered it "lazy." When grandmother was nine years old, in 1816, Mr. Luther Willson was installed colleague with Dr. Whitney. Deacon Nathan said that he had never read in the Bible, or ever heard from the pulpit the word "trinity" until after Mr. Willson came. Mr. Willson came from Massachusetts just as the controversy between those with Unitarian and Trinitarian views was opening.

Dr. Whitney had not been in the habit of preaching doctrinal sermons. He separated from the "Consociation,"

for what reason I do not know, and formed with a Rev. Mr. Lee of Lisbon, and Mr. Atkins of N. Killingly and others, what they called an "Association of Ministers."

When Mr. Willson came Dr. Whitney was anxious to have him settled right away, but Grandfather Nathan objected, saying he thought it would be wiser to hear the young man longer before doing so. Dr. Whitney replied, "I tell you the young man will wear well." I do not know just how long Mr. Willson had been here when he said: "I cannot say that I believe that Jesus Christ is my God," the sentence which precipitated the controversy which ended in a division in the church. Twenty of Dr. Whitney's followers presented Certificates of Separation at a Society meeting, after which they returned to their seats apparently expecting to take part in the subsequent proceedings as usual.

Mr. John Parrish a keen lawyer, was chairman of the meeting, after looking at the Certificates one by one as they were presented he rose and said: "If those persons who have presented Certificates of Separation will leave the house we will proceed to business. I have often heard of one person cutting his throat but never knew before of twenty persons cutting their throats at the same time."

This withdrawal from the Society left the church and its belongings in the hands of the Unitarians, the Orthodox party worshipped for a time in a Hall. There arose many occasions for differences, one of which was in respect to the Communion Service which belonged to the Society but which had been kept at Dr. Whitney's. When the Society asked for it, it was refused, but finally it was arranged to have an appraisal of the Service and either party by paying one half the amount should own it. The Orthodox Society paid the required sum and the Unitarians bought a new Service in Boston.

Mr. Willson was a married man and had several children, Grandmother went to school in the village with his daughter Martha, and she thought there were three or four sons.

I do not know how long Mr. Willson remained but the period was marked by excitement and long continued bad feeling.

Deacon Nathan liked Mr. Willson, and disliked the way Dr. Whitney treated him, and grandmother's father and mother were in full sympathy with him, and his belief.

After Mr. Willson left there was a time without a regular service, during that time our people went occasionally



to the Episcopal Church five miles distant, as did other members of the Society. It was at this time that Priest White, the Episcopal clergyman, and his family interested themselves in grandmother and lent her books which she enjoyed, among them Pope's "Essay on Man" and Scott's "Lady of the Lake" which her cousin read aloud as she spun.

Col. Putnam, the most prominent man in the Episcopal church, in order to secure government land in the state of Ohio which was appropriated for those who served in the War of 1812, was obliged to declare himself without property. As he really had much property Priest White reproved him for doing so, which resulted in Priest White's removal from the church.

During this time Dr. Whitney and his adherents held regular services in the church. The Unitarians, to whom the church now belonged, arranged to have a service begin before the regular hour. Grandmother did not know of this arrangement and rode down on "Nellie" at the usual time, and while hitching her horse at a convenient place on the west side of the Green, she saw Dr. Whitney with some of his deacons and several church members leave his house, which was opposite the church, and go to the front doors of the meeting house, and after a moment saw them turn back and go into his house. She thought it was too bad if they had fastened Dr. Whitney out of the church. She afterwards learned that when he opened the door and saw that services had begun and that it was prayer time, he turned back and had the communion service in his own house.

Dr. Whitney sued the Unitarian Society for his salary, as he claimed that he was settled for life. He lost his case on the first trial, and appealed, and gained it on the second. This added greatly to the burdens the young society was carrying.

The pulpit was supplied by students from the Harvard Divinity School. Each preached four Sundays and was entertained in families connected with the society. Rev. David Reed, who founded and first published "The Christian Register," was one of them. He found his wife, Miss Marian Williams, daughter of Mr. Harold Williams, here. It was she who wrote the beautiful letter in the seventy-fifth anniversary number of "The Christian Register" when in her ninetieth year. Rev. Charles T. Brooks also married a Brooklyn lady, Miss Celia Williams, a sister of Mr. Herbert Williams. He was the one who wrote Brook's "Book of Prayers."



In November, 1822, Samuel J. May was installed pastor of our church. He came in the spring,—a young man just graduated from Harvard, of a prominent Boston family, with every advantage of voice and manner—to our country village, to a new and struggling church, the first Unitarian Society formed in the state of Connecticut, and lived and labored not only for his own church and people, but for the best and highest interests of the town and vicinity.

Professor Norton said in his eulogy of George William Curtis: “Of all the blessings which can befall a community there is none greater than the choice of it by a good man for his home, for the example of such a man sets a standard of conduct, and his influence tends to lift those who come within its circle to his own level.”

This was eminently true of Mr. May, his courteous and friendly manner lessened the bitterness of our opponents to a degree, though one of Brooklyn’s most intelligent and influential ladies, Mrs. Capt. Tyler, said: “Mr. May is a gentleman, but he is no Christian.” He interested himself in raising the standard of our public schools, and one after the other, as he became convinced of their truth, he adopted the reforms of the day, peace, temperance and anti-slavery. His advocacy of these in the pulpit and on the street, displeased some of his own people, who “preferred to hear the gospel preached,” who left to join the other church, where such heresies were not heard.

The subject of temperance was peculiarly obnoxious, as the custom prevailed of serving wine to guests and patrons, and every grocery and hotel sold liquor in some form. I think I can truly say that in every family which opposed Mr. May’s temperance principles some member became intemperate.

The anti-slavery reform excited much bitter opposition from some of the most prominent people of the town, and many offensive things were done when anti-slavery meetings were in progress. The advocates of the cause were virtually ostracized, but Mr. May’s influence attracted the best and most active reformers to our town and we had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with those who were persecuted then but glorified now.

Mr. Garrison’s marriage to Miss Helen Benson brought him often among us.

Mr. Alcott’s marriage to Miss Abby May brought him frequently to Brooklyn.

Mr. May’s influence was felt for half a century or more in this county, which had a higher standard of education and

morals than prevailed elsewhere in this vicinity. It was life long with the young people of the Society and their descendants as well. Even an oft repeated petition in his prayers was long retained. Emmeline Franklin Ketcham in her last sickness, nearly seventy years after, was heard to repeat, "Make us more pure and holy, more devout and thankful, and more heartily disposed to every good word and work."

The old church and society have meant much to our family for generations, from Great-great-grandfather Nathan, who was deacon in the first Ecclesiastical Society for fifty years, and the Great-great-grandmother Kezia, who went to meeting with a baby in her arms and let down fourteen pairs of bars and sang in the choir, and Great-grandfather Ebenezer and his wife Dorothy, who stood by the old church most loyally through all its troubles, great-grandmother singing in the choir, sometimes the only one, and then dear grandfather and grandmother first met in the church, she singing in the choir and he playing the bass viol. Grandfather was deacon for many years, and both were ever loyal and true to its best interests, ready workers and valuable members all their long lives.

Their children have been members of the church and supported it through all its vicissitudes, singing in the choir, playing the organ, teaching in the Sunday School, and today Uncle Joseph is superintendent of the Sunday School and treasurer of the Society, and his wife is the president of the Alliance.

My father's first parish was this dear old church on the Green, he met my mother as a teacher in the Sunday School, they were married at its altar, I was born into its fold.

There are too many hallowed memories connected with it, it has been too bound up in our lives not to have for it a deep, abiding love.

Long may it live and continue to do its work.

## CHANGES

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Up to the time of the Civil War no one who needed food, or shelter, or assistance was turned away from the door. People in the neighborhood who were destitute or sick were clothed, fed and cared for. The Fagans were very poor, and the Townes could always repeat a chapter of lamentations. The darned coat man came regularly, and one tramp who came begging for food had such a soldierly, distinguished bearing that in spite of his rags he seemed like a nobleman, and when he put a large piece of butter in his coffee there was no further doubt about it in the minds of the young folks.

When the war broke out grandfather was afraid to have tramps remain over night.

None of the immediate family went to the war, and Uncle James was the only one who begged to be allowed to go. Aunt Lucy expressed her patriotic zeal and interest by singing all the war songs. I remember her sitting at the organ in the fiddle-back chair and playing and singing "When Johnnie Comes Marching Home," "When This Cruel War Is Over," "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys Are Marching," and "Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground" and others. During the war all the letters from the boys who had gone were read aloud in the family, and when the war was over they gave a big supper to the fourteen men who returned.

Before the close of the war Uncle George and Uncle James were making Winchester rifles for Uncle Sam day and night.

Grandfather was in the state legislature in 1864. He was always proud of having voted for the amendment to the Constitution which freed the slaves. He visited the hospitals in New Haven, taking fruit to the soldiers. He was offered every kind of an office in the town, but I think he always declined.

In May, 1866, Uncle James Ebenezer was married to Caroline Burritt in New Haven which was then and still is his home.

In September, 1868, Aunt Lucy married Vernett Evans Cleveland and went to live in Northampton where they still live.

Thanksgiving Day, 1868, another bride was welcomed at the old Homestead, Aunt Mary Joe, who has lived there ever since with Uncle Joseph.

Aunt Mary had a private school in Providence for many years, until her health broke down and she came home in 1873.

When I was a child Aunt Lucy Brown, no relative, but a lone old woman who had nursed grandmother with some of the children, lived in the family. She was a crotchety old woman, but she was not afraid of mice. One day when there were callers a mouse ran up under her petticoats, she clapped her hand quickly over the little beast and held it until the guests had gone. She had lived in different families and worked for many people, at first getting only 75 cents a week and never over \$1.50. But she saved every cent and when she died she left over \$20,000—a large sum—out of which she left grandmother \$100. The children who were never fond of her were thoroughly indignant that she gave the best friend she ever had so small an amount. I believe the man who had charge of her funds did give grandmother a more substantial recognition of her years of care of the old woman.

Grandfather was always so polite and gallant, so nice with the little grandchildren. I remember standing on a stool while grandfather said: "One to make ready, and two to prepare, three to go slambang right down there," and he watched with such interest my three or four-inch jump, and clapped his hands and laughed as if it were a grand feat.

My sister Sarah had been ill and had had her hair cut off. She did look like a boy, and grandfather putting his hand over his eyes and peering into the carriage said, "Why, who is this? This must be little Sam," and "Sam" she has been ever since.

Life went on serenely, there were yearly visits to their children, which made a pleasant change for them and gave unbounded pleasure to those they visited. It was like rest and peace and sunshine when they came to our house, and many a bit of wisdom and good advice grandmother gave to me, which I well remember. The only time an attempt was made to burglarize our house grandfather and grandmother were visiting us. Grandfather got up in the room over the burglars' heads and they were frightened away, taking only

a few things from the parlor and leaving behind many things which they had intended to take.

Grandmother loved these trips. She enjoyed meeting the nice people, and was never the first to speak of going back to the farm. She used to say that when she was seventy she should like to give up all the care of the house as her mother did and have time to read and visit.

She always looked very handsome in her nice black silk with the snowy folds of net in the V shaped opening, with her black lace head-dress and little side curls. She loved to have her hair fussed over, and I was as proud as Lucifer when I could be barber.

In 1871, grandfather being seventy years old, the farm was handed over to Joseph and Mary Joe. The big chimney was taken down and a nice room built in its place, which grandmother used as her kitchen, leaving the young people to carry on the work of dairy and farm and the old couple to take care of themselves.

In 1873, while visiting their children in Northampton and New Haven, they contracted chills and fever and had a long, severe illness. Aunt Mary came home that summer needing rest and care herself, but she was able to help care for them. Grandfather slowly regained his health and strength in the next spring, working in his garden, which he loved, and from which he supplied all the vegetables for his family table for many years. Grandmother continued to suffer at times from malarial conditions as long as she lived. They resumed the exchange of visits with their long-time friends, went to church and took up again the household tasks.

One of the dearest and most welcome guests was Mary Richardson, grandfather's niece, and Aunt Mary's particular friend since community days. She loved the country, and brought such good cheer that it was like a tonic to have her about. She had a standing invitation to Thanksgiving, and was always doing the nicest things, bringing books, sending magazines and adding in many ways to their comfort and pleasure.

This little family of three, grandfather and grandmother and Aunt Mary, continued to keep house by themselves until 1891, or just as long as grandmother was able to carry her part of the work. So the hope of a release from care and responsibility at seventy was not realized.



## THE GOLDEN WEDDING

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As the time drew near to Sunday, May 27, 1877, thoughts of the golden wedding began to fill the minds of all their children. They meant to have a celebration which should be a crowning tribute of affection and appreciation, love and honor, from friends and family. Handsome invitations were sent to acquaintances and friends far and near. Aunt Lucy and her little son Harry were at the farm a month beforehand helping to get everything in order. My mother and two sisters came a week before, and cake and all sorts of things were made. On Friday there were fourteen arrivals, including grandfather's oldest sister, Great Aunt Mary, eighty-two years old, who came with Mary Richardson, Uncle George and his family with the twins, Uncle James and Aunt Carrie and myself.

Saturday night the family in the old home numbered twenty-seven. There were many friends in the village at the hotel, or with friends, from Kingston, Northampton, New York, Boston and Nashua. Everybody offered everything they possessed, one neighbor offered lodgings for sixteen!

Many beautiful flowers were sent, among them a bouquet from Virginia from James Alexander, the "best man" of fifty years before, who was too infirm to take the journey.

One feature of the day was to be the marriage of the eldest grandchild, Kate De Normandie, to George H. Wilson of Boston, under as nearly ideal conditions as earthly things ever attain.

I was born in the old homestead and I was to be married there, standing where my grandmother stood when she was married, and on Sunday, too.

It was a heavenly day. Aunt Mary dressed the golden bride, who wore a white skirt and lace shawl upon which had been transferred the embroidery from her wedding gown of fifty years ago, (and which every bride in the family has since worn) and a handsome new black silk dress, simply made, with skirt and polonaise, open at the



throat with a lace kerchief inside. She was a handsome bride and the golden bridegroom looked "just splendid" in his new black suit.

I, the young bride, wore white tulle and lilies-of-the-valley, and came in on grandfather's arm, he was "best man" today, and George brought in grandmother, who was the "bridesmaid."

The special guests who came for this part of the celebration were present at one o'clock. My father married us, and congratulations and refreshments followed the ceremony.

The golden wedding reception began at two o'clock. As soon as the dear couple were seated a little procession was formed, headed by the twins, eight months old, James Alexander Stetson, II., and Jane Witter Stetson, who were carried in the arms of their father and mother; each gave a tiny gold dollar and Uncle George made a droll little speech for them; the new couple came next, then the oldest grandson and next oldest granddaughter,—George Allen and Myra De Normandie,—then little Nellie and May, and Harry and Sarah. Each gave some present and some words of congratulation. After this little procession of grandchildren my sister Sarah, otherwise known as "Sam," recited a golden wedding poem, and the family sang "We are all here." Then Uncle George, the oldest son, taking a hand of each, made an address to grandfather and grandmother which was the finest thing in the day, simple, earnest, beautiful words of love and devotion, there was not a dry eye in the room when he finished. Uncle James said a few words and dropped a purse with fifty gold dollars in it in grandmother's lap, Uncle Joseph was too overcome to speak. Then we sang a golden wedding hymn to the tune of "Old Hundred."

It has just struck me as very strange that the daughters made no addresses. It certainly was not because they could not. My mother can make as fine a speech as anybody, and I am sure Aunt Mary and Aunt Lucy are both perfectly able to. Weren't women expected to do such things thirty years ago?

The house was full of guests, neighbors and friends, who came and went all the afternoon, everybody saying some words of appreciation and love, and leaving some token of the day.

Many letters were received from those who could not be present, a few of them were read, among them a beautiful

one from William Lloyd Garrison, another from Rev. Thomas T. Stone, and other dear friends.

To close the festivities my father made an excellent address and offered a prayer.

At ten o'clock, for the sake of the golden couple, the house was quiet and all were in bed, a tired but happy crowd, for long as they had anticipated the event, and as much as they had thought, and talked, and planned for it, their anticipations were more than realized. The occasion had been more perfect than their fondest dreams.

Beside gold and silver money, there were many gifts, useful and ornamental. One deserves special mention as a work of art and sentiment, a decorated plate, with pictures representing the story of their married life, from Mr. and Mrs. Albert Conant of Boston.

This is Mr. Garrison's letter:

New York, May 22, 1877.

Mr. and Mrs. James A. Stetson.

Dear Friends:—Your card is received with its pleasant announcement that the fiftieth anniversary of your marriage will be consummated on the 27th instant. Great is my regret that I shall not be able to be with you and the happy company that will assemble on an occasion of so much interest, and so rare in wedded life; but tomorrow I shall be on the great deep, on my way to a foreign shore; and, therefore, instead of giving you my presence, I can only send you my warmest congratulations, which come from the very core of my heart, and also my best wishes for your continued health and happiness even to a centennial period.

Yours has been a true marriage, and, through all its vicissitudes of joy and sorrow, gain and loss, acquisition and bereavement, its ties of love have been without strain and indissoluble. You have had dear children given you to rise up and call you blessed; you have made troops of friends and acquaintances, who hold you in high esteem and most affectionate remembrance; you have set an example of conjugal oneness and fidelity delightful to contemplate; your lives have been uniformly marked by kind expressions and generous deeds to comfort the sorrowing, relieve the distressed and administer to the wants of those on beds of sickness; and you have kept pace with the spirit of progress and reform, whereon rests the hope of the world for its ultimate deliverance from the manifold evils that still infest it.

“There was a marriage table where One sate,  
Haply, unnoticed, till they craved His aid—  
Thenceforward does it seem that He has made  
All virtuous marriage tables consecrate.  
And so, at this, where without pomp or state  
We sit, and only say, or mute, are fain  
To wish the simple words, ‘God bless these twain!’”

Yes, beloved friends, may the blessing of God rest at all times upon you and yours! A laurel wreath for each of your brows on the “Golden Wedding” anniversary.

Our acquaintance and friendship began more than forty years ago, first brought about by "remembering those in bonds as bound with them." Through the long and terrible struggle to deliver the oppressed you never faltered, and have lived to see every fetter broken.

Your old, attached, and steadfast friend,

WM. LLOYD GARRISON.

Read at the golden wedding.

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Letter from Mr. Stone:

Bolton, May 10, 1877.

My Dear Friends:—

If anything could induce me to leave home for so long a journey it would be such an invitation as we have received from you. An occasion so rare as that of the golden wedding is of itself a matter of interest wherever it is known; its occurrence in our own case a little more than two years ago, gives it to our minds an added interest; and when now it comes to friends so justly dear to us, we would not conceal the reluctance with which we give up the hope of expressing our personal sympathy with it, as also with the marriage so appropriately connected with it of the oldest grandchild. Our hearts, you may be sure, will be with you, and our wishes for the highest blessing both on those who must in the course of nature soon be severed—only we trust, to be reunited in a higher sphere,—and on those who are looking forward to the new joys of that state which they are soon to enter. How gladly should we greet alike the aged and the young, in sympathy both with the memories and the hopes of the day! But—as it is, my wife I suppose, would off at once and go; there seems to be nothing which her seventy-four years are unable to bear, but I am less brave. And the last winter has been to me rather a drawback; nor have I yet recovered all it has taken from me. At any rate I have not quite the courage to undertake the journey.

I do not feel willing to close without another word. My residence in Brooklyn was to me one of the brightest states of my life. I can never forget the friends whom it gave to me, neither I nor my wife, they are equally dear to us both. And among those friends, I trust you will pardon me for saying, we cannot tell how highly we prize your family. Friends from the outset, friends through the whole season of the ministry so dear to the heart; friends still, and we hope forever. And I wish to add, even if I said it before, how few things in the course of a life now covering more than seventy-six years, have ever brought to me sweeter comfort than the letter of sympathy given me just before leaving Brooklyn; it will never pass out of my heart. But I cannot dwell on these remembrances, sacred as they are. We must on—into the future. Age is said to look back, as youth looks forward. But why not remain always young, and live in hope, not memory? Or rather let memory give fresh nutriment to hope?

Besides those of the immediate family we remember of your kindred those who we hope, will be able to meet you, Mr. and Mrs. Sharpe. Assure them of our highest respect and of our best wishes on their behalf.

Farewell dear friends. Peace be with you in your bright gathering and forever. May we all meet at last in some higher mansion of our Father's house.

THOMAS T. AND LAURA STONE.

P. S.—Our love also to all friends who may be with you.

Addressed,

Miss Mary S. Stetson,

Brooklyn, Conn.

Read at the golden wedding.

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Another letter also read:

To Mr. and Mrs. Stetson:

Most cordial golden greetings on this anniversary of the 50th year of their wedding day. "Abby May Alcott" feels herself most flattered and honored, thus to have been remembered by the dear Brooklyn friends not only for her own sake, but the dear sake of him who must be associated with her in this fond remembrance. "Samuel J. May" can have lived on this earth nowhere without leaving the sweet odor of a just good name, and to be associated with such a name and life is one of the privileges of my long continued being among the relations of this state of love and friendship

Please to accept this valentine of my continued good wishes and tender memories.

Affectionately,

ABBY MAY ALCOTT.

Concord, May 16th, 1877.

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This letter accompanied a gift of dining table and chairs from members of the Society:

"Please accept these gifts as tokens of the great love and respect of your friends and well-wishers.

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Searles,  
Mrs. Hannah Scarborough,  
Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Witter,  
Mr. and Mrs. H. Kendall,  
Mrs. Sanger,  
Mr. and Mrs. John Hyde,  
Mr. George Kendall,  
Mr. Charles Searles,  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Kimball,

Mrs. Wood,  
Dr. Whitcomb,  
Miss Maria Spaulding,  
Mrs. M. H. Williams,  
Miss Clarissa Davidson,  
Mrs. J. Davidson,  
Mr. C. J. Williams,  
Mr. N. G. Williams,  
Mr. H. Taylor,

Mrs. John Palmer.

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For a detailed list of the presents on this occasion and the programme as carried out, and the menu of good things served to all who came during the day, see appendix.



MOTHER'S ELM IN 1905





## TOWARDS SUNSET

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On the 8th of July, 1877, grandmother was seventy years old. She had often wished that there was an elm tree on the green between the house and barn, so Uncle Joseph and George Allen found a nice young tree and it was planted to celebrate this birthday. Grandmother selected the spot for it, and held it in place while the others shovelled the earth about its roots. Dr. Whitcomb and niece, Maria Spaulding, the Misses Scarborough, and Mary Richardson, Uncle Joe and Aunt Mary Joe, and George Allen, grandfather, grandmother and Aunt Mary assisted at the planting. Refreshments were served and the afternoon was most delightful. Grandfather watered it every night, and built a wooden fence around it to protect it from the cattle, and today, thirty years later, it is a handsome big tree, an ornament to the place and a living monument to grandmother's memory.

In 1882 grandmother went with Rev. Caroline James, the minister of the old church, and her sister, to the National Unitarian Conference in Saratoga. It was one of the greatest pleasures of her life. My mother and father were there, with friends whom grandmother knew, who increased her enjoyment by drives about the place. She met friends whom she had not seen for many years and received from each a cordial greeting and thoughtful kind attentions. A son and daughter of Samuel J. May were there, Mrs. Olive Williams, a Brooklyn woman whom she had not seen for years, and others. She enjoyed exceedingly the meetings, and hearing the prominent ministers of the denomination, with whom she was in full sympathy and to whom she was an attentive listener. She said: "It is a very different thing to be a Unitarian among hundreds of the faith than to stand alone in our small Society, at times the only Unitarian Society in the state." She returned refreshed and strengthened by the experience, and said: "I felt as if I'd been in heaven."

Grandmother was always a reader and a thinker. As I said before, she read Darwin, and Huxley and Spencer,

when she was seventy or more, so one can easily understand what a misfortune it would be to her to lose her eyesight. One evening she was very much astonished when sitting with her hand over her eyes to find that when she uncovered one eye that she could not see anything at all. She asked why the lamp was not lighted, and as it was lighted it was a surprise to all to realize that she was entirely blind in one eye. She was treated by a good oculist, the cataract was removed and she was able to read again.

In 1882, when my sister Sarah was teaching in the little red schoolhouse and living at the farm, she was reading one day in the west room and grandmother said: "If you find anything interesting in your reading Sarah, I would be very glad to have you read aloud to me. I fear I shall never be able read again."

On inquiry we found that she had strained her eyes in making a bright colored rug and had not been able to read for about a week. She had not spoken of it to any one, and the quiet, uncomplaining, matter-of-fact way in which she said she should not be able to read again impressed Sarah very much; especially as the loss would have meant so much more to her than most people. Happily it was only a temporary inconvenience, and she was able to read and knit almost to the end of her life.

Grandfather's deafness made it quite difficult to read to him, but he read aloud a great deal to grandmother as she knitted. When it was almost impossible for others to make him hear, she would sit near him with her hand on his knee and speaking in an ordinary tone would tell him what the conversation was about.

In the summer of 1884 they took their last journey together, going to Northampton and New Haven, where everything was done for their comfort and happiness. Grandfather's deafness and other infirmities unfitted him for travel and he was content to remain in his home the rest of his life, with his garden and familiar surroundings.

It was this same summer that Aunt Mary saw a knitted bedspread; thinking grandmother might like to make one like it she asked for the directions and bought the material. Grandmother began one at once and was so pleased with the result that she continued to knit bedspreads,—thirteen in all,—five different and elaborate patterns, which she gave to her six children and grandchildren, who prize them as their most precious treasures. Knitting became her chief occupation. It seemed like second nature for her to fall into the way of knitting a stent each day as she used to do as



GRANDMOTHER AND GRANDFATHER



a child. It was remarkable how easily and for how long at a time she could knit without fatigue. Beside the thirteen bedspreads she knit a pair of reins with bells attached for every little boy she knew in the neighborhood and Sunday School, and afghans of colored worsteds, and wash cloths for friends and church fairs, all of which were valued for her sake.

As a relief from knitting, reading and various games interested her. For years she and grandfather played three games of backgammon every evening after tea. She was especially fond of whist and played a good game when she was over ninety.

As grandfather's memory began to fail and he no longer read aloud nor was interested in backgammon nor solitaire, Joseph or Mary or the visitors played a rubber of whist with grandmother.

There was always an open door and cordial welcome to visitors. She was a remarkable entertainer, and had the gift of drawing out the thoughts of others. It was an education to listen to the conversations on all the vital questions of the day, political, scientific, moral, religious, when Dr. and Mrs. Whitecomb, Edwin and Perrin Scarborough, the Conants and others were together.

Grandmother was pretty hard on the younger people who were content to pass an entire evening in games, and very much deplored the lack of conversation among them. When grandmother was almost ninety a granddaughter who was spending the winter in Boston, went to the farm for a visit, she was deeply mortified to see how disappointed grandmother was that she had not attended a course of lectures given that winter in Boston by Mazoomdar. Grandmother had read every word that she could find in the papers about him and his lectures, and was most enthusiastic in her admiration of him, calling him "The Star of the East." She had looked forward to this visit confidently expecting to have a full account of him from one who had seen and heard him.

On May 27, 1887, the sons and daughters, with their wives and husbands came together again to celebrate the sixtieth wedding anniversary. None of the grandchildren were invited, as it was thought that so large a company would be too great a tax for the dear old people. The day was passed in quiet talk and the guests returned to their homes very soon.

In 1889 grandmother gave everybody a great surprise,



when she arrived in New Bedford with Uncle Joseph the morning of September 26th, to attend the wedding of Uncle George's daughter Nellie to Robert L. Baylies. It was such a joy to every one to see her that the attention was quite divided between her and the bride. She was eighty-two, in good health physically and mentally, but it was her last journey out of town.

In the spring of 1891 the entire family in the old homestead was prostrated by grippe, followed by pneumonia. The lives of both grandfather and Aunt Mary were despaired of, and Aunt Mary Joe was nearly as desperately sick upstairs. Uncle Joe himself was sick, too, but he kept up by sheer will power. The devoted care of the doctor and the skilful nursing of Aunt Luey and my mother finally prevailed and all the patients recovered. The constant kindness of friends who sent not only luxuries, but positive necessities, will never be forgotten. Neither of the grandparents were ever quite as well as before this illness, and it was decided that they would no longer try to have a separate table, but would join with Uncle Joseph and Aunt Mary Joe.

Grandfather failed gradually through the winter of 1892-'93. For some time he had not known the members of his family, but his deeply religious nature was shown by frequent Scriptural quotations and repetitions of the Lord's prayer. One day Dr. Bennett went into his room and gave the Masonic signs, all of which grandfather answered correctly. He had been a member of the order seventy-two years, although he had not attended a lodge meeting for many years.

On the morning of March 5, 1893, those who were caring for him feeling that the end was near, helped grandmother into the east room to see him. He did not recognize her, but when she said, "Don't you remember Dolly Witter?" a beautiful light came into his face and he said: "Remember Dolly Witter? Of course I remember Dolly Witter, and I bless the Lord for the first day I ever saw her."

Those were the last words he ever spoke to her. That same day his long life of ninety-one years and five months was ended, the trials and disappointments, as well as the successes were all forgotten, but he had been throughout his whole life that noblest work of God, an honest man.

He lived to be older than any of his brothers or sisters. His children were all at the funeral services, which were conducted by my father. Each one remembers his unselfish and devoted love for and care of his family, and his intelli-



gent interest in and promotion of the best good of his country. He was missed in the home and grandmother often longed for "the lover" of sixty-five years.

Her children never wearied in doing all that was possible for her comfort and welfare. Her grandson, George Allen, put carriage and driver at her service whenever she liked to ride, and she enjoyed driving to the adjoining towns and through the country, recalling many long past events and people.

She celebrated her ninetieth birthday by a drive in the neighborhood; and received many letters and loving remembrances from children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. One granddaughter, "Sam," wrote from Windemere of the Queen's Jubilee, which she had just seen in London, and of the many places of historic interest she had visited. These affectionate and appreciative letters were exceedingly gratifying to her. A poem was written for the occasion by Mary E. Robbins, a friend and neighbor.

As she looked back over her four score years and ten nothing outside of her family joys and sorrows afforded her greater satisfaction than her participation in the anti-slavery, temperance and peace reforms, and the personal knowledge and friendship of the noble persons who despite persecution and opposition had the courage to labor and suffer for the right.

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July 8, 1897.

TO DOLLY WITTER STETSON ON HER 90TH BIRTHDAY.

Congratulations in the air,  
Congratulations from everywhere!  
And something is said of a birthday,  
What is this great occasion pray?

Just ninety years ago today  
A little stranger came this way,  
Helpless and hungry, naked as sin,  
Crying for someone to take her in.

So Capt. Witter, and Dolly, his wife,  
Who had never a child to gladden their life,  
Took her into their home. They said  
She should be sheltered, and clothed and fed.

So at this old house baby Dolly was kept;  
She ate and drank, and laughed and slept,  
And, without a doubt, she sometimes wept,  
Chattered and prattled, and bye and bye talked,  
And one day found her feet and walked.

Later came play, and work, and study,  
And Dolly grew fair and strong and ruddy.  
Before she reached the age of twenty  
I suppose that she had lovers plenty.

For at that time one morning in May  
Her chosen sweetheart, happy and gay,  
Stood by the side of the maid he had won,  
And words were spoken that made them one.

And the parents are left again alone,  
While Dolly went out to a home of her own.  
And children came there, fair girls and boys,  
Each one increasing the cares and joys.

Life was business then with the constant need  
Of clothes to wear and the mouths to feed.  
Oh, such a flock for the parents' care!  
But none too many, not one to spare.  
Yet, He who gave them, with gentle hand  
Transplanted three to the better land.

The young folks learned, as wise youth do,  
It was well to paddle their own canoe.  
And they went from under the old home roof  
To weave in life's web some worthy woof.

Each in his chosen line of toil  
To wrest from earth's forces a share of spoil.  
And there was some courting done I trow,  
For there were wedding bells we know.

While the beaming eyes of the daughters three  
Say, "The best man in all the world sought me!"  
Each son brings home with manly pride  
"The loveliest girl on earth" his bride.

Since the birdlings from the nest have flown,  
Many new nests from the old have grown;  
But again there is a coffin: the sweet young wife  
Though suffering, passed to a painless life.

The branches increase on the family tree  
Since James and Dolly, one, two, three.  
Brave off-shoots, too, who with honest heart,  
In the world's great workshop act well their part.

Well, summers come and summers go,  
And winters come with chill and snow,  
And the couple at home are not so spry,  
As they were in the years long since gone by.

The faces have wrinkles here and there,  
There are streaks of silver in the hair.  
But hands are ready and hearts are warm  
To render all service that love can perform.

Four years ago the white-haired sire  
Obeyed the summons, "Come up higher."  
The mother is waiting her call to go  
To the rest above from the labors below.

And because on that long ago July morn  
This hardy baby girl was born,  
There are greetings, greetings, many and jolly,  
For nonogenarian Mother Dolly!

May your days and nights be full of peace  
'Til the day shall come to bring release,  
And you change the knitting and throwing dice  
For some sweet employment in Paradise,  
And leave the rest in the "old arm chair"  
For a seat with the loved in the home "up there."

MARY E. ROBBINS.

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Her last Thanksgiving Day was November 24, 1898. Her three sons and their wives and Aunt Mary were at home. There was good cheer, and the day was a happy one. Saturday morning she gave them her last blessing and benediction as they left for their homes. My sister was a frequent visitor at the farm, and taught in the little red schoolhouse, and on three or four occasions as she was going away grandmother said, "It is very probable that I shall never see you again," and added her blessing and farewell, but she did not say it at the parting which was really the last.

The excitement of the Thanksgiving visits had been too much for her strength and Saturday night she had a slight stroke of paralysis. One side was so much affected that she could not move herself. Aunt Lucy, the great stand-by, who for years had come at the first call in sickness, and for all special occasions, whose strength and working powers seemed endless, was immediately sent for. A terrible snow delayed her arrival until Wednesday.

Grandmother gradually improved, and even resumed her knitting, glad to be doing something again. Aunt Lucy stayed until a nurse could be found, and all the children thought of and did everything possible to give her every care and attention, every necessity, comfort and luxury as long as she lived.

Uncle Joseph never did a better thing for the family than when he married Mary Clark. From the first she identified herself with all the interests of the family, the church and the town. She was very fond of grandfather and grandmother and no work was too hard and no sacrifice

too great to be made for them. She has made and kept the home with a wide and generous welcome for us all, and has always been ready to use her wonderful health and strength for the comfort and pleasure of the family. No daughter could have been more devoted, no sister more helpful. We all wish for her some release from her many cares and labors, and many happy years of enjoyment as a reward for her years of loving, faithful service.

Although grandmother improved, this illness was the beginning of the end, which came June 5, 1899.

My mother, Aunt Lucy, Uncle Joseph and Aunt Mary Joe were with her at the last.

Dear Aunt Mary, whose care and devotion to both grandfather and grandmother had been constant and unceasing for twenty-five years, who had ministered to them in sickness and in health, was very ill in New Bedford at the time of grandmother's death, and she was spared the pain of being left alone when grandmother was taken away.

No words of mine can be a worthy eulogy of this wonderful woman, whose strength of character was in every motion and felt by every one who came in contact with her. She graced every society and illuminated every place, however humble. Every memory of her is sacred to us with a consecration never to be obliterated.



THE FAMILY REUNION AT THE OLD HOMESTEAD IN 1907

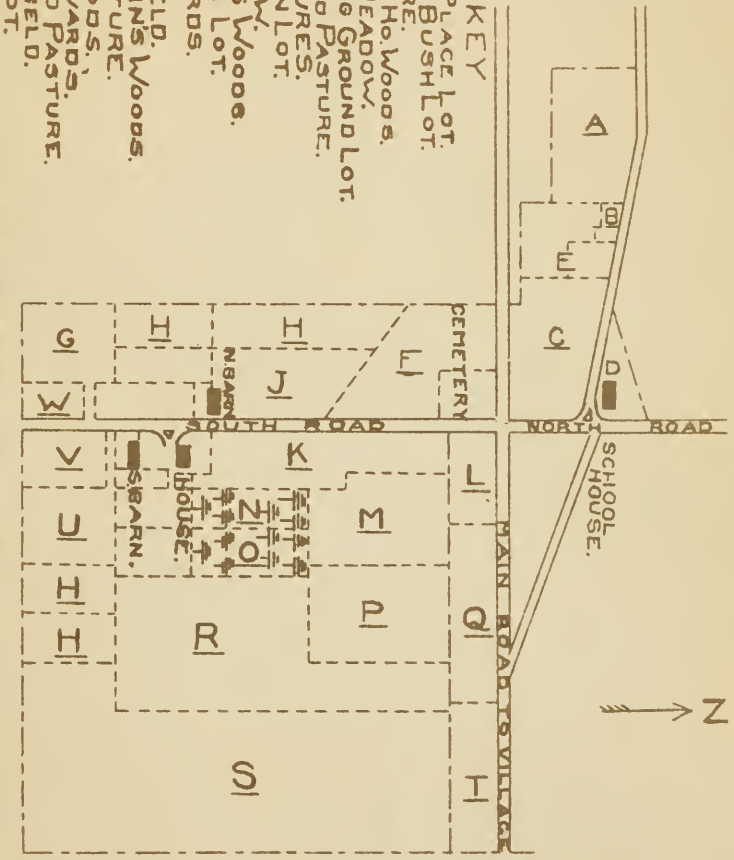




A BODUE CITY J270 200 ST JY W

- UPPER PLACE LOT.
- QUINCE BUSH LOT.
- SCHOOL Ho. Woods.
- LONG MEADOW.
- BURYING GROUND LOT.
- W. Wood PASTURE.
- PASTURES.
- N. BARN LOT.
- MEADOW.
- EVANS Woods.
- CLOVER LOT.
- ORCHARDS.
- OLD FIELD.
- HUTCHINS Woods.
- E. PASTURE.
- E. Woods.
- WOODWARDS.
- ARNOLD PASTURE.
- CORNFIELD.
- DAM LOT.

OLD HOMESTEAD.



JAS



# APPENDIX

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## VALEDICTORY ADDRESS. (1823.)

This world is replete with changes, and these changes are admirably demonstrated by the sacred writers' trials. It is indeed unreasonable to anticipate perfect happiness on earth's low ground. The sun of prosperity is often obscured by the clouds of adversity, and all who have arrived at maturity are ready to acknowledge that the sweetest rose is attended by its thorn, and that all,—all on earth is shadow.

How great and surprising are the revelations produced by time—the changes in families, in towns, in kingdoms and in countries, in the course of a few years or even months are almost incredible. Present to a mind which can contemplate the present state of this, our country, and compare it with what it was two centuries ago, when our ancestors were engaged in sanguinary wars and desperate struggles with the merciless savages. The changes will appear almost supernatural.

We now behold America peopled with an enlightened, refined and happy race. We see seminaries of learning established in all our towns, where children and youth are indulged with opportunities for acquiring useful knowledge, and if America cannot boast of men of eminent erudition it is certain that in no other country can there be found so many of all classes who are favored with a comparatively good education.

In consequence of a few enlightened and benevolent individuals in this town, (Thompson, Conn.), a school has been established which promises to reward their efforts and answer their expectations. That they may be realized is the fervent wish of one who has been permitted to be one of its members and who is now called upon to address perhaps for the last time her beloved associates.

And must we part? Must I now bid you all farewell? Is this the last opportunity which I shall ever have this side the grave to behold you who are so dear to my heart? Oh, can it be! Ah! Yes. No bond of friendship however strong can retard the progress of time. Many and pleasant have been the hours of our acquaintance, but alas! they are gone, nevermore to return, and oh, my dear young friends, let us ask ourselves what report they have borne to heaven.

Our privileges of a religious and scientific nature have been great. Of this we have often spoken, but how can words portray the good we have shared, or speak the mercies which indulgent

heaven with liberal hand and unremitting care has given us, the happy daughters of Columbia! As we must now retire each to her respective home let us recall to mind the instruction which we have this summer received, let us strive to excel in every thing lovely and useful, let us not neglect our studies, but daily commit to memory some important truth. Let us take the Word of God for the criterion of our faith and practice and endeavor to become as useful, as virtuous, and as happy as our beloved instructress has wished and prayed we might be. Although we separate, we separate to love each other. My heart revolts at the idea of separation, but "Be still my heart, submissive lie, nor heave a sigh, or vent a tear."

Farewell my beloved companions. May your journey through life be strewn with flowers fresh, and when the last faint flashes of life's expiring lamp have quivered out their little moment, may we meet in yon bright world of light where parting, sighs and farewell tears shall be sounds unknown forever.

My beloved Instructress: How shall I find words to address you? Oh, that I had the eloquence of Cicero or the talents of Demosthenes, that I might in some degree express my feelings! And must we part? Must I bid you a long, perhaps a last, farewell? Must I never hear the sweet accents of wisdom fall from your lips? Can I part with you to whom I owe so much and can comparatively repay so little? Permit me to tender you my sincere thanks for the kind instruction which I have received since I came under your guidance and care. Be pleased to throw the veil of charity over my many imperfections; attribute them not to any want of affection, or disrespect, for heaven knows I do respect and love you. You have not only instructed me in human science, but in wisdom, which is from above. You have added to your precept your example, which to follow may heaven assist me. And oh, may you be rewarded for your care and fidelity by seeing your pupils walking in your steps. May heaven shower down its richest blessings on your head and may your whole life be one continuous scene of happiness and peace.

Kind, loved Instructress, wilt thou now receive  
My thanks and undissembled love—my hand.  
Ne'er will thy image my fond fancy leave  
Till sublinary joys and sorrows end.

When she delights our former joys to rove,  
And with a pensive pleasure does retrace  
Past blissful scenes, 'tis then the joyous hour  
Shall welcome be when first I saw thy face.

Adieu! Urania, joy and peace be thine;  
Discretion, prudence, zeal thy steps attend.  
Heaven's sweet approving smile around thee shine  
And guard and guide thee to thy journey's end.  
Then may our souls perfected friendship prove  
And ever, ever sing redeeming love.

—Original Poem to Miss Urania Dutch, Beloved Instructress.

## WITTER NOTES.

Joseph and Ebenezer Witter were not the first of the name in the colonies. William Witter was one of the earliest settlers in Lynn, Mass., and "bought a tract of land comprising what is now Nahant and a part of Lynn of Black William for two pestle stones" in 1637. He died in 1659, aged 75 years.

There are also records of business transactions in his name in Salem. His son, Josiah Witter, married Elizabeth Wheeler, daughter of Elder Wheeler. They were all living in Stonington, Conn., Nov. 16, 1670. Josiah married for a second wife a daughter of John Crandall, who was imprisoned in Boston, Aug. 1651. John Crandall later went to Westerly, R. I., and died in 1676. It would be interesting to know if Prudence Crandall, who was imprisoned for taking colored girls into her school, and whom grandfather and grandmother visited, was a descendant of John Crandall, whose daughter married Josiah Witter.

There was also a Richard Witter, assistant justice in the Barbadoes in April, 1631.

This may have been an elder branch of our ancestor's family, but I do not know that it was.

I do not know where they came from in Scotland. There are some fine old Witters noted. There was a Daniel Witter, Bishop of Killaloe, 1669-1674. See Burke's General Armory.

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The deed of the first 100 acres, bought of a Mr. Davidson by Ebenezer Witter, II., of Preston, and given to his son Nathan Witter, is dated March 9, 1765.

74 acres, £114, Oct. 11, 1759. Seth Paine to Ebenezer Witter, II, bought for his son Nathan.

74 acres, £130, November 14, 1772. Thomas Arnold to Nathan Witter.

12 acres, \$333.33; bought of Jacob Witter (by Capt. Ebenezer, III).

23 acres, 140 rods. (Also bought by Capt. Ebenezer, III).

9¾ acres, 19 rods, \$345.40. William Putnam to Ebenezer Witter, III, April 1816.

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When the man, afterwards Governor Cleveland, was surveying the "deep valley," he said: "If my conscience was as white as Mrs. Witter's tablecloth, I would not care whether I were going to the 'deep valley' or the 'dark valley.'"

The tall clock is owned by George Allen Stetson.

The mahogany desk, by Uncle George.

The banjo clock, by Jane Witter Stetson, now Mrs. David Beaman.

One bureau, by Sarah Y. DeNormandie, now Mrs. T. W. Bailey.

The fiddle-back chair, by Aunt Lucy.

One ribbon-back chair, by my mother.

A case of drawers grandfather made was given my sister Myra many years ago.

The other things, including mirror, little red table, warming pan and later things, including organ, as far as I know, remain in the old house.

## SHARPE NOTES.

The grandee Sharpes were of Bradford, Yorkshire. The first one mentioned is Thomas, who married Dorothy Weddal, and died in 1670. They were the younger branch of the Sharpes of Little Horton, near by; all records except the registry were burned when Bradford was taken during the Civil War.

If our family of Sharpes is the same, it could only be proved in England, if at all. There was another Robert Sharpe, who came from London in 1635, age 21, in another ship. See Hotten's Lists of Emigrants, 1600-1700.

Burke's General Armory gives 27 Sharpes bearing some six or seven coats of arms, so it is impossible to know definitely without further information about the Robert of 1635.

I am told that the Sharpe genealogy (which I have not seen), has as frontispiece, the coat of arms of the Sharpes of Little Horton that was granted to DeJohn, Archbishop of York, in 1691, so it could not possibly have been borne by either Robert, who came in 1635, and would not belong to any of their lineal descendants. No references in this country give a coat of arms to either Sharpe or Witter, even in the Whittier form.

### ENGLISH LINE TO GRANVILLE SHARP.

1. Thomas m. Dorothy Weddal, died 1670.
2. Their son John DeJohn b. 1644, was Archbishop of York. His son, John, of Grafton Park.
3. And Thomas, b. 1693, was Archbishop of Northumberland. His son Granville Sharpe, b. Nov. 10, 1735; d. July 6, 1813. Contemporaneous with my grandmother's grandfather, 1742-1835. He was the great anti-slavery man, and a friend of America.

John de John Sharpe, D. D., the Archbishop of York, was said to be "one of the most popular preachers of his time." He was chaplain to James II, 1685-88, and member of the House of Lords 22 years. He was buried in St. Mary's chapel in York cathedral, a sumptuous monument was erected to his memory.

His son John, of Grafton Park, served his country and her majesty, Queen Anne, 1702-14. He was in several parliaments and the Board of Trade.

Thomas Sharpe, b. 1693, was Archdeacon of Northumberland, and was buried in the cathedral church of Durham in a chapel called Gallilee.

The most noted was Granville Sharpe, son of the Archdeacon of Northumberland, who championed the slave, and who after years devoted to fighting the iniquitous slave trade, lived to see the abolition of slavery by an act of the British Parliament in 1833.

There is a mural tablet to his memory in Westminster Abbey. The council of London erected a bust with this inscription:

Granville Sharpe  
to whom England owes the  
Glorious verdict of her highest Court  
"That the slave who sets his foot on British ground  
becomes that instant free."

Born Nov. 10, 1735.

Died July 6, 1813.



## JOHN SHARPE'S LETTER TO THOMAS MUKINS.

Address—"This for Loving Master Thomas Mukins, living at Hatfield, this deliver."

"Loving and much respected Master: My love is remembered unto you and my dame, hoping you are well as I am at the writing hereof, blessed be God for it. My wiff desiars to be remembered unto you and my dame and we are yet in our habitation thro' God's marsi, but we are in expectation of the enemi everi day if God be not the more marsiful unto us. I have been out 7 weeks myself, and if provisions had not grown short we had folood the enemi into your borders, and then I would have given you a visit if it had been possibel; for I went out a volunteer under Capt. Wardsworth of Milton, but he is caled hom to recout about theire owne town, so I left off the desire at present. There is many of our friends are taken from us. Capt. Jonson of Roxberi was slaine at Naragansit, and Will Lincon died before his wound was cured. Filup Curtis was slaine at a wigwam about Mendham, but we have lost but one man with us these wars. My mother Vose is ded and my sister Swift. I pray remember my love to John Elis and his wiff and the rest of our frends, and however it is like to fare with us, God knows, and we desire to comit all our affairs into His hands. So having nothing els desiaring your praiars for us, I rest.

"Your servant,

"JOHN SHARPE.

"Mudiriver, of the 1 mo., 1676."

On a stone in Sudbury, Mass., is this inscription: "Capt. Samuel Wadsworth of Milton, his Lieut. Sharpe of Brookline, and 26 other soldiers fighting of the defence of their country, were slain by the Indian enemy April 18th, 1676, and lye buried in this place."

The son of Lieut. Sharpe was one of the petitioners to the General Assembly of the colony Aug. 13, 1704, for the incorporation of Brookline as a distinct town.

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## COPY OF GRANDFATHER'S LETTER ABOUT HIS BUSINESS.

The burning of the shop where I learned my trade, together with the owner and his brother, who was the foreman of the works, both of whom died from burns received at that time (the 20th March, 1820) by which calamity my future life was determined, leaving me free at the age of 19½ years, having served three years, in which I learned to be a good carriage trimmer and found ready employment at good wages.

At the age of 23 years I came to Brooklyn, in August, 1824, contracted for a shop to be built by October and moved into it in December following. Now the reason for this boyish haste was that Mr. Bird (my master that was) found the best market for his chaises in the eastern towns of Windham County. There was no shop in the state east of Connecticut River where chaises were made to any amount. Besides I had a partner about my own age who had saved about as much as I had and joining his

money with mine we thought we had enough to begin business. He could not come until the Spring of 1825, but, alas! he was taken sick and after lingering along for a few months he died. What money he had advanced his friends wanted and I had to borrow. So I was left alone among entire strangers to paddle my own canoe as best I could. It is not necessary for me to say that his death was a very great disappointment. I was not discouraged, I had plenty of work at good prices and employed six hands during the spring, summer and fall until December, the third night my shop took fire or was set on fire by a painter that I had turned off for drunkenness the October before. I had reason for believing he was in the neighborhood that night, very soon after I saw in a newspaper that near Middletown an Englishman bearing the same name and supposed to be a painter, was found in the river, supposed to have committed suicide, that description answered to the man I turned off.

While the fire swept everything I had to do business with and more, in Sept. previous I moved my mother and sister Mercy from Waltham to Brooklyn to keep house for me and board my men and apprentices. My sister was troubled with heart disease and staying out looking at the fire took cold and died in February following. She was very handsome and good as she was handsome, and was engaged to be married to my partner, spoken of as above, who lived but a very few months after I commenced business. But I did not despair, I had my mother with me and she was now dependent upon me for bread and butter, and I remembered that I owed her for milk she furnished me when quite young, and thousands of other things that I never paid her for. Altho our losses were terrible to her, she encouraged me to go on, and I shall never forget the kindness extended to me by the townspeople, all urging me to stay and saying they would do all they could to help me. The next day after the fire timber and material began to come in to build me a new and larger shop, subscriptions were made to amount of between \$700 and \$800, more than enough to build the shop. I wrote to those men in Boston of whom I had my stock, stating my loss, and they wrote back urging me to go on, and offering to furnish me with whatever I wanted in their line.

In less than two months from the time my first shop was burned I was at work in the second, with new tools, and with stock, having lost six years' earnings and owing considerable besides.

So I started again, with no means, to do business entirely upon credit. I have somewhere a statement of business for 1826, but cannot find it. I remember the result, I cleared over all expenses \$600. I have no doubt I did better in 1827 and very well in 1825. New work sold readily but on time. I had no trouble in getting notes that I took for chaises, discounted at the bank, so that in 1828 I made 25 new chaises with harness, the average value not less than \$170 each. My work that year amounted to nearly \$9,000, but, amidst all this apparent prosperity, I was like a ship at sea, with a gathering storm about her and on a lee shore. That year began a long depression in business of all kinds, culminating in the panic of 1837, the biggest I ever knew. All classes were involved. I was obliged to make an assignment in 1829-30, turning over to my creditors property enough, I supposed, to nearly pay them. It brought at auction

not one-third what it cost, leaving me heavily in debt again, which, after a struggle of ten years I very nearly wiped out—more than \$1,500—from two dollars up to one hundred and fifty to 50 persons. In 1837 I went into the weavers' harness business and came out minus \$200. This was owing to the embarrassed situation of the patentee. I could have made money by making the harness, but his creditors interfered.

The next move was to Northampton in 1843, to join the community established by S. L. Hill, George Benson and others. I had very little confidence of success in a business to be carried on by so many directors, and my doubts were fully realized, for in three (or four) years the whole concern was in the hands of S. L. Hill to settle up, and owing to losses he had to get an extension of five years in which to pay the debts.

So after four years I returned to Brooklyn, but I have ever since been thankful that I went, although I returned as poor as when I went in money, but the advantages to my family were very great in schooling and association with the best people I ever knew. Having acted as their agent myself to establish a market for their sewing silk, they continued me as such for about four years longer, paying me a good salary, which salary was of great service to me in supporting my family after coming on the farm, which was very much run down by having been let for many years. !

Every building needed thorough repairing. All I sold from the farm the first two years was \$150 worth of produce. I look back upon my life as a farmer with satisfaction, as having been a success up to the time I let it and gave up control of it. All the buildings are now in as good condition as could be expected. All have been industrious and helped to make our home as comfortable as need be and I have been freed from buying and selling, a business I came to dislike more than I can tell.

## GOLDEN WEDDING.

Golden Wedding.  
1827—May 27th—1877.

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### Programme:

1 P. M.—Marriage George and Kate.

Congratulations.

Wedding Breakfast.

2 P. M.—Reception to the Golden Couple.

Procession of Grandchildren, Presenting Gifts.

Golden Wedding Poem, recited by Sarah Y. DeNormandie.

Song—"We Are All Here."

Addresses by George R. Stetson and James E. Stetson.

Golden Wedding Hymn.

Letters Read from:

Rev. Thos. T. Stone, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Mrs. A. M. Alcott.

Address and Prayer—Rev. C. Y. DeNormandie.

Congratulations. Refreshments.

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### Menu:

All prepared in the house and served by the busy "Marthas." Nothing gave out, nothing failed. Everything was delicious and abundant.

Cold Ham (4)	Tongue (6)
Jellied Chicken (6)	Lobster Salad (18)
Wedding Cake (9 loaves)	Rolls
Pound Cake	Bride's Cake
	Silver Cake
	Sponge Cake
	Three Other Kinds
Lemon Jelly	Wine Jelly
Oranges	Candy
Coffee	Tea
	Lemonade

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### LIST OF PRESENTS GIVEN AT THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

30 Yards Black Silk—From Mary, Lucy, Nett and Courtland.  
32 Yards Matting—Mary and Lucy.  
27 ½ Yards Carpet—Courtland.  
Table Cloth and Napkins—Mary.  
Sugar Spoon—Andrew Ingraham.  
Perfume Case—Mrs. Alcott.  
Pair Blankets—Aunt Nancy.  
Set of Silver Knives—Aunt Mary.  
Stand Cover—Anna Colby.  
Channing's Works—Miss Moore (of Kingston.)  
H. Martineau—Mr. and Mrs. Thaxter.  
Berry Spoon—C. L. Richardson.  
Study Lamp—George and Kate.

Photograph—James Greenwood.  
 Historic Plate—Mr. and Mrs. Conant.  
 Pickle Dish—Mrs. E. Ketchens.  
 Swiss Carving—Mrs. G. G. Withington.  
 Candelabras—Mr. and Mrs. Ovington.  
 Case Coffee Spoons—Mr. and Mrs. Beal (of Kingston.)  
 Gold Pencil—Mr. Waldo Kendall.  
 Tidy—Mrs. Jane Fuller.  
 Sugar Spoon—Fanny Sawyer.  
 Black Embroidered Shawl—Julia Ketcham.  
 Bed Quilt—Grandma Stetson.  
 Picture St. Jerome—Mr. and Mrs. E. Scarborough.  
 3 Volumes Poetry—Dr. J. Allen.  
 Lowell's Poems—Mr. and Mrs. Bolles.  
 Gannett's Works—Mrs. Chase.  
 Table and Chairs—Brooklyn Society.  
 Two Pictures—George R. Stetson.  
 Glasses.  
 Album.  
 Ring—George Allen Stetson.  
 Gold Glasses.  
 Pencil and Pen.  
 A Napkin Holder Embroidered with "Grandfather"—Made  
 by Sarah.  
 A Rug—Made by Myra.  
 50 Gold Dollars—James.  
 20 " " Mr. and Mrs. Randall.  
 10 " " Mr. and Mrs. Porter.  
 5 " " Mrs. Eliza A. Holmes.  
 5 " " Mr. Joseph A. Holmes.  
 5 " " Kate.  
 5 " " Courtland.  
 5 " " Myra.  
 2.50 " " Minnie.  
 2.50 " " Sarah.  
 2.50 " " Harry.  
 2.50 " " Ed. Richardson.  
 2.50 " " Nellie.  
 2.50 " " May.  
 1.00 " " ( Twins,  
 1.00 " " ( Twins,  
 25.00—50 fifty cent pieces—Mary A. Richardson.  
 10.00—Mr. and Mrs. Atkins.  
 5.00—Uncle Davis Sharpe.  
 1.00—Addie Robbins.  
 1.00—D. Robbins.  
 .50—

COPY OF COMMISSION AS ENSIGN TO  
NATHAN WITTER.

1770.

Jonathan Trumbull, Esq.:

Captain General and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's  
Colony of Connecticut, in New England.

To Nathan Witter, Gent.

Greeting:

You being by the General Assembly of this Colony accepted to be Ensign of the 5th Company or Trainband in the 11th Regiment in this Colony. Reposing special Trust and Confidence in your Loyalty, Courage and good Conduct, I do, by Virtue of the Letters Patents from the Crown of England to this Corporation, Me thereunto enabling, appoint and empower you to take the said Trainband into Your Care and Charge, as Their Ensign carefully and diligently to discharge that Trust; exercising Your inferior Officers and Soldiers in the Use of their Arms, according to the Discipline of War: Keeping them in good Order and Government, and commanding Them to obey You as Their Ensign for His Majesty's Service. And You are to observe all such Orders and Directions as from Time to Time You shall receive either from Me, or from other Your superior Officers, pursuant to the Trust hereby reposed in You. Given under My Hand and the Seal of this Colony, in New Haven the 13th Day of October in the 10th Year of the Reign of Our Sovereign Lord George the Third, King of Great Britain, &c. Annoque Domini, 1770.  
By His Honor's Command,

George Wyllys Sec'y.

JONATHAN TRUMBULL.

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COPY OF COMMISSION AS LIEUTENANT  
TO EBENEZER WITTER.

1803.

Jonathan Trumbull, Esquire,

Captain-General and Commander in Chief in and over the  
State of Connecticut, in America.

To Ebenezer Witter, Gent.

Greeting.

You being by the General Assembly of this State accepted to be Lieutenant of the 9th Company in the 21st Regiment of Militia in this State to take rank from the 12th of April 1803; reposing special trust and confidence in your Fidelity, Courage and good Conduct, I do by Virtue of the Laws of this State, me thereunto enabling, appoint and empower you to take the said Company into your Care and Charge as their Lieutenant, carefully and diligently to discharge that Office and Trust, exercising your inferior Officers and Soldiers in the Use of their Arms, according to the Rules and Discipline of War, ordained and estab-



lished by the Laws of this State, keeping them in good Order and Government, and commanding them to obey you as their Lieutenant and you are to observe all such Orders and Directions as from Time to Time you shall receive, either from me, or from other your superior Officer, pursuant to the Trust hereby reposed in you.

Given under my Hand, and the public Seal of this State, at Hartford, the 19th Day of May A. D. 1803.

By His Excellency's Command,  
Samuel Wyllys Secretary.

JONATHAN TRUMBULL.

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COPY OF COMMISSION AS CAPTAIN  
TO EBENEZER WITTER.  
1806.

Jonathan Trumbull, Esquire,  
Captain-General and Commander in Chief in and over the  
State of Connecticut, in America.

To Ebenezer Witter, Gent.

Greeting.

You being by the General Assembly of this State accepted to be Captain of the ninth Company in the 21st Regiment of Militia in this State, to take rank from April 14th, A. D. 1806; reposing special Trust and Confidence in your Fidelity, Courage and good Conduct, I Do by virtue of the Laws of this State, me thereunto enabling, appoint and empower you to take the said Company into your Care and Charge as their Captain carefully and diligently to discharge that Office and Trust, exercising your inferior Officers and Soldiers in the use of their Arms according to the Rules and Discipline of War ordained and established by the Laws of this State, keeping them in good Order and Government, and commanding them to obey you as their Captain and you are to observe all such Orders and Directions as from Time to Time you shall receive, either from me or from other your superior Officer, pursuant to the Trust hereby reposed in you.

Given under my Hand, and the Public Seal of this State, at Hartford the 19th Day of May A. D. 1806.

By His Excellency's Command,  
Samuel Wyllys Secretary

JONA TRUMBULL.

COPY OF COMMISSION AS CORPORAL  
TO  
JAMES A. STETSON.  
1820.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

To Mr. James A. Stetson of Walpole

Greeting:

You having been appointed a Corporal of a Company of Infantry under the command of Captain Samuel T. Bird in the first Regiment, second Brigade, and first Division of the Militia of Massachusetts:

By virtue of the Power vested in me, I do, by these Presents, grant you this Warrant. You are, therefore, with vigilance and fidelity, to discharge the duty of Corporal, in said Company, according to the Rules and Regulations established by law, for the Government and Discipline of the Militia of this Commonwealth. And you are to observe and follow such orders and instructions, as you shall from time to time, receive from your superior officers.

Given under my Hand, at Needham this second day of May One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty.

CHESTER ADAMS, Colonel.

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COPY OF COMMISSION AS SERGEANT  
TO  
JAMES A. STETSON.  
1828.

Chas. Coit Esquire,

Colonel of the First Regiment of Lt. Artillery in the State of Connecticut,

To James A. Stetson

Greeting:

Reposing especial confidence in your courage, skill, and good conduct, I do by these presents constitute and appoint you, the said James A. Stetson to be a Sergeant in the Third Company in the Regiment under my command. You are therefore faithfully and diligently to exercise the several acts and duties of said office, in a strict and careful discharge of the same. . . . . And you are to observe and obey all such orders as you may from time to time receive from me, or other your superior officers, and to instruct said company in the use of arms, and all necessary duty, commanding them to obey you as their Sergeant, for which this shall be your sufficient warrant.

Given under my hand and seal, at Norwich, this 1st day of April A. D. 1828.

CHARLES COIT, Colonel.

COPY OF COMMISSION AS SECOND LIEUTENANT TO  
JAMES A. STETSON.  
1831.

John Samuel Peters, Esquire,  
Captain-General and Commander in Chief, in and over the  
State of Connecticut, in the United States of America.  
To James A. Stetson, Gent. Greeting.

You being by the General Assembly of this State, accepted to be second Lieutenant of the 3rd Company of the 1st Regiment of Lt. Artillery in the Militia of this State, to take rank from the 9th day of June A. D. 1831; reposing special trust and confidence in your fidelity, courage and good conduct, I do, by virtue of the Laws of this State, me thereunto enabling, appoint and empower you to take the said Company into your care and charge, as their second Lieutenant, carefully and diligently to discharge that office and trust, exercising your inferior officers and soldiers in the use of their arms according to the rules and discipline of war, ordained and established by the Laws of this State, keeping them in good order and government, and commanding them to obey you as their second Lieutenant; and you are to observe all such orders and directions, as from time to time, you shall receive, either from me, or from other your superior Officers, pursuant to the trust hereby reposed in you.

Given under my Hand, and the Public Seal of this State, at New-Haven, the 9th day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two.  
By His Excellency's command, JOHN S. PETERS.  
Thomas Day, Secretary.

BREWSTER—WITTER  
MARRIGAES.

I

1. William Brewster and Mary his wife.  
d. Apr. 10, 1644. d. Apr. 17, 1627.
  2. Love Brewster and Sarah Collier.
  3. Dea. Wm. Brewster and Elizabeth Partridge.
  4. BENJAMIN BREWSTER m. ELIZABETH WITTER.  
b. 1688. Oct. 16, 1713. b. Mar. 31, 1694.  
d. Feb. 21, 1741.
- 7 Children.
- |            |              |             |
|------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 William. | 4 Elizabeth. | 7. Jerusha. |
| 2 Grace.   | 5 Damaris.   |             |
| 3 Asa.     | 6 Drusilla.  |             |

II

1. William Brewster and Mary his wife.
  2. Jonathan Brewster and Lucretia Oldham.  
b. Scrooby, Eng., Aug. 12, 1593. b. in Darby.  
d. Aug. 7, 1659. d. Mar. 4, 1678.  
m. Apr. 10, 1624.
  3. Benjamin Brewster and Ann Dart.  
d. Sept. 14, 1710. d. May 9, 1709.  
m. Feb. 28, 1659-60.
  4. Jonathan Brewster and Judith Stevens.  
d. Nov. 20, 1704. m. Dec. 18, 1690.
  5. JOSEPH BREWSTER m. DOROTHY WITTER.  
b. Apr. 13, 1698. m. Mar. 17, 1723.  
d. Oct. 15, 1770.
- 9 Children.
- |             |           |           |              |          |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| 1 Elijah.   | 2 Joseph. | 3 Nathan. | 4 Elizabeth. |          |
| 5 Jonathan. | 6 Ezra.   | 7 Jacob.  | 8 Stephen.   | 9 Jabez. |

III

1. William Brewster and Mary his wife.
2. Jonathan Brewster and Lucretia Oldham.
3. Benjamin Brewster and Ann Dart.
4. DANIEL BREWSTER and DOROTHY MORGAN WITTER.  
d. June 14, 1756, aged 69. b. 1666 in Malden, Mass.  
d. 1750 in Preston, Conn.  
m. Dec. 9, 1727.

N, son of Benjamin Ste  
in Scituate, d. in Sm  
ing a sick neighbor.

ALEXANDER, Sept. 3,  
s merchant of Boston.

when he thought the F  
Charlestown instead, e  
son was a Merchant T  
t four children were b  
ere born. They movec  
was born there and he d

1794, in Boston, d. in Na

1796, d. in Lowell, Oct., 1

1798, d. Oct. 10, 1889,

Edinburgh, Oct. 27, 18

Hotel, Boston, and of tl

1799, d. July 31, 1878

I. H. See III.

ANDER, b. Sept. 28, 1801

er.

Apr. 30, 1803, d. Brookly

1804, d. Apr. 29, 1832.

, 1806, d. Dec. 25. 1876. 1

b. 1808, d. 1890, in Kai

See V.

, 1810, in Smithfield, R.

1st Generation.      Cornet Robert Stetson      2nd Generation.      Joseph Stetson.      3rd Generation.      Robert Stetson.      4th Generation.      Anthony Stetson.      5th Generation.      Benjamin Stetson.      6th Generation.      Benjamin Stetson.      7th Generation.      James Alexander Stetson.

Robert Stetson was born in County Kent, England, in 1613, d. Scituate, Feb. 1, 1703. He came to Plymouth in 1643, and settled in Scituate in 1644. His wife's name was Mary. He was Cornet of the first Horse Company of Plymouth Colony, 1638-41. He received from the colony a grant of 200 acres on the North River, Scituate. He became a freeman in 1652. He was Deputy in the General Court 17 years included in the period 1654-1678. He was appointed Commissioner "to act for the country in all matters relating to the trade in Kennebec," and received 200 acres more for his services. He was a member of the Council of War for 29 years, 1661-1681, and was delegated to visit and treat with King Philip on behalf of the Colony. He was an active officer during King Philip's War. In 1688 he was commissioned to buy for the Colony a tract of land now comprehended in the towns of Hanover and Abington, from Sachem Josias Chickatabutt which was subsequently re-deeded to Cornet Robert. He was a man of great business ability, a highly valuable man to the Colony. He was honored in every way by the town and Colony. His name is on the roster of those at Captain's Hall with Miles Standish. He had nine children.

JOSEPH STETSON, eldest son of Cornet Robert Stetson and Mary his wife b. June, 1639, d. 1722-4. Married PRUDENCE L. Loved in Scituate. Had eight children. Joseph, b. 1667, m. Hannah Oldham, Nov. 6, 1688. ROBERT, b. Dec. 9, 1670, m. Mary Collamore, Jan. 12, 1692. Lou, b. Mar. 1672, m. Foul of Scituate. William, b. Dec. 1673-4, d. Aug. 14, 1690. Desire, b. Sept. 1676, m. Richard Sylvester of Scituate Aug. 16, 1703. Prudence, b. Sept. 1678. m. Ebenezer Leach of Bridgewater, Dec. 17, 1707. Samuel, b. Dec. 1679. Hannah, b. June, 1689, m. Solomon Lincoln Apr. 25, 1705.

ROBERT STETSON, second son of Joseph Stetson and Prudence his wife b. Dec. 9, 1670. Married MARY COLLAMORE, Jan. 12, 1692, d. dau of Capt. Anthony Collamore and Sarah Chattenen. She was born in 1667. He was Constable in 1722 and was a man of business enterprise. They had eight children. ANTHONY, b. Sept. 12, 1693, d. 1747. m. Anna Smith, Mar. 28, 1717. Jennima, b. Mar. 13, 1694, m. Daniel Damon, July 27, 1721 (2nd wife). Isaac, b. Mar. 15, 1696, was drowned in 1719. William, b. June 26, 1700, d. 1761. m. Hannah Lapham, Nov. 21, 1723. He was Constable and Collector, and is supposed to have been murdered. Anna, b. June 18, 1703, d. 1777. m. Margaret Thayer of Braintree, May 9, 1727. Cordwainer. Martha, b. Sept. 3, 1706. m. Nehemiah Hatch, Dec. 21, 1731. Gideon, b. July 19, 1709, d. 1761. m. Lydia Pitcher, June 5, 1735. His second wife was Mary Paine of Braintree, m. July 12, 1740. He was a chrier. Robert, b. Sept. 3, 1710. m. Hannah Turner of Pembroke, Nov. 23, 1738.

ANTHONY STETSON, eldest son of Robert Stetson and Mary Collamore. b. Dec. 9, 1693, d. 1747. Married ANNA SMITH, dau of Joseph Smith and Anna Hatch. Mar. 28, 1717. He was a cooper, and had 11 children. Mary, b. Dec. 9, 1717. m. Ist Vinel, 2nd Woudworth Isaac, b. Oct. 9, 1719, d. June 8, 1811. m. Ruth Prouty, dau of Das of Prouty, Esq. of Charlestown, Nov. 16, 1740. She was b. Sept. 7, 1723, d. Sept. 18, 1805. Joseph, b. Feb. 24, 1722. m. Mary Eames of Marshfield. Moved to Kingston, where he died. Anna, b. June 2, 1721. m. William Hayden, 1744. Charles, b. Oct. 17, 1726. m. Bathsheba Hatch of Rochester. 1752. Ezra, b. Sept. 22, 1729, d. Apr. 25, 1805. m. Sarah Ryder of Plymouth. Moved to Hanwick. Elizabeth, b. Jan. 26, 1731, d. 1791. m. Lydia Cook of Kingston, 1753. Thomas, b. Apr. 22, 1734, d. Feb. 8, 1785. m. Susanna Gray of Barnstable, 1766. He was a ship carpenter by trade. BENJAMIN, b. July 7, 1738, married Mercy Turner, June 11, 1763. Abel, b. Oct. 23, 1738, d. Aug. 28, 1819. m. Ruth Bonney of Hanwick. Later lived in Chatterfield. Martha, b. Aug. 18, 1741, m. Seth Taylor of Pembroke, Nov. 24, 1769. Lived in Chatterfield.

BENJAMIN STETSON, son of Anthony Stetson and Anna Smith. b. July 7, 1738. Married MARY TURNER, June 14, 1763. He was a taylor by trade. They had six children. Mary, b. Apr. 26, 1766, d. 1830. m. Benjamin T. Lane, Nov. 2, 1790. b. July 7, 1761. Married MARY TURNER, June 14, 1763. He was a taylor by trade. They had six children. Mary, b. Apr. 26, 1766, d. 1830. m. Benjamin T. Lane, Nov. 2, 1790. b. July 7, 1761. Married MARY TURNER, June 14, 1763. He was a taylor by trade. They had six children. BENJAMIN, b. Jan. 8, 1771, d. Sept. 1840. and m. Mary Alexander, Sept. 3, 1793. Joseph, b. Jan. 8, 1771. A tinsmith. d. Oct. 12, 1787. Betty, m. Conrad Clapp, Nov. 28, 1797. Fanny, m. Bradburn. Lived in Beverly and died in Atholston.

BENJAMIN STETSON, son of Benjamin Stetson and Mercy Turner. b. Jan. 8, 1771, in Scituate, d. in Southfield, R. I., of fever contracted in nursing a sick neighbor. Married MARY ALEXANDER, Sept. 3, 1793. She was the daughter of a prosperous merchant of Boston. He moved his fine furnishings to Charlestown when he thought the British would burn the city but as they burned Charlestown instead, every thing was lost. Benjamin Stetson was a Merchant Taylor. They lived in Boston where the first four children were born. Then in Scituate where the next five were born. They moved to Southfield, R. I. in 1849. The 10th child was born there and he died there in 1810. Mary, b. Nov. 6, 1791, m. Boston, d. in Nashua, N. H., June 4, 1870. Eliza, b. Jan. 30, 1796, d. in Lowell, Oct. 1849. m. James Wilson. See I. Joseph, b. Aug. 28, 1798, d. Oct. 10, 1889, in Cambridge. m. Elizabeth Thompson of Edinbrough, Oct. 27, 1822. He was landlord of the United States Hotel, Boston, and of the Samoset House, Plymouth. See II. Mary, b. Dec. 31, 1799, d. July 31, 1878. m. Luther Richardson of Manchester, N. H. See III. JAMES ALEXANDER, b. Sept. 28, 1801, in Scituate, d. Mar. 5, 1863. m. Dolly Witter. Mercy Turner, b. Apr. 30, 1803, d. Brooklyn, Conn., Feb. 1829. Fanny, b. Dec. 3, 1804, d. Apr. 29, 1809. Almira, b. July 29, 1800, d. Dec. 25, 1876. m. Francis Winch of Nashua. See IV. Catherine Knapp, b. 1808, d. 1890, in Kansas City. m. George Benson of Brooklyn. See V. Nath. Ann, b. July 1810, in Southfield, R. I. d. June 17, 1892. See VI.

JAMES ALEXANDER STETSON, son of Benjamin Stetson and Mary Alexander b. Sept. 28, 1801, d. March 5, 1863. Married DOLLY WITTER, dau of Capt. Ebenezer Witter and Dolly Squires, m. Brooklyn, Mass. 27, 1827. b. July 8, 1807, d. June 5, 1876. 10 children. See record of Witter's. Almira, b. July 29, 1800, d. May 22, 1878. m. Rev. Conitland V. DeNormandie, May 22, 1830. Mercy Turner, b. Nov. 29, 1829, d. Feb. 12, 1841. Mary Schaefer, b. Dec. 8, 1830. Ebenezer, b. Feb. 11, 1831, d. Oct. 21, 1834, d. Nov. 1, 1843. Sarah, b. June 15, 1835, d. Aug. 16, 1855, d. Apr. 3, 1858. m. Nath. Allen, Jr. June 4, 1856. Oliver, b. July 11, 1837, m. Ellen Starr, Nov. 23, 1859. Conitland, b. Feb. 10, 1839, d. Oct. 21, 1878, d. Jan. 21, 1842. Fanny, b. Feb. 10, 1841, m. 20, 1841, in Vermont. Cleve, d. Sept. 37, 1868. Dolly Witter, b. Apr. 21, 1811. m. Caroline A. Bennett, May 1, 1866. Joseph Benjamin, b. Oct. 12, 1847, m. Mary A. Clark, Nov. 26, 1848.

JOSEPH, b. June 1639, d. 1722-91. m. Prudence Benjamin, b. Aug. 1641. Was Captain in Colonial army. His three sons Thomas, b. Dec. 11, 1643. m. Sarah Dodson. They had seven sons. Samuel, b. June 1646. He had several children, among them John, b. April 1648, married Mary. Their first son Barnabas, b. 1688, was killed in a Canadian expedition. Emma, b. April 28, 1650. m. Rogers. Levi, b. Feb. 1651. Robert, b. Jan. 29, 1653, married Joanna Brooks 1670. Timothy, b. 1657.

Benjamin, b. 1665, m. Teres Turner, 1690. Matthew, b. 1668. James, b. 1670, were all killed in Canadian Expedition in 1690. Thomas, Vershom, Joshua, Caleb, Elisha, Elijah, Ebenezer. Capt. Jonah, b. 1691, m. Mercy Turner, 1720. John, m. Relief Esel, 1727. Bought the Wanson estate 1730. Both the first and null.

Benjamin, b. 1665, m. Teres Turner, 1690. Matthew, b. 1668. James, b. 1670, were all killed in Canadian Expedition in 1690. Thomas, Vershom, Joshua, Caleb, Elisha, Elijah, Ebenezer. Capt. Jonah, b. 1691, m. Mercy Turner, 1720. John, m. Relief Esel, 1727. Bought the Wanson estate 1730. Both the first and null.

\*MERCY TURNER was descended from Elder Brewster in this way:  
1. Elder Brewster and Mary, his wife  
2. Jonathan Brewster and Lucretia Oldham & Sarah, m. Apr. 16, 1694. 3. Mary  
3. Mary Brewster and John Turner, the Elder m. Apr. 14, 1695.  
4. Benjamin Turner and Elizabeth Hawkins m. Apr. 14, 1695.  
5. Benjamin Turner and Mercy Turner (m. later)  
6. Mercy Turner and Benjamin Stetson m. June 14, 1763.

\*Benjamin T. Lane, who married Lucy Stetson, had a daughter Lucy who married Nathaniel Allen of Walpole, the celebrated educator of W. Newton. Their daughter Lucy m. James Davis and lived for a while in Fairhaven, Mass. James Lane Allen is of this family, a son of Dr. Allen of Northhampton a son of Lucy and Nathaniel. James, the son of Mr. Bradburn and Fanny Stetson, was grandfather's partner. He died soon after coming to Brooklyn. He was engaged to grandfather's sister, "Mercy Turner," who took cold the night the shop burned and died soon after.

The Turner line is  
1. Humphrey Turner and Lydia Garner b. 1698, settled in Scituate, 1699.  
2. Thomas Turner and Sarah Island m. 1652  
3. Charles Turner and Mercy Curtis m. Dec. 25, 1666.  
4. Mercy Turner and Benjamin Turner (m. later)  
5. Mercy Turner and Benjamin Stetson, m. June 14, 1763.

I. The children of Eliza Stetson and James Wilson were George F. Wilson, a lawyer, nephew and cousin, m. Emily G. Fisk. Their son George Henry married Kate, dau of Almira and Courtland V. DeNormandie. James, a farmer, who married first Matthew Elliott, then a Mr. Parmer of California. John, Eliza, Mary. II. Joseph Stetson and Elizabeth Thompson of Edinbrough, Scotland had five children, only three of whom lived to grow up - George F. born Sept. 1824, Mercy Turner, d. young, Benjamin F. b. July 1828, Hannah J. b. Oct. 2, 1834. Hannah was a fine woman gifted with all and never ill. She became a cripple from an injury in her knee, and d. a wonderfully beautiful endmiser. She had taught music and cared for her parents as long as she was able to. III. Nancy who married Luther Richardson, had four children, Charles F. who m. Mary Winch his cousin. A prosperous man. Truss of cotton mills in Manchester. Edna F. who also lived in Manchester and had a family. Her wife's name was Mary R. one of the dearest of women, devoted to grandfather and grandmother and Aunt Mary's intimate friend from childhood. Died in Kingston in 1890, at mother's. Elizabeth, m. William Swarts. Fine daughter, Lucy, m. Dr. Swasey, lived for a time in New Bedford. They had a large talented family, very musical and unusual. IV. Almira and Francis Winch had three children, Fanny, m. Aaron Sawyer, a lawyer lived in Nashua. Mary, whom Charles Richardson. Henry. V. Catherine, called Kate, m. George Benson and moved out to Kansas. They had several children. Henry Benson, a banker, an excellent citizen, son, brother and friend. Anna Benson, was an osteopathic doctor and theosophist and many other things. Mary George Sarah, now a widow, living with Henry. VI. Nally Ann was often with grandfather and grandmother. She was a dear young woman, a fine singer and helper. She taught me my letters and numbers. She had melancholia come upon her in middle life which proved incurable. She lived many years in the asylum in Concord, N. H.



DOROTHY

ly (as she was always  
 y Davis.  
 d. Dec. 9, 1857.  
 BENEZER WITTEB  
 d. Nov. 18, 1840.  
 Homestead. Th  
 1807, d. June 5, 18  
 ALEXANDER STET

ew York, was in  
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1st generation.	ROBERT SHARPE.	2d Generation	LIEUT. JOHN SHARPE.	3d Generation.	WILLIAM SHARPE.	4th Generation	JOHN SHARPE.	5th Generation.	ROBERT SHARPE.	6th Generation.	DOROTHY or DOLLY SHARPE.	7th Generation.	DOLLY WITTER		
ROBERT SHARPE. b. in England, 1616. Came to America from London in the ship "Abigail," 1635. Settled first in Braintree, then at Muddy River, now called Brookline, where he purchased a large tract of land with Peter Aspinwall. Died 1655. Married ANNA, who, after his death, married Nicholas Clap. They had three children.		JOHN SHARPE, son of Robert Sharpe and Abigail his wife b. Mar. 12, 1641. Killed in battle at Sudbury, Apr. 19, 1676. Lieutenant in Capt. Wadsworth's Company. See letter in appendix. Married Martha. Had three children.		WILLIAM SHARPE, son of Lieut. John Sharpe and Martha his wife. b. in Brookline, Mar. 12, 1673, d. in Pomfret, Conn., Nov. 30, 1756. He sold his part of the land in Brookline to his brother Robert, Apr. 10, 1721. Moved to Pomfret, Conn. Was Deputy to General Assembly 1732-1733. Married ABIGAIL WHITE, dau of John White of Watertown, probably 1698-9. b. 1676, d. Feb. 15, 1753. They had 19 children.		JOHN SHARPE, son of William Sharpe and Abigail White b. July 14, 1703, d. May 10, 1779. Married DORCAS WHITE of Woodstock, Sept. 12, 1723, d. Oct. 10, 1754. They had 10 children.		ROBERT SHARPE, son of John Sharpe and Dorcas Davis. b. May 2, 1742, d. June 30, 1835. Lived in Pomfret. Married SARAH DAVIS, dau. of Daniel Davis of Thompson, Conn. b. Sept. 15, 1752, d. June 16, 1813. They had nine children. He served in the Revolutionary War.		DOROTHY, or DOLLY (as she was always called) SHARPE, dau. of Robert Sharpe and Mary Davis b. Jan. 30, 1779, d. Dec. 9, 1857. Married Capt. EBENEZER WITTER III, May 11, 1808. b. Apr. 19, 1775, d. Nov. 18, 1840. Lived at the Old Homestead. They had one daughter.		DOLLY WITTER, dau. of Capt. Ebenezer Witter III and Dorothy Sharpe. b. July 8, 1807, d. June 5, 1899. Married JAMES ALEXANDER STETSON, May 27, 1827. b. Scituate, Sept. 28, 1801, d. Mar. 5, 1863, in Brooklyn. They had 10 children.		DOLLY WITTER, dau. of Capt. Ebenezer Witter III and Dorothy Sharpe. b. July 8, 1807, d. June 5, 1899. Married JAMES ALEXANDER STETSON, May 27, 1827.	
JOHN, b. Mar. 12, 1642.		WILLIAM, b. 1673, d. Nov. 30, 1756, in Pomfret. m. Abigail White, 1698-9.		Abigail, b. Mar. 29, 1700, d. May 2, 1743.		Robert, b. Feb. 4, 1728-9, d. Feb. 13, 1749.		Mary, b. June 21, 1774, d. Nov. 27, 1775.		DOLLY, b. July 8, 1807, d. June 5, 1899.		Almira Backus, b. May 22, 1828, m. Rev. Courtland Y. DeNormandie May 22, 1853.			
Abigail, b. 1648.		Martha, m. Joseph Buckingham of Braintree, afterwards lived in Framingham.		JOHN, b. July 14, 1703, d. May 10, 1779, m. Dorcas Davis, Sept. 12, 1725.		Abigail, b. Apr. 12, 1731, d. Feb. 19, 1749.		2nd Mary, b. Feb. 11, 1776, d. Dec. 18, 1844. m. Pratt or Platt, lived in Burlington, Vt.		Married JAMES ALEXANDER STETSON, May 27, 1827.		Mary Turner, b. Nov. 29, 1829, d. Feb. 14, 1833.			
Mary, baptized in Roxbury Dec. 5, 1652.				{ William and { Solomon b. Feb. 23, 1705.		Mary, b. July 10, 1733, m. Ephraim Ingalls.		Lucy, b. Apr. 17, 1777, d. Aug. 10, 1840. m. Elisha Chase, Apr. 4, 1797. Lived in Vermont.		Herekiah, lived in New York, was in Tiffany's. Grandmother's favorite cousin. A religious youth, always quoting the Bible on all occasions most aptly.		Mary Sharpe, b. Dec. 8, 1801.			
				Martha, b. May 7, 1704, m. John Stone of Dudley, Mass., Oct. 30, 1737.		Elijah, b. Aug. 22, 1735, m. Lois Hammond.		DOROTHY, b. Jan. 20, 1779, m. Ebenezer Witter III, May 11, 1808.		Sarah, m. a Randall. Lived on a rich farm in Randallville, part of Ashford.		George Ripley, b. May 11, 1837, m. Ellen Stoll, Nov. 23, 1850. b. Hadley, Mass., Mar. 14, 1829.			
				Joseph, b. June 17, 1711, d. in the service of H. B. M. Sept. 10, 1760, m. Elizabeth Cady.		Dorcas, b. Jan. 20, 1737-8, m. Moses Grossvenor, lived in Schoharie, N. Y.		Sarah, b. Mar. 22, 1781, m. Clement Sharpe, Mar. 10, 1810. Their children d. May 22, 1830.		Dwight, m. a Chase, lived in Abington. Died from effects of fighting a fire which got away from him.		James Alexander, Jr., b. Oct. 21, 1839, d. Jan. 21, 1842.			
				Benjamin, b. Nov. 1, 1713, m. 1st, Deborah Ingalls, Dec. 19, 1751, d. Apr. 17, 1783. 2d wife Mary Craft, Mar. 5, 1765.		William, b. Mar. 27, 1740, m. Sarah Terrington.		Sophia, b. July 28, 1783, d. Mar. 21, 1784.				Lucy Dolly, b. Dec. 30, 1841, m. Vergelt L. Cleveland, Sept. 17, 1868. b. Canterbury, Mar. 14, 1846.			
				Isaac, b. May 23, 1716, d. Sept. 15, 1777.		2nd ROBERT, b. May 2, 1712, d. June 30, 1835. m. Sarah Davis, Dec. 30, 1772.		George, b. Jan. 23, 1786, m. Lucretia Robinson, d. Apr. 16, 1862.				James Ebenezer, b. Apr. 21, 1844, in Northampton. m. Caroline A. Burritt, May 1, 1866. b. Cincinnati, Aug. 15, 1844, d. New Haven, Apr. 23, 1909.			
				Elizabeth, b. May 15, 1718, d. Oct., 1803.		2nd Abigail, b. May 14, 1744, d. Mar. 19, 1814. m. Reuben Goodell.		Robert Davis, b. Aug. 21, 1790, m. Syrena Robinson, d. Sept. 10, 1878. Grandmother's favorite uncle.				Joseph Benjamin, b. Oct. 12, 1817, m. Mary Clark, Nov. 26, 1868. b. Scotland, Conn., May 23, 1842.			
				Gershom, b. May 15, 1720, d. Sept. 29, 1802.		David, b. June 12, 1716.		2nd Sophia, b. Mar. 10, 1793, m. Fred Tyler of Hartford, Feb. 18, 1816. Grandmother stayed with them often, and "Aunt Tyler" was always good to her.					For Dolly Witter's grandchildren and great grandchildren, see Witter Record.		

Witter-Stetson's Gra

PURTLAND Y. DENORMANDI

Mar. 13, 1855.

m. George H. Wilson M  
b. Lawrence, Mass., Fe  
d. Pittsburgh, Pa., Mar  
Five children.

n, Mass., Feb. 4, 1862, d.  
athic physician.

en, July 13, 1864.

W. Bailey, Apr. 20, 1902. b.

m. ELLEN STALL, Nov. 23,

60, Old Homestead,  
abeth Pratt, Sept. 22, 1886.  
Mass., Aug. 9, 1863. 2 sons.  
6, 1863, in New Haven.  
1865, Florence, Mass.

Bridgeport.

lies, Sept. 26, 1889. One so  
July 26, 1864,

1872, New Haven.

n. Edwin L. Gardiner, July 2  
S. Hopkinton, R. I., Sept. 28  
26, 1876. New Bedford.

26, 1876, m. David W. Beama  
b. Cincinnati, No

1883, d. June 6, 1883.

VERNETT E. CLEVELAND, S

869, Florence.

9, Danielsonville.

, m. CAROLINE A. BURRITT

ven, d. Oct. 10, 1867.

ved to be 91 years and 11  
grandfather Nathan Witter  
only seven were living at an  
ily six. Uncle George and  
an all the others put toge  
e first Ebenezer's born in 17  
of Sharpes and the fifth ge  
endants, only 20 of whom v  
n, 8 great-grandchildren. If  
m Uncle Joe and Aunt Mary  
rep in the old homestead.  
mly Alexander Stetson, lived  
ants.

1st Generation. Deacon Ebenezer Witter I. 2nd Generation. Deacon Ebenezer Witter II. 3rd Generation. Deacon Nathan Witter. 4th Generation. Capt. Ebenezer Witter III. 5th Generation. Dolly Witter-Stetson. 6th Generation. Dolly Witter-Stetson's Grandchildren. 7th Generation. Dolly Witter-Stetson's Great-grandchildren.

Two brothers, Joseph and Ebenezer Witter, came from Scotland and settled in Hopkinton, Rhode Island. Joseph remained in Hopkinton, Ebenezer went to Preston, Connecticut, at a date prior to 1694. He is our first ancestor in America.

**Ebenezer Witter I**, b. in Scotland, 1668, d. in Preston, Conn., 1712. Married **Dorothy Morgan**, dau of Lieut Joseph Morgan and Dorothy Park b. in Malden, Mass. 1666, d. in Preston, Conn., 1750. They had seven children, the last two twins. She married \*Daniel Brewster Dec 9, 1727, after being a widow fifteen years.

**Ebenezer Witter II**, b. Mar 31, 1694, d. Feb 21, 1741, m. \*Benjamin Brewster, Oct 10, 1711. Seven children.

**Ebenezer**, b. 1699, d. Canterbury 1799. m. Elizabeth Brown, 1727.

**Dorothy**, m. \*Joseph Brewster, Mar 17, 1723. b. Apr 19, 1698, d. Dec 18, 1770. Nine children.

Daughter m. Smith.  
Daughter m. Tracy.

**Ebenezer Witter II**, son of Dea Ebenezer Witter I and Dorothy Morgan, b. in Preston, 1699, d. in Canterbury, 1790, at his son Asa's house. Married **Elizabeth Brown**, 1727. They had 16 children. I can give only the names of their sons.

**Nathan**, b. in Preston, 1731, d. Brooklyn, Oct 22, 1822, m. Keria Branch, Nov. 15, 1750.

**Joseph**  
**Jonah**  
**Josiah**, lived in Hampton.

**John**, Soldier, served in 1st of Putnam's Battalion, Capt. Winship's company. Paid bounty June 8, 1777.

**Amos**, m. Lucy Cray, Nov 10, 1756.

\***Asa**, b. 1711, d. in Canterbury Oct 7, 1792. m. Joanna Kinn in 1735, dau Capt. Ezra Kinn, gr dau Ebenezer and Joanna Dransis of Boston. She was b. 1719, d. 1829.

**William**, b. Aug 4, 1706, d. 1796, m. and lived in Preston. Their son and **Joseph**, b. Aug 4, 1706, d. Jan 12, 1799, m. Sarah of Hopkinton. They had three sons, Joseph, William, Josiah.

\*The three Brewsters are direct descendants of Eble Brewster and Mary his wife, who came over in the Mayflower in 1620. See record of Brewster and Witter marriages in appendix.

\***Asa Witter** and **Joanna Kinn** his wife lived in Canterbury. Seven children.

**Nathan Witter**, son of Ebenezer Witter II and Elizabeth Brown, b. in Preston, 1731, d. in Brooklyn, Conn., Oct 22, 1822. Married **Keria Branch**, Nov. 15, 1750, dau of Thomas Branch and Zipporah his wife. b. in Preston, 1744, d. in Brooklyn, Oct 20, 1808.

Lived on farm bought for him by his father, Dea Ebenezer II., Jan. 1754. Thirteen children.

**Mary**, b. Nov 2, 1754.  
**Lucy**, b. Feb 25, 1757, m. Joseph Williams.  
**Jonah**, b. Apr. 29, 1760. Lived in Preston. Oxen belonged to him, also "huddleback" chairs.

**Nathan II**, b. Feb 20, 1761, m. Mary Fuller. Their daughter married a Fayne, and their dau Sarah was grandmother's great friend and schoolmate in Thompson. She.

**Ebenezer Witter IV**, b. Oct 21, 1833, d. Nov 1, 1843, in Northampton. Nathan III m. Abigail Litchfield. Their son's. This is the Nathan Mr May baptised, i.e. immersed to quiet his conscience.

**Keria**, b. July 5, 1763, m. Eleazer Litchfield of Woodstock b. Aug 27, 1757.

**Elizabeth**, b. Jan. 28, 1766, d. Oct 7, 1778.  
**Cynthia**, b. Mar. 27, 1768, m. Mr Morgan. Lived in York state visited her brother, etc.

**John**, b. May 16, 1770, d. Oct. 11, 1770.  
**Joseph**, b. Mar. 26, 1773. Lived in Brooklyn village. His wife called Myra the "patientest little critter she ever saw."

**Ebenezer**, b. Apr 10, 1775, d. Nov. 19, 1810. m. Dorothy Sharpe, May 11, 1806.

**Rahana**, b. Dec. 6, 1777, d. Dec. 8, 1778.  
**Zeruah**, b. Nov. 28, 1770, d. Mar 3, 1793.  
These are all that are recorded in the Bible. One may have died before being named.

**William Witter**, b. 1769, d. 1811, m. Hannah Branch, d. 1818. 7 children.

**Ezra**, b. 1766.  
**Rhoda**, b. 1770, m. Pratt Allen.  
**Betsy**, b. 1773, m. Enoch Allen, 1794, son of Asabel Allen. Their son, **Sally**, b. 1776, m. Uriah Litchfield. Lived in Hampton.

**Ebenezer**, b. 1778, d. 1803, m. Eunice Rana, 1791. He was deacon of Hanover church. The third of same name. Was Justice of the Peace, member of state legislature, and received 75 cents a day. Lived in Canterbury and was "a very useful man."

**Polly**, b. 1780.  
**Joanna**, b. 1792, after her father's death.

Dea. Nathan Witter's descendants at the time of his death, 91 years of age, were 13 children, 87 grandchildren, 82 great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren, in all 164, of whom only 22 had died, leaving 142 living descendants.

**Ebenezer Witter III**, son of Dea. Nathan and Keria Branch his wife, b. in the old homestead Apr 10, 1775, d. Nov. 18, 1840. Married **Dolly Sharpe**, dau of Robert Sharpe and Sarah Davis b. in Fundret, Jan 30, 1778, d. in Brooklyn, Dec 9, 1857, m. May 11, 1809. They had one daughter.

**Dolly**, b. July 8, 1807, d. June 6, 1899, m. James Alexander Stetson, May 27, 1827.

**Almira Baber**, b. May 22, 1828, m. Bev Courtland Y DeNormandie, May 22, 1853. Three daughters.

**Mary Turner**, b. Nov 29, 1829, d. Feb. 12, 1833.  
**Mary Sharpe**, b. Dec. 8, 1831.

**Sarah Frances**, b. Aug 16, 1835, m. Nathan Allen, Jr., June 3, 1868. d. Apr 3, 1858, in Danielsonville. b. Canterbury, Nov 28, 1824. d. July 22, 1890.

**George Ripley**, b. May 11, 1837, m. Ellen Stall, Nov 27, 1859. b. Hadley, Mass., Mar 14, 1819. 7 children.

**James Alexander, Jr.**, b. Oct 21, 1839, d. Jan. 21, 1842. m. Robert L. Bayless, Sept 26, 1861. One son. b. New Bedford, July 26, 1864.

**Lucy Dolly**, b. Dec 29, 1841, m. Vernet F. Cleveland, Sept 17, 1868. b. Canterbury, Mar 14, 1848. One son.

**James Ebenezer**, b. Apr. 21, 1843, in Northampton, m. Caroline A. Burritt, May 1, 1869. b. Cincinnati, Aug 15, 1811, d. New Haven, Apr. 29, 1893. One son and

**Joseph Benjamin**, b. Oct 12, 1847, m. Mary Clark, Nov. 25, 1868. b. Scotland, Ct., May 23, 1842.

**Dolly, Daniel, Olive, Eliza, William, Jr.** (a doctor), Orinda, Charles

**Asa Witter Allen**, b. 1795. In war of 1812. m. Sophia Hopkins, 1818, moved to Elsworth, Ohio, 1810. Wrote the "Genealogy of the Allen and Witter Families," published in Salem, Ohio, 1872. (Printed by Luther W. Smith)

**Dolly Witter**, only child of Capt. Ebenezer Witter III and Dolly Sharpe, his wife. b. in the Old Homestead, July 8, 1807, d. June 6, 1899. Married **James Alexander Stetson**, May 27, 1827. b. in Schuette, Mass., Sept 28, 1801, d. Brooklyn, Conn., Mar 5, 1863. He was a chaise and harness maker. An agent for the Florence Silk Co. a deacon of the church. Member state legislature. A Mason, and at last a farmer. Ten children.

**Almira Baber**, b. May 22, 1828, m. Bev Courtland Y DeNormandie, May 22, 1853. Three daughters.

**Mary Turner**, b. Nov 29, 1829, d. Feb. 12, 1833.  
**Mary Sharpe**, b. Dec. 8, 1831.

**Sarah Frances**, b. Aug 16, 1835, m. Nathan Allen, Jr., June 3, 1868. d. Apr 3, 1858, in Danielsonville. b. Canterbury, Nov 28, 1824. d. July 22, 1890.

**George Ripley**, b. May 11, 1837, m. Ellen Stall, Nov 27, 1859. b. Hadley, Mass., Mar 14, 1819. 7 children.

**James Alexander, Jr.**, b. Oct 21, 1839, d. Jan. 21, 1842. m. Robert L. Bayless, Sept 26, 1861. One son. b. New Bedford, July 26, 1864.

**Lucy Dolly**, b. Dec 29, 1841, m. Vernet F. Cleveland, Sept 17, 1868. b. Canterbury, Mar 14, 1848. One son.

**James Ebenezer**, b. Apr. 21, 1843, in Northampton, m. Caroline A. Burritt, May 1, 1869. b. Cincinnati, Aug 15, 1811, d. New Haven, Apr. 29, 1893. One son and

**Joseph Benjamin**, b. Oct 12, 1847, m. Mary Clark, Nov. 25, 1868. b. Scotland, Ct., May 23, 1842.

**Sarah Payne**, grandmother's great chum, m. John Gray. Their dau Susie has been an intimate friend of Aunt Mary's for many years.

**Henry Witter** m. Sally Taylor, and lives in Canterbury. He is the only Witter I ever remember seeing. It seems strange that with the great families all coming from the vicinity of Brooklyn, I never saw any but this one, nor heard much about any of them.

**Amiba B. Stetson**, m. Courtland Y DeNormandie May 22, 1853. Three daughters.  
**Kate**, b. in Old Homestead Mar 13, 1855.  
m. George H. Wilson May 27, 1877.  
b. Lawrence, Mass. Feb. 18, 1824.  
d. Pittsburgh, Pa. Mar 18, 1890.  
Five children.

**Myra Frances**, b. Fairhaven, Mass., Feb 1, 1862. d. Boston, Mass., Jan 10, 1905. Homeopathic physician.

**Sarah Yardley**, b. Fairhaven, July 13, 1844. m. Thomas W. Bailey, Apr 29, 1862. Kingston, Mass.

**George Ripley Stetson**, m. Ellen Stall. Nov 27, 1859. Seven children.

**George Allen**, b. Dec 28, 1860, Old Homestead, m. Sarah Elizabeth Pratt, Sept 22, 1880. b. Abington, Mass., Aug 2, 1861. 2 sons.

**Lillian Thedora**, b. Apr 16, 1863, in New Haven. d. Sept. 1865, Florence, Mass.

**Ellen M.**, b. June 24, 1869, Bridgeport. m. Robert L. Bayless, Sept 26, 1891. One son. b. New Bedford, July 26, 1864.

**Mary Ebenezer**, b. May 11, 1862, New Haven. d. Aug 28, 1901. m. Edwin L. Gardner, July 22, 1896. 1 dau. b. Hopkinton, R. I. Sept 28, 1899.

**James Alexander** b. Sept 26, 1870, New Bedford.  
**Jane Witter** b. Sept 26, 1870, in David W. Brainin. June 25, 1902. 1 daughter, b. Oct 23, 1902.

**Robert Porter**, b. Mar. 30, 1883. d. June 6, 1884.

**Lucy Dolly Stetson**, m. Vernet F. Cleveland. Sept 17, 1868. One son.  
**Harry James**, b. Sept 12, 1890, Florence. d. May 4, 1870, Danielsonville.

**James Ebenezer Stetson**, m. Caroline A. Burritt, May 1, 1869. One son.  
**James Frederic**, b. New Haven, d. Oct 10, 1897.

Altho my grandmother lived to be 91 years and 11 months old, she could not compare with her grandfather. Nathan Witter m descendants. She had 16 children, but only seven were living at any one time, and after Aunt Sarah's death only six. Uncle George and Aunt Eliza had the largest family, more than all the others put together, and twins, too. The only pair since the first Ebenezer's born in 1700. There were twins in the third generation of Sharpes and the fifth generation of Stetsons. She had had 30 descendants, only 20 of whom were then living, 10 children, 12 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren. It was a great disappointment to her as to Uncle Joe and Aunt Mary for that there were no children growing up in the old homestead.

Grandfather's Mother, Polly Alexander Stetson, lived to be 96 years old and had had 96 descendants.

**Kate H. DeNormandie**, m. George H. Wilson, May 27, 1877. On the occasion of Grandmother's Golden Wedding.  
**Katherine Day Wilson**, b. Aug. 18, 1878, Harrison Square, Boston. m. Robert Hatten Schaeffer, Dec 31, 1901, St. Margaret's, Westminster, London.  
**Robert Morton B. Don**, b. Nov 22, 1879, Harrison Sq.  
**Margaret F. W. Don**, b. June 10, 1881, 47 Old Hylor St., So. Boston. m. Edward Brown Lee, Sept 15, 1900, in her grandfather's church. b. Island Pond, Vt., Jan 22, 1871. Kingston, Mass.  
**Amy Moor H. Don**, b. Jan 20, 1881. Dorchester, Mass.  
**Dorothea Howard Wilson**, b. Jan 10, 1885. Dorchester, Mass. d. Shick's, Pa., Mar 8, 1901.

**George Ripley Stetson**, m. Ellen Stall. Nov 27, 1859. Seven children.

**George Allen**, b. Dec 28, 1860, Old Homestead, m. Sarah Elizabeth Pratt, Sept 22, 1880. b. Abington, Mass., Aug 2, 1861. 2 sons.

**Lillian Thedora**, b. Apr 16, 1863, in New Haven. d. Sept. 1865, Florence, Mass.

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**James Frederic**, b. New Haven, d. Oct 10, 1897.

# WITTER.

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JAMES A

m. I

10 C

e. b. Aug. 18, 1878, Harrison Sq.  
Schauffler, Dec. 21, 1904, St. Margaret's

*Almira* b. Minster, London.

m. C 79, Brunn, Austria.

b. 22, 1879, Harrison Sq.

d. Dec 10, 1881, So. Boston.

Dec, Sept. 15, 1906.

*Mercy T* 74, Island Pond, Vt.

b. 1883, Dorchester.

Jan. 10, 1885, Dorchester.

*Mary Sh* Mar. 6, 1899, Shields, Pa.

*Ebenzer*

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*Sarah F* 1, 1889, New Bedford.

b. 24, 1898, Dorchester.

m. N

*George I*

m. 4, 1896, New Bedford.

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## Descendants of JAMES ALFANDER STETSON and DOLLY WITTER.

**JAMES ALFANDER STETSON** b. Sept. 28, 1801  
d. Mar. 5, 1893.

m. **Dolly Witter**, May 27, 1827  
b. July 8, 1807  
d. June 5, 1899  
10 CHILDREN.

**Almira Backus** b. May 22, 1828  
m. **Castland Fardley DeNormandie** May 22, 1853  
b. Feb. 16, 1827, Falsington, Va.  
d. Feb. 25, 1910, Kingston, Mass. 3 daughters.

**Mercy Turner** b. Nov. 29, 1829  
d. Feb. 12, 1833

**Mary Sharp** b. Dec. 8, 1831  
**Ebenezer Witter II** b. Oct. 21, 1833  
d. Nov. 1, 1844

**Sarah Frances** b. Aug. 16, 1845  
d. Apr. 3, 1958, in **Hamdenville**  
m. **Nathan Allen, Jr.**, June 3, 1866  
b. Canterbury, Nov. 28, 1884

**George Ripley** b. May 11, 1837  
m. **Ellen M. Stall**, Nov. 27, 1859  
b. Hadley, Mass., Mar. 14, 1817  
7 children.

**Lucy Dolly** b. Dec. 20, 1841  
m. **Vernett Evans Cleveland**, Sept. 17, 1868  
b. March 13, 1846, Canterbury

**James Ebenezer** b. Apr. 24, 1814, Northampton  
m. **Caroline A. Burrill**, May 1, 1866  
b. Aug. 15, 1864, Cincinnati, O.

**Joseph Benjamin** b. Oct. 12, 1847, old homestead  
m. **Mary Clark**, Nov. 26, 1868.  
b. May 23, 1842, Scotland, Conn.

**Kate** b. Mar. 13, 1856, in the old home-land  
m. **George Henry Wilson**, May 27, 1877  
b. Feb. 18, 1854, Lawrence, Mass.  
d. Mar. 18, 1908, Pittsburg, Pa.

**Mary Frances** b. Feb. 4, 1862, Fairhaven, Mass.  
d. Jan. 10, 1895, Boston  
Homeopathic physician.

**Sarah Verdier** b. July 13, 1864, Fairhaven, Mass.  
m. **Thomas Ward Bailey**, Apr. 20, 1902  
b. Kingston, Mass.; Feb. 19, 1874.

**George Allen** b. Dec. 28, 1860, in the old homestead.  
m. **Sarah Elizabeth Pratt**, Sept. 22, 1886.  
b. Aug. 9, 1863, Amington, Mass.  
2 sons.

**Lillian Theodora** b. Apr. 16, 1863, New Haven, Ct.  
d. Sept., 1865, Florence, Mass.

**Ellen M.** b. June 21, 1869, Bradport.  
m. **Robert L. Bayliss**, Sept. 26, 1889.  
b. July 26, 1864, New Bedford.

**Mary Elizabeth** b. May 11, 1872, New Haven, Ct.  
d. Aug. 28, 1901.  
m. **Edwin Leander Gardner**, July 22, 1896.  
b. Sept. 28, 1869, Hupkinton, R. I.

**James Alfander**, } b. Sept. 26, 1876, New Bedford  
**Jane Hester**, }  
m. **David Webster Beaman**, June 25, 1902.  
b. November 2, 1872, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Robert Porter** b. Mar. 30, 1883.  
d. June 6, 1883.

**Henry James** b. Sept. 13, 1869, Florence, Mass.  
d. May 4, 1879, Danielsonville, Ct.

**James Esderus** d. Oct. 10, 1867.

12 grandchildren

**Katharine DeNormandie** b. Aug. 18, 1878, Harrison Sq.  
m. **Robert Haven Schaeffer**, Dec. 21, 1904, St. Margaret's  
Church, Westminster, London.

b. April 8, 1879, Brun, Austrin.  
**Robert Morton** b. Nov. 22, 1879, Harrison Sq.  
**Margaret Emily** b. June 10, 1881, So. Boston.  
m. **Edward Brown Lee**, Sept. 15, 1906.  
b. Jan. 22, 1874, Island Pond, Vt.

**Amy Moore** b. Jan. 28, 1883, Dorchester.  
**Dorothea Blanchard** b. Jan. 10, 1885, Dorchester.  
d. Mar. 6, 1899, Shields, Pa.

**Robert Allen** b. July 31, 1889, New Bedford.  
**Richard Pratt** b. Apr. 24, 1898, Dorchester.

**Robert Stetson** b. Dec. 4, 1896, New Bedford

**Virginia May** b. Jan. 21, 1901, So. Boston.  
(Born after Grandmother's death).

8 great grandchildren.











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