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In Memoriam



Hon. Gershom Bradford Weston

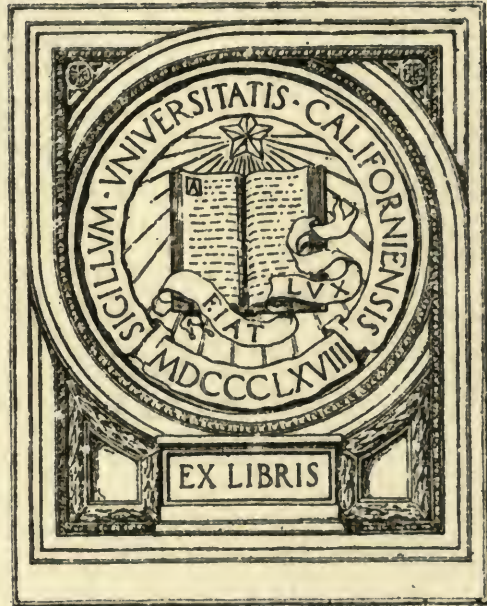
Deborah Brownell Weston

of

Duxbury, Massachusetts

GIFT OF

Edmund Brewell Weston



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HON. GERSHOM BRADFORD WESTON
(About 53 years of age)

In Memoriam

HON. GERSHOM BRADFORD WESTON

DEBORAH BROWNELL WESTON

OF

DUXBURY, MASSACHUSETTS



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In Memoriam

MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER

HON. GERSHOM BRADFORD WESTON

DEBORAH BROWNELL WESTON

OF

DUXBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

Memoirs of

CAPT. EZRA WESTON (I)

EZRA WESTON (II)

GERSHOM BRADFORD WESTON

ALDEN BRADFORD WESTON

EZRA WESTON (IV)

AND

DEBORAH BROWNELL WESTON

WESTON ARMORIAL BEARINGS AND DESCENT

By

EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

see date p. 75

PROVIDENCE, R. I., 1916

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EDMUND B. WESTON

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Preface

The writing of this Memorial is mainly due to the rereading of some old letters that my mother wrote to me when I was in South America in the latter part of 1868, and in which was expressed the desire that when an opportunity offered I would write something in an endeavor to commemorate my father's good deeds if it had not been done previously by another member of his family.

In order to make the memoir of my father as complete as possible under the circumstances, I have included memoirs of his grandfather, his father and his two brothers, and I felt I could not complete my work without adding a memoir of my mother.

The memoir of my father in particular, in order to have what I have written in accordance with facts, has necessitated much care and attention. Fortunately, my father was in the habit of talking with me from my early childhood about his past experiences and relative to the four firms, E. Weston, E. Weston & Son, Ezra Weston and E. Weston & Sons, and the recollections of these talks have materially helped me in my work. While I have several scrapbooks containing old newspaper clippings concerning my father's public life, unfortunately the dates were rarely written on the clippings and I had to make many inquiries in connection with them. When I was about

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eight years old, in looking through some manuscripts which were filed in my father's library in Duxbury, I came across his autobiography, which, even at my early age, I found to be very interesting. Shortly after discovering the autobiography I asked my mother about it and she informed me that the leading biographical publishers in the United States had asked my father for his autobiography and picture for publication and that he felt quite complimented by their request and wrote the autobiography. He then sent it to the publishers with his picture, but after they had received it they wrote to him to the effect that before publishing it they would ask him to send them a check for a substantial amount. In those days my father, I feel sure, would not have minded the expenditure of the money, but he believed that he could not maintain his manly independence if he should send it, and I can fully appreciate his feelings in the matter, and, therefore, requested the publishers to return to him the autobiography and the picture, and it was never published. I am very sorry that my father felt the way he did as if the autobiography had been published it would have been of much interest to his family and friends and of great service to me in writing this Memorial; possibly my father did not have in mind at the time how more or less history is made. Both my mother and I endeavored to preserve the manuscript autobiography above referred to, but after my mother died I could not find it; it apparently was lost or destroyed during our moving in Duxbury or when my mother left Duxbury to reside in New Bedford.

What I have written regarding my great-grandfather, grandfather and two uncles is, as will be noted, quite brief,

Preface

but the information is all I could obtain after diligent search and inquiry.

What I have written regarding my mother is practically from memory, as all of her near relatives have passed away, and while there are many people who have spoken to me in the highest praise of my mother's personality they have not been able to give me particular information relating to the history of her early life.

While the old records of the "Lloyds" in London contain full accounts of the vessels belonging to the four Weston firms and the firms were extensively known in America and abroad in their time, there has not been very much published concerning them. I recall of having accidentally met a few years ago the author of one of the latest books pertaining to the early mercantile marine of the United States, which was then in course of preparation, and much to my surprise he did not have any particular knowledge relative to the Weston firms and I referred him to data regarding them, which he was very glad to have and which he put in his book. It is quite likely that the reason why more has not been published about the Weston firms is because their principal business was practically located and carried on in the relatively small country town of Duxbury, although they had counting rooms in Boston. The Old Colony Railroad was not completed between Boston and Plymouth until 1845, and even then Duxbury was about four miles from the nearest station on the road. Previous to 1845 practically the only means of travel between Duxbury and Boston was by horse relays on land and packets on water, and there was not any electric telegraphic service until years afterwards. The paramount

Preface

reason, in my opinion, why more has not been published about the Weston firms is that my great-grandfather and grandfather, while sterling business men and great marine merchants, were conservative in connection with their business affairs and preferred to keep them to themselves rather than to advertise them to the world.

What I have written in regard to the Weston armorial bearings and descent was instigated by an apparent misunderstanding in the minds of more or less of our Weston family relative to the origin of the armorial bearings and the use which could be made of them by the family, and I have endeavored to explain the value of the armorial bearings in accordance with the accepted laws of heraldry.

It will be noted that more or less of what I have written in this Memorial is in the first person, and my reason for so doing is that I felt I could express myself at times more clearly and comprehensively in the first person than in the third, especially where sentiment and personal experiences are involved.

For considerable confirmatory and other information regarding my father's memoir, I am indebted to the State Librarian, Secretary of State and Adjutant-General of Massachusetts. A Weston unpublished genealogy which was prepared by my two uncles, Ezra Weston (IV) and Alden Bradford Weston, and also several old pamphlets have been of valuable assistance to me in preparing this Memorial, as well as records which have been preserved concerning the business of the four Weston firms. I have taken a great deal of trouble in endeavoring to have the illustrations as perfect as possible. Those of my great-grandfather, Ezra

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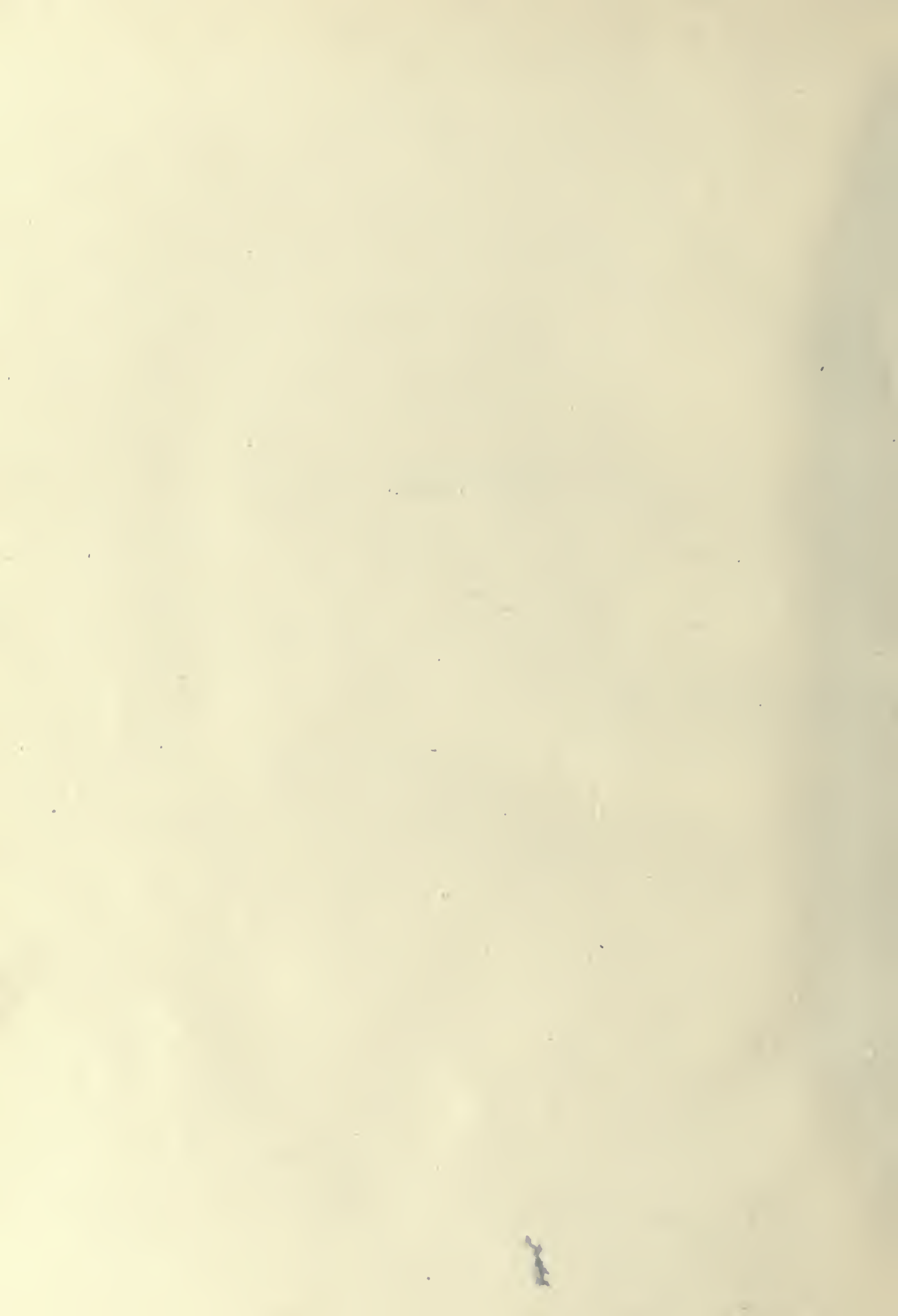
Weston (I), and grandfather, Ezra Weston (II), were reproduced from old paintings and the others were reproduced from old daguerreotypes, old photographs and the latest photographs I could obtain. The dates on the illustrations probably in more than one instance are not exact, as the originals did not have dates on them and I had to estimate the dates from personal remembrances and from the best data I could obtain.

EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

September, 1916.

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Memoir of Capt. Ezra Weston (I)



CAPT. EZRA WESTON (I)

Capt. Ezra Weston (I)

Ship Carpenter and Builder, Marine Merchant and Soldier of the Revolution

Ezra (I)—son of Eliphas—son of John—son of Edmund.

Ezra Weston (I), son of Eliphas Weston and Priscilla Peterson, was born in Duxbury, Mass., July 24, 1743, and died there October 11, 1822.

He was a stout and well-built man, light complexion, light hair and five feet eight or nine inches tall.

“He lived on his farm of 100 acres at Powder Point in Duxbury, and was one of the most enterprising and wealthy men in the province. He was the largest shipbuilder and owner in the country, and was familiarly known as “King Cæsar.” He was the richest man in Plymouth county, and owned nearly half of the town of Duxbury, and did a great deal for that town, and was of course by far its most prominent man in all respects, a man of high sense of honor and integrity and beloved by all. He served in the revolution, in Captain Benjamin Wadsworth’s company (Second Duxbury), Colonel James Warren’s regiment, and answered the Lexington alarm, April 19, 1775; also in same company under Lieutenant Nathan Sampson and Colonel Thomas Lothrop, December 10, 1776; and in Captain Allen’s company, Colonel Theophilus

Capt. Ezra Weston (I)

Cotton's regiment, on a secret expedition to Rhode Island, September and October, 1777."*

He married (first) April 20, 1767, Sylvia Church of Marshfield, who died May 31, 1768; (second) October 25, 1770, Salumith Wadsworth, who died July 23, 1815; (third) July 4, 1817, Priscilla Virgin of Plymouth, who was a widow at time of marriage and who died May, 1853 or 1855. Child of first wife: Sylvia Church, born May 13, 1768, died 1836; married Captain Sylvanus Sampson. Child of second wife: Ezra (II), born November 30, 1772, died August 15, 1842.

He carried on business from 1764 to 1798 under the firm name of E. Weston. A description regarding the business of the four Weston firms, E. Weston, E. Weston & Son, Ezra Weston, and E. Weston & Sons, is given in the accompanying memoir of Gershom Bradford Weston.

The remains of Ezra Weston (I) and his second wife were disinterred and are now buried near the granite monument erected by Alden Bradford Weston, his grandson, in the Weston burial lot in Mayflower Cemetery, Duxbury.

KING CÆSAR.

Ezra Weston (I) was given the sobriquet of "King Cæsar" by his townspeople, probably on account of his being a man of large affairs and a "leader among men." From 1800 to 1803 Ezra Weston (I) and other citizens of Duxbury wished to have the town build a bridge over Bluefish River, while a number of other citizens were opposed to its being done. It was finally decided to build the bridge, and on the Fourth of

*Genealogical and Personal Memoirs.



DWELLING HOUSE OF CAPT. EZRA WESTON (I)

Built by him on his farm at Powder Point, Duxbury, Mass., about the year 1768. The house was totally destroyed by fire December 27, 1886. His son Ezra Weston (II) and his grandsons Gershom Bradford and Alden Bradford Weston were born in this house

(The illustration shows house as in 1881 when in rather a dilapidated condition)

Capt. Ezra Weston (I)

July, 1803, the bridge, having been completed, was formally dedicated. The bridge was decorated for the occasion and a temporary arch erected over it, on which was perched a broad-spread eagle of wood. In Winsor's "History of Duxbury" there is an amusing account of some of the incidents connected with the erection of the bridge in which "King Cæsar" is prominently mentioned, and is as follows:—

"And it came to pass in the days of Cæsar, the King, that he commanded his servant Joshua, saying, get thee up a journey into the land of the Hanoverites, to Benjamin, the Scribe, and say unto him, I, Cæsar, the King, have sent forth my decree, and commanded that the people in the land of Sodom shall no longer be separated from the Westonites, the Drewites, and the Cushmanites, that dwell on the north side of the great river Bluefish. And also command Benjamin, the Scribe, that he forthwith make out a petition and convey it to the judges and magistrates of our land, commanding that they straightway direct the Sodomites, the Westonites, and all the other ites, within our borders, to build a bridge over the great river Bluefish. So the Judges and Magistrates, fearing Cæsar, the King, and Joshua, his servant, commanded that the bridge be built according to Cæsar's decree. But it came to pass that there arose up certain of the tribes of Judah and Levi and of Samuel, and of the Chandlerites, and others most learned in the law, and showed unto the Judges and Magistrates, that Cæsar, the King, had done wickedly, in commanding what was unlawful to be done, and so by the voice of the multitude the decree was set aside. And it came to pass that Cæsar and the Sodomites wrought the minds of the people, and cast such delusions before their eyes, that they had fear before Cæsar, the King, and at length resolved to build the bridge, and connect Cæsar's dominions to the land of Sodom. And now behold Cæsar,

Capt. Ezra Weston (I)

the King, has erected an arch fifty cubits high, on that bridge, which the people, in their folly, have built,—and set up an image on the top of the arch, and commanded all the people from the land of Sodom on the south, the Westonites and all the other tribes in the north to assemble on the fourth day of the seventh month, and bow their heads to the image which the King has set up. And behold the people assembled according to the King's decree, and did as he had commanded."

SOMEWHAT ILLITERATE.

In an interesting little book "Historic Duxbury," published a few years ago, it is related in regard to Ezra Weston (I):—

"He was one of the first to start the shipbuilding industry in the country, as his son was the largest one. Nevertheless, this King Cæsar was very ignorant outside of his special vocation. In the course of his business, which was that of storekeeper in addition to his shipbuilding operations, he had occasion to spell 'coffee,' which he did without using a single letter of the word,—'kauphy.'"

Without commenting on the questionable taste of publishing the above in "Historic Duxbury," the author would say that it hardly appears probable that Ezra Weston (I), who was capable of designing and building vessels, was one of the leading merchants of his time and who was constantly bringing to America in his own vessels coffee from foreign countries and sold it in connection with his business, should not know how to spell coffee correctly, especially as there must have been many shipping documents and invoices mentioning coffee frequently brought to his attention. Even if it is true that he was an exceedingly poor speller, his descendants may derive some satisfaction from knowing that it is

Capt. Ezra Weston (I)

notorious that the Duke of Wellington could not spell and that there were plenty of men of his mental caliber quite as illiterate. A number of years ago a list of names of distinguished Frenchmen who could not spell was collected and the list was headed with Thiers, who, though not a genius, was certainly one of the cleverest men that ever lived; Thiers never managed to spell his native language, although, as a writer, he was correct enough.

HIS BROTHER COMMANDED A PRIVATEER.

Timothy Weston, a younger brother of Ezra Weston (I), commanded a privateer (schooner 100 tons) during the Revolutionary War and was lost with his vessel and all on board in the Bay of Fundy, while cruising there. He was born in 1749, and lived in Duxbury. It is not on record as to who owned and fitted out the privateer.

EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

September, 1916.

Memoir of Ezra Weston (II)



EZRA WESTON (II)

Ezra Weston (II)

One of the most Celebrated Marine Merchants of the Age in which
he lived

Ezra (II)—son of Ezra (I)—son of Eliphas—son of John—
son of Edmund.

Ezra Weston (II), son of Ezra Weston (I) and Salumith
Wadsworth, was born in Duxbury, Mass., November 30, 1772,
and died there August 15, 1842.

He had a light complexion and light hair and was about
five feet nine inches tall.

He lived on his farm of 100 acres at Powder Point in Dux-
bury, where his father lived.

“Ezra Weston, the second of the name, and inheriting from
his father the popular title of ‘King Cæsar,’ was for the years
1820 to 1842 probably the most widely known citizen of
Duxbury, and was considered to be the largest shipowner in
the United States. Daniel Webster so rated him in his great
speech at Saratoga during the Harrison campaign of 1840.
His ships were then to be seen in all parts of the world. He
not only built his own vessels, but he controlled nearly all
the branches of business connected with shipbuilding, and the
ownership of vessels.”*

*Capt. John Bradford, in the “Old Colony Memorial.”

Ezra Weston (II)

He was taken into partnership by his father in 1798 under the firm name of E. Weston & Son. On the death of his father in 1822 he continued the business to 1842 under the firm name of Ezra Weston. A description regarding the business of the four Weston firms, E. Weston, E. Weston & Son, Ezra Weston, and E. Weston & Sons, is given in the accompanying memoir of Gershom Bradford Weston.

He made one or more trading trips to the Carolinas as supercargo.

“It was ‘Aunt Reeny’ Brewster who announced that the initials connected with the weather-vane surmounting the tall flag-staff on Powder Point, stood for ‘Ezra Weston’s New Ship.’”*

He was president of the Duxbury Bank from the year of its incorporation, 1833, to 1836, when his son, Gershom Bradford, succeeded him.

In the War of 1812 he was a member of the Duxbury Sea Fencibles and a “Drag Rope Man” of gun No. 3.

He was a Selectman of Duxbury in 1812 and 1813.

He married, June 2, 1793, Jerusha Bradford, who was born January 30, 1770, and died October 11, 1833. His children were: 1. Maria, born December 3, 1794, died February 2, 1804; 2. Ezra, born October 3, 1796, died September 12, 1805; 3. Gershom Bradford, born August 27, 1799, died September 14, 1869; 4. Jerusha Bradford, born August 9, 1802, died March 3, 1804; 5. Alden Bradford, born January 17, 1805, died June 1, 1880; 6. Ezra, born December 23, 1809, died September 6, 1852.

*Capt. John Bradford, in the “Old Colony Memorial.”



DWELLING HOUSE OF EZRA WESTON (II)

Built by him on the Weston Farm at Powder Point, Duxbury, Mass., in 1808. His son
Ezra Weston (IV) was born in this house

Ezra Weston (II)

Ezra Weston (II) and his wife are buried in the tomb under the sandstone monument in the Weston burial lot in Mayflower Cemetery, Duxbury.

SPEECH OF DANIEL WEBSTER.

The following is an extract from a speech by Daniel Webster relating to a United States Bank, at a great mass meeting at Saratoga, N. Y., August 19, 1840, in which he referred to Ezra Weston (II):—

“There is, too, another class of our fellow-citizens, wealthy men, who have prospered during the last year; and they have prospered when nobody else has. I mean the owners of shipping. What is the reason? Give me a reason. Well, I will give you one. The shipping of the country carries on the trade, the larger vessels being chiefly in the foreign trade. Now, why have these been successful? I will answer by an example. I live on the sea-coast of New England, and one of my nearest neighbors is the largest ship-owner, probably, in the United States. During the past year, he has made what might suffice for two or three fortunes of moderate size; and how has he made it? He sends his ships to Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, to take freights of cotton. This staple, whatever may be the price abroad, cannot be suffered to rot at home; and therefore it is shipped. My friend tells his captain to provision his ship at Natchez, for instance, where he buys flour and stores in the currency of that region, which is so depreciated that he is able to sell his bills on Boston at forty-eight per cent. premium! Here, at once, it will be seen, he gets his provision for half price, because prices do not always rise suddenly, as money depreciates. He delivers his freight in Europe, and gets paid for it in good money. The disordered currency of the country to which he belongs does not follow and afflict him abroad. He gets his freight in good money,

Ezra Weston (II)

places it in the hands of his owner's banker, who again draws at a premium for it. The ship-owner, then, makes money, when all others are suffering, because he can escape from the influence of the bad laws and bad currency of his own country."

DICK'S MONUMENT.

The following was published in a Boston newspaper some years ago:—

"Standing out in the mid-field at 'Powder Point,' Duxbury, the other day, my eye rested upon a neat red brick column, surmounted by a big brown sphere. What kind of a sun-dial is this? thought I. Judge of my surprise upon approaching it to read this inscription:

'We are all parts of one stupendous whole;
Life is Nature, and God, the soul.

Here Lies Buried
Honest Dick.

This noble horse served faithfully three
Generations.

Born on 'Powder Point'—1817,
Here lived and here died—
1846.'

'That,' quoth the native, 'why, that was King Cæsar's horse.'

'And who was King Cæsar?'

He looked at me pityingly. 'Ezra Weston,' he said. 'He owned the biggest part of the navigation of the United

Ezra Weston (II)

States once; nobody had so many ships afloat as he. That was why they christened him King Cæsar. He set his life by that horse, an' when he was buried himself he wanted just the same pattern monument over his grave. So there it is up in the town cemetery, only it's stone, and not brick.'"

It can be stated in further explanation that Dick's principal occupation during his long and useful life was in furnishing power in the Westons' ropewalk; he was harnessed, in the cellar, to a long bar connected by a central upright "drum" with the heavy machinery above, and walked round and round in a circle, thus supplying the needed power. The "King Cæsar" referred to by the "native" was Ezra Weston (II), who inherited from his father, Ezra Weston (I), the popular title of "King Cæsar," and the monument to Dick was erected by Ezra Weston (IV), son of Ezra Weston (II). The monument in the town cemetery referred to was built by Alden Bradford Weston, grandson of Ezra Weston (I) and son of Ezra Weston (II), as his own family monument and in commemoration of Ezra Weston (I).

EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

September, 1916

Memoir of
Hon. Gershom Bradford Weston



HON. GERSHOM BRADFORD WESTON
(About 48 years of age)

Hon. Gershom Bradford Weston

Marine Merchant and Public Citizen

Gershom Bradford—son of Ezra (II)—son of Ezra (I)—son of Eliphas—son of John—son of Edmund.

Gershom Bradford Weston, son of Ezra Weston (II) and Jerusha Bradford, was born in Duxbury, Mass., August 27, 1799, and died there September 14, 1869.

On his mother's side, he was a descendant, in the seventh generation, of William Bradford, second Governor of Plymouth Colony.

He had a light complexion and red hair and was a large man, weighing about two hundred and fifty-five pounds.

SCHOOL DAYS.

In his early youth he attended the public and private schools of his native town, then for two years he was under the charge of Rev. Mr. Norton of Weymouth and Rev. Morrill Allen of Pembroke, and finally he spent two years at school in Boston.

EARLY BUSINESS CAREER.

In early life he, by often visiting the vessels belonging to his grandfather and father, as they returned from foreign

Gershom Bradford Weston

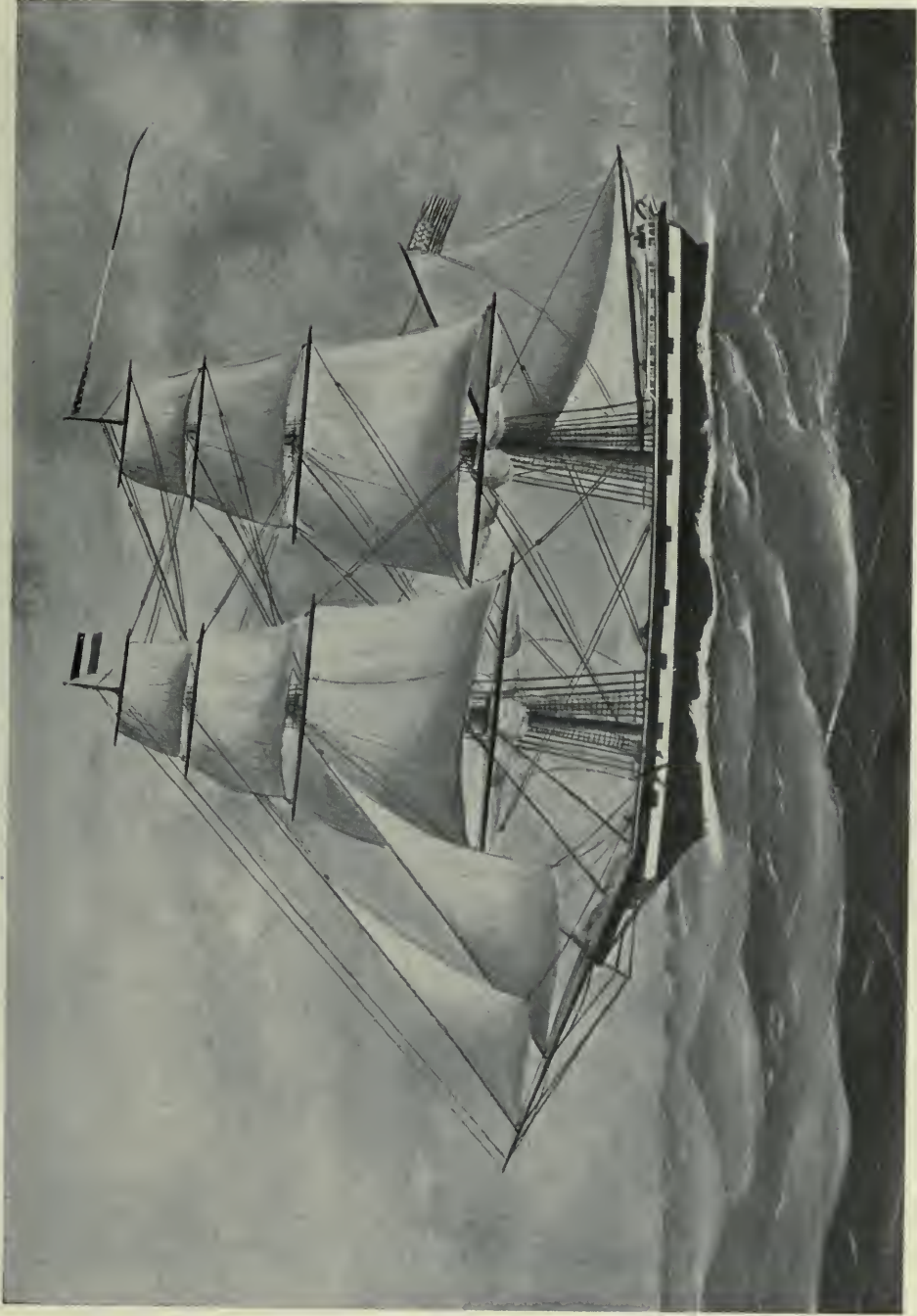
ports laden with rich products of other climes, imbibed a strong desire for a sea-faring life. His father, seeing him bent on trying his fortune on the mighty deep, found him a berth in one of his own ships as captain's clerk, bound to a port in Denmark. When he sailed on this voyage he was seventeen years old. Still persisting in a determination to follow the sea, he engaged subsequently as second officer on board one of his father's vessels bound to London, England, and still later, in the same capacity, he visited Calcutta, India. At the close of his third voyage, he entered the employ of his grandfather and father, E. Weston & Son, and soon after he became his father's general "out-door" assistant in connection with building ships, managing the farm and attending to other portions of the firm's business.

·ADMITTED TO PARTNERSHIP WITH FATHER.

In 1842 he was admitted to partnership with his father, together with his brothers, Alden and Ezra (IV), in Duxbury and Boston, the firm name being changed from Ezra Weston to E. Weston & Sons. They continued in business until December 31, 1857, when the firm dissolved.

THE FOUR WESTON FIRMS.

The business of E. Weston, E. Weston & Son, Ezra Weston and E. Weston & Sons, of Duxbury and Boston, was carried on successfully for about a century, from father to son. Their vessels were always rated A1, and to say that a vessel was built in Duxbury and owned by the Westons silenced and satisfied all criticisms or inquiries. Their vessels sailed and their sails whitened every known ocean and sea on the globe,



BRIG SMYRNA

Built in Duxbury, Mass., in 1825 by the firm of Ezra Weston and owned by them and afterwards by E. Weston & Sons; 160 tons; was first vessel to carry United States Flag into the Black Sea through the Dardanelles and Sea of Marmora under a "Firman" issued by the Sultan of Turkey in 1830

Gershom Bradford Weston

and carried the Stars and Stripes into all the principal maritime ports of the world, where the names of E. Weston, E. Weston & Son, Ezra Weston and E. Weston & Sons were familiarly known and their credit unlimited. In 1820 E. Weston & Son were probably the largest ship owners in the United States, and it has been stated that in 1842 the "Lloyds," London, England, had E. Weston & Sons registered as the largest ship owners in the world. Ezra Weston's brig "Smyrna" was the first vessel to carry the United States flag into the Black Sea through the Dardanelles and Sea of Marmora under a "Firman" issued by the Sultan of Turkey in 1830. His celebrated ship Hope, 881 tons, was, when she was launched in 1841, the largest merchant vessel in New England, and on her first arrival at Liverpool, England, she attracted a great deal of attention on account of her large size.

The first shipyard of E. Weston & Son was at "Harden Hill," Duxbury, and was familiarly called the "Navy Yard" on account of the large size of the vessels built there. They afterwards established one of the finest ship-building plants in Massachusetts, consisting of a shipyard of ten acres and a wharf on Bluefish River and a ropewalk, a quarter of a mile in length, a spar yard and a sail loft on their farm at Powder Point, Duxbury, as well as a wharf with five large buildings on their water front on Duxbury Bay. The Weston firms brought their timber and lumber from Haverhill and Bangor in their own schooners, or from Bridgewater and Middleboro with their own ox or horse teams, and their supplies from Boston in their own packets. They built all their vessels and made the spars, rigging and sails, and when their vessels left their wharfs in Duxbury they were ready to proceed on a

Gershom Bradford Weston

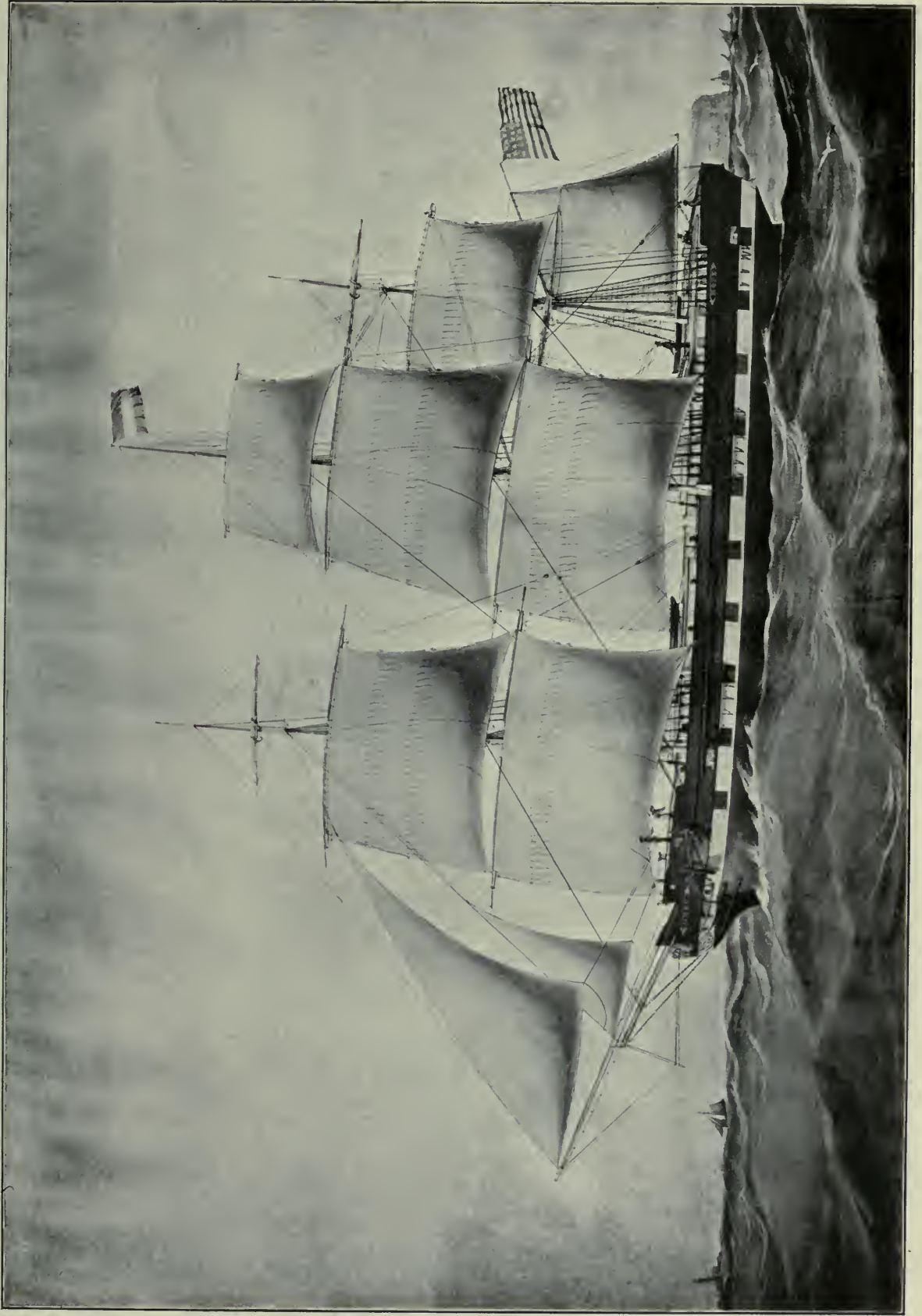
voyage. They frequently had three or four, and sometimes five, vessels on the stocks at once. They employed one hundred mechanics and paid for labor alone, in the town, \$120,000 annually, and did more than \$1,000,000 worth of business in a year. They also conducted a large country store, from which they paid their many workmen, there being very little, if any, money in circulation. Their salt came from Cadiz, St. Ubes, and Turk's Island in their own brigs. They sent their schooners to the Grand Banks for fish in the summer time and "out south" in the winter for corn.

Ezra Weston carried on an extensive farm several miles inland towards Pembroke, where he raised a large part of the vegetables and the beef and pork used on board his vessels.

During the War of 1812, mainly on account of foreign depredation on American marine commerce, E. Weston & Son established a cotton factory at Millbrook, Duxbury, which they afterwards converted into a nail and tack factory. Water was used for power, which was derived from the pond from which Duxbury now obtains its supply of potable water.

The four Weston firms owned and built from 1800 to 1846, inclusive, 97 vessels; namely, 21 ships ranging from 246 to 881 tons, 1 bark 209 tons, 30 brigs ranging from 120 to 240 tons, 35 schooners ranging from 20 to 120 tons, and 10 sloops ranging from 50 to 63 tons. The total tonnage of the 97 vessels was about 16,700 tons and, based on general marine construction prices of the "olden time," it may be roughly estimated that the cost of building the 97 vessels was about \$1,421,000.

The house flag of the four Weston firms consisted of three horizontal stripes, red, white and blue.



SHIP HOPE

Built in Duxbury, Mass., in 1840-1841 by the firm of Ezra Weston and owned by them and afterwards by E. Weston & Sons; 881 tons

Gershom Bradford Weston

The names of the partners of each of the four Weston firms and the length of time that each firm carried on business were:—

E. Weston, 1764–1798, 34 years; Ezra (I).

E. Weston & Son, 1798–1822, 24 years; Ezra (I) and Ezra (II).

Ezra Weston, 1822–1842, 20 years; Ezra (II).

E. Weston & Sons, 1842–1857, 15 years; Ezra (II), several months in 1842; Gershom, Alden, and Ezra (IV), 1842–1852, about 10 years; Gershom and Alden, 1852–1857, about 5 years.

Their last office in Boston was at Nos. 37 and 38 Commercial Wharf.

PRESIDENT OF DUXBURY BANK, ETC.

Gershom Bradford Weston was President of the Duxbury State Bank from 1836 to 1842, when it was discontinued.

He was a Director of the Equitable Safety Marine and Fire Insurance Company of Boston from 1850 to 1858.

OLD COLONY AND SOUTH SHORE RAILROADS.

He was asked to become the President of the Old Colony Railroad in its early days, with the understanding that he should purchase about \$50,000 worth of the stock of the road, but he did not deem it advisable to do this. The Massachusetts Legislature, in 1846, granted him and several others a charter to build the South Shore Railroad, "along the shore," from Duxbury to Boston (to connect at Quincy with the Old Colony Railroad running into Boston). He was the chairman

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of the Executive Committee of the proposed South Shore road and expended much time and energy in connection with it. The road, however, was not built as the Old Colony road that was completed in 1845 appeared to be able to handle the business of the "shore towns."

PUBLIC LIFE.

In politics, he was a Republican during his later years. He joined the Republican Party when it was first formed; previous to that time he was a "Free-Soiler" and earlier a "Whig." To promote the interests of the party with which he was identified he liberally contributed his time and property when needed.

At the age of twenty-eight years he was chosen by the Town of Duxbury as its representative to the Legislature, and for twelve successive years was either a member of the House or Senate (House, 1828 to 1831, inclusive; Senate, 1832 and 1833, and House, 1834 to 1839, inclusive), and during the twelve years he served on leading committees and was chairman of the most important of them for eleven years; he was a member of the Governor's Council in 1852, a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1853, a delegate to the National Republican Convention in 1856 which nominated John C. Fremont for President, a delegate to the National Republican Convention in 1860 which nominated Abraham Lincoln for President, appointed Draft Commissioner of Plymouth County in 1862, Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue for First District of Massachusetts in 1863 and 1864, appointed Special Hoosac Tunnel Award Commissioner in 1866, and a member of the Massachusetts Senate again in 1868 and 1869.



HON. GERSHOM BRADFORD WESTON
(About 62 years of age)

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For more than thirty years he attended the conventions of his political party for the nomination of state and national officers, and thus he formed acquaintance with distinguished men from all parts of the country. He was a Justice of the Peace for the County of Plymouth thirty-nine years and for the whole state seventeen years. For many years the citizens of Duxbury chose him to preside at their annual town meetings and as a member of the School Committee, and he also filled other town offices.

In 1852, during the brief existence of the Free Soil Party and before the birth of the Republican Party, he was the Free Soil candidate for Congress for the Second District of Massachusetts. It was not anticipated that the Free Soil candidate would be elected as the Whig Party had long been in the habit of carrying all before it. It was, therefore, a great surprise to learn at the conclusion of the counting of the ballots that he had only lost the election by less than 150 votes.

During the first part of President Lincoln's administration, in 1861, he was asked if he would accept the appointment as our Minister to Austria, but, mainly on account of it appearing that the annual salary of \$12,000 would not be sufficient to cover the expenses which would probably be necessary to customarily and creditably maintain the position, he declined.

Among my father's personal friends were Senator and Vice President Henry Wilson, Senator Charles Sumner and Governor John A. Andrew, and I can just recall, when Senator Sumner was brutally assaulted in the senate-chamber in Washington in 1856, how my father, immediately after he learned of the outrage, went on to Washington to offer his sympathy.

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CIVIL WAR.

He dearly loved his native Town of Duxbury and her interests were ever his interests. His devotion to the old flag, which to the last was his joy and pride, was unlimited and came directly from his heart; no better example of this can be mentioned than his patriotic efforts during the unhappy Civil War, 1861 to 1865.

It is written, my son, in the stories,
That a white-haired Colonial dame
Whose eyes were bedimmed with the weeping
For sons who in battle were slain,
Stitched her love and her trust and her anguish,
Stitched her hope and her fears and her pride,
In the tri-colored flag of our country,
Which, pray God, may forever abide.

And it's said, too, by students of history,
That the story is naught but a tale,
That no Betsy Ross ever existed,
And they laugh at the story and rail,
But I say to you, son, there's the banner—
And it matters no whit what they say,
And it matters no whit who designed it,
It is ours, and it's up there to stay.

It was a great disappointment to him, owing to poor health and advanced age, that he could not enlist on the call of President Lincoln for volunteers. His disappointment was somewhat alleviated, however, as two of his sons enlisted, one in the navy and one in the army, at the outbreak of the war. He constantly labored during the war, in order to prevent any of the citizens of Duxbury from being drafted, to have the quota of men called for from Duxbury filled by volunteers or to raise funds for the purchase of substitutes. During the

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war he was instrumental in having a great many "war meetings" held in different parts of the town, when he did his best by making stirring and patriotic speeches to create enthusiasm and bring about the results desired. At times he greatly impaired his health in going back and forth to the "war meeting" in snowstorms and other inclement weather and in making speeches when he was not physically able to do so. The energetic endeavors on his part undoubtedly had a vast influence in reducing to a minimum the number of citizens drafted from Duxbury. His addresses made at the reception of the Duxbury volunteers on their return from the war and on other patriotic occasions were inspiring and much appreciated. He was ever in the lead in striving to have the town pay bounties to its volunteers. When the town voted a \$100 bounty to each of its "Nine Months' Volunteers," there being some doubt about the legality of the town's taking such action, he and other patriotic citizens of Duxbury gave their individual security by endorsing the town notes. While the Duxbury Volunteers were in the field he personally sent them, when possible, at Christmas or Thanksgiving, boxes of appetizing homemade mince pies and other delicacies. He exerted himself in many other ways in endeavoring to lighten the sorrow of those whose dear ones were fighting for their country, and the following from a newspaper printed during the war can be taken as a criterion:—

"Hon. G. B. Weston has secured, after many difficulties, and had embalmed, the body of young Paulding, of Duxbury, who was 'only a private.' In a few days his friends and fellow citizens will receive his remains in his old home to pay their tribute of respect and drop the silent tear over the brave departed, lay him where the widow and orphan may visit his final resting place, and his body sleep 'mid the graves of his fathers."

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CHARITABLE AND HOSPITABLE.

He was truly a friend of the poor, and in his prosperous days his house and heart were always open to their wants; his hospitality was unbounded and numberless were the blessings he bestowed on all around. He was a cordial friend and a not indifferent enemy, and if he had had many more faults than he had his generous and unostentatious charity would have covered them all.

“ ‘HE HAS no enemies,’ you say:
My friend, your boast is poor,
He who hath mingled in the fray
Of duty, that the brave endure,
Must have made foes. If he has none,
Small is the work that he has done;
He has hit no traitor on the hip;
He has cast no cup from perjured lip;
He has never turned the wrong to right;
He has been a coward in the fight.”

DOMESTIC MAN AND KIND HUSBAND AND FATHER.

He was particularly a home man and was fond of reading standard works, and in his prosperous days he acquired a library of considerable value. He was a devoted husband and a kind and generous father. Those of his sons that required financial assistance in their business careers, he generously assisted to the extent of his ability, and he exerted his influence in helping his other sons to obtain positions.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE.

He attended the Unitarian Church in his early manhood, was much interested in the teachings of Theodore Parker and attended the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Duxbury the latter part of his life.

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TEMPERANCE MAN.

He became a total abstinence man in 1842 and he labored in the cause of temperance reform from that time, and he was interested in many different organizations for the reformation and salvation of the fallen. He was also very much interested in the formation of the Duxbury Martha Washington Relief Society in 1842 and in its continuance; the Society had for its object the promotion of charity and temperance. He often lectured on the subject of temperance.

CAPABLE SPEAKER.

He was a capable speaker and a good debater and at his best on extemporaneous occasions. One of his best endeavors, he seemed to think, was a speech which he made in the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention in 1853 in favor of each town, however small its population, continuing to send one representative to the Legislature. The late Governor George S. Boutwell in his "Reminiscences" states that the Constitutional Convention of 1853 consisted of the ablest body of men that ever met in Massachusetts; Nathaniel P. Banks was the presiding officer, and among men of prominence who were members of the Convention were Robert Rantoul, Rufus Choate, Charles Sumner, George S. Boutwell, Henry Wilson, Caleb Cushing and Benjamin F. Butler.

FREEMASON.

In the earlier days it was customary for those who followed the sea to become Freemasons. He was made a Mason when he was a young man and he always kept up his interest in

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Freemasonry, and on more than one occasion he was called on to deliver addresses on the subject in Duxbury and adjoining towns. He was a member of the Mattakecsett Lodge of Duxbury.

FISHING AND HUNTING.

He was fond of fishing and hunting water fowl and shore birds. E. Weston & Sons owned a schooner yacht of 24 tons, the "Mayflower," with which he occasionally entertained his friends by taking them on fishing trips and during which fish or clam chowder dinners were served. In the late fifties and early sixties he had a boathouse at the Old Cove and kept there two large spritsail boats, an ice gunning-boat, and a tender. He had a first-class assortment of guns, fishing tackle and other necessary equipment, wooden goose and coot decoys and quite a number of live geese and ducks for decoying purposes.

TROUBLE WITH EYES.

His eyes troubled him from his boyhood days, and during the last two or three years of his life quite severely. The original cause was owing to his having had the measles when he was about fifteen years old while boarding in Boston. His landlady, who was a kindly and attentive woman, did not know what the trouble was when he first became ill and did not darken his bedroom, but she immediately sent word to his mother in Duxbury. His mother, however, did not reach his bedside until three days had elapsed as it was before the days of railroads and telegraphs. After his mother arrived his bedroom was at once darkened and under her care he recovered

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in due course, but the light, during the days when his room was not darkened, had injured his eyes permanently, and he afterwards had to wear dark-colored glasses in the open and strong uncolored glasses indoors and for reading.

Before the Old Colony Railroad between Boston and Plymouth was built (1845), the members of the Weston firms and their families generally traveled back and forth to Boston on horseback or with a horse and chaise or sulky, and they kept relay horses at the old Hanover "half-way house."

HEALTH.

He injured his health from exposure in 1846, from which he never fully recovered, when he was Chairman of the Executive Committee of the proposed South Shore Railroad as he personally took a great deal of interest in the preliminary surveys, etc., and was more or less up and down the line in all kinds of weather.

ALWAYS RESIDED IN DUXBURY.

He lived with his father on Powder Point, Duxbury, until his marriage in 1820, when he went to live in a house which he had purchased with 30 acres of land fronting on the north side of Harmony Street, Duxbury. He made more or less improvements in connection with this house to suit his convenience, and in it all of his children but the three youngest were born. He converted the 30 acres of land into a beautiful estate by grading, laying out avenues and walks, planting and setting out many ornamental and fruit trees and vines, a great deal of shrubbery, and an abundance of flowers and erecting rustic arbors. He built on the estate, about 1840, a mansion having

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all modern improvements, two large barns, outbuildings, hot houses and ice houses. He lived in this mansion until 1850, when it was, with its contents, valued at about \$50,000, completely destroyed by fire. He then moved to Boston and resided there for about five years in a house at the corner of Boylston and Church streets and which is now part of the Thorndyke Hotel; he did not, however, relinquish his Duxbury citizenship while living in Boston. In the meantime he built in Duxbury another mansion, in which he resided until 1867. Then, owing to financial reverses he was obliged to move from his magnificent estate, which he had commenced to lay out in early manhood and had taken great pride in improving in after years, into a small house on an adjacent tract of land which the owner rented to him. He lived in this house a little over a year, when the owner notified him that owing to it being necessary for him to give up his business in Boston he wished to occupy the house himself or to sell it. At the time he did not have the requisite amount of money to purchase the property nor did he think of any immediate possibility of obtaining it, and the worry in connection with the matter added greatly to his already poor health. He was a member of the Massachusetts Senate at the time, 1868, and one of the senators, who was a sincere friend and wealthy man, when he learned in regard to his anxiety about the house, arranged with other friends in the Senate to contribute the necessary amount for the purchase of the house and land, which they presented to his wife.*

*The author has been endeavoring for a number of years to find a way to personally refund to the legal heirs of the senators the amounts contributed, but as yet he has been unable to do so, as he has found it impossible to obtain a list of the amounts subscribed.

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HIS LAST DAYS.

During the first part of 1869 the condition of his health became serious and did not improve after the adjournment of the Senate in June and it gradually grew worse and he died in Duxbury on September 14, 1869.—While in his last days he was reconciled to circumstances, greatly owing to the devotion of his loving and self-sacrificing wife, Deborah Brownell Weston, and the sympathy of his family and kind friends and neighbors, it was pathetic that as his end was drawing near he could look out from the windows of the house in which he then lived upon his once magnificent estate, hardly a stone's throw away, which he had acquired and embellished during his prosperous years.

He was much pleased and gratified on his being elected to the Massachusetts Senate again, for the years 1868 and 1869, and it came as a balm in his last years. He liked his associates in the Senate, one and all. At the opening of the Senate in 1868 he was called upon to preside, as he was the senior member and in connection with it he wrote to his wife:—

“Today I called the Senate to order—in a political view—the proudest day of my life in my declining years.”

In a letter dated November 7, 1869, his wife wrote to their son, the author, who was in Holland, the following:—

“The hope that your father is in a world ‘where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest’ is the greatest comfort to me. ‘Come unto me all ye, that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest,’ I often repeated to your father, and every night he would say ‘we will say our prayers,’ and I would repeat the Lord’s Prayer ‘Our Father who art in heaven’ and ‘Now I lay me down to sleep.’ He said he would like to live but if it was God’s will he was reconciled to go.”

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He was buried with Masonic rites in the tomb under the sandstone monument in the Weston burial lot in Mayflower Cemetery, Duxbury. A delegation of Senators, his former colleagues, was present at the funeral.

FAMILY.

He married (first) September 20, 1820, Judith Sprague, born in Duxbury, Mass., April 25, 1799, died November 25, 1845; (second) February 23, 1848, Deborah Brownell, born in Little Compton, R. I., August 1, 1822, died July 12, 1907. Children of first wife: 1. Gershom Bradford, born October 25, 1821, died April 15, 1887; 2. Maria, born December 16, 1822, died May 30, 1823; 3. Jerusha Bradford, born March 15, 1824, died December 8, 1824; 4. John Allyn, born November 3, 1825, died May 12, 1869; 5. George Canning, born March 28, 1828, died January 18, 1856; 6. William Bradford, born June 20, 1830, died June 19, 1915; 7. Edgar, born August 31, 1832, died October 31, 1851; 8. Jerusha Bradford, born December 19, 1834; 9. Alfred, born January 11, 1837; 10. Maria, born June 3, 1839, died January 21, 1916; 11. Alden Bradford, born November 25, 1844. Children of second wife: 1. Edmund Brownell, born March 25, 1849; 2. Ezra, born July 31, 1859, died September 11, 1859.

TRIBUTE BY A FRIEND.

The following is a copy of a memorial tribute to the Hon. Gershom B. Weston by a former Legislative associate, published in January, 1870:—



SANDSTONE MONUMENT OVER TOMB IN WESTON BURIAL LOT
IN MAYFLOWER CEMETERY, DUXBURY, MASS.

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“At the assembling of the Massachusetts Legislature a few days since, the remarks of President Coolidge relative to the decease of Hon. Gershom B. Weston, who for the past two years has represented this district in the Senate, were so opportune and truthful that we ask leave to quote them with a hearty endorsement of their sentiments:

‘As I look about this Board I see many new and kindly faces, friends yet to be that have taken the places of friends of the past. One friend has gone from us forever. The senior member of the last Senate; one who gave his youth, his manhood, and his old age to the service of the State. He rests by the side of the ‘much sounding sea’ in the county with which his name is identified. Who that met him in these halls can forget his gentlemanly courtesy, his devotion to the State, his honest and sturdy independence, his firmness in his own views, and the respect he always showed to the opinions of others. His legislative career may teach those who knew him many a lesson.’

With an acquaintance with the course of Mr. Weston as a citizen, and in the arena of politics for many years, we can readily appreciate the justice of this tribute to his character and worth. Identifying himself at its formation with that party which in 1848 reared the standard inscribed ‘Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor, and Free Men,’ he continued in the support of these ideas until the close of an earnest and eventful life.

In the advocacy of what he deemed the best methods of advancing the Temperance reformation, he never faltered; and while the power was given him, the suffering or needy found him with a sympathizing heart and a helping hand.

Associated with him for a time in the performance of Legislative duties, in the occasional conference or companionship, we were led to respect and honor him the more. Through cares, perplexities and trials, more than ordinarily falling to the lot of man, and during a protracted and painful illness, he maintained the reputation, than which none can earn a better, of a true man.

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How many of his fellow citizens will cherish his memory and recall his kindly words and deeds. As we stood that beautiful September day, in the calm and peaceful grove which he had so loved to adorn, and witnessed the devotion with which his earnest friends, and brothers of the mystic tie performed their last offices of respect, we recalled the many manly words and deeds for which he will long be kept in memory, and with a remembrance of the worthy surrounding, we felt with the poet that it was for him to

‘Sleep in peace with kindred ashes
Of the valiant and the true;
Hands that never failed their country,
Hearts that baseness never knew.’ ”

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS.

As recollections often bring out more clearly and truthfully the human side of the natures and lives of those who have passed away, I give below some personal recollections of my father, the Hon. Gershom Bradford Weston. These recollections cover a period from my early childhood until I was slightly over eighteen years old, when, on July 10, 1867, I sailed from America on a long voyage and did not return until November 25, 1869, about two months after my father's death. The majority of the recollections are based on incidents during my father's prosperous days.

STEALING MOLASSES.

When I was about three or four years old my father used to tell me, among other stories, about little boys stealing molasses from barrels on their wharf in Boston after they had been unloaded from vessels that had returned from the “West Indies.” He said a boy obtained the molasses by

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shoving a small, smooth, round stick of convenient length through the bunghole of a barrel and then pulling the stick out of the barrel quickly and drawing it, covered with the molasses, between his lips. This story interested me very much and my father took me down to the wharf one afternoon, but, alas, all there was to be seen at that time were the barrels as the boys were not in evidence.

EARLY HISTORY.

My father taught me during my trundle-bed days a good deal about the early history of America and Plymouth Colony. The knowledge was imparted while we were in bed and soon after we awoke in the morning. His procedure was to ask me questions such as "Who discovered America" and "When did the Pilgrims land at Plymouth" and many others of a similar character, and if I did not know how to reply correctly he would tell me the answers. Previous lessons were frequently reviewed in order to keep them in my memory. This instruction regarding history was kept up with pleasure to both my father and me until I outgrew my trundle-bed and moved to a room of my own, but I fear that it was not always agreeable to my mother, whose morning naps were often interrupted.

MAY BASKETS.

I can recall the pleasure I had when a child in hanging May baskets for my father. This was generally suggested to me by my mother at the right time, and one of the family made very pretty paper baskets for me. I put into a basket a bunch of wild violets that I picked and a stick of candy which I bought with a cent that my mother gave me. I

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hung the basket on the knob of the west door of the house, pulled the door bell violently and then rushed around the front of the house and went in by the east door, and to my delight, at the time, I did not get caught, although in entering the house at the east door I was so excited that I must have made as much noise as a "young hurricane," and probably nearly everybody in the house knew what was going on. Very soon after I got in I was summoned to my father in his library, and my mother was there as well, and he gravely told me that he had received a May basket and shared the stick of candy with my mother and me.

POCKET MONEY.

In my boyhood days my father, notwithstanding that he was a very generous man, rarely gave me money offhand to spend, although he often gave me small sums to put into the bank.

As I was his youngest child, I inherited the use and control of a donkey and cart, and at times in the spring I rented the donkey and cart at ten cents a day to a few people that cultivated small gardens. In the summer I also rented the donkey and cart to the children of Duxbury summer visitors at a rate of from ten to twenty-five cents a day. My father also used to pay me for donkey loads of rock weed, which I used to pull off the rocks on the Powder Point shore at low water. He also would buy from me, for feeding his pigs, horseshoe crabs, which I generally caught at flood tide, and he gave me a little flat-bottomed boat for my expeditions after horseshoe crabs and for pleasure. He also allowed me every spring a very small plot of land for a garden, which I occasionally took

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advantage of by planting radishes, peas and pop corn. As I recall, however, generally more seemingly important matters than tending to the garden occupied my attention after the radishes had matured. As I grew older, he let me keep a few hens, and I raised chickens which I sold to peddlers. My chicken farming was relatively a financial success as I did not have to pay for the food for the hens and chickens as I had permission to take it from the meal and corn bins in the barn. I also had another source of income for a time as my father offered to give me one dollar at the end of each school term if I had not been absent or late at school during the term. I can only recall, however, of having earned the dollar once.

To summarize, my father was always perfectly willing that I should have a reasonable supply of pocket money, but he felt that I should do something to earn it.

WAR OF 1812 AND FRENCH SPOILIATIONS.

When a boy I often used to sit out on our front piazza with my father during pleasant summer evenings, and he would sometimes get quite reminiscent and tell me stories about the Weston firms.

I can remember quite well his accounts of how, during the War of 1812, his grandfather's and father's vessels had to be hauled up in the narrow creeks in the salt marshes back of Pine Hill and their upper masts housed in order that the vessels would be out of sight of the British men-of-war which were often cruising up and down the coast.

There is a story told that during the War of 1812 a Duxbury sea captain with a younger brother, while on the inside of the beach on a gunning or clamming trip, took occasion to climb

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up on the ridge of the beach and there saw at the outside of the beach a British war vessel landing men. The captain referred to was a man of large frame and strenuous character and had a loud voice. The captain at once attracted the attention of the British war vessel by calling out to the effect, as I remember the story, "Come on boys, here they are" and the British, evidently thinking they were being surprised by an armed force, possibly the Duxbury fencibles, retreated to their vessel as quickly as possible and she got under way and sailed from the vicinity.

My father also talked to me about the capture, by French privateers, from 1797 to 1801, of vessels belonging to his grandfather and father and how unjustly the United States had acted towards the owners of captured American vessels as although France had paid damages to the United States for the loss of the vessels the United States had not recompensed the owners of the vessels. In the early seventies, however, Congress began to make the long delayed appropriations for the settling of the damages.

DRIVES IN WOODS AND "SOULE'S BEAR."

Very pleasant drives could be taken in the Duxbury woods up and about the Island Creek and Round Ponds. The Westons owned a great deal of woodland, and my father kept trimmed the obstructing trees on more or less of the narrow roads running by and through their land and, by permission, the land of others so that a carriage could be driven without difficulty. My father enjoyed driving in the woods with my mother on pleasant summer evenings. His favorite equipage was a strong and commodious four-wheeled vehicle, its front

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wheels turning under the body, somewhat resembling a modern buggy, which he had built in Duxbury for local use. I was often taken on these rides when a little boy and stood up in front of my father and mother holding on to the high dasher for support.

I can recall a story that my father sometimes told me when we were driving in the woods. It appeared that years before a man by the name of Soule was walking through the woods in the main road leading from Island Creek Pond towards Duxbury Village early one evening and as he got about half way from Island Creek Pond to the now Mayflower Cemetery, he thought he saw a bear among the upper branches of a group of tall trees a short distance from the road on his right. He then ran down to the village as fast as he could and aroused his neighbors, some of whom, with firearms and other weapons, returned with him to where he thought he saw the bear, but it was discovered that what he took for a bear was only a thick bunch of foliage. The bear hunt resulted in the group of trees being afterwards known as "Soule's Bear."

ENTERTAINING.

In his prosperous days my father had house parties in Duxbury every summer and entertained quite a number of friends from Boston and elsewhere. Everybody was made to feel perfectly at home. During the house parties he used to take pleasure in having his guests get together on Sunday evenings in the music room and sing hymns. One of the family, who was a proficient musician, would play on the piano. Although my father and some of his guests could hardly be called good singers, all of them seemed to enjoy these amateur

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sacred concerts. His favorite hymn was "Greenland's Icy Mountains," and, as I recall, he was at his best when singing this hymn. There were riding parties and whist playing in the afternoons and evenings. Also during the season there was generally one or two fishing trips to Brant Rock, Marshfield.

Usually on a fishing trip one or two carriages and a large wagon carried the party, fishing tackle, bait and a goodly supply of appetizing lunch. He always kept on hand a large number of long bamboo fishing rods and hooks and lines. When the party arrived at Brant Rock each person was furnished with a rod and line and the party distributed itself on the Rock near the edge of the water. The fish caught was sea perch and occasionally a tautog. When the fish were unhooked they were put into depressions in the Rock that contained sea water and were collected at the end of the day's fishing. Lunch was served at a convenient time and everybody had a good appetite for it. The fish were taken home and dressed and served for supper, which was one of the principal events of the trip. In those days there were not any bungalows or cottages at Brant Rock or along Marshfield Beach and, consequently, the only people likely to be met in the vicinity were excursionists.

THANKSGIVING CHEER.

My father, in his prosperous days, used to send on Thanksgiving eve to each of about fifty elderly men and women in Duxbury two delicious mince pies and to some of them a pair of chickens or a turkey as well.

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There was always a good deal stirring in our house for a week or two before Thanksgiving, and I can recall the great interest I used to take, when a small boy, in seeing the mince pies baked. We had in our cellar a large brick oven having an iron floor. A fire of cord wood was built in the oven and after the oven was sufficiently hot the ashes were raked out and the pies put in to cook. As I remember, at least twenty or thirty pies could be baked at a time.

HORSES AND DOGS.

My father usually kept about six horses, and among them was always one beautifully matched span. In addition, most of the time there was a donkey and a pony for the use of the younger members of the household.

There were generally two valuable dogs on the estate, one a magnificent Newfoundland and the other a watch bulldog. The watchdog's term of life was not very long, and I can remember three of them; they were all named "Bose" and were white, marked with more or less black. There was also a very fine water spaniel, named "Shot," who was very good-natured and an agreeable companion, but otherwise not of much use.

The Westons have always shown an appreciation of and kindness to animals, and among my father's horses was a white one, named "Jim Simmons," used altogether as a work horse. Jim lived on my father's estate many years and met his death by an accident at the age of more than forty years. As during the last years of his life he had grown too old for work, he was pastured back of Pine Hill on my father's estate during the warmer months of the year. There was a spring in the pasture,

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which was curbed up with wooden planks in the form of a well, and one day Jim was found dead with his hind legs and quarters in the well. He had fallen into the well and the concussion of the fall had killed him.

The second watchdog, Bose, who was a savage dog and made friends with only a few people, was particularly fond of Jim Simmons and his liking was apparently reciprocated by the horse. Bose would follow Jim about when he was at work and generally when Jim was standing still Bose would establish himself under the cart.

The body of Jim Simmons was buried near where he died, but there was not any monument erected to his memory as in the case of my grandfather's horse "Dick" who died on Powder Point; however, my father's talented cousin, Miss Charlotte Bradford, who was one of Jim's friends, wrote a poem at the time and dedicated it to Jim, in which Bose is also mentioned, which is as follows:—

"EPITAPH FOR JIM SIMMONS

Stay friend awhile—lament for poor old Jim,
Stay stranger too, and weep a tear for him
Who spent full forty years in service true—
And if there's heaven above for me and you,
Rest and reward for us when time shall cease,
Why not for poor old Jim a heaven of peace?—
Patient and faithful, meek and far from strife,
He lived an honest, much enduring life,
Inured to heavy burdens, slow and sure,
He served the rich and often helped the poor,
Of friends old Jim could count but very few,
Though until death the faithful Bose was true,
And fewer still of foe would like the name,
For foe to Jim would sure be all to blame,
But who shall all thy joys and sorrows tell?
Fare well old Jim, old Bose sighs fare thee well."

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GUNNING AND FISHING.

Soon after the firm of E. Weston & Sons dissolved, my father revived his early interest in gunning and fishing and devoted considerable time to it until matters connected with the Civil War took up a great deal of his attention.

He had a large conveniently arranged boathouse at the Old Cove, and he kept there two cedar, lap-streaked, spritsail boats, only one of which, however, was generally in commission at a time, an ice gunning-boat and a small tender for going back and forth from the shore to the sailboats which were moored in midstream. His boats were looked after by one of the men who was employed on his estate, an ex-sailor, who also went with him on most of his gunning and fishing trips when the spritsail boats were used.

He had wooden goose, coot and other decoys, as well as live geese and ducks for decoying purposes. He kept on hand a full assortment of fishing tackle and guns and other apparatus. He had a well-equipped gun room in the carriage house near his mansion, and the live ducks and geese were kept on his estate most of the time, where he had fenced in an area containing a large tank into which water was pumped.

As what constitutes an ice gunning-boat or the manner in which it is used may not be clearly understood, I will explain in general detail. The boat is generally used for stalking wild fowl, principally geese, when they are feeding on the flats in the bay. It is a low, flat-bottomed, perfectly tight boat painted white to represent an ice cake, and the men using the boat dress in white. Under ordinary conditions the boat is propelled with two muffled oars, in the customary manner, but in stalking wild fowl it is sculled with one muffled oar,

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there being a round hole in the stern for that purpose. When stalking wild fowl, the boat is, when possible, first rowed or sculled to the leeward of the birds and the men in the boat lie down on their backs with their guns in readiness to shoot. The man nearest the stern sculls the boat slowly towards the birds. The birds in the meantime supposedly think that the boat is an ice cake. The man sculling keeps his head sufficiently elevated to observe the birds and when the boat is sculled up near enough for a shot he signals the man in front of him and they sit up and shoot.

My father usually employed to go with him on his gunning and fishing trips a very experienced gunner and fisherman who was a first-class shot, and I will refer to him as I go on as the captain.

My father's ice gunning-boat was conveniently arranged so that he could lie at full length in the boat with his shoulders resting on a strip of canvas stretched between the two sides of the boat and, therefore, did not in any way interfere with the captain in the stern of the boat who did the sculling.

My father could only be called a fair shot, principally on account of his having trouble with his eyes, as nearly all his life he was obliged to wear dark-colored glasses in the open and strong uncolored glasses indoors and for reading. In shooting he could not make practical use of either of these glasses and generally had to shoot without glasses; therefore, he was at a great disadvantage.

For a time he leased what was then called Soule's Pond and some adjacent land running up to a relatively high elevation and bordering on the shore a short distance below the Old Cove. This pond and land was enclosed by a high picket fence

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and he had there at times as many as twenty-five live wild goose decoys. The idea was that the live goose decoys would roam around on the high land and be able to see any wild geese which might be flying along the outside of or over the beach, which was somewhat more than a mile distant, and that when they saw these geese they would honk and attract their attention and induce them to come into the pond, but I do not recall that this ever happened.

My father and the captain shot quite a number of wild geese from the ice gunning-boat in the bay at different times, and more or less of those that were only wounded were captured by the captain after strenuous chases and were added to the geese kept in Soule's Pond.

During the gunning season my father kept moored in the Island Creek Pond, or Lily Pond, a flock of twelve wooden wild goose decoys having a most natural appearance. At night and in the early morning he used to go with the captain to the pond to shoot wild geese, taking two or three live wild goose decoys with him. He had a blind at one side of the pond and the live goose decoys, after being secured by having long lines fastened to their legs, would go into the water and disport themselves or roost on little rests which were built for the purpose and at the same time honk and make themselves sufficiently in evidence to attract any wild geese which might be in the pond or flying over it.

The most exciting gunning adventure that I recall was at the Island Creek Pond. It was on a holiday, and I was at home from school and tried to persuade my father to go up in the woods around the pond to shoot partridges. He finally told me that if I would find the captain and arrange with him

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to go with us in the afternoon that we would take live goose decoys along and he and the captain would go to the blind and endeavor to bag a wild goose or two if any should come along and that I could roam off by myself after partridges. I arranged with the captain to go with us, and as we were driving in the woods, about half a mile from the pond, we saw a man in the distance hastening towards us and when he reached us he was very much out of breath and only about able to say that he was on his way to notify my father that a flock of wild geese were swimming around his wooden decoys in the pond. We then rode on to as near the pond as it was thought advisable and my father and the captain took their guns and the live goose decoys and went off to the blind, leaving me in charge of the horse and wagon. This, I did not like, but I had to accommodate myself to circumstances. Very soon I heard the sound of a gun, soon after a second shot and then two more shots, and then my curiosity got the best of me. I tied the horse to a tree and made my way to the blind and there I found my father and the captain feeling very pleased as they had killed six large Canadian wild geese. There were nine geese in the flock in the first place and two were killed at the first shot, when the remainder of the flock flew out of the pond but they came back again once or twice and four more were killed. Two of the geese were wounded and were captured alive within a day or two and brought to my father and were added to his flock of live geese. The ninth goose, if I remember, was never positively accounted for, although I have a faint remembrance of hearing that it was found badly wounded by some one who appropriated it for his own use, which, of course, he had a perfect right to do.

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As we were driving home in the evening with the six geese, I noticed that my father and the captain were laughing and enjoying themselves and that instead of going home the nearest way, as was usually the case, we drove down through the village by the Point Union Store. This store, from my early remembrance, was a meeting place in the evening for a few kindly and congenial citizens where the news and events of the day were discussed. When we arrived at the store my father asked me to go in and ask a certain delightful gentleman, who was generally found there in the evening and who was very fond of gunning and an expert shot, to come out for a moment, which he did, and the captain swung a lantern around into the body of the wagon where lay the six large Canadian geese which almost filled it. Our friend was much interested and the captain briefly told him how the geese had been killed. The next morning practically all of the gunners and those interested in the district knew all about the killing of the six geese.

My father also used to go gunning for wild ducks to the Island Creek Pond. Live tame ducks were used as decoys at the blind and they would quack and generally attract the attention of any wild ducks in the vicinity.

For shooting wild fowl, such as coots (scoters), quandies, sheldrakes and loons, he used one of his spritsail boats. For effective shooting, a line of boats, belonging to different gunners, would anchor off the Gurnet at right angles to Duxbury Beach at a suitable distance apart and furl their sails and unstep their masts and put out wooden decoys. The wild fowl in the fall, which was the best season for gunning, would come from the north, following the contour of the outside

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of the beach and, with the exception of sheldrakes and loons, would usually fly in flocks near the surface of the water, but before reaching the boats they would rise to avoid the boats and a shot from a boat would generally cause them to fly off at right angles, thereby passing within shot of the other boats. Many were the coots, quandies, sheldrakes and loons that my father and the captain brought home from the Gurnet gunning trips.

There is one thing in regard to the manner in which wild fowl were dressed down on the south shore which I never heard of being done elsewhere; that is, after a fowl had been picked and singed it was thoroughly washed and scrubbed in warm water with castile soap, and as a result a relatively large quantity of slime was removed from the skin of the bird, which an ordinary rinsing would not have brought about, and then the scrubbed fowl had as white and attractive appearance as that of a domestic duck. In my own experience I used clean, warm water at least three times on each occasion. In the course of conversation at times, when I have mentioned coot stew as being one of the most delicious dishes of my early remembrance, I have been told that as the flesh of coots is so strong it is not supposed to be palatable, but I have replied to the effect that most assuredly it is when the coots are dressed in the manner just described.

My father and the captain also used to shoot ducks in a manner that I have never heard of elsewhere. A dog was especially trained for the purpose. This dog was of a pointer breed, having short hair and tan in color. The principal advantage of this kind of a dog is that it will control its feelings and keep silent when at work. The dog was made use of as

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follows: A blind was built on the inside of the beach near the high water mark and as the tide rose the ducks which had been feeding in the bay on the flats or in the guzzles or channels would congregate into flocks. Then the dog was made to play with a ball in front of the blind. The dog would run and jump after the ball and make himself quite conspicuous, which would attract the attention of the ducks, and they, being very curious, would swim in a mass towards the dog and when they were near enough, the dog was called in and the gunners behind the blind would shoot at the ducks.

During the latter part of the fall, when the wild fowl were migrating, my father would sometimes drive up and down Duxbury Beach, and I was very fond of going with him on these trips as occasionally we would come across one or more of the great white owls, spotted with black, that were to be found on the beach during the colder months of the year. As I remember these owls, they had large yellow eyes and some of them were about two feet high. I recall one amusing, but sad for me, experience, when my father shot at one of the very largest of these owls. We then drove up to the owl and it appeared to be wounded and inert and did not fly away, and my father said that he would put on his heavy gloves after he had loaded his gun and put the owl inside of our closed wagon. He loaded his gun and put on his gloves and was about to take hold of the owl when the owl coolly spread its wings and flew away and although we spent nearly an hour in trying to find the owl it was the last we ever saw of it. On other occasions he shot more or less of these owls and had one or two of them stuffed, but none of them was such a magnificent specimen as the one that flew away which I have just mentioned.

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When a boy I sometimes used to go gunning after "peeps" on the outside of the beach in the fall with my father, and in those days peeps were very plentiful. The best time for shooting was from about half-ebb to low tide and the surface of the outside of the beach in those days, from a short distance below highwater mark to lowwater mark, was hard and compact and a horse and carriage could be driven over it with ease and rapidity. Sometimes the peeps were shot from the carriage as we drove along as we had a very reliable horse that was not frightened by gunfire, but most of the time, after a flock of peeps was located feeding, my father would get out of the carriage and walk up within shooting distance of the birds.

In the late fifties and early sixties Duxbury was quite different from what it is now. The summer cottager had not made his advent and there was not any obstruction between the Old Cove and Bay as the bridge from Powder Point to the beach had not been built. Shore birds were abundant in season and the birds far outnumbered the gunners, whereas at the present time it is stated that on occasions the gunners outnumber the birds.

On account of my father not allowing, as a rule, any birds to be shot on his estate, and the groves and trees which afforded them shelter, all kinds of local birds and quail lived and propagated there in considerable numbers.

The principal fishing at Duxbury consisted in trolling for bluefish and bass in the Bay and in catching cod out on the ledges beyond the beach and perch and haddock off the Gurnet and Saquish, and there was generally good fishing inshore off the Gurnet when the codfish came into the shallow water in the fall.

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In regard to bluefishing: There was a procedure that appears to be particularly original. In my father's boats, when he went bluefishing, there was always carried a covered water-tight tub or box. This was about half or more filled with sea water. When a bluefish was caught it was knocked in the head, its tail cut off and then put into the box or tub to bleed. A bluefish will bleed "like a pig," and the water in the box or tub was changed two or three times or more, dependent on the number of fish caught. The fish, when taken ashore, were cut open in the back, dressed, the backbone removed, sprinkled with salt and then hung up to drain. The bleeding of the fish greatly improved its appearance and flavor.

At one time he and the captain conjointly owned a large fish weir. The material was furnished by my father and the captain built it. The weir was located, as I remember, about a thousand feet northeast from Powder Point, on a flat beyond the main channel leading to the beach. I can recall that a number of fair catches were removed from the weir at times but that, on the whole, it was not a success. I think it was destroyed by ice the winter after it was built or the next winter.

EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING.

My father, as a speaker, was at his best on extemporaneous occasions. I can recall that at a war meeting in the early sixties, when urging citizens of Duxbury to enlist or to contribute money for the purchase of substitutes, in order that a draft on the town might be avoided, he was interrupted by a citizen asking him why he himself did not enlist. My father almost instantly replied to the effect that he would gladly have enlisted at the commencement of the war if he had not

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been too old and in very poor health but that two of his sons had enlisted at the outbreak of the war and did not wait for the Town of Duxbury to buy substitutes for them. The citizen then apologized for having interrupted him.

ESQUIRE WESTON.

My father was in a great many instances addressed as "Squire" by many people in Duxbury, especially those that grew up with him. Whether the title of "Squire" originated from his being a Justice of the Peace or as a mark of distinction, I do not know.

POLITICAL PRESTIGE.

It has been said that my father's influence in regard to politics in his prosperous days was largely due to his being a wealthy man. This, I do not think is true, although his wealth may have had considerable to do with his success. However, when he was last elected to the Massachusetts Senate, for 1868 and 1869, he was a poor man. Also, he was informed in 1868, when he was advocating in his district the nomination of a friend for Congress, that some of the leading men of the district were discussing him as a candidate for Congress.

BURNING OF MANSION.

On March 29, 1850, my father's mansion in Duxbury, valued at about \$50,000, was completely destroyed by fire, the inmates barely escaping with only their night clothes on and they fled for refuge to the house of my eldest half-brother about a quarter of a mile away. The fire was discovered

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about eleven o'clock at night in the nursery, which was completely in flames, and the house was filled with smoke. The Volunteer Fire Department with two engines were soon on the ground and rendered efficient service in protecting the barns and other outbuildings from destruction. The citizens of the neighborhood and village were early present, anxious and willing to do all that could be done to arrest the flames, but the fire spread so rapidly that all efforts to save the house and its contents proved unavailing.

There are several versions as to how the fire started, but the most plausible one appears to be that it was due to a defect in the nursery chimney. Everybody in the house was asleep, when the laundress, who slept in a room in the upper story, dreamed that the house was on fire, and she awoke and found the house apparently filled with smoke and ran out into the hallway and screamed and awoke my father, who immediately aroused the other inmates. The fire came very near resulting in a tragedy as my father had a narrow escape with his life. The nurse had brought my youngest half-brother, about six years old, downstairs in his nightgown and left him temporarily to get something to wrap around him and cautioned him not to move from where she left him, but he got interested in the men carrying buckets of water upstairs and followed some of them, and when the nurse returned the boy was gone and she frantically informed my father, who rushed back into the burning house, and while searching for the boy his eyebrows were burned off and his face badly scorched; in the meantime the boy had returned and was found by the nurse.

Naturally there was more or less excitement at the time, and my mother has told me that when she was leaving the

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burning house, instead of taking her watch and jewels from her dressing table, she went to a closet and took out and carried with her one or two skirts or dresses of very little value and also that some of the kindly citizens, who were endeavoring to assist as much as possible in saving what furniture they could, threw mirrors out of the second story windows to the ground. My mother has also told me how my Aunt Cornelia, who was visiting my mother at the time, carried me, wrapped in a blanket, from the burning mansion to the house of my eldest half-brother.

There were some very valuable papers lost in the fire, especially those in connection with the French Spoliation Claims, which related to the loss of American vessels that were captured by French privateers from 1797 to 1801, and which, had they been saved, would undoubtedly have enabled my father's heirs to have collected a substantial amount from the United States Government for the loss of several vessels owned by E. Weston & Son as in the early seventies Congress began to make the long delayed appropriations for the settling of the damages for which the French Government had already reimbursed the United States Government.

"THE RICH MEN OF MASSACHUSETTS."

In a book published in 1851, entitled "The Rich Men of Massachusetts," is the following relating to my father:—

"WESTON, GERSHOM B.	\$200,000
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This gentleman may be worth more than our estimate, but his property is chiefly invested in navigation, and it is hard to judge of its value. He inherited a large amount from his father, Ezra Weston, a distinguished ship-owner,

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and has been successful in the same business. He is generous, hospitable, fond of good living, more fond of having his own way, and pretty sure to have it. He was formerly a Whig Senator, but is now an influential member of the Free-Soil party. He is also remarkable for the zeal and liberality, with which he has espoused the Temperance cause. His elegant mansion, which cost sixty thousand dollars, was the boast of Duxbury, until it was destroyed by fire, some two years since. Mr. Weston is a cordial friend, and a constant enemy. If he had many more faults than he has, his general and unostentatious charity would cover them all."

DREAM OR VISION ON ATLANTIC OCEAN.

Just before sailing from the Guanape Islands in the Pacific Ocean, via Cape Horn, for Hamburg in 1869, I received letters informing me that my father was very ill and in all probability that I would never see him again. Although I felt very badly regarding the news, I had too much to occupy my attention to let it seriously dwell on my mind, but one night on the South Atlantic Ocean I had a dream or vision while asleep. As I recall the incident, there seemed to be off on the water gliding towards me a somewhat indistinct procession of draped rectangular objects that suggested a funeral, which made me shudder. The first letters from home which I received on my arrival at Hamburg informed me that my father had died, and as near as I could estimate he died about the time I saw the mysterious procession in my dream. I have told this story several times and more than one who have heard it say that the incident was a vision, but in my own opinion it was simply the depression, which I unconsciously felt after hearing at the Guanape Islands that my father was very ill, making itself manifest in a dream.

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MY FATHER'S LAST LETTER TO ME.

On my return to America on November 25, 1869, I found a letter written to me by my father about two and one-half months before he died. At the time he wrote the letter I was "on ship" at the Guanape Islands in the Pacific Ocean. The letter was as follows:—

"JULY 2, 1869

My dear son Edmund,

I am only able to write these few lines. God bless you and prosper you through life. Protect and take care of your mother is your dying father's request.

Good-bye,

Your affectionate father,

G. B. WESTON."

MY FATHER'S BECOMING A POOR MAN.

It has seemed surprising to many, and I have often been asked, why it was that my father during his last days was a poor man, when during the greater part of his life, to about 1860, he had been considered a successful merchant and wealthy, and his father and grandfather before him had been extremely prosperous in business and wealthy, and in explanation I would state the following:—

In 1843, the commencement of the clipper ship era, on account of the growing demand for the quick transportation of tea from China, and later, under the stimulating influence of the discovery of gold in California and Australia in 1849 and 1851, there was a great call for faster sailing ships, and my father was very desirous that his firm, E. Weston & Sons,

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should build clipper ships to meet the requirements of the time, but his two brothers, the other members of the firm, were so extremely conservative that they would not consent to do this, and, therefore, great business opportunities were allowed to go by as other leading American merchants, recognizing the probable business advantages, built clipper ships and realized large fortunes in consequence, while the business of E. Weston & Sons commenced to decline, and on December 31, 1857, it was discontinued altogether.

He lost about \$100,000 in transactions in "Eastern lands" in which a number of Boston capitalists were interested.

His personal expenses, on account of his large family and magnificent estate and luxuriously appointed mansion, were relatively very heavy.

He assisted financially at least two of his sons in their business ventures at times and his house and home were always open as an abiding place, free of expense, for his children even after his sons had reached manhood.

He was very generous, kind hearted and charitable. Among his papers when he died were more than sixty notes receivable, which were outlawed, ranging in amounts from \$5 to \$2,300, and which were practically all signed by "needy" inhabitants of Duxbury; also among his papers there was another outlawed account, amounting to about \$6,000, which money he had loaned to a supposed friend who had made misrepresentations and taken advantage of his good nature. He was liberal in his political contributions as well as to organizations for the promotion of the temperance cause and to others established for improving and benefiting the human race.

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He commenced housekeeping in 1820 in a house which he had purchased with thirty acres of land bordering on the north side of Harmony Street, Duxbury. He converted the land into a beautiful estate by setting out and planting many ornamental and fruit trees and a great deal of shrubbery and laying out avenues and walks. He built on the estate a mansion having all modern improvements, two large barns, outbuildings, hot houses and ice houses, rustic arbors and "summer houses." As soon as his new mansion was completed, about 1840, he moved into it and made it his home until early in 1850, when it was, with its contents, valued at about \$50,000, destroyed by fire, which, owing to a misunderstanding, was not insured at the time and was a total loss. He then moved to Boston and resided there for about five years, although he did not relinquish his Duxbury citizenship. In the meantime he built in Duxbury another mansion, on the same site, which had to be entirely supplied with new furniture, to take the place of the mansion that was burned down.

Commencing in 1861, his only living brother sued my father for money which he had loaned him and foreclosed a mortgage which he held on my father's Duxbury estate; consequently, my father was obliged to give up his luxurious home in the winter of 1867 and move into a small house nearby which a neighbor rented to him.

It might be said that, when my father's mansion burned down, if he had permanently moved back into the unpretentious house in which he first commenced housekeeping, instead of rebuilding, and had reduced his living expenses accordingly, he might have ended his days in comfortable circumstances,

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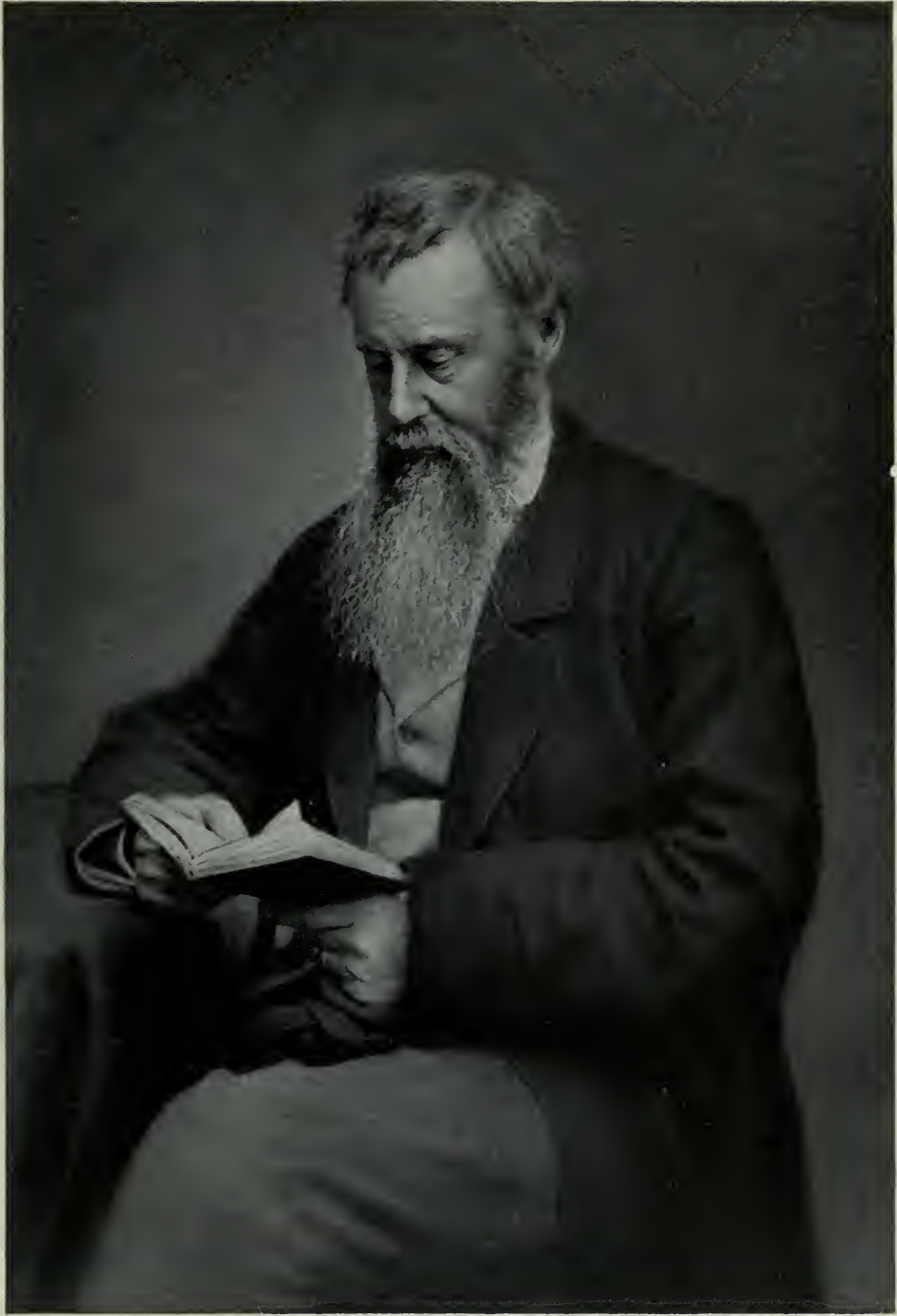
but he had been brought up in an atmosphere of prosperity and success, and I can understand why he hesitated to do this.

An extensive experience in professional and commercial business practically all over the world leads me to believe that if, in accordance with my father's advice, E. Weston & Sons had commenced to build clipper ships in the forties they could have successfully continued in business, and my father, instead of dying a poor man, would have died in prosperous circumstances.

EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

September, 1916.

Memoir of Alden Bradford Weston



ALDEN BRADFORD WESTON

Alden Bradford Weston

Marine Merchant

Alden Bradford—son of Ezra (II)—son of Ezra (I)—son of Eliphas—son of John—son of Edmund.

Alden Bradford Weston was the son of Ezra Weston (II) and Jerusha Bradford.

The only genealogical data that the author is conversant with regarding his uncle Alden is what was principally written by his uncle Alden himself and is among Genealogical Memorandums relating to the Weston family, as follows:—

“B. Jan. 17th, 1805. D. June 1st, 1880, aged 75 y. 4 m. & 15 d.—at Duxbury, Mass. Light complexion—light hair—thin about five feet 8 inch high—M. at St. Louis June 9, 1860 to Mrs. Phoebe A. Hammond, daughter of Samuel Aderton & Phoebe Dunham, of Freeport, Maine, B. Oct. 21, 1814, D. January 29, 1869.”

As what my uncle Alden wrote about himself is so brief and as he was a member of the firm of E. Weston & Sons, I will add something to it, based on my own recollections about him:

He entered the employ of his father, Ezra Weston (II), at an early age and afterwards became his father's principal “indoor” assistant. In 1842 he was admitted to partnership

Alden Bradford Weston

with his father, together with his brothers Gershom and Ezra (IV), the firm name being changed from Ezra Weston to E. Weston & Sons. A description regarding the business of the four Weston firms, E. Weston, E. Weston & Son, Ezra Weston, and E. Weston & Sons, is given in the accompanying memoir of Gershom Bradford Weston.

He lived on the Powder Point, Duxbury, property which he, with his brother Ezra (IV), inherited from his father, and where his father and grandfather had lived. On the death of his brother Ezra (IV), he also inherited the portion of the Powder Point property which had belonged to his brother Ezra (IV).

He is buried with his wife by the side of the granite monument which he personally had erected in the Weston burial lot in Mayflower Cemetery, Duxbury.

My recollections regarding my uncle Alden are principally from my early childhood until I was about fifteen years old. I recall him as a pleasant, kindly man of conservative views and habits. He lived simply, and his principal amusement in the evening, in Boston, where he resided much of the time, was in playing whist in his boarding house with congenial companions. Many a Christmas morning, on account of his generosity and thoughtfulness, he greatly added to my pleasure and to that of my youngest half-brother and my two half-sisters by our finding many attractive presents in our stockings that were hung up the night before. He also made my youngest half-brother and I many other delightful and appropriate gifts during our boyhood days.

It is with sorrow that I recall the unpleasant events which transpired during the last six or eight years of my father's

Alden Bradford Weston

life, as the two brothers (Gershom and Alden) were deeply estranged.

This was principally due to financial matters and resulting disagreeable lawsuits. Previous to their estrangement they were on brotherly and friendly terms. The financial matters involved were mainly that my uncle Alden had loaned my father money from time to time and he also held a full mortgage on my father's magnificent estate in Duxbury, my mother having "signed off" her right of dower. The final result was that after about six years of litigation, commencing in 1861, my father, in due process of law, was evicted from his home by his brother under trying circumstances in the winter of 1867 and was obliged to move into a small house which he rented nearby. It is possible, however, that before his death my uncle Alden may have acquired a more charitable frame of mind relative to my father as he did not leave a will and, consequently, his property, after he died, was inherited by my father's children, the legal heirs. My uncle Alden did not communicate with any of his relatives during his last illness and none of them were with him when he died.

EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

September, 1916.

Memoir of Ezra Weston (IV)



EZRA WESTON (IV)

Ezra Weston (IV)*

Lawyer, Horticulturist and Marine Merchant

Ezra (IV)—son of Ezra (II)—son of Ezra (I)—son of Eliphas—son of John—son of Edmund.

Ezra Weston (IV), son of Ezra Weston (II) and Jerusha Bradford, was born in Duxbury, Mass., December 23, 1809, and died there September 6, 1852.

He had a light complexion and light hair, was a well-built person and was about five feet ten inches tall.

He was a Harvard man, graduated in the famous class of 1829, studied law at the Harvard Law School and was admitted to the bar and practiced law in Boston. He was very popular with his classmates, and he was captain of the college military company.

After he graduated from Harvard he was called to the command of the Boston Light Infantry, familiarly known as "The Tigers."

Some few years later, on being urged, he accepted the appointment of "City Marshal" of Boston.

In 1842 he was admitted to partnership with his father, together with his brothers Gershom and Alden, the firm name

*Ezra Weston (III): Born 1796, died 1805.

Ezra Weston (IV)

being changed from Ezra Weston to E. Weston & Sons. A description regarding the business of the four Weston firms, E. Weston, E. Weston & Son, Ezra Weston, and E. Weston & Sons, is given in the accompanying memoir of Gershom Bradford Weston.

He visited Europe several times, and traveled abroad extensively.

He was something of a musician and devoted considerable time to the study of music.

He lived on the Powder Point, Duxbury, property which he, with his brother Alden, inherited from his father and where his father and grandfather had lived.

He was unmarried.

He is buried in the tomb under the sandstone monument in the Weston Burial Lot in Mayflower Cemetery, Duxbury.

EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

September, 1916.

Memoir of Deborah Brownell Weston



DEBORAH BROWNELL WESTON AND HER SON
EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

(About 30 and 3 years of age, respectively)

Deborah Brownell Weston

Devoted Wife and Mother

Deborah Briggs Brownell, daughter of Edmund Brownell and Priscilla Briggs: Born in Little Compton, R. I., August 1, 1822, and died in New Bedford, Mass., July 12, 1907; married, as his second wife, Hon. Gershom Bradford Weston of Duxbury, Mass., February 23, 1848, who was born August 27, 1799, and died September 14, 1869. They had two children: Edmund Brownell, born March 25, 1849; Ezra (V), born July 31, 1859, and died September 11, 1859.

PROGENITORS.

The progenitors of Deborah Briggs Brownell were as follows:—

Sir Edmund Brownell, Mayor of Coventry, England, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

His son: Thomas Brownell, of Derbyshire, England, born about 1618, and died 1665. He married Anna, his wife, in about 1638, who survived him, and they came to America in 1639.

His son: Thomas Brownell, born 1650, died May 18, 1732. His wife: Mary Pierce, born May 6, 1654, and died May 4, 1736.

Deborah Brownell Weston

His son: Lieutenant George Brownell, born January 19, 1685, and died September 22, 1756; probably served with Gen. Wolfe at Quebec. His wife: Mary Thurston, born March 20, 1685, and died February 3, 1740.

His son: Lieutenant Jonathan Brownell, born March 19, 1719, and died June 11, 1776; was wounded at Bunker Hill and did not recover. His wife: Elizabeth Richmond, born February 26, 1725, and died June 2, 1806.

His son: Pardon Brownell, born July 6, 1745, and died January 24, 1799. His wife: Prudence Shaw, born 1744, and died January 9, 1823.

His son: Edmund Brownell, born in Little Compton, R. I., November 7, 1775, and died there February 1, 1840. His wife (second): Priscilla Briggs, born in Little Compton, January 10, 1785, and died there December 1, 1869. Deborah Briggs Brownell was one of their daughters.

My mother's American forebears were upright, God-fearing people. The Brownell men, from the earliest Colonial Times, were ever ready to and did fight for their country when their services were required.

FATHER AND EDUCATION.

My mother's father, Edmund Brownell, was a prosperous farmer of Little Compton, R. I., and his house was a commodious one.

Her early education was acquired in the schools of Little Compton and later in Boston, where she resided a large part of the time with her eldest brother, Gilbert, who married Eliza Emerson and who was a dry goods merchant in Boston.



DEBORAH BROWNELL WESTON
(About 31 years of age)

Deborah Brownell Weston

MARRIAGE.

My mother married my father, Hon. Gershom Bradford Weston of Duxbury, Mass., when she was twenty-five years old, and my father was forty-eight years old. At the time of her marriage my father had living nine children, seven sons and two daughters, ranging in age from four years to twenty-six years, the eldest child, a son, being nine months older than my mother.

I have heard it said that when one of her friends learned that my father had so many children she asked how my mother could have married into such a large family, particularly as my mother had a delightful home and her family greatly loved and appreciated her. The marriage of my father and mother was a genuine love match, however, as I can personally remember, and I have frequently been told, that my father and mother were always particularly devoted to each other. I can recall a circumstance which perhaps might fill part of a romantic story: In looking over my mother's most valued possessions after she died I found a small, carefully tied-up package, on which was written "Given me by Mr. Weston the first time I saw him, at the Mechanics Fair in 1847." As I had never heard of this package before, I opened it with unusual interest, wondering what it could be that my mother had kept so carefully for more than fifty-nine years and thinking that possibly it might be a valuable "jewel," but I only found a little piece of dried-up, brown soap, which my father had evidently presented to my mother as a pleasantry or a joke.

INFANT'S DEATH.

My mother's greatest sorrow during the first half of her married life was probably on the death of her infant son,

Deborah Brownell Weston

Ezra (V), who was born July 31, 1859, and died September 11, 1859. I find, among others, in a scrapbook which belonged to her, the following lines that she pasted in the book at the time:—

“O! when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of wo, the watchful night,
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An overpayment of delight?”

CHARACTER.

My mother was a remarkable woman and had one of the sweetest dispositions, in my opinion, that is conceivable for anyone to have. A dear friend who knew her intimately has recently written me that nothing can be said which will express her true worth. I recall a saying of my mother's to the effect that she always tried to make up her mind in the morning as to how she could make somebody happy during the day and that at night she liked to be able to look back and feel that she had made somebody happy during the day.

She was a sincere christian, and, with her family, was a member of the Congregational Church until she married. After her marriage she generally attended the same churches as her husband, and after his death she worshipped at Congregational and Episcopal Churches.

Her extraordinary devotion to her husband during the latter years of his life, when he was in poor health and seriously embarrassed relative to financial matters and had to give up and move from his magnificent estate, had a vast amount to do with keeping up his courage and prolonging his days.

She was a woman of remarkable executive ability, but her ways were quiet and of a persuasive order rather than arbitrary.



DEBORAH BROWNELL WESTON
(About 32 years of age)



Deborah Brownell Weston

In 1867, when the furniture of my father's mansion in Duxbury was being packed and moved, she seemed to superintend everything with apparently slight effort, although there were more or less people constantly asking her for detailed instructions regarding a great many different things.

After my father's death she seemed more devoted to her Saviour than ever before, but it was with that wondrous kind of devotion which always enabled her to appear cheerful and smiling, which was an encouragement to others, rather than somber and gloomy.

BURNING OF MANSION.

I have described in the memoir of my father the burning of his mansion in Duxbury, valued at about \$50,000, in 1850. My mother's personal loss during the fire was considerable, the value of her jewels alone being about \$3,000.

CHANGE IN FORTUNE.

I can recall with what remarkable fortitude my mother bore the great change in her manner of living, owing to my father's becoming a poor man and having to give up her luxurious home over which she had presided for nineteen years. I never heard her make any complaints regarding it, and I feel sure that she never in any way talked regretfully about it to my father, but, on the contrary, made almost superhuman efforts to cheer and encourage him during the years that followed. She would occasionally talk to me about our old home, but it was always in a cheerful and reconciling manner, but she must have greatly felt the change in her fortune at times.

Deborah Brownell Weston

TEMPERANCE, CHARITABLE AND PUBLIC SPIRITED WORK.

My mother was President of the Union Martha Washington Relief Society of Duxbury, a charitable and temperance organization, consisting of ladies, which my father was very much interested in founding in the early forties. She became its President soon after she was married to my father, and continued in that position until she went away from Duxbury to live. I do not recall that in those days there was another society of its kind and prominence in Duxbury, and once a year they gave an entertainment, about Christmas time, generally in the nature of a fair and "grand ball." These entertainments were largely attended and were one of the features of the town life and were looked forward to. The society also nearly always had an annual strawberry festival. At times my mother's work in connection with the entertainments was very fatiguing, but she seemed to enjoy it. The members of the society met at regular intervals to sew for charity, to attend to the business of the society and for social intercourse. During the Civil War the society contributed money and clothing and other necessary articles for the soldiers through the various agencies instituted for the purpose. They also subscribed for a recruit to be enrolled in the name of the society.

After the war was over an association of ladies was formed to build a soldiers monument, of which my mother was the President. She and other members of the association devoted a great deal of time and energy in regard to raising subscriptions for the monument, which was dedicated Memorial Day, May 30, 1872, and stands at the southeastern corner of Mayflower Cemetery, Duxbury.

Deborah Brownell Weston

I can remember when the "Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union" was incorporated in March, 1858, for the purpose of raising funds for the purchase, as a memorial, of "Mount Vernon," the former home of George Washington. The project was a success, and the greater part of the property was purchased by 1858 and the remainder by 1887. My mother was appointed by the National Committee as a collector of funds for Duxbury. Each individual subscription was limited to one dollar, and in connection with the matter my mother spent a great deal of time in driving all over town to ask people to subscribe, and for a little town like Duxbury she was reasonably successful as she collected about \$127.

She was greatly interested in the National Sailors Fair, for raising money for a National Sailors Home, which was held in the Boston Theatre from November 9 to November 19, 1864. My mother and Mrs. Charles G. Davis of Plymouth were the managers of the Old Colony table and during the Fair she was always in attendance.

Also, my mother did a great deal personally for the soldiers during the Civil War, and during her married life she ably labored with her husband in connection with public functions, charities, the temperance cause and in doing all she could for the uplifting and welfare of the unfortunate, and after her husband's death she took a great interest in the education and advancement of the colored race in the South and in the Dr. Cullis Consumptive Home in Boston and assisted both of these causes in the collection of funds and the securing and making of articles for their fairs and sales for the purpose of raising money.

Deborah Brownell Weston

LEAVING DUXBURY.

For about eight years after my father's death my mother lived the greater part of the time in Duxbury and in New Bedford with her sister Cornelia, the wife of Dr. G. F. Matthes, a prominent physician.

In 1877 she went to reside with a friend in Hartford, Conn., and lived there about seventeen years, with the exception of two or three months during the summer of each year which she spent in Duxbury and New Bedford and at the mountains or seashore. My mother was very happy during her residence in Hartford, and it may have been one of the pleasantest periods of her life, notwithstanding the love and reverence she bore my father's memory. It was in Hartford that her cousin, the Rt. Rev. Thomas C. Brownell, for a time President of Washington College (now Trinity) and Episcopal Bishop of Connecticut and presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, formerly lived. Bishop Brownell died before my mother went to Hartford to live, but his widow was still living and was one of her dearest friends.

After residing in Hartford until 1894, my mother went to New Bedford to live with her sister Cornelia, whose husband had died about five years before. She then lived until she died with her sister Cornelia, but serious cares fell once more on her shoulders after living in New Bedford a short time as her youngest brother, Richard, went to my aunt's house very sick and died there about a year later, and afterwards her sister Cornelia was taken ill and never left her bed again, and, although nurses and doctors were constantly in attendance, a great deal of responsibility fell on my mother's shoulders,



DEBORAH BROWNELL WESTON
(About 60 years of age)

Deborah Brownell Weston

owing to the management of the household and the financial overlook regarding my aunt Cornelia's property. A younger sister, Eliza, also resided in New Bedford with my aunt Cornelia, and she, too, was taken ill after my mother went to New Bedford to live and she never entirely recovered, although she regained her health sufficiently to attend to her usual duties and she outlived her two sisters.

When my mother went to live in Duxbury as a bride she was practically a stranger, but she soon made friends. She became attached to Duxbury, particularly on account of my father's great love for the town and especially during the last years that she lived there owing to the kind sympathy of friends and neighbors for my father in his misfortunes, and it was with regret that she went from Duxbury to live. After leaving Duxbury she generally made an annual visit to Duxbury with pleasure and enjoyment, but as she grew older and her sisters in New Bedford required more of her attention she practically gave up her visits to Duxbury after the death of her very dear friends, my father's cousins, the Misses Lucia, Elizabeth and Charlotte Bradford. These three ladies were descendants in the seventh generation from William Bradford, the second Governor of Plymouth Colony, and were highly educated, cultivated and public-spirited.

PASSING AWAY.

One of the greatest shocks of my life was when I learned of my mother's death. She was always so cheerful and unselfish and said so little about her own personal troubles that it was hard to believe the possibility of her death at the time. I was not notified when she was first taken sick or when she

Deborah Brownell Weston

grew worse the next day as no one deemed her illness of a serious nature and she died suddenly. I was not even notified on the day of her death as my aunt Cornelia, who was confined to her bed, did not know of it herself as it was not thought best to tell her until a day or two after my mother had died, my aunt Eliza was very nervous and had not recovered from a serious illness, the family doctor, who took the responsibility of caring for the health of the three sisters, was a busy man and the efficient nurse, who had charge of my aunt Cornelia's case, had a great deal to do. If it had not been that an intimate friend of the family called me up by telephone the morning after my mother died, Saturday, I might not have learned of her death until considerably later as I had, for some time, been in the habit of going from Providence to spend the week-end at different places, and if I had gotten away from Providence before receiving the telephone message I might not have been communicated with until Monday, as I did not always leave my address in Providence. My acknowledgment of the telephone message was "you mean my aunt is dead and not my mother," but I was assured it was my mother, and when I afterwards telephoned to relatives and friends in regard to the sad news they thought it must be a mistake for none of them could at first believe that she had passed away.

"Oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!"

The following is an extract from a letter that my mother wrote to me a number of years before she died and left for me to read after her death:—

Deborah Brownell Weston

"I want now to thank you, my dear son, for all your kindness and care for me and, oh, my dear son, may we meet in that Blessed Land, where there will be no more sorrow, no more tears and God shall wipe away all tears from our hearts. Do good, my dearest son, as you have opportunity and many, many be better and happier for your life. I shall look for you, my dear son, and watch for your coming and perhaps your little baby brother will be waiting for you when you shall be called. May many rise up to call you blessed. Hard, hard it will be to leave you, but only Jesus, your Saviour, can help you in your loneliness."

My mother is buried, as she desired, by her husband's side in the tomb under the sandstone monument in the Weston Burial Lot in Mayflower Cemetery, Duxbury, and her infant son Ezra (V) is buried in the same tomb.

IN MEMORIAM.

In memory of my aunt Eliza and my mother, I have presented, in trust, the estate where my grandmother and aunt Eliza last resided in Little Compton, R. I., which I inherited through my aunt Eliza and my mother, to the Village Improvement Society of that town as a headquarters and for their general use with the proviso that the property shall be maintained and kept in good condition forevermore.

EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

September, 1916.

Weston Armorial Bearings and Descent



WESTON ARMORIAL BEARINGS

Weston Armorial Bearings and Descent

What I am writing regarding the Weston armorial bearings and descent at first thought may not appear to be particularly conclusive, but it is the result of months of careful research in America and England, with the assistance of the Richmond Herald, College of Arms, London.

Our family of Westons is descended from Edmund Weston who came from England to Duxbury, Mass., in 1635, and who was the great-grandfather of Ezra Weston (I), but mainly owing to the loss, by fire, of the earlier records of Duxbury, it has not been possible to actually determine who the ancestors of Edmund Weston were.

There is a copy of Weston armorial bearings which has been in the possession of the families of my grandfather and father since 1834, when it was brought over from England by Ezra Weston (IV), who was a graduate of Harvard College, a lawyer and a man of literary attainments, and he undoubtedly satisfied himself as to the authenticity of the armorial bearings before he brought the copy to America. These armorial bearings may be described as: Arms—"Or, an eagle displayed regardant sable;" Crest—"An eagle rising regardant sable, beaked and membered or;" and Motto—"Craignez Honte."

It should be borne in mind, in accordance with the accepted laws of Heraldry, that our family of Westons can only right-

Weston Armorial Bearings and Descent

fully use the armorial bearings above referred to as an assertion of their descent from the person to whom they were granted, confirmed or allowed or by whom they were inherited in the direct line.

There are many families of the same name in England having armorial bearings which have the same arms (which represent a name or names) on a shield or coat, but their crests (which are borne for cognizance or to indicate descent) and their mottoes are different.

It was discovered in 1845 that another copy of Weston armorial bearings had been in the possession, for a great many years, of a related Weston family living in Maine and, consequently, it must have been brought over from England a long time before the copy brought over from England by Ezra Weston (IV). On a slip of old paper attached to the copy belonging to the Maine Westons the following was written: "It beareth Or an Eagle displayed by the name of Weston being granted to Richard Weston of Rugeley in the county of Stafford & is borne also by Sir John Weston—copy from Heraldry attest John Ledes Sentor Herald Painter."

At the commencement of my researches I had the impression that the Richard Weston of Rugeley, mentioned on the slip of old paper, was Sir Richard Weston, first Baron of Neyland and first Earl of Portland, but I found, on further investigation, that Richard Weston of Rugeley was a different person and his crest was "An eagle's head erased," while the crest of Sir Richard Weston, first Baron of Neyland and first Earl of Portland, was "An eagle rising." It appears that as the Sir John Weston mentioned on the slip of old paper bore the same armorial bearings as Richard Weston of Rugeley

Weston Armorial Bearings and Descent

he was of the same branch of the Weston family as Richard Weston of Rugeley. Sir John Weston was Sir John Weston, K. B., of Hardeby Harby Manor House, who was Chamberlain to Queen Eleanor that was married to Edward I in October, 1254, and who died at Sir John's Manor House in November, 1289.

The copy of the armorial bearings which I have mentioned as being in the possession of the families of my grandfather and father is the same as that of Sir Richard Weston, first Baron of Neyland and first Earl of Portland; namely: Arms—"Or, an eagle displayed regardant sable;" Crest—"An eagle rising regardant sable, beaked and membered or;" and Motto—"Craignez Honte," and, therefore, indicates that our family of Westons may be of a junior branch of the same Weston family as that to which Sir Richard Weston, first Baron of Neyland and first Earl of Portland, belonged.

During one of my visits to the National Gallery in London a number of years ago, I discovered what was apparently a new portrait and which was labeled:—

"Richard Weston
First Earl of Portland, K. G.,
Courtier, statesman and diplomatist,
Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1621, and
Lord High Treasurer, 1628.

Painted in 1627 by Corneles Janssen Van Cenlen."

On inquiry I found that the portrait was a genuine old painting which had been touched up, reframed and recently presented to the National Gallery.

After seeing the portrait I made investigations in England regarding it. I was somewhat misled in the first place as I

Weston Armorial Bearings and Descent

could not find in "existing English Peerages" an Earl of Portland having the name of Richard Weston, although I found Earls and Dukes of Portland having other names, but by consulting "extinct English Peerages" I found that the first Earl of Portland was Sir Richard Weston who belonged to the historic Staffordshire family of Westons that derived its origin from Hamon de Weston, Lord of Weston-under-Lyzard, County of Stafford, during the reign of King Henry II (1154-1189).

Sir Richard Weston, Knight, born in 1577 (above mentioned), was employed in the reign of King James I (1603-1625) as ambassador to Bohemia and subsequently to Brussels to treat with the ambassadors of the Emperor and King of Spain regarding the restitution of the palatine, and soon after which he was constituted Chancellor of the Exchequer and elevated to the peerage April 13, 1628, as Baron Weston of Neyland. His lordship was subsequently made Lord Treasurer of England, invested with the Garter and created Earl of Portland on February 17, 1633. The titles of nobility of Sir Richard Weston were granted with limitation to the heirs male of his body by Frances, his wife, daughter of Nicholas Waldegrave. The heirs male to the titles expired in 1688, on the death of the fourth Earl, when his estates passed to his nieces, the daughters of the second Earl.

About one year after the title of the Earl of Portland became extinct in the Weston family William Bentinck, a favorite of King William III (formerly Prince of Orange), who came with the King from the Netherlands to England, was created Earl of Portland, which title has since been merged in that of Duke of Portland. When William Bentinck was

Weston Armorial Bearings and Descent

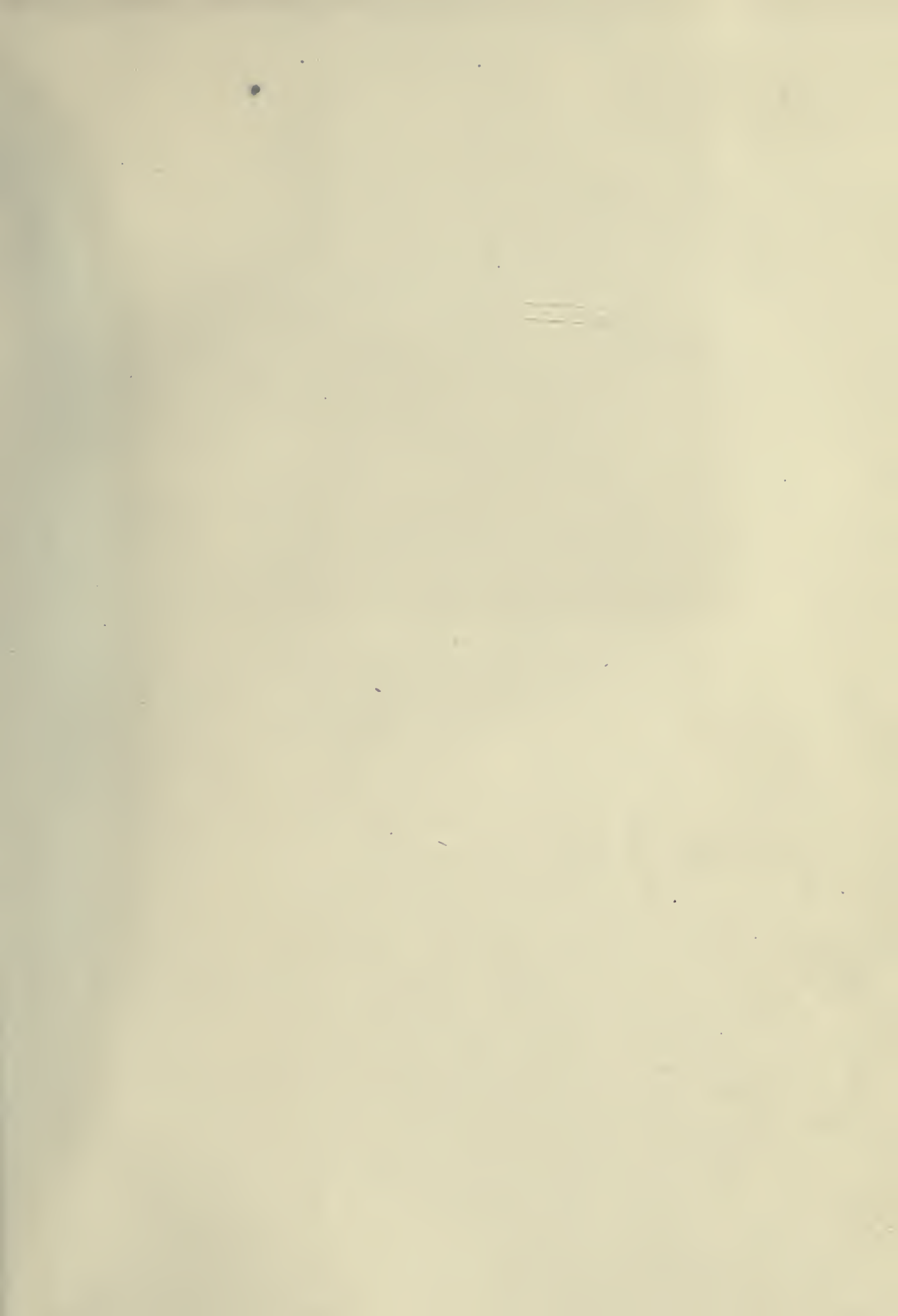
made Earl of Portland in 1689 he took the Weston motto "Craignez Honte," and the Richmond Herald, College of Arms, London, has written me concerning the transaction to the effect that the only explanation he can offer is that possibly William Bentinck having no motto of his own thought the motto "Craignez Honte" pertained to the title of Portland and so assumed it.

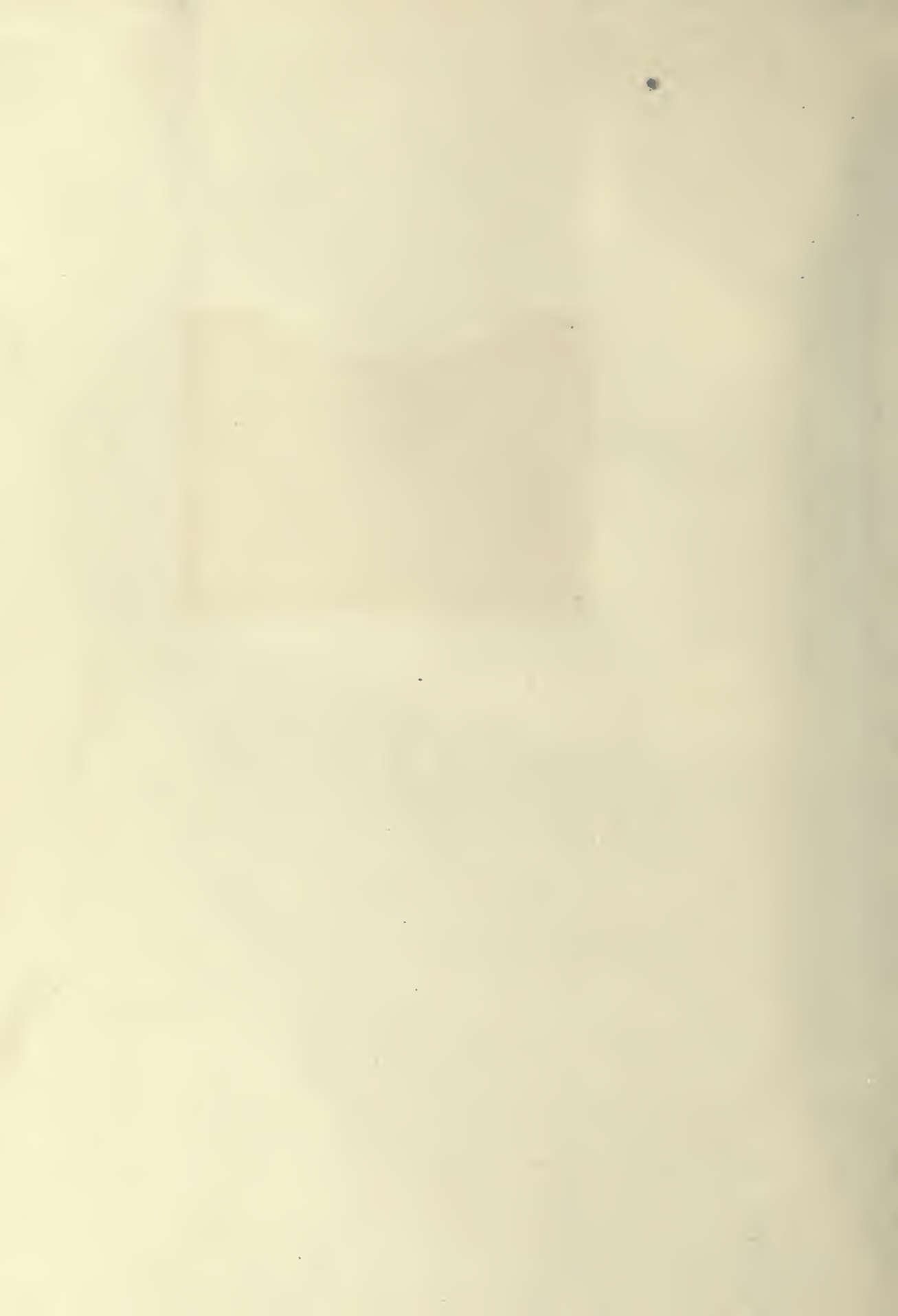
Sir Richard Weston, first Baron of Neyland and first Earl of Portland, must be distinguished from a contemporary and namesake, Sir Richard Weston (c. 1579-1652), baron of the exchequer. Another Sir Richard Weston (c. 1466-1542) was a courtier and a diplomatist under Henry VIII. A third Sir Richard Weston (1591-1652) was mainly responsible for introducing locks on the River Wey and thus making it navigable.

To summarize: As a result of my investigations, assisted by the Richmond Herald, College of Arms, London, and owing to the copies of the armorial bearings which have for many years been in the possession of the Weston families in America above mentioned corresponding to the armorial bearings of the Staffordshire Westons, it would seem that Edmund Weston who came to Duxbury in 1635 was quite possibly of a junior branch of the Staffordshire Weston family to which the Weston Barons of Neyland and the Earls of Portland belonged.

EDMUND BROWNELL WESTON

September, 1916.





Weston, E.B. 346022
In memoriam: my father
and my mother, Hon Gershom
Bradford Weston, Deborah
Brownell Weston

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Weston

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