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MIDDLESEX FELLS

With a Map

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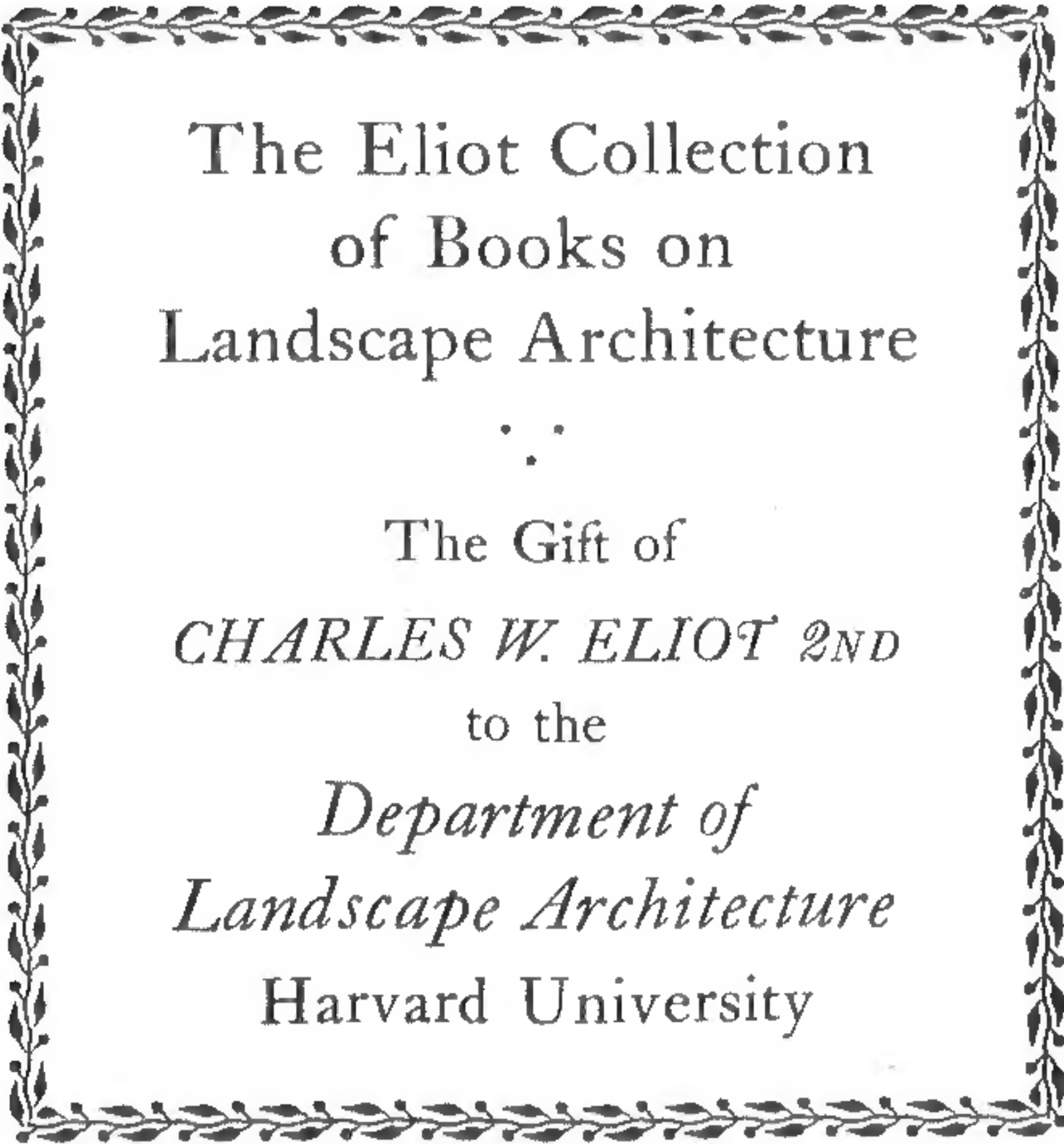
ROSEWELL B. LAWRENCE



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Middlesex Fells.

BY ROSEWELL B. LAWRENCE.

MANY inquiries have been made during the last few years concerning maps of the Middlesex Fells. A good map was published by the late Hon. Elizur Wright, in June, 1883, but it does not show the numerous wood-roads which give access to the many points of interest. This want has led to the preparation of a map published in connection with this number of APPALACHIA.

In its compilation valuable assistance was obtained from Mr. Wright's blue map, Prof. H. F. Walling's map of Medford (1855), Mr. G. M. Hopkins' maps of Stoneham (1874) and Melrose (1874), a plan of the Winchester reservoirs, drawn by Mr. Percy M. Blake, and the maps of the various municipalities in Beers' Atlas of Middlesex County (1875). These maps, however, afforded but little assistance in locating the wood-roads, foot-paths, hills, brooks, and swamps. To accomplish this part of the work the writer has traversed every wood-road and foot-path — many of them several times — and has climbed nearly every hill. Although accuracy is not claimed, no scientific observations having been taken, yet it is hoped that the results of personal exploration, published in this map, will be useful to the lover of Middlesex Fells, and will lead many strangers to form an intimate acquaintance with the numerous attractions of that delightful region.¹

¹ A request is here made that any one who discovers errors or omissions will kindly send the information to the writer, in order that it may be incorporated in a subsequent map, should a second edition be deemed advisable.

The location and character of Middlesex Fells are well described by Mr. Sylvester Baxter:—

“Something like five miles northerly from Boston lies a great tract of country, all stony hills and table-lands, almost uninhabited, and of wonderful picturesqueness, and wild, rugged beauty. It is within the limits of the towns of Malden [now a city], Medford [Melrose], Stoneham, and Winchester; and its heart is that most beautiful of Boston’s suburban lakes, Spot Pond, which lies high up among the hills. The limits of this region are defined with great clearness, especially on the south and east, a line of steep hills and ledges rising abruptly from the broad plain that borders the Mystic River, almost as level as a floor, and forming its southern boundary, while on the east the ledges start with still greater steepness out of the long valley of meadow-land through which the Boston and Maine Railroad passes. . . . Its western margin is formed by the valley through which run the Lowell Railroad and its Stoneham branch, and its northern by the houses and fields of Stoneham. . . . The nature of this region cannot be better characterized than by the application of the old Saxon designation *fells*,— a common enough word in England, meaning a tract of wild stone hills, corresponding to the German word *felsen*.”¹

During the past few years efforts have been made by Mr. Wright and others to secure the preservation of this region as a Natural Park or Forest Preserve. The territory embraces about 4,000 acres, including 500 of water reservoirs. The owners number 150, and the assessed valuation is between \$300,000 and \$350,000, including buildings valued at about \$70,000. The limits, as marked upon the map, are arbitrary, having been drawn by Mr. Wright and others so as to include the water-sheds of the reservoirs, the chief hills, and all the wooded and rocky land lying between the settled portions of the five towns. Much of the region is now covered by brush; but there are many fine groves of pine and hemlock, and hundreds of acres covered with oak, birch, maple, hickory, cedar, etc. The whole region is well adapted to the growth of white pine.

A “Chronological Account of the Middlesex Fells Movement” was given in the “Boston Evening Transcript,” Nov.

¹ Boston Herald Supplement, Dec. 6, 1879. See also Transcript, Nov. 15, 1880, answer to query 3,156.

13, 1880. In this account we find mention of Mr. Wilson Flagg's article entitled "A Forest Preserve: A Proposition to State and City Governments." Mr. Flagg alluded to the wild region extending from Stoneham to Salem as a good site for the location of one or more of these preserves.¹ In 1869 Mr. Wright published a pamphlet entitled "Mt. Andrew Park," in which he recommended that the Fells region, then known as "The Five-Mile Wood," be converted into a park. He advised the preservation of the forest upon the hills, and the establishment of Schools of Natural History in connection with it. In the last chapter of "The Woods and Byways of New England," published in 1872, Mr. Flagg recommended that "The Five-Mile Wood" be selected as a site for a "Forest Conservatory," and in 1876 an unsuccessful attempt was made by Mr. Flagg and others before the Massachusetts General Court to secure legislation favoring this project. In 1879-80 appeared Mr. Baxter's article, and three open letters by Mr. Flagg to Col. T. W. Higginson.²

The Middlesex Fells Association was organized in the early part of 1880, with Mr. Wright as President. At one of its meetings two interesting communications were presented,— a statement by Mr. Flagg showing the public the objects of the Association, and a letter from Mr. Frederick Law Olmstead giving his advice on the Fells project.³ Under the auspices of the Association a mass meeting was held in the Medford Town Hall, Jan. 26, 1881, the principal speakers being Governor Long, Prof. B. G. Northrop of Connecticut, Col. T. W. Higginson, Hon. E. S. Converse, John Owen, and Elizur Wright.⁴ The most important work accomplished was the passage by the Legislature of the Public Domain Act, chapter 255 of the Acts of 1882, "An Act authorizing towns and cities to provide for the preservation and reproduction of Forests." This act empowers a town or city to take or purchase land for the preservation and culture of forest trees, or for the preservation of the water-supply, to

¹ Charles M. Hovey's Magazine of Horticulture, Jan., 1856.

² Transcript, Dec. 31, 1879, Jan. 13, 23, 1880; see also Dec. 11, 18, 30, 1880.

³ Herald, Nov. 14, 1880.

⁴ Transcript, Jan. 27, 1881.

make appropriations in money for such taking or purchase, and to receive donations in land or money. The title of such land is to vest in the Commonwealth, and be held in perpetuity for the benefit of the town or city in which it is situated. The State Board of Agriculture, acting as a Board of Forestry, is to have the management of all such public domains, and to make regulations for the preservation of timber and the planting and cultivating of trees; it may also appoint keepers and lease buildings. The income from leases and the sale of products is to be applied to the management of the domain, the surplus in any year being paid to the city or town in which the domain is situated. No land can be taken or purchased, or liability incurred under this act, until an appropriation sufficient to cover the estimated expense shall have been made in a town by a vote of two thirds of the legal voters present and voting; or in a city, by a vote of two thirds of each branch of the City Council. To defray the expenses, bonds may be issued, denominated on the face "Public Domain Loan." These are the leading features of the Act.

To encourage favorable action by the five municipalities, a subscription was started, and a Board of Trustees formed to receive and hold "conditional obligations" which were to be collected and paid to the municipalities, when by their concurrent votes the title of the real estate should vest in the Commonwealth. Although no canvass was made, about \$15,000 was subscribed. The passage of the new Forest Law was celebrated June 17, 1882, on Bear Hill, by a meeting of the Fells Association, the Essex and Middlesex Institutes, and other friends of the project. Among the speakers were Hon. George B. Loring and Hon. Daniel Needham.¹ The Medford Public Domain Club was organized Dec. 17, 1884, to enlist the active co-operation of Medford citizens; and the meeting was addressed by Rev. Edward Everett Hale and Mr. Wright.² Many other meetings have been held, in public halls and at various points in the Fells.

On Nov. 21, 1885, the Hon. Elizur Wright died suddenly at his residence in Medford. He was the originator and chief

¹ Massachusetts Ploughman, June 24, 1882.

² Globe, Dec. 18, 1884.

supporter of the Middlesex Fells project, and his life was probably sacrificed by overwork in endeavoring to arouse public interest in its behalf. He was a Life Member of the Appalachian Mountain Club, and a frequent attendant upon its meetings and excursions. Jan. 9, 1884, he read a paper on the "Sanitary Effect of Forests."¹ An appropriate eulogy, which I am permitted to quote, was contained in the address of President T. W. Higginson before the Club, Jan. 13, 1886:—

"We miss from among us the face of that devoted friend of all outdoor explorations, Elizur Wright. I have known him almost all my life: first, as the fearless ally, and at times the equally fearless critic, of William Lloyd Garrison; then as the translator of La Fontaine's Fables, — a task for which he seemed fitted by something French in his temperament, a certain mixture of fire and *bonhomie*, which lasted to the end of his days; then as a zealous petitioner before the legislature to remove the lingering disabilities of atheists; and then as the eager, hopeful, patient, unconquerable advocate of the scheme for setting apart the Middlesex Fells as a forest park. I served with him for a time on a committee for that seemingly hopeless object, and shall never forget the inexhaustible faith with which he urged it. In his presence it was almost impossible not to believe in its speedy success; all obstacles seemed little before his sanguine confidence, and each scattering donation of a dollar or two filled him with renewed faith, although it was plain that tens of thousands of dollars must be forthcoming to accomplish the end. Scarcely any one was ever present at these committee meetings except the three old men in whom the whole enterprise appeared to centre, — Wilson Flagg, John Owen, and Elizur Wright. They were all of patriarchal aspect; and as they sat leaning toward each other, with long gray locks and gray beards flowing, I always felt as if I were admitted to some weird council of

¹ Among the numerous articles written by Mr. Wright, the following may be mentioned in addition to those noticed in the text: The Park Question; The Park of the Future; Middlesex Fells (several papers); The Forests; Middlesex Fells, Boulevards across Mystic Valley; Middlesex Fells, Suburban Park between Medford and Stoneham; Our Water Supply, address in the Town Hall, Malden, March 31, 1881; Oh for a Worthy Palm (poetry); The Legend of Cheese Rock (poetry); The Voice of a Tree from the Middlesex Fells, Transcript, Oct. 10, 1883; The Public Domain, — the Atmosphere of Heaven the Atmosphere of the People; Forest Culture from a Sanitary Point of View; The Massachusetts Law; Answers to L., Medford Mercury, Jan. 9, Oct. 30, 1885; "Fas est ab hoste doceri," Medford Mercury, Nov. 6, 1885.

old Greek wood-gods, displaced and belated, not yet quite convinced that Pan was dead, and planning together to save the last remnants of the forests they loved."

The principal attraction of Middlesex Fells is Spot Pond, a beautiful sheet of water with several pretty islands and many rocky and wooded points. The name of the pond, interesting on account of its historic origin, is explained by the following quotation from Governor Winthrop's Diary :—

"February 7, 1631 (O. S.). The governour, Mr. Nowell, Mr. Eliot and others, went over Mistick River at Medford, and going N. and by E. among the rocks about two or three miles, they came to a very great pond, having in the midst an island of about one acre, and very thick with trees of pine and beech; and the pond had divers small rocks standing up here and there in it, which they thereupon called Spot Pond. They went all about it upon the ice."¹

The elevation of this pond above the sea is about 150 feet, the greatest depth 32 feet, the area 296 acres, and the area of the water-shed about 1,100 acres. The water, which is exceptionally pure, is the source of water-supply for the city of Malden and the towns of Medford and Melrose. The small brick and stone buildings on the south and east shores belong to the water-works.

Boats can be hired to row to the islands, and paths may be found leading to the most attractive spots along the shores. There are several good places to rest or lunch. On the south side of the pond, near Forest Street, is a pine grove, a part of which was formerly used as a picnic-ground; the view is very pretty. On the shore, a short distance farther east, is a picturesque rock jutting into the water. This spot can be reached by following the shore from Forest Street, or by taking a narrow sylvan road which leaves Forest Street at a point farther south. Between the Medford water-works and Wyoming Street is a high point with pines and hemlocks, commanding one of the finest views on the pond. This place can be found by following foot-paths from Wyoming Street and

¹ Winthrop's New England, vol. i. p. 6. See also Mt. Andrew Park, by Mr. Wright.

the Medford gate-house. On the southeast side, along Wyoming Street are several stone houses which command good views. Pretty views can also be enjoyed from Pond Street, where it runs along by the water. On the west side of the pond is another beautiful spot, a rocky, wooded promontory, commanding a view of the whole pond, including the interesting features on the south and east sides. To reach this point, take the path next south of the road which leads to the old ice-house, invisible from Main Street.

From Spot Pond, Governor Winthrop and his party went to what is now called Bear Hill. This is the highest elevation in the Fells, being about 370 feet above sea-level, and is distant from the State House exactly $7\frac{3}{4}$ miles.¹ I am indebted to Professor Charles E. Fay for the following description of the view from Bear Hill: —

“The view from Bear Hill is interesting, first of all, for what lies near at hand. From no point, perhaps, can one secure a more comprehensive view of the Middlesex Fells; and it is over these scanty wooded knolls, or between them, that one catches glimpses of Boston and its neighbors. How subordinate the part which the city is forced to play in this scene! and then to think that there is spare money enough just over there, if it could only be got at, to ransom all this fair wild, and make it a free park forever!

“The horizon from south to west is set with familiar eminences, — the Blue Hill Range, the hills of Brookline and Newton, with distant Pegan over Belmont, and then the heights of Arlington, Lexington, and Woburn. Then the sky-line suddenly retreats, and for sixty degrees we have an almost continuous line of distant mountains. How they gleam these March days under their snowy mantles! First the ‘whaleback’ of Wachusett, nearly due west; next, after two or three considerable hills, Watatic rises in a pronounced cone; then comes the monarch of them all, the grand Monadnock. The lower swell of Kidder Mountain follows, and then a fine mountain-mass, rivalling Monadnock itself as seen from here, yet in reality far less grand. It consists of two high peaks, some distance apart, but joined by a lofty ridge. The first is Temple Mountain, the other Pack Monadnock. Yet more to the right is another long mountain rising into something of a peak at its eastern end, — the Lyndeborough Range. A trifle farther to the

¹ U. S. Geological Survey, 1885.

right and still more distant, one sees Crotchet Mountain, in Frances-town, rising above an intervening hill. Nothing of note follows until Joe English Hill, lifting its bulk out of the low horizon, asserts itself with much more assurance than the higher Uncanoonucs, whose upper portions only are seen farther to the eastward, overtopping a much nearer ridge. Nearly as far to the right of the Eastern Uncanoonuc as Joe English is to its left, about midway between the former and that prominent hill in the middle ground which ranges in line with two ponds (Fox Hill, in Billerica), rises a high and very distant summit, which can hardly be other than the southern Kearsarge. A few degrees west of north, where the horizon again recedes, the eye greets a mountain seldom noted in the list of those visible from our suburban hills, — probably Pawtuckaway, a coast-survey station in Rockingham County (N. H.). About as far to the east of north are the hills of Andover, the grassy slopes of Holt's most prominent. Over other gently swelling hills of Essex County the view ranges, until, summoning courage to pass the great rampart of masonry that crowns the summit of Asylum Hill in Danvers, it comes to enjoy the glimpses of the sea."

On the north slope are cedars, in the shade of which one can rest while enjoying the view of the distant mountains. Here the Governor's party lunched. "This place they called Cheese Rock, because, when they went to eat something, they had only cheese (the governour's man forgetting, for haste, to put up some bread)."¹ It is somewhat uncertain where this rock is located; but according to the most generally accepted opinion, it is the precipitous ledge which faces the north. The hill may be approached by cart-paths leading from Main and Marble Streets to the foot of the steep northern slope; also by a path on the east side, ascending gradually from Main Street to the open table-land a short distance south of the summit.

Taylor Mountain might well be called the southern end of Bear Hill, being part of the same mass. From this so-called mountain we have a charming bit of scenery. Below the ragged cliffs on the southwest side is the long narrow basin of the Winchester reservoir, curving among the hills. One does not suspect that this beautiful sheet of water is the work

¹ Winthrop's New England, vol. i. p. 6.

of man, until he spies the gate-house at the northwest end. The dam cannot be seen from the upper part of the reservoir, and is hardly noticeable from Taylor Mountain. The pond is seven eighths of a mile in length, 26 feet in depth, and its elevation is about 150 feet.¹ The area is 60 acres, and the area of the water-shed 460. The view from Taylor Mountain also includes Spot Pond, Turkey Swamp, the numerous hills of the Fells, and some distant points.

Contrary to general expectation, Turkey Swamp is very interesting. It occupies the centre of the western half of the Fells, and is destined some day to be one of the most beautiful attractions. Even now the millions of cat-o'-nine-tails lend it a charm. In 1873 the town of Winchester secured the right to use this area as an additional source of water-supply. At that time it was feared that the north reservoir would be inadequate, and it was also expected that the town would be able to sell some of its water. The right was secured, and a dam built at the southern end; but the opportunity to sell water not being realized, and the present reservoir continuing to be sufficient, it was impossible to secure the appropriation necessary to complete the new one. Winchester showed great foresight in securing this valuable privilege. The water will eventually be needed by that and other municipalities; and if the water-shed, as well as water area is secured, the town will be wise indeed. The water could then be kept free from contamination, and the supply increased by the forest which would cover the hills. The area of the reservoir will be 140 acres, and the area of the water-shed 600; its surface will be ten feet above the north reservoir.

Turkey Swamp is very irregular in shape, and may be divided into several sections, the principal point of division being near the centre of the west side, where there is a small dam at which it is possible to cross at any season of the year. Cart-paths cross the swamps at two other points in dry seasons. The upper portion can be reached by a wood-

¹ The Winchester reservoir is 136 feet above the Mystic dam. According to the article in the "Transcript," Dec. 31, 1879, it is three feet higher than Spot Pond. It was constructed in 1873.

road leading from Main Street, Stoneham, not far from the Medford line: this road divides, the southern branch crossing at the little dam, then passing some fine pines, and coming out in Winchester at the head of Mt. Vernon Street; the northern branch skirting the southern slope of the hill which lies between the present reservoir and the swamp, passing the high-service reservoir, a small round building on the top of a hill, and coming out in Winchester at the head of Wilson Street (a new street not yet laid out) and also at the reservoir dam. The windmill at this dam pumps the water into the high-service reservoir.

In the Winchester section of the Fells are several groves of pines, the one overlooking the reservoir being perhaps the pleasantest. The hills afford good views, and can be reached by various paths; the highest point, an elevation of about 270 feet, is most easily reached by a wood-road which branches from the Mt. Vernon Street wood-road.

The large dam at the southern end of Turkey Swamp is best reached from Winchester by a lane which leaves Main Street a few rods north of the Medford line. Care should be taken to leave this lane at a point where a cart-path crosses an open cultivated field. One can also find this lane from Chestnut and Mt. Vernon Streets, but with more or less risk of getting lost. The easiest way to the dam from Medford is by a long and pleasant wood-road, which is very easy to follow after it has been found. The lower end starts from a field a little to the right of the upper end of a lane which leaves Purchase Street not far from High Street. The upper end loses itself in the works at the dam. On the west side of this wood-road is a hill which gives a fair view. The dam is also reached by following Brooks Lane from Medford Square. There is a perfect maze of wood-roads between Pine Hill and the swamp, but by paying strict attention to the map the way can be found. The proposed line of division between Medford and West Medford (the town of Brooks) starts at Spot Pond and runs nearly south-southwest, leaving Turkey Swamp on the right and striking High Street near Purchase.

Pasture Hill is near the centre of Medford, and affords a view of the town and the Mystic Valley. It is easily reached

by Brooks Lane, which takes its name from Governor John Brooks. The entire length of this wood-road is delightful for a walk. Leaving the residence of Governor Brooks on the left corner of High Street, the lane passes a brick house, one of the old forts of the Indian times, runs along the foot of Pasture Hill, then between fields where once were farmhouses, and finally through the woods to a point on Forest Street, half-way between Pine Hill and Spot Pond.

Pine Hill, about 282 feet,¹ is the highest elevation on the southern line of the Fells. The summit is sharp and rocky. The view embraces the Milton Hills, the ocean on both sides of Nahant, and Boston surrounded by its suburbs and harbor. The Mystic Valley lies in the foreground, and just beyond appear the buildings of Tufts College on the summit of College Hill. The northern half of the view shows the wilderness of the Fells region. Distant points are seldom visible. The hill is ascended by two paths, — one from the late residence of Mr. Wright, and the other from the road which leads to the old granite quarries west of the hill. Under the careful protection of Mr. Wright, many young pines have been springing up on the slopes of the hill, and especially on the rocky land west of the quarries.

Of the many rocky eminences north of Pine Hill, the one which gives the best view might be called Silver Mine Hill. At its northwest base is a deep shaft where the precious metals were sought a few years ago. More money was sunk in the hole than was dug out of it. The extensive wooded elevation north of the mine was called by Mr. Wright, Mt. Lincoln. He said he could get a good view from this hill by climbing a tree. I presume I have never found the tree he climbed.

In the depression south of Spot Pond and between Forest, Elm, and Fulton Streets, is a pretty pond made for ice-cutting. A higher dam would flow a large area and furnish a good supply of water. It would be wise policy on the part of Medford to secure this area as a future addition to her water-supply; for if the municipalities which now draw upon Spot Pond continue to grow in population at the rapid rate of the

¹ The height as given by Mr. Wright, obtained by levelling.

past five years (an increase of nearly 31 per cent), and do not secure additional supplies, then in some dry season Spot Pond will merit its name, not on account of the spots of rocks upon its surface, but on account of the spots of water among the rocks. Near the centre of this area south of Spot Pond is a large boulder which can be reached by several foot-paths, the one from the northwest being the best, especially in wet weather.

That region which lies between Forest Street and Highland Avenue is not specially interesting. A view can be obtained from the rocky peak close by the Malden line and near the lane which is called Murray Street, and another from the pile of rocks which crowns the rugged cliffs just north of the proposed Valley Street. This latter tract is now being opened to settlement, a new street having been already built to the top of the hill, and plans being now in preparation for laying out house-lots. Those who enjoy a ride on a truly rural road should try Fulton Street. It was built in 1641 by Charlestown, to gain access to her land north of Medford.¹ At that time Charlestown completely surrounded Medford. Lest any one should be misled by old maps, it is well to add that a portion of Medford was annexed to Malden in 1877.² From Salem Street to the Stoneham line the width of this strip, east to west, is 990.64 feet.

The section which is bounded on the west by Highland Avenue, Fulton and Wyoming Streets, on the north by the Ravine Road, on the east by Washington Street, and on the south by the settled portion of Malden, is the most rugged part of the Fells. Its rocky peaks are its leading features, and it therefore well deserves to be called "Fells." Many of its cliffs are remarkably fine, and some command good views. It contains several fine groves of pines and hemlocks, and in the wet season many small ponds. A labyrinth of wood-roads and foot-paths must be disentangled before one can plan and carry out a visit to all its attractions.

The finest cliffs in the vicinity of Boston are on the east side of this section, near the Fells Station on the Boston and

¹ History of Medford, by Charles Brooks, 1855, p. 51.

² Acts of 1877, chap. 139, and Acts of 1878, chap. 19.

Maine Railroad. They alone are worth a visit. In a depression in the ledge between the two highest points of rock is the "Cascade," the only waterfall of which the Fells can boast. The brook comes from the hills and swamps, and on account of the limited area of the watershed, is dry in summer. In the spring, however, the cascade is beautiful, and sometimes in winter the interesting ice-work renders it even more attractive. Farther north, near the point where Washington Street crosses the line from Melrose into Stoneham, is a fine grove of pines, — a remnant of that famous pine and hemlock forest which only a few years ago extended from Melrose to Spot Pond on both sides of the Ravine Road. Although the axe and the mill have destroyed the charm of this drive, there are still left several sections which are well worth serious efforts to save. On the elevated ground south of the Ravine Road a high-service reservoir is in process of construction for the town of Melrose.

In the interior of this section of the Fells are two pretty ponds, which exist during the entire year unless the season is extremely dry. They are called Shiner and Hemlock Ponds. I have not seen any shiners in either of them, but the latter has some fine hemlocks crowning the rocks at its northern end. This pond and its grove are well worth a visit to one who enjoys a charming bit of Nature. East-northeast of Hemlock Pond, and not very far distant, is an immense rectangular pile of rocks, — two sides of which, however, have fallen down, — marking the highest elevation in the eastern half of the Fells, about 300 feet.¹ This is the Stone Monument. From its top one can get a good idea of the rocky nature of the region; and if an observatory were built, an extensive view in all directions could be enjoyed.²

The two ponds and the Stone Monument can be easily reached from either of the several highways, provided the pedestrian knows the way. It is hoped that the map will

¹ Aneroid measurement.

² The stone which serves as the common bound of Malden, Medford, and Stoneham is a few rods southeast of the Monument; and 990.64 feet south 65° east of that is an old rock, marked M. M. S. No. 1, the present bound of Malden, Melrose, and Stoneham, and the former bound of Medford, Melrose, and Stoneham.

help any one with a good bump of locality to know the way before he starts. A stranger wishing to visit the ponds is advised to take the wood-road which leaves Wyoming Street near the southeast corner of Spot Pond. The path from Hemlock Pond to the Monument is hard to find; but, the Monument once found, the path to the pond is plain. Hemlock Pond is also easily reached by a wood-road which leaves Fulton Street, Medford, at a point opposite a small house standing close to the street. The wood-roads leading into this section from Malden and Melrose, especially the Bear Den Path, are good; but the stranger should be careful in following them, unless he is willing to get lost. And why not get lost? If you have a compass and plenty of time, — and both of these you always should have when tramping in the woods, — what greater charm is there than to wander hither and thither, wondering what beautiful bit of Nature you will stumble upon next! It may be a precipitous cliff or a mossy glen, a grove of noble pines or hemlocks, an interesting boulder or a pretty flower, a beautiful pond, an extensive view, or a wilderness of charming cat-o'-nine-tails.

That section which lies in Stoneham near Franklin Street is not specially attractive, and probably would not have been included by Mr. Wright within the limits of the Middlesex Fells had it not been a part of the Spot Pond water-shed. Doleful Pond merits its name, for it is largely surrounded by swampy land and its chief inlet rises in a swamp. There are several hills commanding northeast views, and many pleasant paths, the chief one being a cart-path which goes from Pond Street through to Green's Lane. I am indebted to A. Selwyn Lynde, Esq., of Melrose, for valuable assistance in tracing the paths in this section.

In concluding, it may not be inappropriate to say a few words concerning the present prospects of the Middlesex Fells movement, and to summarize the arguments in its favor. In the death of Elizur Wright the Fells lost their most enthusiastic friend. His energy can no longer be relied upon. Does it not, therefore, become the duty of all who are interested in the project to increase their efforts? Mr. Wright once wrote: —

“The people must move and act spontaneously, if anything is done. It is everybody’s axe; and if nobody grinds it, it will be dull for the generations to come. The wood-choppers are sure to grind theirs while a tree is left. Here is work for the press, the pulpit, the platform, — for every one who likes to breathe pure air, drink pure water, and see green things.”¹

It is hoped that the publication of this map will, by enabling people to become more familiar with the region, stimulate public interest in the work. The task is undoubtedly a difficult one. To insure success it must be pushed by influential men, and their efforts must be seconded by a generous public. Little assistance can be expected from the city and towns within whose borders the Fells lie; for they are at present growing very rapidly, and are so burdened with necessary improvements that they do not feel able to appropriate money for this purpose from their treasuries. They do not, however, realize what a fine opportunity they have for securing a natural park. The city of Boston, which would be largely benefited, is already struggling with an elaborate system of parks within its own borders. The Forestry Congress, held in Boston last September, was addressed by Mr. Wright on the subject of the Fells. A committee appointed by this meeting will endeavor to secure further legislation to secure the protection of forests from fires, and are in consultation with a few prominent friends of the Fells as to what further measures it is advisable to take to secure the success of that project.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the arguments which are familiar to all, — that the northern portion of Boston and its northern suburbs need a park just as much as the southern portion and the southern suburbs need Franklin (West Roxbury) Park; that contiguous real estate will increase in value, and the neighboring towns become more desirable for residences; that a valuable opportunity is offered to secure, not the ordinary garden-park with fountains, flower-beds, and gravel-walks, but a unique park, one after Nature’s own heart, and in which she can be enjoyed in her simplicity, unadorned by man’s artificial devices; that a large annual

¹ Melrose Journal, March 17, 1883.

income can be derived from a well-managed forest, as is proved by European experience; that the forests increase and preserve the water-supply by storing up the spring and fall rains and protecting the springs from drying up; that a natural park would offer valuable educational facilities and lead the people to study the rocks and flowers, and especially our New England forest-trees; that here the city child could catch his first glimpse of Nature, and the overworked professional or business man and the tired laborer could find recreation and relief; that the "appreciation of the beauty and use of absolutely rugged and wild scenery"¹ would become general.

A more serious aspect of the subject is presented to the mind when we recall the difficulties with which Boston is now contending in preserving the purity of her water-supplies. Even the town of Winchester, situated within the basin of one of Boston's supplies, is fighting the owner of a large piggery which lies upon the water-shed of her own reservoir. Already there are several cheap dwelling-houses upon the water-shed of Spot Pond,² and the rapid growth of Stoneham will, before many years, wake the people who drink Spot Pond water to a realization of their folly in not securing the water-shed for public park purposes, and thus preserving the purity of the water. Moreover, the large increase in population and valuation of all five municipalities during the past five years³ emphasizes the desirability, from every point of view, of establishing a public park in their midst. Now is the time to act; for the four thousand acres are practically unsettled, and real estate is cheap.

¹ Frederick Law Olmstead, Herald, Nov. 14, 1880.

² Near Franklin Street.

³ Recent growth of the municipalities within the Middlesex Fells:—

	Population.		Real-Estate Valuation, 1885.
	1880.	1885.	
Malden	12,017	16,407	\$10,655,050
Medford	7,573	9,041	6,185 425
Melrose	4,560	6,101	4,374 250
Stoneham	4,891	5,652	2,710 335
Winchester	3,802	4,390	3,069,722
Total	32,843	41,591	\$26,994,782



PUBLICATIONS
OF THE
APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB.

APPALACHIA, the journal of the Club, has now reached its fifteenth number, the one last issued being Vol. IV., No. 3.

Vol. I. (1876-78) contains three hundred and eight pages and eleven plates; Vol. II. (1879-1881), three hundred and seventy-nine pages and nine plates; Vol. III. (1882-1884), three hundred and ninety pages and six plates. Each number is composed of special articles and an official section. The former are chiefly papers of special interest that have been presented or read at the meetings of the Club, and represent with equal fulness its scientific and touristic interests. The official section contains the reports of officers, especially of the Councilors, — with appended brief accounts by individuals of special work done by them in the several departments, — the proceedings of the Club, reports of its excursions, etc. The illustrations are chiefly topographical and geological maps and camera profiles, and reproductions from photographic negatives taken by members and others. In general, the journal is an exponent of the character and work of the society, and serves as a bond of interest to the non-resident members, and as a representative of the Club to other similar associations.

Vol. I., No. 1. is out of print, but copies of any other issue will be furnished at 50 cents each. Bound copies of Vol. II. and Vol. III. may be procured by application to the sales-agents, Messrs. W. B. Clarke & Carruth, 340 Washington Street, Boston.

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