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FAVORITE DRIVES
AROUND



GARDNER

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BETTY SPRING ROAD.

Favorite Drives

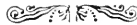
Around Gardner

BY

CHARLES D. BURRAGE



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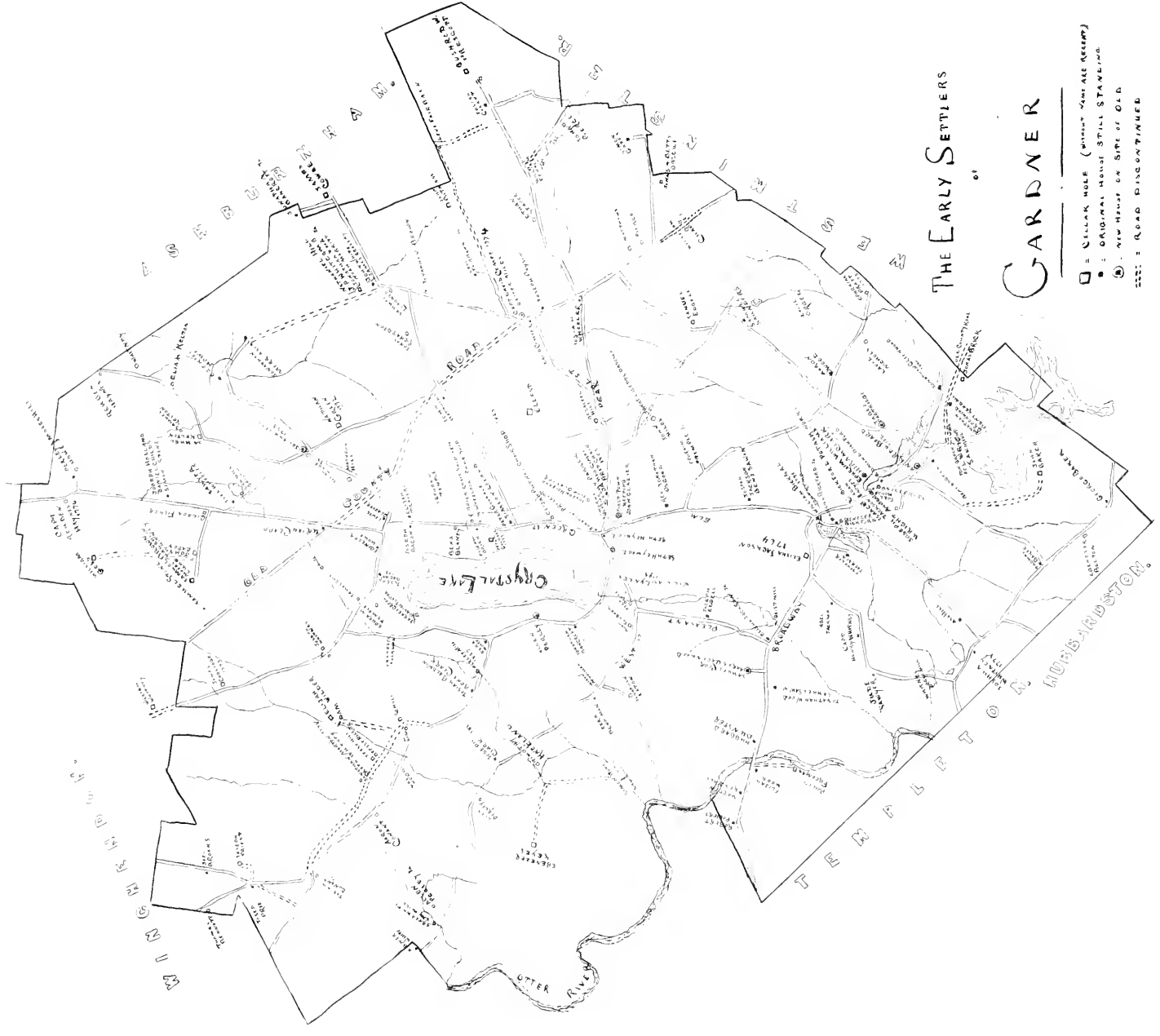
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CHARLES H. STRATTON.

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List of Illustrations.

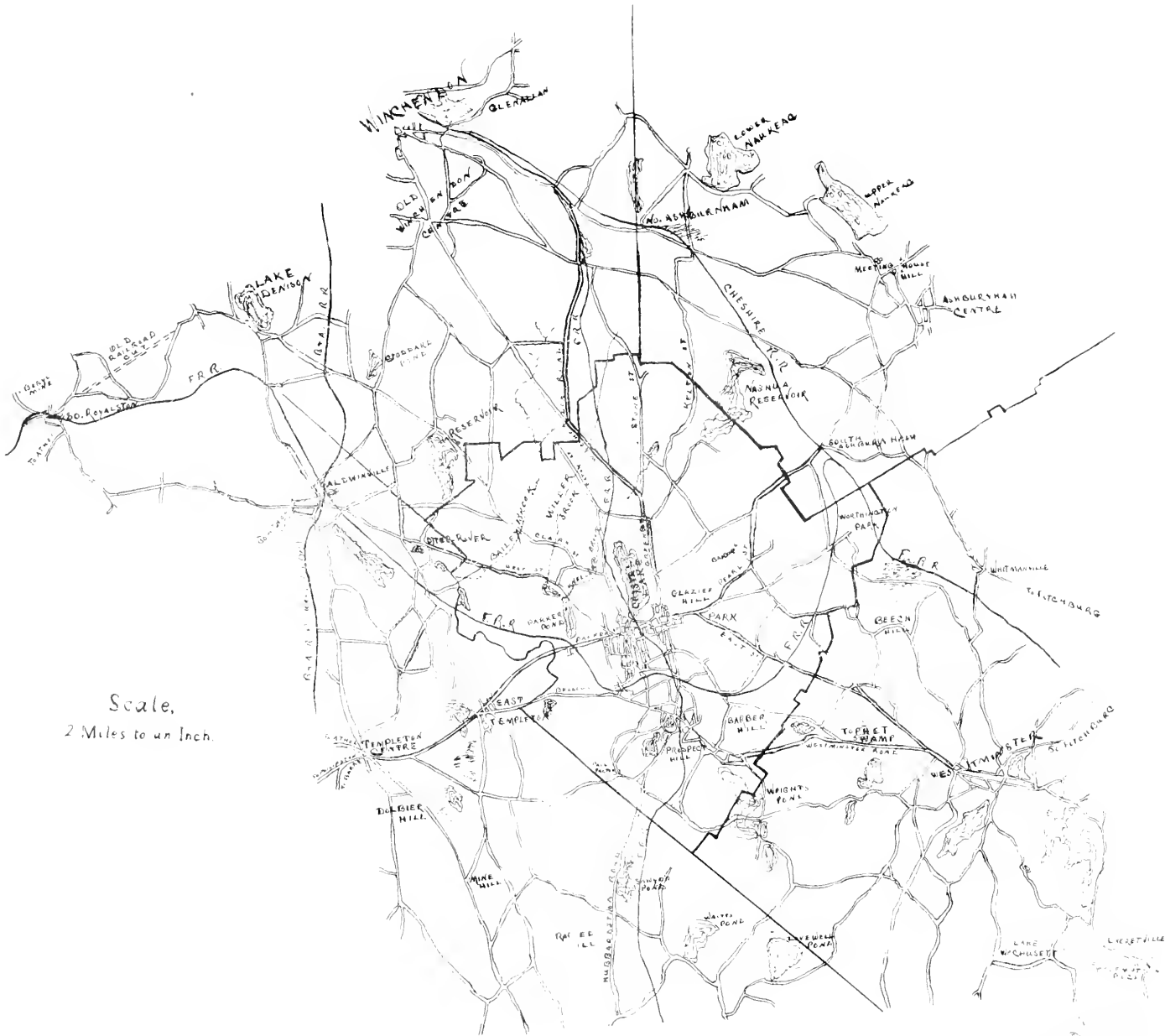
	Page.		Page.
1. Betty Spring Road, Frontispiece.	1	33. Near the Kneeland Place, . . .	27
2. Initial—Sedge, (Drawing) . . .	2	34. Rhodora,	28
3. Betty Spring Road,	2	35. Bickford-Travers Mill-dam, . . .	29
4. Tomb of Rev. Jonathan Osgood, . .	2	36. Jackson House,	30
5. Crystal Lake,	3	37. Twin Flower,	31
6. Betty's Spring,	4	38. In the Woods by Crystal Lake, (Drawing),	32
7. Moneses, Pyrola and Pipsissewa,	5	39-40. The Old Railroad Cut,	33
8. Buckbean,	5	41. The Coolidge Place,	34
9. Pale Laurel,	6	42. Redemption Rock,	35
10. Labrador Tea,	7	43. Redemption Rock—the Inscription,	36
11. Oldest Cellar-hole,	8	44. Crystal Lake, (The Sheep-pen), .	37
12. Bed of Indian Pipe,	9	45. Crystal Lake, (The Upper Cove),	38
13. Worthington Park,	10	46. Fringed Gentians,	39
14. Azalea,	11	47. Closed Gentians,	40
15. Columbine,	12	48. An Orchis,	40
16. Pogonia,	13	49. Cardinal Flower,	40
17. Calopogon,	13	50. The Coolidge Place,	41
18. Home of the Azalea,	14	51. Many-flowered Indian Pipe, . .	41
19. Moccasin Flower,	15	52. Skull, (Drawing),	42
20. Wild Calla,	16	53. The Whispering Pines,	43
21. Andalusite Crystals,	16	54. Bailey Brook,	44
22. Chapel Place,	17	55. Lake Denison,	45
23. Purple-fringed Orchis,	18	56. Blueberry Blossoms,	46
24. The Woods near Crystal Lake, (Drawing),	20	57. Beryl Mine,	47
25. Pitcher Plant,	21	58. Lake Denison,	48
26. Great Green Orchis,	21	59. Ladies' Tresses,	49
27. Ragged-fringed Orchis,	21	60. White-fringed Orchis,	50
28. Meadow Lily,	22	61. Tomahawk, (Tail-piece), . . .	51
29. Snowy Owl,	23	62. Map of Roads of Gardner, . . .	
30. Old Stump (Drawing),	24	63. Map of Early Settlers,	
31. The Kneeland Place,	25		
32. The Bed of the Brook, (The Cardinal Flower),	26		



THE EARLY SETTLERS

GARDNER

- = ULLMAN HOUSE (WHICH WAS ALICE ASHLEY)
- = ORIGINAL HOUSE STILL STANDING
- = NEW HOUSE ON SITE OF OLD
- = ROAD DISCONTINUED



Scale,
2 Miles to an Inch.

THE ROADS OF GARDNER AND VICINITY

WACQUSETT
MT.



Favorite Drives Around Gardner.

"I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth."

—*Wordsworth.*

"We are put here to secrete something
everlasting out of nature."

—*Thomas Starr King.*



OUR hill-town of Gardner, situated on the highest part of the backbone of the state, on the crest of the ridge between Wachusett and Monadnock, is 1200 feet above the sea, and in summer all the breezes of New England fan her brow. The waters flow away in every direc-

tion; to the west by Otter River, to the north by Miller's River, to the east by the Nashua, and to the south by a branch of the Ware River. The roof-tree of more than one house in Gardner divides the rain drops as they fall, to send part to the Connecticut and the Sound, and part to the ocean above Cape Ann. No wonder she can boast the best record in the Commonwealth for the smallest percentage of deaths from consumption. Built on the tops of her seven hills, whichever way we go is "down-hill." Winchendon lies 200 feet below to the north and 400 feet to the west; Templeton from 400 feet below at Baldwinville to only

100 feet at the Centre, on the brow of Dolbier hill; Hubbardston and Westminster, 200 feet below, and Ashburnham on the east, where the villages are, 200 feet below, while Fitchburg, twelve miles away, lies 700 feet below.



"The birds sing in the branches."

Gardner has many pleasant drives through the woods within and beyond her borders, and the stranger may safely take any road, confident that he will find beauties on every side: dark woods inviting him to their cool recesses; silvery streams reflecting the enchantments of the sylvan shades on their banks; flowers in profusion on either hand, in all the colors of the rainbow; and from every hill-top views rivalling in magnificence the choicest and most famous in New England. For not even from famous Round Hill, in Northampton, looking down upon the wide Connecticut meadows, with the ribbon of the river winding through them, nor from the Berkshire Hills around the Lenox bowl, nor from the Blue Hills of Milton, half lost in soft haze from the ocean, are there afforded such glorious and extensive views of hills, woods, lakes and mountains—the peculiar charm of the New England landscape—as those from our own Gardner hills.

Each drive has its special charm, however: one because of a particular view, another because the haunt of a rare wild flower that grows nowhere else, and others because of the stories of the deserted "cellar-holes" by the way, marking the sites of ancient homesteads.

The drives around Gardner are beautiful because they are through a country still left to nature, where the brush by the roadside screens the fields, and the woods have not seen the woodman's axe for a generation. Every year sees some great tract of woodland despoiled of its royal crown, but every year also sees old sprout lots become full-grown woods, that hide the heavens from us as we eagerly seek their depths. Even before the trees grow large enough to choke to death the berry bushes they invited in their struggling youth, we rejoice with them in their coming glory.



Tomb of Rev. Jonathan Osgood,
The First Settled Minister.



CRYSTAL LAKE.



BETTY'S SPRING.

The Betty Spring Road.

When

“The south wind wanders from field to forest,
And softly whispers, ‘The Spring is here.’”

we first of all turn our horse's head eastward, passing from the busy town streets at once into the shade of the overhanging and “venerable woods” at Betty's Spring, the choicest spot in Gardner, where the birds sing in the branches, and, at evening, the plaintive cry of the whip-poor-will echoes the shrill call of the quail. In the early part of the present century, two Indians,



Moneses.

Pyrola.

Pipsissewa.

Betty and her husband Jonas, last of their tribe, lived on the side-hill above the spring since called by her name, in the cottage built by one of the early settlers, John Miles. Only the cellar now remains. Before this they lived a few rods beyond the railroad crossing on the right, on the Beech Hill road, where faint traces of the cellar may still be found in the woods. Afterwards, with a nephew named Jodorus, they moved to the Temple place on Green street, and died there. In the shadow of the woods by Betty's Spring, beneath the great trees,

“Huge trunks and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwined fibres serpentine
Upcurling and inveterately convolved,”



Buckbean.

benjamins (*Trillium erectum*) abound, and the painted trillium (*Trillium erythrocarpum*) with its white face. Here we find the mayflower (*Epigaea repens*) nestling in its bed of snow, and Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisca triphyllum*) preaching to hundreds of his brothers. A little later the whole hillside under the century-old trees blossoms out, for the foam flower (*Tiarella cordifolia*) and the Canada Mayflower (*Maianthemum Canadense*) hide the many violets as they change from yellow to white and to purple, and the glad yellow of the *Clintonia borealis* grows richer in the moss. Here, in summer, the



Pale Laurel.

wax-like members of the heath family tempt us by their profusion, for the shin-leaf, or lily-of-the-valley (*Pyrola elliptica*) grows in beds by the side of the shining-leaved Princes' pine, or Pipsissewa (*Chimophila umbellata*), near the beautiful, one-flowered pyrola (*Moneses grandiflora*), and their degenerate cousin, the parasitic Indian pipe (*Monotropa uniflora*), the ghost-flower, or corpse plant, hides its pure white stalks in the depths of the woods among the dead leaves. The brook at the edge of the woods runs murmuring through the meadow and loses itself beneath the heavy growth beyond. On the hillside huge boulders lie strewn about in picturesque abandon, as if just from the

hands of giants wearied in play. From the woods little streams come trickling to the meadow, making nooks and dells and glens, where the ferns, undisturbed, speak in every delicate frond, of the sanctity of



Labrador Tea.

nature inviolate, and the harsh noises from the town's pushing, hustling, money-making factories sink into softness, recalling man's universal kinship. These rough, worn hill-sides, scarred and seamed

by storms, and covered with the growths of a century, with their grassy knolls and beds of flowers, inviting retreats and shady nooks, appeal to the desire for rest and peace instinctive in us all, a longing becoming pathetic in its intensity in such a busy, hard-working town as Gardner.

“These shades
Are still the abodes of gladness; the thick roof
Of green and stirring branches is alive
And musical with birds, that sing and sport
In wantonness of spirit.”



The Oldest Cellar-Hole.

On the left from Pearl street, half a mile from the road, almost hidden by the bushes growing around it, is the oldest cellar-hole in Gardner, and the only one whose history is lost. The eighteen-inch stump of a pine tree that grew in its centre indicates an abandonment long before the settlement of the town. A few narrow, hand-made brick of ancient pattern and the iron crane that once hung in the stone chimney, attest the presence of a white man, as does the deep cellar itself; but all else is gone forever.

In these woods a favored maiden once found the rare white ladies' slipper (*Cypripedium candidum*), perhaps the only one ever found in Worcester County.



A BED OF INDIAN PIPE.

Just beyond the town "dump" on Pearl street, on the knoll, is a cellar hole once occupied by the house of Bezaleel Hill, who left town in 1812. He was a famous inventor, an original of Darius Green, as he invented a flying machine and, with great wings on his arms, leaped from his second-story window. The story runs that he said the flying was all right, but it was the stopping that hurt.

Slowly we leave these woods

"Where, when the sunshine struck a yellow shade
The rugged trunks, to inward peeping sight
Through in dark pillars up the gold green light,"

to drive straight on to Westminster, all the way a delight.



Worthington Park.

The delicate wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) and, in summer, the wood lily (*Lilium Philadelphicum*) and clover head polygala (*Polygala sanguinea*) brighten the roadside with their beds of color. Or we may turn through Temple street and go under the railroad to climb Barber hill, and then by little-used roads past Tophet swamp to the village of Westminster, returning through the woods and swamps on the "turnpike" to South Gardner, picking the white swamp honeysuckle (*Rhododendron viscosum*) blooming in the very midst of the



AZALEA.

waters, and the snake's head (*Chelone glabra*) showing white in the edge of the woods.

The old County road did not run through these swamps, but bore off to the south, passing over the hill above the Baptist church, past Wright's mill and on the side hill just below the original Jonathan Greenwood house, a route long ago discontinued and now almost obliterated.

Near the old cellar-hole on the top of Wright's hill, where the first house (burned in 1808) built by Joseph Wright stood, is the



Columbine.

ancient well, and by its side a large stone with a circular hollow in its top that the family used for many years as a wash basin. It was possibly in use before their time by the Indians as a mortar for grinding corn.

The Old Quag.

A visit, one day in early spring, to the "old quag" by the railroad, near East street, a favorite resort of the village boys for generations, rewarded us with the purple blossoms of the pitcher-plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*); the fresh and attractive white stalks of the buckbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), a rare flower in Worcester County, at first sight suggesting an orchid; the slender and delicate white *Smilacina trifolia*, which almost unconsciously is called Lily-of-the-valley; from

the fringe of bushes at the land's edge, the woolly-leaved Labrador tea (*Ledum latifolium*), a rare and radiant shrub found in few towns in the county, and the bell blossoms of the low-bush blueberry (*Vaccinium vacillans*).



Pogonia.

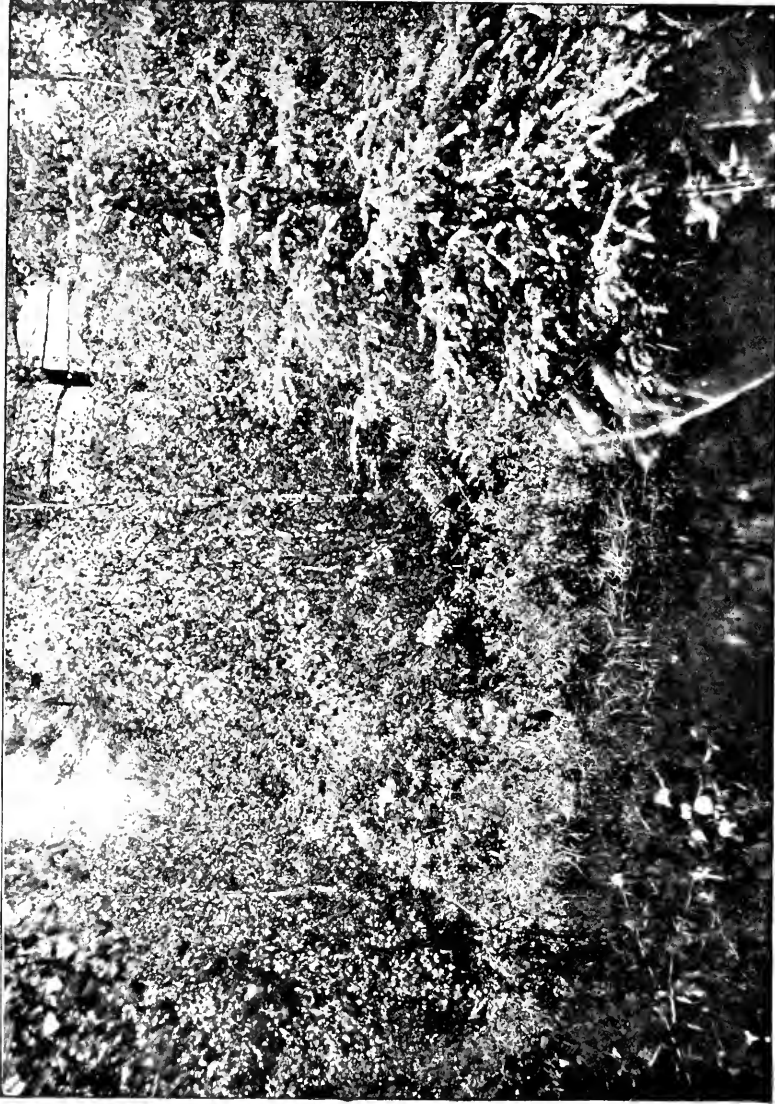
Here, beside the brilliant blossoms of the rhodora (*Rhododendron rhodora*) that lighten the bleak bareness of the bushes just budding into leaf, in the middle of the swamp, just above the water we find, also, an earlier and exceedingly graceful sister of the mountain laurel, the delicate, fragile pale laurel (*Kalmia glauca*). The treacherous moss sinks deep into the water as we cross it, and the air-holes catch us, drawing us into their depths until we fairly gasp

at the rush of cold waters, the thick, slimy ooze under the tangled roots holding the feet with almost overpowering suction. But it is a rich treasure house of flowers, a delight and a joy to remember forever after—just such a bed as would attract the fairest and daintiest of New England's jewels—the brightest colored and choicest of the flowers.

Pearl street, itself, leads to Ashburnham Centre and Meeting-house Hill, with its wonderful views. It is well worth climbing the great hill to stand on the north brow and look across the Naukeags with their wooded islands, "when the gold of evening meets the dusk of night;" a view unsurpassed, save, perhaps, on Lake George. On the way home, in late summer, we find a rattlesnake orchis (*Goodyera pubescens*) by the roadside, and note the curious markings of the leaves. We may drive straight on from Pearl street to the very edge of the town, to Worthington Park, at the end of the road,



Calopogon.



THE HOME OF THE AZALEA.

and looking at the fire-scorched ruins, reflect upon the transitory nature of all earthly plans. Between the high cellar-walls the fireweed (*Epilobium augustifolium*) glows with brilliant color, contrasting with the blackened trunks of the ancient trees.

Then to the right, down the steep hill, we ride for an hour or more, on winding roads, through thicket and brush,

“A land of trees, which reaching round about,
In shady blessing stretched their old arms out,
With spots of sunny openings.”



Moccasin Flower.

in the shade of maple, pine and oak woods, silent, cool, and filled with beauties, where

“The pines are whispering in the breeze
Whispering—then hushing, half in awe—
Their legends of primeval seas.”

emerging finally upon the broad highway in the middle of Ashburnham, to return through the long village street at the Junction.

Chapel Street.

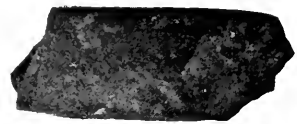
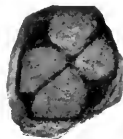
Or, we may take the Beech Hill road to Westminster, and, on the right, enter an abandoned road that plunges at once into brush and brier, where the tall grass reaches to the carriage. On a low rise of land fronting the shining rails of the railroad, are the cellar-holes of several buildings, with fruit trees run wild around them. Cherries



Wild Calla.

hang ripe and red on the trees; lilac bushes, luxuriant in their abandonment, flaunt their colors on either side above the cellar, where the decaying timbers are overrun with raspberries, the fruit large, rich and tempting. But when we learn the story of the place, we remember with regret. Many years ago this was a thriving New England farm, with sons and daughters around the hearthstone looking forward to life's blessings. To this household disease suddenly came

—a foul and loathsome disease that struck down one after another, and drove in horror every friend and neighbor from them. The father, taken ill, died of small-pox, and was hastily buried on the farm itself. The house became as if accursed. Provisions were brought only to the wall down the road. Imagine, if you can, the last sad scene of this pitiful history, when the mother, alone with her sick, in her sorrow and almost broken by the strain of her weeks of watching, stood all one night by the bedside of her dying child. Then she went away forever. So the buildings were left to decay, with a horror attached, that for years has kept all human kind away from them, leaving the lonely graves to grow each passing year more lonely,—



Andalusite Crystals.
(Crystal Lake.)

“Where roses blossomed, branches now o’erspread;
 The mournful ruins bid the spirit weep.
 The broken fragments stay the passing tread.”

On the left is where a soldier in the French and Indian wars settled, Chapel, for whom the street was named. He died in 1820, at the age of one hundred and three years, the oldest person who has died in Gardner.

The swamp across the railroad entices us with its promises of hidden treasures, for here from the sphagnum moss in the water, among



“Where Roses Blossomed.”

the white blossoms of the cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*), spring one of the prettiest of the orchis family, the pink flower of the beautiful beard (*Pogonia ophioglossoides*), and its beautiful sister, the Indian pink (*Calopogon pulchellus*) is near, its rich purple blossoms contrasting strangely delicate beside the cat-tails. Careless of everything, save the delight of communing with Nature in her home, we wade far out into the treacherous waters to find the wild calla (*Calla palustris*) hiding its pure white petals in the very heart of the swamp, reserving its beauties for those who love it and seek it in its retreat. In early spring the flower masses of white almost cover the waters—a beautiful picture.

We may go on over Beech hill to enjoy the views, or turn sharply to the right to cross the country to the Betty Spring road near Westminster, returning laden with flowers, and listening to

“The breeze murmuring in the musical woods
Where the embowering trees recede, and leave
A little space of green expanse.”

The North Roads.

From the Windsor House as a starting point, we drive north expectantly, for the woods run together for miles and the houses are few. We may go to the right over Matthews' hill, with berries in abundance



The Purple Fringed Orchis at Home.

on either side, and keep on through the swamp, past ancient homesteads indicated by abandoned cellar-holes, to Pearl street; or go north to the end of the road at the Nashua reservoir, enjoying every rod of the wooded drive.

But when the day is young and we want a long drive, we go on past the great elm at Page's (the largest in Gardner) through woods that seldom see a carriage, where

“ * * * fantastic aisles
Wind from the sight in brightness and are lost
Among the crowded pillars,”

over a brush-grown road that leads for miles without a house, through the swamps, where, in June,

"The Atlantic June,
Whose calendar of perfect days is kept
By daily blossoming of some new flower."

the azalea (*Rhododendron nudiflorum*) blooms on acres and acres of bushes, where the moccasin flower, or lady's slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*), another of the orchis family, boasts its careless wealth of color, and where the columbine (*Aquilegia Canadensis*), daintiest and most graceful of flowers, welcomes us to her home on the fern-covered bank. Every little while we pass a deserted "cellar-hole" and tell again the varying life histories of their former owners: some sad, some tragic, all pathetic. All the way we delight in the profusion of flowers, for the pyrola and its white sisters lie in beds about us, the Indian-pipe is under almost every bush and by every log, while the one-flowered pyrola, the exquisite star of the *Moneses grandiflora*, forces an exclamation of genuine pleasure from us, when we see a great bed of its pure white, waxy petals under the spreading branches of a pine. Abundant in this vicinity, it is unknown elsewhere in the county. The swamps in the woods fairly glow with the beautiful blossoms of the purple-fringed orchis (*Habenaria fimbriata*), most precious and most sought-for of all the season's flowers. How the heart thrills at the first sight of the delicate, fragile blossoms gleaming white against the dark background of the woods. Here in the dense woods, where the sun never shines,

"In the deep glen, or the close shade of pines,"

we find the great green orchis (*Habenaria orbiculata*), whose large, full-orbed leaves add to its royal dignity.

At the four corners we can go west to force a narrow way through brush that sadly scratches the carriage to the little red schoolhouse on the main Winchendon road: and once we used to go east to the Junction, but now the road is discontinued. Here in the swamps, the curious fly-trap, or pitcher plants (*Sarracenia purpurea*), grow in hundreds and we watch them

"How at the dawn they wake, and open wide
Their little petal windows"

safe here from all intrusion by man, and

"The passion they express all day
In burning color, steals forth with the dew
All night in odor."

and the ragged fringed-orchis (*Habenaria lacera*) keeps them company. So we keep straight on to leave the woods at last at the Astor



"Leafless are the trees; their purple branches
Spread themselves abroad, like reefs of coral rising silent
In the Red Sea of the winter sunset."

House, the old tavern on the turnpike at Burrageville, in North Ashburnham, the home of the yellow meadow or Canada lily, the fairies' or witches' cap (*Lilium Canadense*), whose branched stems and graceful drooping bells remind us of candelabra in some ancient cathedral. The meadows and even the roadside are rich to prodigality with the golden bells, and the delicate, smaller purple fringed-orchis (*Habenaria psycodes*) growing

“Beside a brook in mossy forest dell”

hardly lessens our admiration by the glory of its richer beauty. By the bridge we once picked a meadow-rue (*Thalictrum* delicate than its graceful the great mill-dam and house, where the roads side, in a little way, corner eight different roads at its own peculiar and is the old toll-road, bring-Town Farm; another and passing for miles

large cluster of purple *purpurascens*), more sister. We return by the little red school-corner, and on either in fours again, making our service, each with inviting charms. One ing us out near the climbs the great hill, under



Pitcher Plant.



Great Green Orchis.



Ragged Fringed Orchis.

“green-robed senators of mighty woods,
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars”

becomes Stone street, in Gardner, one of the prettiest drives in town; and by another we go to old Winchendon to enjoy a particularly fine view of Monadnock on the way.

All through these woods we catch glimpses of the brown rabbit hopping along in front of us, and every little while the whirr-r-r of the partridge startles us from our reveries. Once we drove into the midst

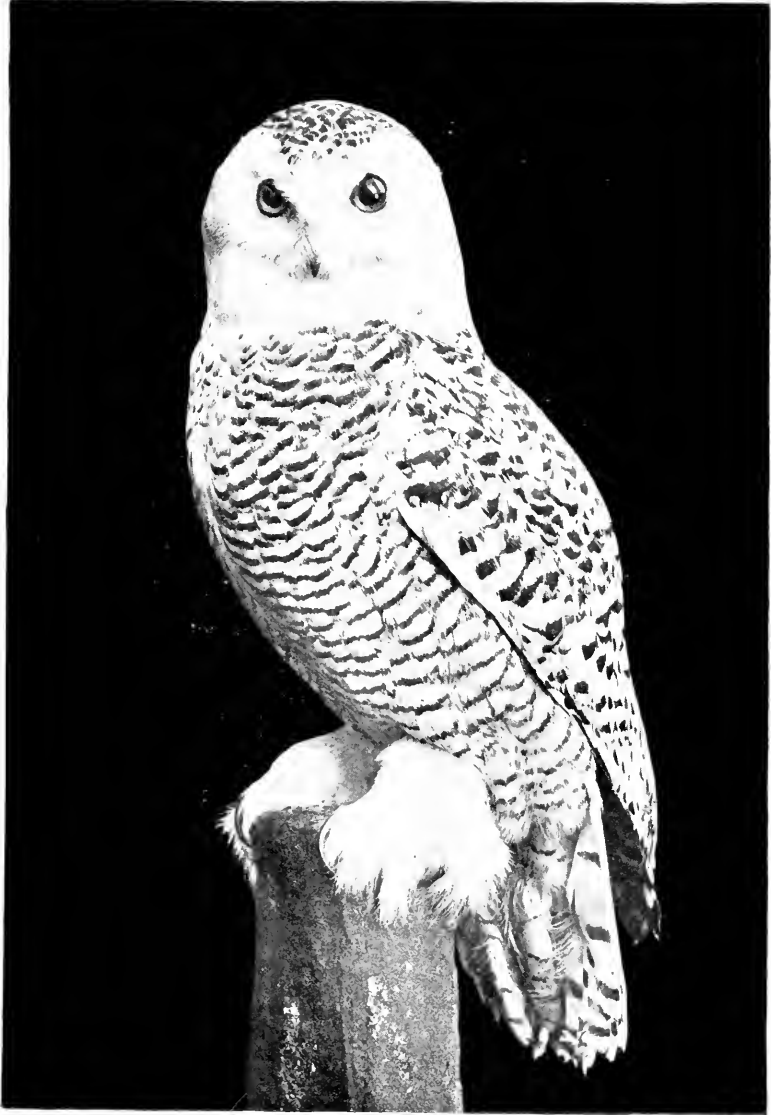
of a young family, and instantly the mother-bird fluttered by the carriage, apparently hurt unto death, causing eager pursuit through the bushes until she had led us a safe distance; then, recovering, she flew far away; we almost fancied we heard a laugh as she left us. Her little, brown-backed children hid themselves under the brush, keeping absolutely quiet while we stood over them watching their nervous heart throbbings.



Meadow Lily.

The long, bushy tail of the fox is sometimes seen disappearing through the bushes ahead, indicating "good hunting" here, and the dust in summer and the snow in winter bear the imprint of the raccoon in almost perfect imitation of a baby's foot.

The red squirrel abounds, for nuts are plenty, and, with the woodpecker for company, an occasional chipmunk or rare gray squirrel fill the woods with life.



SNOWY OWL.

Otters once frequented the river named from them, Otter River, and are still found there; a wildcat was recently killed near the Nashua reservoir, and a Snowy Owl, from Canada, in 1882 strayed to its death on Glazier Hill. Two or three deer have visited here in late years, probably driven south by the severe winters.



The Kneeland Maids.

Crime, sorrow, disease, the wrong of man to man, and man to woman have not spared our peaceful town in the century of its life, and the dense growth of its great woods, for miles seldom trodden by man, hide many a dark mystery, the shame of many a crime.

As we drive through the West Village with its thronging homes, we turn aside, near the curve in the railroad, to visit a gravel-knoll half a mile from the road, secluded and covered with wood. On this



The Kneeland Place.

low hill, (debris of a moraine dating from the glacial epoch) a hunter, a few years since, found in the shade of a tree a withered human body, with a rope around the neck and a broken end hanging from a limb overhead. He had lain there two or three years, unknown, unseen, perhaps never missed. The mystery of the suicide remains to this day unsolved, and, buried on the spot, the sleep of the faint-hearted continues unbroken under the tree he chose, in a lonely and soon-to-be-forgotten grave.

We linger a moment near here, in the bed of the brook, to rejoice in the wealth of flowers that greets us on every side, for the purple monkey-face (*Mimulus ringens*) hides under the bushes, with the

skull-cap (*Scutellaria galericulata*) beside it; near by the dainty blue and yellow of the "ruby grape of Proserpine," the nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*) hangs close to to the golden blossoms of the jewelweed (*Impatiens pallida*); below us the pool is white with arrow head (*Saggitaria variabilis*); from our feet rises a great club of thorough-



"The red pennons of the cardinal
flowers
Hang motionless upon their upright
staves."

wort, or boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*), while in the foreground the brilliant cardinal-flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), High Priest of the Tabernacle, stands stately, erect and magnificent in all the bright glory of its coloring.

Then on through the valley, where the swamp flowers abound, white lilies lie in the sun, and, late in the summer, great beds of purple asters, harbingers of autumn, fill the roadside with their masses of star-like blossoms. Turning to the right in East Templeton, we swing rapidly down the long, exhilarating curves of the hill to Bailey brook, through woods that the twin-flower (*Linnaea borealis*) loves, and the

air is filled with its fragrance—one of the flowers that conduce to thought, through which

“ Ever the words of the gods resound ;
 But the porches of man's ear
 Seldom, in this life's low round,
 Are unsealed, that he may hear.”

The twin-flower is no longer found in Worcester county outside of the few northern towns, so the great beds in Gardner are especially interesting.

As we return on the circuit, at the head of Parker's pond and the junction of Wilder and Kneeland brooks, almost within sound of the



Near the Kneeland Place.

busy life of Gardner, we find, by the foot of a tall tree, a faint cellar-hole marking the site of the home of the Kneeland Maids. They were two aged sisters, daughters of Timothy Kneeland, one of the earliest settlers in Gardner, found beaten to death in their beds in March, 1855. The buildings were destroyed by fire the following May, and a crime that filled the whole state with horror, and caused, to the timid, fear and apprehension for many a long year thereafter—a crime that was as brutal and cowardly as any in the history of the Commonwealth, went unpunished by man, and after forty years leaves the ashes of a once happy home its only reminder.

Or keep on through East Templeton, turning to look at the great blossoms on the tulip-tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) at the corner of the Parkhurst house-lot, and as you climb the long Ladder hill, note an



RHODORA.

especially attractive view—Gardner and its multitude of houses framed in by the walls of earth. All roads that are before you are inviting, but if you have the time, go down into and across the Ware River valley, through the Four Corners, and swing home through Phillipston Centre and Goulding Village, across the Great Meadows, where pout and pickerel thrive. On such a trip, if in late July, one may find, in a hollow between the Phillipston hills, a great cluster of purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) crowning the marsh, standing as brilliantly erect as in its native land in the days of Ophelia.



Bickford-Travers Mill-Dam.

“There is a willow grows aslant a brook
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream,
 There with fantastic garlands did she come
 Of crow flowers, nettles, daisies and long purples
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
 But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.”

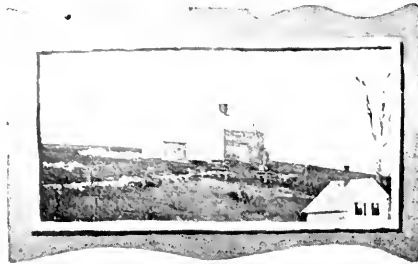
To get far away from the noise of the town, turn south from East Templeton to Hubbardston, over Mine hill. The road terraces the steep hillside, with precipitous depths beneath in the shadows of the woods; the curves under the hill reminding us of the famous Geyser

grade. Here the railing is for actual use, and we can almost level with our eyes the top of the tall hemlock that grows just below the road.

"Steep is the side * * * shaggy and wild
With mossy trees and pinnacles of flint
And many a hanging crag."

It makes little difference whether you return by the way of Ragged hill and through the long woods below the Pail Factory, where the Mayflower (*Epigaea repens*) first blooms every spring, and "the green vistas arch like the hollows of mighty waves of some crystalline sea;" or go on through Hubbardston in a wilderness of drives; a glorious prospect, with woods and ponds alternating in an unending pageant of pleasure. The wild calla (*Calla palustris*) haunts the swamps, and we pick several varieties of tick-trefoil as we drive along. The morning-glory (*Convolvulus Americanus*) bells cover the walls and rock-piles, and the wild bean (*Apios tuberosa*) barricades the banks. Returning from Hubbardston with a bunch of brilliant red Oswego tea-heads (*Monarda didyma*) we drive slowly by the old mill-dam of the Bickford mill, the first built in town, destroyed by fire August 20, 1895. On Kendali hill, behind the station, where the old turnpike crossed the brow of the hill, a few elms still stand sentinel over the site of the Jackson house, the first house built in Gardner. Here the "bright chalice" of the painted-cup (*Castilleja coccinea*) glow

"In the green like flakes of fire,"
its scarlet tufts
"Tinted thus to hold the dew for fairies."



From photo by F. H. Brown.

Jackson House.
Built 1764

On Glazier Hill.

One of the earliest settlers had the courage (and love of nature) to build his house on the top of Glazier hill, where the reservoir now is. He sold in 1772, to John Glazier, from whom the hill takes its present name. The house now stands on Morrill street, and is the oldest in town. In it was held the first town meeting in Gardner. As we climb the hill, the winding road brings us fresh surprises at every turn, for we are on a great pyramid with all the Commonwealth spread out before us, and

* * * * * "The mountains that in fold
In their wide sweep, the colored landscape round,
Seem groups of giant kings, in purple and gold,
That guard the enchanted ground."



Twin Flower.

From the first blush of morning, mantling the face of Wachusett, standing huge and solitary in the plain, twelve miles away to the south, to the last red arrow shot by the setting sun against the dark blue mass of Monadnock, watchman of the Northern hills, one of the

"Mountain columns with which earth props heaven;"
from the faint gray

"The pure mist—the pity of the sea
Coming as a soft white hand,"

to curtain the beds of the flowers in the swamps in early morning, to the drawing of the fog-covers over the rivers, reflecting golden glories

of the sky at sunset ; we watch the wonderful transformations, as the sun lights up the woodlands, shadows the long lines of hills, and turns the

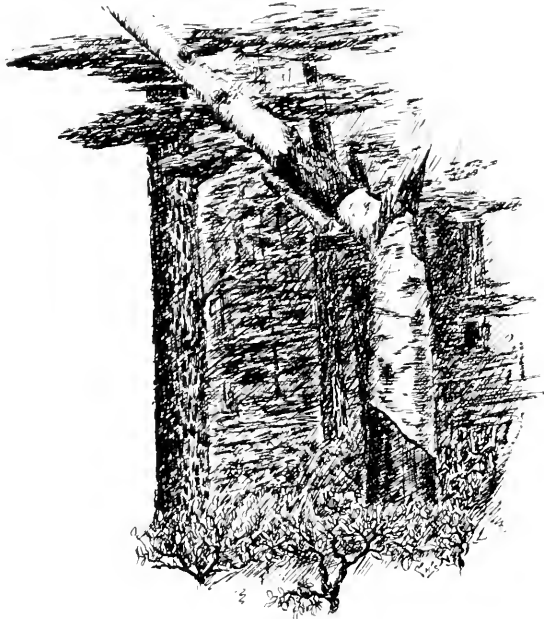
“ Waters resting in the embrace of the wide forest,”

into quivering glowing quicksilver, instinct with life, and color and beauty—

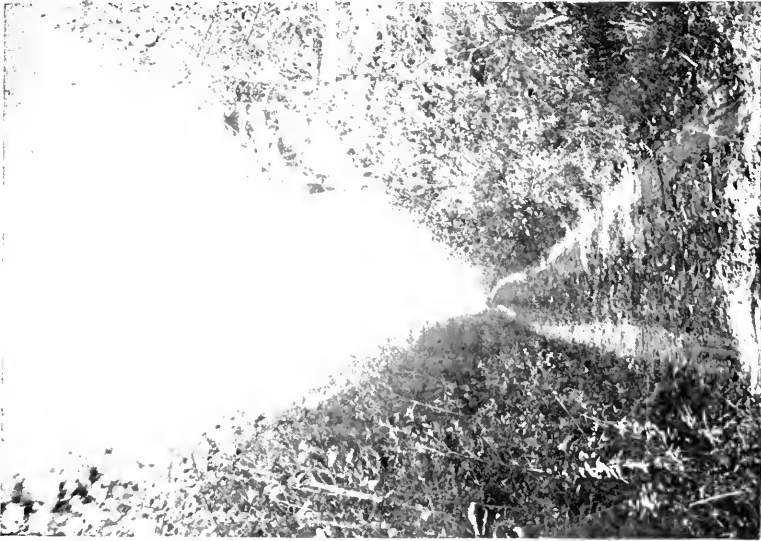
“ A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved
All over this still ocean ; and beyond
Far, far beyond, the solid vapour stretched
In headlands, tongues and promontory shapes,”

and all the fair land at our feet reminds us of the gardens of Armidas of which Tasso sings,

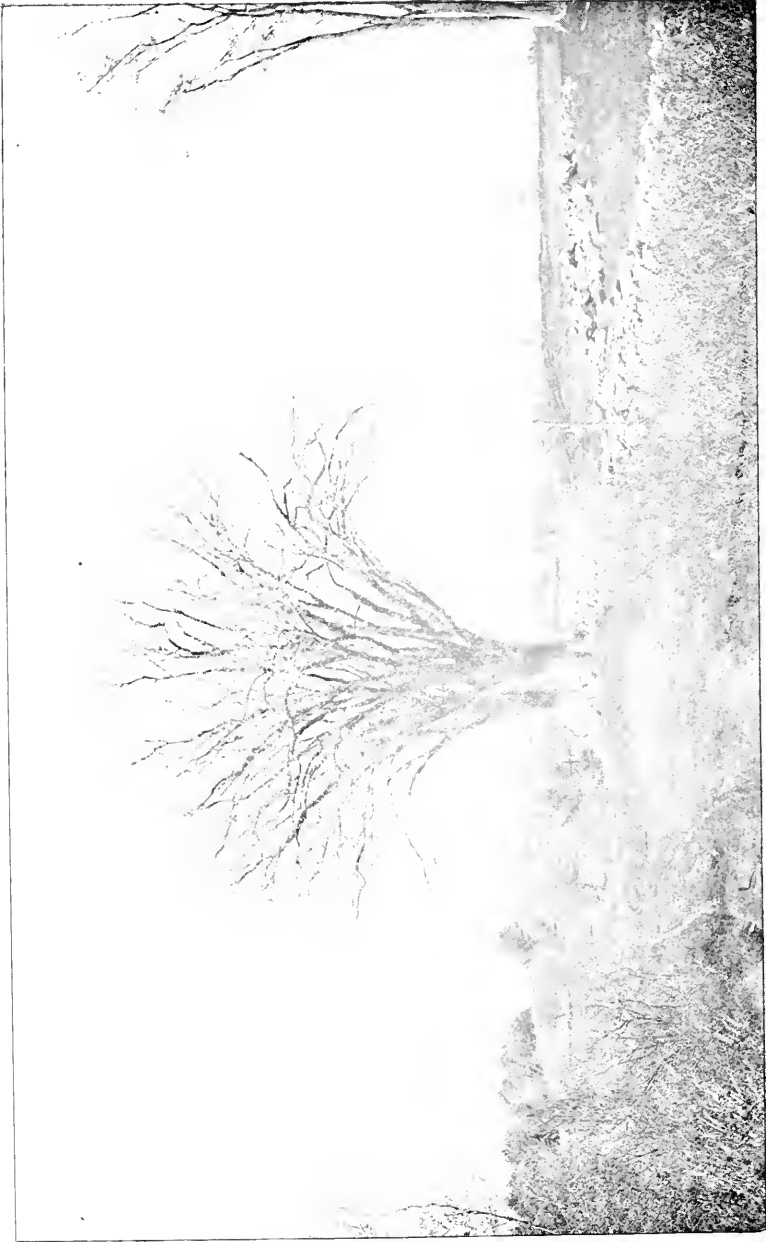
“ Still lakes of silver, streams that murm’ring crept,
Hills, on whose sloping brows the sunbeams slept ;
Luxuriant trees, that various forms displayed,
And valleys, grateful with refreshing shade ;
Herbs, flow’rets, gay with many a gaudy dye,
And wood, and arching grottos meet the eye.”



Last of Its Race.



“Sudden our pathway turned from night ;
The hills swung open to the light.”



.. The milestones of the fathers, the landmarks of the past."

Redemption Rock.

An eight-mile drive takes us through Westminster by the left side of Wachusett Lake, near the foot of Wachusett Mountain, to the broad-topped Redemption rock, just by the roadside; its further side twenty feet above the grass. The inscription on its face tells its story.



From Photo.

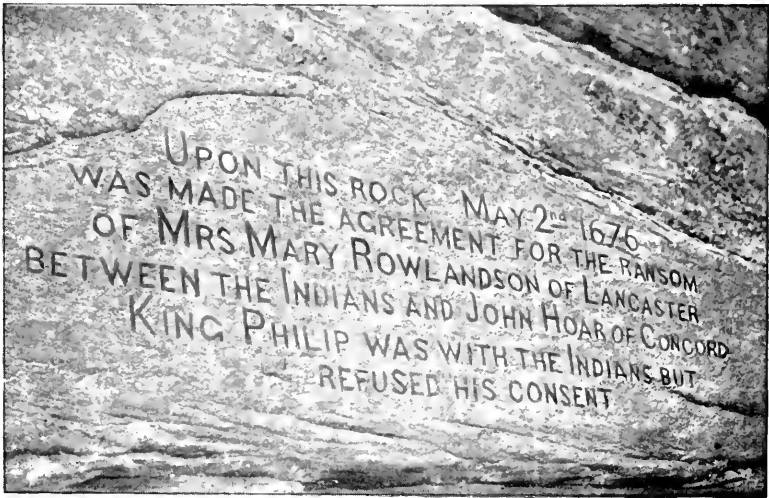
Redemption Rock.

We may everywhere find flowers, rare and beautiful, but we have a choice as to where to go at different seasons. On Lynde hill, in the very heart of the town, the hepaticas (*Hepatica striloba*) grow

“ When spring unlocks the flowers to paint
the laughing soil ; ”

Checkerberries, or wintergreen, (*Gaultheria procumbens*) redden Bickford's or Parker's hill, with their abundance; and in summer the smaller orchid, ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes gracilis*) twists through the dying grasses on Glazier hill. By Crystal Lake the white laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) and the lamb-kill, or sheep laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*) relieve the darkness of the woods; the American brooklime (*Veronica*

Americana) shields itself from prying eyes; and in the fields on the hillsides rising from its waters, we find the pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*) and the corn cockle (*Lychnis githago*). The fringed polygala (*Polygala paucifolia*) grows abundantly on Greenwood Hill. The maiden hair fern is no longer found in Gardner, but still flourishes in some favored spots in Templeton. The wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), the "wind-flower," grows in great abundance in the low land near the pail factory; the European hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*), "the devil's paint-brush," may be found on the roads to the east, and the rhodora (*Rhododendron rhodora*), brilliantly beautiful in its purple brightness, may be found on every hill and in every swamp. On one road to the north is a quarter-acre lot that is fairly covered with these bushes, every one a mass of color, in the spring. The beautiful white fringed orchis (*Habenaria blephariglottis*) lines the edge of one swamp on East street, and is found in several others. Beech-drops, a curious parasite (*Epiphegus Virginiana*) are abundant in the woods by Crystal Lake.



From Photo.

Redemption Rock.

The Inscription.



The Sheep-pen.

“JUST IN THE GRAY OF THE DAWN.”



Upper Cove.

“Lake of the hills, where cool and
sweet,
Thy sunset waters lie.”

Around Crystal Lake.

For a varied and interesting drive start from Monument Square and go past the green lawns on the hill, past the smooth, rich fields of the Heywood Farm, and turn to the left. Crystal Lake lies before us as a brilliant jewel, with its setting of green; to the north, Monadnock, black and forbidding, bars the view. By the lakeside, in September, we chance upon the latest, and almost the fairest of the season's flowers—the wary, fringed gentian (*Gentiana crinita*)



Fringed Gentian.

“colored with heaven's own blue,”

the flower of which the poet sings,

“Four plumes from the bluebird's wing, as fast
to the south he flew

The Angel of Flowers caught them up as they
fell in the autumn dew,

And shaped with a twirl of her fingers this spire
of feathery blue.”

By its side is the slender-twisted white orchis, ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes cernua*.) Earlier in the year, the strange sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*), with carnivorous leaves feeding on insects attracted by the sweet “dew” that glistens like a tiny web of diamond dust, raises its drooping head in the meadow farther north, and a great bed of wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) lights up the roadside at the archway under the trees. The rose-like blossoms of the purple

flowering raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*), a plant somewhat uncommon in Worcester County, attracts us to its home under some great oaks and chestnuts, where its abundance gives it unusual dignity; while over our heads, the golden woodpecker and oriole fly back and forth. From our windows in the winter we look out on the snow depths after

a severe "cold spell" to watch the little brown Labrador birds hopping in the branches, for they only come in the coldest of mid-winter, from their far northern home. From the edge of the woods we gather a large bunch of closed gentians (*Gentiana Andrewsii*), the



Closed Gentians.

"Flower all elusive, guarding alike from the
rain and the sun
The mystical heart of thyself,"

to brighten the rooms at home for



An Orchis.

"Seven threads of light
Morning's gold and evenings' red,
Braided with the starry night,"

week after week, sometimes keeping fresh and bright with undimmed color for five or six weeks. In summer we follow the road through fields fragrant with flowers and berries. The bushes are blue with high bush blueberries; great clusters of blackberries hang coyly under the leaves, and



Cardinal Flower.

“ Along the roadside, like the flowers of gold
That tawny Incas for their gardens wrought,
Heavy with sunshine droops the goldenrod,”

the flower most typical of sturdy American energy and independence, throwing to the breeze its graceful richness of delicacy and color. A branch of brilliant maple leaves, rivaling the sunset in hue, waves gently to and fro, a warning of the chill of winter soon to come. Two great elms, guarding a deserted homestead at the end of the road, indicate the long battle with fortune fought by one of the early settlers of Gardner. The grass under the great trees, dried by the fierce August heats, invites us to its soft embrace,



“ * * * * bright clouds,
Motionless pillars of the brazen heaven,—
Their bases on the mountains—their white
tops
Shining in the far ether,—fire the air
With a reflected radiance,”

and we rejoice in all the glorious wealth of display and generous profusion of the waning of a New England summer.

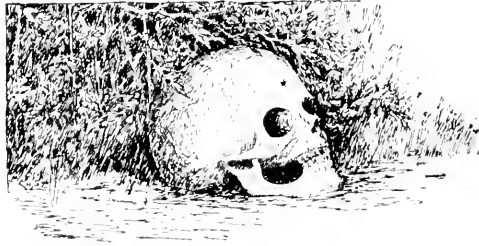
In the darkest corner of the dark woods we seek and find another of the ghost flower family, the many-flowered Indian pipe (*Monotropa hypopitys*).

Beautiful as the location is, the desolation of the fine old homestead strikes us to the heart, and the sense of loneliness grows within us when we learn that a few years since, there was found under the bushes by the road, where it had been hidden for more than sixty years, a skeleton, with a bullet-hole through the grinning skull. The careful concealment



Indian Pipe.
(Many-flowered.)

of the body forbids a charitable solution and couples the dreadful bullet-hole with crime alone. The silence of sixty years grows into the silence of eternity, and the white bones of the victim may rest peacefully in a soon forgotten grave; the momentary uncovering of the tragedy excites only passing comment, and the curtain falls as the incident sinks into oblivion.





"The whispering pines meet in converse."



“ * * * * * Dark, through willowy vistas seen,
The river rolled in shade between.”

Bailey Brook and Lake Denison.

But when the spirit moves you some bright day in early summer when the sun's heat hastens all vegetation forward, drive west through "Little Canada," by Crystal Lake, and see the floating hearts (*Limnanthemum lacunosum*) covering the surface, with the slender pipewort (*Eriocaulon septangulare*) thrusting its white points beside them.



The White Beach, Lake Denison.

Go past Bailey brook, with its vistas of reflections and promises of autumnal glories in the foliage on its banks, where

“Down bend the banks, the trees depending
grow,
And skies beneath with answering colours
glow,”

past the meadows, yellow in spring with cowslip blossoms (*Caltha palustris*) and the golden ragwort (*Senecio aureus*), down the long hill where the rhodora grows, its frail, naked blossoms lighting up the whole bleak pasture, on down to the head of the Reservoir, where the whispering pines meet in converse overhead, and form

“* * * * * a pillared shade
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,”

we find a rich treasury of flowers. Let the horse walk awhile, for the yellow clover (*Trifolium agrarium*) is sweet here, and earlier in the year the brilliant red of the fringed polygala (*Polygala paucifolia*) catches the eye. An old stump, cut when the pond was first flowed, has a tiny seedling pine starting from its top, delighting the children when it is pointed out as a "curiosity." From this pond great turtles



Blueberry Blossoms.

come, one huge fellow weighing over fifty pounds, with a shell over two feet in diameter.

We stop here under the pines, and, looking across the waters of the stumpy pond, see the Templeton hills in the distance; behind us the road disappearing in a vista whose beauty lingers in our memory for many a day thereafter. Here from the swampy, brush-grown recesses of the woods, we pluck the purple fringed orchis (*Habenaria fimbriata*). Here the ground is white with wax flowers, the pyrolas, pipsissewa and moneses, the bunchberry (*Cornus Canadensis*) and the delicate stars of the *Dalibarda repens*.

We may go north through Winchendon, south through Templeton, or go straight on through Mill Glen to Lake Denison, a famous ancient resort of the Indians, and the home of the white water-lily (*Nymphaea odorata*), which grows here in thousands.

“God’s plans like lilies pure and white unfold,
We must not tear the close shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.”

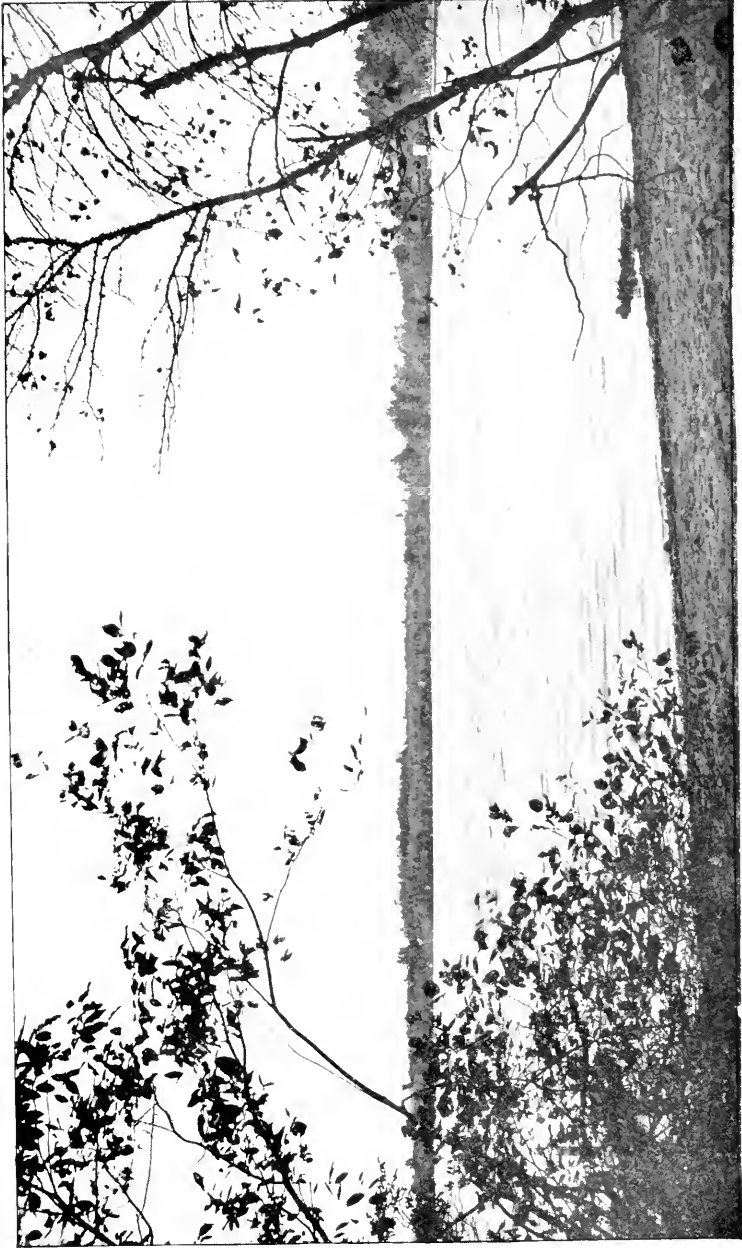


The Beryl Mine.

Near the lake is the ford across Miller’s river, beside which Mrs. Rowlandson camped with the Indians on her return to Wachusett for ransom, the soldiers abandoning the pursuit on the farther shore. Beyond the lake, a by-road follows the abandoned bed of the railroad, whose course was changed to the other side of the river. It runs straight as an arrow for nearly two miles, at one time high above the swamp on an embankment, at another cutting through a rocky hill, where ledges tower above our heads

“Huge pillars that in middle heaven uprear
Their weather-beaten capitals,”

Overgrown with brush, uncared for, in the spring axle-deep in water



“Where the water-lilies floated,
Where the rushes waved and whispered.”

at one end, a drive on such a road is an inspiration to the tired worker, and

"The calm shade
Shall bring a kindred calm, and the sweet breeze
That makes the green leaves dance, shall waft a balm
To thy sick heart."

Whether you go on to the beryl-mine, or the granite quarry in Royalston, or visit Doane's or Forbes' falls, or remain quietly at Lake Deni-



Ladies' Tresses.

son to fish and pick lilies, and dig in the pure, white sand, makes little difference, for

" * * * All that is most beautiful is imaged there
In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purple gleams."

The passing of the seasons is reflected in the flowers by the way-side, and as the heart thrills at the sight of the first mayflower in the spring, so it is chilled by the coming of the golden-rod in the early autumn. The colors of the prevailing flowers change, too, as the seasons wane, for the delicate white and yellow of the violet and *Clintonia borealis* pass into the waxy-white and pink of the larger and more ornate laurel; that in turn into the richer pink and purple of fleur-de-lis



WHITE-FRINGED ORCHIS.

and lily and trumpet-weed. The pure white of the daisy is succeeded by the brilliant red of the fireweed and the yellow of the primrose and golden-rod, and they again by the deep purples of the asters, until late autumn crowns the whole with the gorgeous coloring of the changing maple leaf; and the mantle of winter's snow softly covers all the flowers, to await in safety the certain resurrection of the spring.

For there is

“A little drop of Heaven in each diamond of the shower,
A breath of the Eternal in the fragrance of each flower.”

“The Beauty which old Greece or Rome
Sung, painted, wrought, lies close at
home;
We need but eyes and ear
In all our daily walks to trace
The outlines of incarnate grace,
The hymns of gods to hear!



Found in the Swamp.

(1850.)

