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From Betsy Forham  
whose mother transcribed  
her mother's or  
Grandmother's  
Reminiscences

## WILMOT CENTER of the 1890s

as written by

Edith Marion Goodhue Campbell - 1968

When seen through the eyes of maturity the impressions of childhood may seem invalid, yet a child sees people and places as they are, responds to kindnesses and attitudes without prejudice and by the same ability to judge fairly, is repelled by unkindness and the cruelties which rarely but surely are woven into the fabric of Life. The following tale will be imperfectly written, following somewhat the trail of a Will-o-the Wisp as the fancies flit hither and yon.

For me life began in 1889 in the ell apartment of the home of Mrs. Asenath Upton Stevens near the foot of Bunker Hill. She was the widow of Amos P. Stevens and occupied the homestead for many years alone except for the tenants who lived in the pleasant apartment. The ell at that time was a one-story structure and was occupied by my parents, Fred E. and Josie S. Goodhue, for the first five years of their married life. The place is now owned by Miss Evelyn Mahan and has been allowed to deteriorate from its original well-kept condition.

In 1892 my Father purchased a home on the main street from Thomas Craggie whom I remember well. In this house, now owned by David and Mary Addison, my brother Harland was born and most of the memories of my childhood and youth cluster around this home and the eighteen years my parents spent there.

We had good neighbors. Just across the street, if a gravel country road can be called a "street", in the present home of Mrs. Virginia Bertagna, lived Mrs. Rebecca Cross, the widow of Merrill Cross, long time store-keeper in the "old Store" and for 25 years Wilmot's town clerk. I was only four when Mrs. Cross died but I remember the excitement when she fell down the cellar stairs breaking her hip which injury caused her death at age 84. The house was then purchased by Mrs. Mary (Pedrick) Emerson who resided there many years. She shared the home with her sister, Miss Melvina Pedrick, these pleasant ladies being two of the daughters of Joseph and Sabrina Pedrick. I liked them so much that the many hours I spent with them are happy memories. Melvina was given to relating stories of her childhood to which I listened with genuine awe. While few in our village were blessed with an abundance of worldly possessions, the tales of frugality and thrift practised in large families like the Pedricks' made a lasting impression. I have always been grateful to Melvina for the glimpse

she gave me of the years so far behind my own experience.

Continuing west along "Main Street" or "The Fourth New Hampshire Turnpike" and still on the left was the home of George W. Whittemore, his wife Julia and daughter Harriet (Hattie) who became Mrs. Oscar Cahoon. Mr. Whittemore was a jeweler and watch & clock repairer which business was carried on in a small building west of the homestead. The entire Whittemore place was a model of neatness with well-kept lawns, flowers and the biggest black cherry tree I have ever seen. How I loved those cherries! The tree embellished both the home and the very attractive jewelry store. I loved Mrs. Whittemore and Hattie but Mr. Whittemore was a self-professed infidel and used to scare me to death while he also incurred my wrath by deriding my attendance at Sunday School.

In the field beyond the Whittemore place was a small white building which housed the town hearse, a hearse of such fine quality that when other towns, even New London, had to say "Farewell" to one of their prominent citizens the Wilmot equipage was always solicited.

The next home, now on the right, was the Baldwin place, named for the family of Professor Baldwin who was a teacher at the K.S. of P. during that school's most prosperous years. This was a most attractive home and while I did not know the Baldwins, I do remember the next owners, John Tilton, a widower, and his blind mother-in-law. Mrs. Page was sweet and gracious and John a large, handsome man. I spent frequent visiting-hours with Mrs. Page supposedly entertaining (?) her with my autoharp. This



dwelling was later purchased by Marcus and Nettie Grace and is now owned by Stanley Patten.

Continuing up the Turnpike were the homes of Joseph E. Gove, widower, who lived alone and across the road his daughter, Mary, with her husband, Moses Prescott and children Ethel, Wilfred and Clarence. Carlton was born later. Often Mr. Prescott's children by a former marriage, Leroy and Gertie, ~~w~~<sup>ere</sup> there also. \* See page 28.

Mr. Gove had two other daughters, Clara who married Seth Maxson and Asenath, the wife of Charles Gove. I remember Mr. Gove as a kindly man. The site of his home is now occupied by that of Joe and Esther Farnum. The homes of Mr. Gove and the Prescotts were purchased by several successive owners and were finally destroyed by a fire which originated in the huge barn at the George Patten place later owned by Joseph and Gertrude Sullivan and now by Joseph Szilagyi. The barn was on the left side of the Turnpike and the fire which leveled it with the Gove and Prescott homes threatened the entire village even setting fire to the roof of the "new store". Fast work by a group of citizens and an early troop of Boy Scouts in forming a bucket brigade saved the store and possibly the community,

The George Patten family of my childhood consisted of George, tall, angular and stoop-shouldered but the best "fiddler" in the area who was in demand for every local dance whether it was held in the old town hall or the kitchen of Isaac and Abbie Tenney, and his first wife Mary, daughter of Kirk and Emily Mason. George and Mary had one son, Mason. A second son Henry was born later.

Mary died when only 37 and the home, a large two-story house, was destroyed in a second and later fire.

In due time Mr. Patten married Luvia Tenney and lived at the Pedrick Place. To them six children were born: Katie, Forrest, Ruth, Ernest, Dorothy, and Ervin.

Still going west the next home was that of Kirk Mason, who in my youth was the town clerk. Kirk was also the most imaginative and spell-binding story teller in the region. Every evening he entertained the circle of men who gathered around the box stove in the village store, a circle which broke up as promptly when the clock struck nine as though the trump of doom had sounded. Kirk's wife was Emily Tenney and beside the daughter Mary who married George Patten they had one other, Angie, who became Mrs. Albert Thomas. The Mason home had several later owners and was last occupied by Clarence and Martha Gove.

Just beyond the Mason's was the Colonel Melvin Tenney homestead (now the Starkweathers). Just why Mr. Tenney was called "Colonel" I never knew, in fact I did not know him at all except from the picture I gleaned from the neighbor's description of a strange person shrouded in a heavy overcoat and long, wool entwining muffler who was wont to stroll down the village street thus attired even on the hottest days of summer. The "Colonel's" wife's name was Sarah, or "Sal" and their children were: Byron, Clara, Andrew Jackson, (known as Jack), Alvin (a "blue boy who died young"), Charles, Rose and Luvia. Clara married Mason Wheeler Rose married Robert Fowler and Luvia became the second wife of George Patten.

Across the bridge which was then a picturesque wooden structure known as "Tenney Bridge" and a little further west was the lane which trailed up, over and around the hills adjacent to Bog Mt. to the Silas Prescott Place. A low, weathered Cape Cod house and a large barn were surrounded by pastureland and a few well-kept fields. Here Silas lived with his widowed mother. I do not remember her but I do recall my father relating the difficulties encountered when she died. No horse drawn vehicle could safely transport a coffin over the narrow, uneven lane so several men carried the casket on their shoulders to the home and in like manner brought Mrs. Prescott down to a waiting conveyance.

Silas was a mild-mannered man whose personality included a certain gentleness and pride in work well done. Wood sawed by Silas was a work of art and the result piled evenly in the woodshed a mosaic of closely fitted pieces. Silas was an authority on Bees and kept many hives. He could work with them without protection and never acquire a sting. I have listened to his stories of Bees with fascination and only regret that somehow this wealth of practical information was not preserved.

Silas was one of the "regulars" who spent most evenings at the store trudging home at nine o'clock with provisions or a sack of grain on his shoulder. To me, a child, the little house at the foot of Bog Mt. seemed as far away from people as the mysterious North Pole.

The first house on the Turnpike on the right, above Tenney



Bridge was the Horace Osborne home and this has always been considered the second oldest house in Wilmot. Horace was a blacksmith and plied his trade in a building just west of his home. He was industrious and persevering for he had only one eye and though I do not remember this second handicap it is reported he had lost one arm. His wife, Minerva, was a pleasant woman. She was a sister of Moses Prescott. The Osbornes had no children.

The next house above the Osborne place and the second bridge, later owned by Mr. and Mrs. Buren Carter now by Mrs. Dorothy Stafford, was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Dan Messer. Dan was a woodsman, hunter and trapper. Furthermore when fall arrived and hogs were doomed for slaughter Dan was the town executioner. For this reason I abhorred him. He was doubtless a law abiding citizen but my sympathy was entirely with the pigs.

There were no other dwellings on the Turnpike until the Philbrick place came into view on the left. This farm consisting of 1000 acres was in the early days a tavern, then later the home of Mr. and Mrs. Porter Philbrick. Their three children were born there and my parents told me of an incident which today seems strange but then was not unusual. Doctors and town clerks were not required to return birth certificates with full information. Such items as given names were often omitted and the child was thus designated as "Male" or "Female". It sometimes happened that children went by nicknames until it seemed that the importance of an honest to goodness name was forgotten. Thus the Philbrick children went to school as "Bub", "Sis" and "Tot". The teacher decided that this was not regular so she gave

them real names. The names she chose were: Sumner, Mary and Ellen. The parents must have reacted favorably for the children remained Sumner, Mary and Ellen for the rest of their lives. My family always spoke of the Philbricks with respect and I know that the children who went West gained places of influence and were financially successful.

In my childhood the Philbrick Place was occupied by Lucy Jane (Fowler) Langley, a widow with two sons, Will and Austin. Will married Effie Prescott. Their three children, ~~Sere, Esther, and~~ John and Ben. Austin married June Woodward. Their family consisted of Iris and Andrew.

In time the Philbrick farm became the property of Charles Murphy, Wilmot's only millionaire. Mr. Murphy was a stately 6'4" gentleman who usually wore a gray flannel suit and always a gray ten-gallon hat. He came from the West and raised horses. The house was totally destroyed by fire but was rebuilt by Mr. Murphy. It is now the summer home of Mrs. Julia Gleason. Mr. Murphy was killed on the Potter Place railroad crossing in a blinding snowstorm. Formerly the farm had two large barns, one on either side of the road. These were also victims of fire on different occasions.

Situated in the triangle formed by the junction of the Turnpike and Stearns Hill Road I remember a tenement house of sorts. I believe it was a two story building. Patrick and Kate Logue who worked for my grandparents lived there at one time. Later the Edgar Fowler family occupied one tenement there. This structure literally fell by the wayside and was removed.

Only a short distance beyond the tenement house was the home of Mr. Edward B. Dodge and his wife Martha. Mr. and Mrs. Dodge maintained a wonderful home and large family. They were industrious to the nth degree yet public-spirited and hospitable. They were interested in all phases of community life but especially the church and opened the doors of their home to Christian Endeavor socials and other seasonal parties. They often filled two pews in the church on Sunday morning and some of the young people were in the choir. Mrs. Dodge was Sunday School Superintendent for many years.

The Dodge children were May who married Elwin Sargent and lives in Santa Ana, Calif. Though the oldest of ten children she is the only one still living (in 1968). Charles married and with his wife Annie lived in Stoughton, Mass. where he became a successful lumber merchant. William and Walter were twins. William married Eva Bolton and lived in East Andover. Walter died when 25 years of age unmarried. Eben married Sarah R. Swett of New London and lived in Pittsfield. Martha ("Mattie") married William Tucker who died when still young. She then married Richard Howard and lived at "Pinnacle Farm" where their son Samuel was born. Her third husband was Arthur Collins of Springfield who had a large family. Alice married Frank Marsten of New London but died shortly thereafter. Three Dodge children died when very young. Mrs. Dodge's mother, Mrs. Martha Gove, was also a member of the Dodge household.

One of the thrills of my childhood was to ride up to "Dodges Mill" with my grandfather, Seth Goodhue, when he went for



lumber. The mill, up-stream from the house, was really dual, a shingle mill and a saw mill. It was a busy place since Mr. Dodge employed several men at the mill and many others in the woods. Some of these were French Canadians whose use of English was, to say the least, unusual. Phrases in my father's store were; "My wife he" or "My man she". I used to wonder who "he" and "she" really were.

Above the mill were "the Falls", a cascade which, except in summer, furnished power to activate the whining saws. I held those saws in awe since once in a while an accident occurred.

The Dodge house fascinated me. Two piazzas on the first and second floors encircled the entire house. I remember the thrill of standing on the upper one at the back of the house and following the course of the stream as it dashed over the FALLS, ESCAPED from the mill as if in a great hurry and rushed through a gorge far below only to finally become pacified as it strolled away to the quiet of the Philbrick meadow.

To have this family leave town, one by one, until the house and mill were deserted, then to see those memorable buildings fall into decay and crumble was to me one of the saddest recollections of later years. Where there had been so much of life, industry, fun and laughter as well as serious moments, now there is no sound save the ceaseless murmur of the brook and the wind in the tree-tops of the encroaching forest. Sadly the fate of the Dodge home has been and is being repeated by the life cycle of many others.

But we must continue with our memories to a few places west of the Dodge home site. The first dwelling was that of Joseph Odette, his wife and children Fred, Delore, Midia and Odille. The Odettes were industrious, peaceful and law-abiding. Just above the Odette home was the Dodge school house, District #4, situated between the Turnpike and the stream.

On the opposite side of the Turnpike was an up-hill side road known as the "Poor Road" so named for a family by the name of "Poor" who in earlier years lived there. A few jolting rides up this rocky road gave one the impression that it was named for its condition rather than its inhabitants. A short distance up "Poor Road" and within sight of the Dodge school house was the farm of Frank and Betsy (Ray) Brown. They left no children. The Odette and Brown homes have long since disappeared. The school house remains as a summer cottage, its location changed to the other side of the road by the building of Route 4A. The Poor Road is now Quaker Path.

For the most part homes on the Turnpike seemed to be on the right side as one traveled west toward Springfield. I have wondered if this may have been because it is the sunny side. The hills on the other side produced much shade and early sunsets.

The next dwelling, about 1 1/2 miles above the school house was the home of Mrs. Pettee. I remember her vaguely as a very elderly woman. Her farm eventually became the Bertagna Place and a few years ago burned.

The only other home that I remember was that of Lewis

Johnson near the Springfield-Wilmot line. This place still stands. Mr. Johnson was a remarkable person and one of the many Civil War veterans of that day. He was devoted to the Congregational Church and every Sunday drove his horse and buggy to the Center twice, once for the morning service and again for the meeting of the Christian Endeavor Society in the evening.

Several side-roads branched off the Turnpike nearer the village on the left as the traveler faced west. The first, known as Pedrick Road, boasted one house only, the old Pedrick place where before my day Joseph and Sabrina Pedrick lived and raised their large family. Several of the young people died but I knew daughters Maria (Wilder), Mary (Emerson), Melvina, Ellen (Farnum) and Dora (Miner) and the only surviving son, Horace. All were fine citizens.

In my youth Patrick Logue, a very loveable, elderly son of Erin lived on the Pedrick place. He had worked many years for my grandfather who owned the Pedrick farm and who raised the roof to its present height. Originally the house was so low posted that the Pedrick children must have left home early for several were above normal height. Pat, now widowed, kept the little house immaculate and always had a story to tell. I much preferred to call on Pat rather than pick the strawberries my mother needed for a shortcake and for which I had been sent to the Pedrick Place.

Continuing on to the junction with Granite or Prescott Hill Road, Pedrick Road was joined by its other half which left the Turnpike at the second bridge. On this road the fine home of

Horace Pedrick was built. Horace was a veteran of the Civil War and the Officer in charge when the goodly number of veterans then living assembled on Memorial Sunday and attended church. I was thrilled beyond my powers of expression when "the troops" came marching in, all in uniform, with banners flying and swords rattling. They marched, halted and were seated at Horace's command. Horace's wife was Nancy(Ray) and their children: Sidney, who married Nettie Emery, Lottie who became the wife of James Richards, Fred who married Isabel Tewksbury, Addie, first wife of Clarence Wells and Lee who never married but, after the death of his parents, lived on the farm alone until this home also was destroyed by fire. Another fine home gone and not replaced.

Continuing east on this branch road was one other farm, that of Isaac Tenney and his wife Abby(Ray). They were parents of three daughters; Roxanna who married Byron Tenney, Pamela, wife of Fred Piper and Mary who married Newell Grace. Isaac, or "Ike" as he was called locally, had two passions: hard cider and Camp Meeting. He trafficked<sup>k</sup> in the former all winter, to the distress of the wives of the younger men, then was converted every summer at Camp Meeting. The conversion lasted until the next fall.

Just above the junction of Pedrick Road with Granite Hill Road was a weather-beaten house, the home of David Prescott. I never really knew Mr. Prescott and now the house is gone.

Beyond and just around the corner to the right of the old "Hill Road" is the site of one of Wilmot's 13 school houses, District #7. My aunt, Mrs. May (Goodhue) Lamson, once told me



that she taught at that school when among her pupils were children from thirteen families living on the Hill.

Before reaching the top one passed a big barn which was the last remnant of the Matthew Emery place, now gone. Further on to the right was a lane which led to Prescott Hill where was the farm of Hiram Prescott, his wife Addie and their only child, a lovely daughter, Bertha who in time married Quimby of Andover. I admired Bertha and sympathized with her when she walked that uneven two miles to school alone and home again, also alone. She was the only pupil left in all the Hill area.

At the top of Granite, or Jones Hill, was the Stone House and nearby a huge barn. I remember how thrilled I was when, with my father and Mrs. Joseph Brown, the owner, I was allowed to "tag along" when they walked over the broad hilltop acres which I was sure were exactly on the top of the world. Equally impressive to a child were the sheep which seemed to be everywhere. No pastoral scene could have been more ideal. Mr. and Mrs. Brown were people of sterling worth and more often than not managed even in winter to drive down to the village to church. As they became aged Fred and Belle (Tewsbury) Pedrick went to the Stone House to live with them. Soon a rare event occurred. A daughter, Marion, arrived and has the distinction of being the only child to have been born in the Stone House. She is now Mrs. Fremont Annis of New London. A few years later the hilltop home was abandoned as a permanent place of abode. It is now Camp Tabor. The original

charm is gone - lovely casement windows, winding stairway and hand wrought iron fixtures for illumination - victims of a commercial age.

If, instead of turning up the long Hill road, we veered left we would have come to the Simon Grace farm on the right. Simon and his wife Elnora with her daughter Nettie Emery (by a former marriage) were the only members of the family then at home. Nettie in due time married Addison Merrill and lived at Wilmot Flat.

Returning to the village let us wander up another hill, this time our still scenic and well populated Bunker Hill. Only eight homes are included in my early memories of Bunker Hill. At the foot was a large set of buildings erected by my grandfather, Seth Goodhue, in the 1850s. Many of the happiest recollections of my childhood center there with farm animals to pet and feed, hay mows and my Grandfather's carpenter shop to play in, family gatherings and festivities and the coming of distant relatives who had settled in various parts of the West.

Grandpa was tall, 6' 1", stately and kind and a workman who it seemed needed "not to be ashamed". Besides his own home he built the Whittimore place at the foot of Center Hill, now owned by Mr. Seufert, the Warren Langley home, now the Bisailles and many other buildings in and around Wilmot and surrounding towns. He was in demand as a builder of water wheels and was a cabinet maker. He once had a cabinet shop down stream on Kimpton Brook opposite the place owned by the Howard Woodwards, later by Mrs.



Heyer and the Millers. The foundation can even now be seen at the edge of the brook. "Grandpa" was also an undertaker and, until such items could be obtained commercially, built the coffins and caskets which his profession required. He drove the town hearse and owned the span of black horses which always drew the vehicle. He succeeded Merrill Cross as town clerk and served for 25 years. "Grandpa" was an Adventist and attended that church in South Sutton. Also, he had one strange profession (if such it might be called). He owned a set of dental instruments, kept shining and carefully wrapped and when a native suffered a bad tooth ache "Grandpa" was consulted. One thing is certain, when Grandpa's six foot one was pitted against a mere molar, Grandpa always won. Incidentally, when a voluntary patient arrived and I was present, I sought the silence of the hay mow.

Grandma, Susan (Stearns), was always the helpful, serene, kindly, philosophical person a grandmother is supposed to be. She was definitely a homebody and a lover of flowers.

Also in the family was Uncle Seth Goodhue who became the owner of the "new store", built about 1898, and his lovely wife/ Aunt Florence (Langley). I loved them both and spent every possible minute with them. They were active in church and community and everyone was saddened when Uncle Seth died at the age of 34. They left no children.

Besides the two sons, Fred E. (my father) and Seth E., my grandparents had one daughter, Mary A., who became the wife of Dr. Charles A. Lamson, later of New London.

Up the hill in the Steven's homestead was Mrs Asenath Stevens who as "Aunt Stevens" to many, was one of the most remarkable women I have ever known. She was a member of the Upton family whose descendents were highly intelligent. Her oldest brother, Samuel, was a judge in Manchester and the younger, Kendrick, First Assistant Treasurer of the United States during many administrations. She was an ardent Congregationalist and whether discussing affairs of Church or State was never found to be uninformed. She was an avid reader and Bible student and was active in the church, Sunday School and missionary interests. She spent her last years in Manchester and died just before her 93rd birthday.

At the top of the hill the present Langley home was, in my youth, owned by Sylvester Bunker, son of Benjamin who first settled on the hill which henceforth was to be known as "Bunker Hill". Sylvester lived there in the 1 1/2 story Cape Cod type dwelling with his wife Josie Sylvia and daughter, Genevra. Mr. Bunker was sexton of the cemetery for many years. A sister, Mrs. Susan Bunker, had been a member of the family until she died during the famous snow storm of 1888. This was before my arrival but my parents have related how the men of the village gathered and shoveled a path from the Center to the Bunker home and also to the grave-site in the cemetery across the road. Thus people were able to attend the funeral of this lovely lady who had died.

Beyond the Bunker home on the left of Cross Hill Road was the home of Cyrus and Martha (Babcock) Langley. The two older children, Frank E. and Amber, had gone to establish them-

selves in larger places; Frank to become in time editor of the Barre, Vt. Times and the Concord Monitor in New Hampshire and Amber as the wife of Herbert Arey, a R.R. engineer in Lowell, Mass. Florence soon - and before I was old enough to comprehend the importance of such events - married my Uncle Seth while Aubrey was at home until he married Abbie Williams. I enjoyed going to the Langley home with Aunt Florence and was even then impressed with the books which Mrs. Langley always had beside her rocking chair. She was an inveterate reader of the best literature. Ten years later when death claimed Amber Arey and left five children motherless the Langley home became theirs, bringing new life and interest to the home as well as the community.

Not far from the Langley home was the dwelling of James Currier, a widower with two grown children, Helen and Ned who worked in Andover. This property was recently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Rathborn.

On the other side of the road was a little house owned by an elderly bachelor, David Dean. My recollection of David was limited to a rather small and very religious man who was wont to indulge in frequent verbal duels with my grandfather. Though, ~~as~~ I later learned, both were Adventists, I was aware that their ideas differed violently. I now believe they both enjoyed these encounters.

The home on the left at the top of Cross Hill was that of Michael Graney and his wife, two refugees from the Emerald Isle who had fled from the great Irish Famine of 1848 to make a life

for themselves in the New World. The only sons I remember were Charles and Thomas. Both contributed much to the affairs and government of the Town. I used to love to listen to Mrs. Graney though I never understood a word she said since I had no knowledge of Gaelic.

Opposite the Graney's home was that of Augustus Phelps, his wife and two daughters, Lisa and Alice. Their home, I now believe, was the original Cross place for which the hill was named. Sadly, it was burned several years after the Phelps family had moved away.

Returning to the Center to a triangular plot of land formed by the junction of the Turnpike and Bunker Hill Road, we cannot by-pass the huge watering trough built and maintained by my grandfather. It was round and had an iron exterior. Inside was a wooden tub with insulating material between. On cold nights my grandfather placed a cover over the tub so a thin sheet of ice was the only obstruction in the morning. The tub was so large it never froze completely.

On the left side of the Turnpike and facing Bunker Hill was the "Old Store" building where my grandfather and father maintained a "Country Store" under the caption "S. and F.E. Goodhue". My father was post-master. The building, once owned by Merrill Cross, was the property of Uncle James Stearns who, with his wife Eunice, lived in an immaculate apartment above the store. They were a dear couple and much interested in the Cong'l. Church. They had no children and as old age approached the store building became a burden and its improvement too much to



consider. It was then that my father built the "New Store" for Uncle Seth. The old building deteriorated and was taken down on the installment system. Now it seems that the "New Store", abandoned as a place of business, is decaying also, leaving Wilmot with no store what-so-ever until recently a family came to town who developed a store attached to their home.

As we go on, this time down hill, we pause to contemplate the old Kearsarge <sup>h</sup>School of Practise building, once Wilmot's pride and joy. In my day a winter term was conducted by various fine teachers, among them Idella K. Farnum. For a short time Wilmot maintained a two-year high school, then the building became a private dwelling.

Below the K. S. of P. lived Dea. Daniel Farnum with his wife Ida. They had one child, a daughter, Everline who married Mason Patten and lived in Sanbornton. This dwelling is the oldest in town and was the gathering place for the first Town Meeting. It was originally built at the junction of Bunker and Cross Hill Road, then moved down to it's present location. It is now the LaJoie home. When my mother needed cream for a strawberry shortcake she would send me down to Ida Farnum's. Ida would take me into the sweet-smelling milk room and skim from the large pans a cup of heavy cream. The price was 5¢.

Across the road on the corner was the Youngman place, home of Hannah, widow of Isaac. Her constant companion was Miss. Nettie Currier, daughter of John G. Currier of the North Road. Nettie was a very fine person and each Sunday faithfully took notes on the sermon at the Cong'l. Church which she shared with

Mrs. Youngman. Mrs. Youngman was aged but alert, had been the moving spirit behind the establishment of the K. S. of P. and gave liberally to the churches of the Center and North. She was a very large woman and always sat in the same rocking chair beside the righthand porch window. The interior of the room was made fascinating for me by two large suspended domes made of mica cut in diamond shapes, pierced with designs and sewed together, with colored thread, these being above each window like canopies. Beneath one of these domes Mrs. Youngman resembled one of the dowager queens of history. She died in 1900, aged 83.

Below the Youngman house was the home of George and Flora (Poore) Gove with their two children Winifred and Harold. George was not well and died in 1902, age 38. The family moved from Town. Mrs. Gove married a Mr. Grover of Concord; Winifred, Arthur Lang of Penacook and Harold lives with his family in \_\_\_\_\_. The home has never been sold and, with the grounds, is kept in perfect condition by the succeeding generations.

Backtracking a bit to the dwelling below the LaJoie's we find the home of the late Bill and Emily Call. I vaguely remember an elderly Mrs. Dickey but more clearly a Mrs. Wheeler as living there. She was the mother of Mason Wheeler who married Clara Tenney, oldest daughter of Col. and Mrs. Sara Tenney. The Mason Wheeler family lived there with his mother for a few years. The oldest son, Harold, was slightly older than I and occupied the seat behind mine in the district school. Unfortunately my hair was long and heavy and presented an occasional temptation



to Harold who adroitly tied my braids together under the back of my seat. When I was asked to stand to recite, Wham! I sat down again abruptly. That boy, now an elderly man, lives in Springfield. However, I cannot see his name in the "Transcript" without getting a crick in my neck.

The next house on the right, tending down hill, was the home of George and Rena (Carena) Woodward. They were among the first residents of Wilmot to engage in the "summer boarder" enterprise and the house became known as "The Wilmot House". George kept several cows in the big red barn and business thrived for several years. Two children, Maria and Raymond, completed the family. George's sister Harriet was a member of the household. She was a very intelligent woman and a great help in all community organizations.

The next home, recently the De Benedictis', now the Hoyt dwelling, was the home of Will and Annie (Heath) Gove and their children Ethelind and James. The children were about the same age as I and my brother respectively and many good times were had by the four of us.

Will was a carriage painter and could draw the most perfect stripe free-hand on a newly painted vehicle. His carriage shop had a raised platform to assist the painting projects so Jim and Ethelind conceived the idea of a theater in miniature with four principle characters. An old-time melodian and some improvised curtains<sup>were</sup> added to the equipment and the stage was set. Ethelind and I played solos and duets, we all sang and recited and "a good time was had by all" the parents and friends who attended our

Will died while the children were young and thus another family had to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Annie was a fine practical nurse and was employed in Franklin where she married Arthur Dow. The children went on in school, Jim to Boston University. Summers, he returns to his home in Wilmot Flat formerly owned by his aunt, Mrs. Jennie Fiske.

On down the hill was the Howard Woodward home, recently that of the Millers. Howard and Ella (Leach) Woodward maintained a pleasant home with their four children, Herbert. Mary-Jane(Mamie), Roy and Hattie, also Ella's mother, Mrs. Esther Leach.

In the little house just below the Woodward's, Mrs. Hoyle lived alone. She used to walk up the hill assisted by a staff on which she leaned heavily. Also, she wore a long cape presenting a perfect replica of the picture in my Mother Goose book of the "Old Woman Who Lived Under the Hill". I thought she was truly the subject of that nursery rhyme.

The next owners of that house were Ellen (Pedrick) Farnum and her son, Herbert.

Across the road to what is now the Lyford place, was the home of Eliza and Gilbert Briggs with daughter, Gertrude and sons, Will and Charles. There may have been other sons away from home. Gertrude married Delore Odette and they continued to live at the family home with their children until they removed to Franklin.

The next home was "the Jewetts". George was a Civil War veteran as was Gilbert Briggs. His wife, Annie, and children Alice and George, comprised the family and with the other wives and children of the community, were regular church attendants. The majority of the men seemed to leave religious pursuits to the

wives and children although Deacon Farnum and Howard Woodward were the exception from the Center Hill section.

Returning to the other side of the road, the home now owned by the Dan O'Sheas was the retirement home of the first minister of the Cong'l. Church whom I can remember, Rev. Henry Thurston. I picture a nice looking, gray-haired man in the pulpit for a short time until his health failed and he occupied the cottage under the hill with his daughter, Lettie. Lettie married Byron Woodward and some years after Byron's death became the wife of Charles Chase. There were no children in either family.

Opposite the Thurston home was a low wood-colored house surrounded by lilacs where an elderly lady, Amanda Upton, lived alone. Since she died when I was 4 I only remember her as she stood in the door of her cottage and talked with my father who had stopped his horse and buggy to "chat with Mrs. Upton". the house finally decayed and was removed.

On the right side of the road below the Thurstons was the home of Franklin Clough, his wife and daughter, Leonora (Lennie). The house was unpainted but neat and the interior a model of good housekeeping. In fact, the untidy home was rare in those years and I marvel at the industry of the women who kept their domiciles so immaculate and their families neatly clothed. Franklin Clough was another Civil War veteran. That home also fell into decay and is no more.

Crossing to the left of the then country road was the show place of the town, the Parker Whittemore residence (now Mr. Seuferts). The grounds were elaborate, judged by the standards of country village homes. A fountain on the side lawn played constantly.

The water poured from the upheld hand of a bronze statue in the form of a handsome boy into a pool beneath. Below the wall was a rose garden and flowers were abundant. Mr. Whittemore with his wife and aged mother comprised the human family but a fine black horse and a King Charles spaniel named "Pansy" completed the household. Mr. Whittemore was a traveling magician and, being a fine looking man, was impressive as he drove forth in his shining black carriage drawn by his handsome horse. He always wore a black suit and tall silk hat and presented a truly stunning appearance, especially when accompanied by his wife. She had been an actress and was a blonde of the type which caused raised eye-brows among the women of a more conventional caste. She always wore black silk, a black picture hat and always Pansy sat in her lap with the supercilious expression of a K. C. spaniel, seemingly turning up his nose at the rest of creation. In due time Pansy died, mourning was in order and finally he was buried in a casket in the rose garden and his resting place marked by a small marble tomb stone. The stone is no longer there. Evidently some later owner of the property refused to perpetuate Pansy's memory.

After Parker Whittemore's death his widow left town and, having no knowledge of how to handle finances, died alone and in poverty. The end of a story which had its high moments, its humor and its tragedy.

Again we take a diagonal course to the right and the home of Seth and Clara (Gove) Maxon. Seth's father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Amos Maxon, lived there also and the three lovely daughters of Seth and Clara. The daughters Eva, Evelyn and Grace, were



among my best friends. The Maxons had a fine maple orchard and one afternoon every Spring my Mother, brother and I were invited for a "sugering off". Plain doughnuts enhanced by syrup boiled down to soft creamy sugar and finally "leather aprons", (sugar on snow) were an annual treat as well as the visit to the sugar house. The elderly people passed on and all too soon Clara died so another family was broken and eventually scattered.

The three remaining homes as we stroll toward the Andover line were all on the left of the dusty country road. Sections of the road were firm but the area we now approach was deep with sand.

The first house was occupied by Jack and Dora Tenney. They had no children and lived quietly and unobtrusively in the long, low house which has changed little in the passing years.

The next home, now the Fredericks, was occupied by John Prescott, Daniel Webster and John's cousin, Martha Messer. Martha was Wilmot's veteran, most reliable school teacher who had the ability to take the most refractory school and in a short time make it an institution of learning. The reports of School Boards in our Town Reports of many years ago bear testimony to Martha Messer's remarkable, in-born ability.

The last house, now known as "Quickwater Farm", was the home of Augustus Cilley, his wife, their widowed daughter Carrie Powers, their son Otis and Carrie's daughter Edith. Mr. Cilley held some town offices and Carrie was the first organist to play the new church organ in 1896. The organ is the one still in use but the Cilley family has gone. The house fortunately was blessed with subsequent owners who cared. Daniel Chase began restoration of the house; Walter Douglas, V.Pres. of U.S.Steel, laid out the

grounds, planted hundreds of flowering shrubs and rebuilt the stone walls. He also planted acres of pine<sup>s</sup> and laid out bridle trails which he traveled on horseback with his family and friends. Then came the Righters whose story is well known.

The Andover line prevents further reminiscence in this direction so we can only return to the Four Corners at the top of the hill and explore "Church Street" as North Wilmot Road was then called. The wooden bridge across our scenic brook has gone, replaced by iron which now has been superseded by a steel structure. So, as in all phases of the village life, changes have occurred and will continue to take place.

Near the bridge on the right is the home of Mrs. Dorothea Brown Brady. During my childhood this was the property of Miss. Emma Brown and , for several years, her invalid sister, Helen. Emma was a large, capable woman who was devoted to the Methodist Church. I seldom went inside the home for I was somewhat awed by the pallor of the invalid whose face was as white as the bed sheets. Neither of these sisters married. A third sister, Lucy, became Mrs. Horace Pingree and lived on the Pinnacle.

The Congregational Church parsonage was the second dwelling on that side of the road and I have many pleasant memories of the fine ministers and their families who lived there. First, there was Rev. Henry Thurston and his daughter Lettie, then Mr. and Mrs Henry Coolidge. The Coolidges were musical and young and I loved them. Mrs. Coolidge shortly died when I was nine. Her funeral was the first I ever attended. The school children went to this service in a body, attended by their teacher, Miss. Gertrude Cummings, who later became Mrs. Hervey Woodward.



Page 4. Children of Mary and Moses Prescottt.

Ethel married Emil Nye, Wilfred became a telegraph operator with the B. and M. Railroad and Clarence we know as a fine carpenter now retired with his wife Edna (Rayno) to their home on Kearsarge. Carl married Lena Morey and lives in Tilton.

**Appendix – as added in the 1980s (?) by daughter Connie Campbell Forsham**

Ironically, Mother had covered all roads leading from the Center except the remainder of Church Street, where her home- now mine- was located. Her account ends abruptly, terminated by ill health and impaired eyesight. One wonders what she might have written about the Fisks, the Goves or the Robys, who owned our home. It was Calvin Fisk who sold off some of his land for the school house, the First Congregational Church and the Horse Sheds. Or what would she have said of the Trussels (now Schoelers) who lived opposite, the Warren Langley home (now Bisaillon) which was built by Seth Goodhue (her grandfather) or of the James Richards farm, now home to Julie and John Morse. Of these and other families further on, we will never know.

## The Old Town House

My memory of the Old Town House at the top of the hill just north of the Nellie Trussell home recalls a large barn-like structure from which paint had long since disappeared. The building had three windows on each side and in front one either side of the door. Each window had 24 small panes according to a count made in later years. I also learned that my Great-Grandfather, Josiah Stearns, made the sashes by hand when he was superintending a certain stage of the building of the first Meeting house on Bunker Hill, which structure furnished the material for the Old Town House of my youth.

The clapboards were of the narrow antique variety and the windows were protected by wooden outside shutters. The chimney was small and was attached to a stove which gave forth more smoke than heat. The one granite step which furnished access to the front (and only) door was inadequate and required considerable agility on the part of anyone wishing to enter the ancient portal.

The interior was sparsely furnished with wooden benches around the walls and in the center of the room. A raised platform at the north end served election officials at Town Meetings, for males only, and occasionally was the scene of "Shows" put on by "Medicine Men" who presented programs while they advertisedn their wares. I remember one group of entertainers who were extremely popular. They were glass blowers and their creations intrigued both adult and child audiences.

Occasionally the village school presented a program and "Exhibition" on the evening following the last day of school. I well remember one such occasion. The stove had been removed

leaving a gaping hole in the chimney which may have been scheduled for repair. I was taking my turn on the program by "speaking a piece" when a brick fell down the inside of the chimney, crashing into the assembly, thus disrupting the audience and my oratory. I believe I finished my assignment but amid no little confusion. In a few years these programs were discontinued since the old building was declared too decrepid for comfort or safety.