

MY BIRTHPLACE

By ODELL T. FELLOWS

'Twas lowly, yes, 'twas rude and rough;
Kind Fortune's hand ne'er rested there.
But Heaven's skies were clear enough,
And Old Katahdin loomed afar.

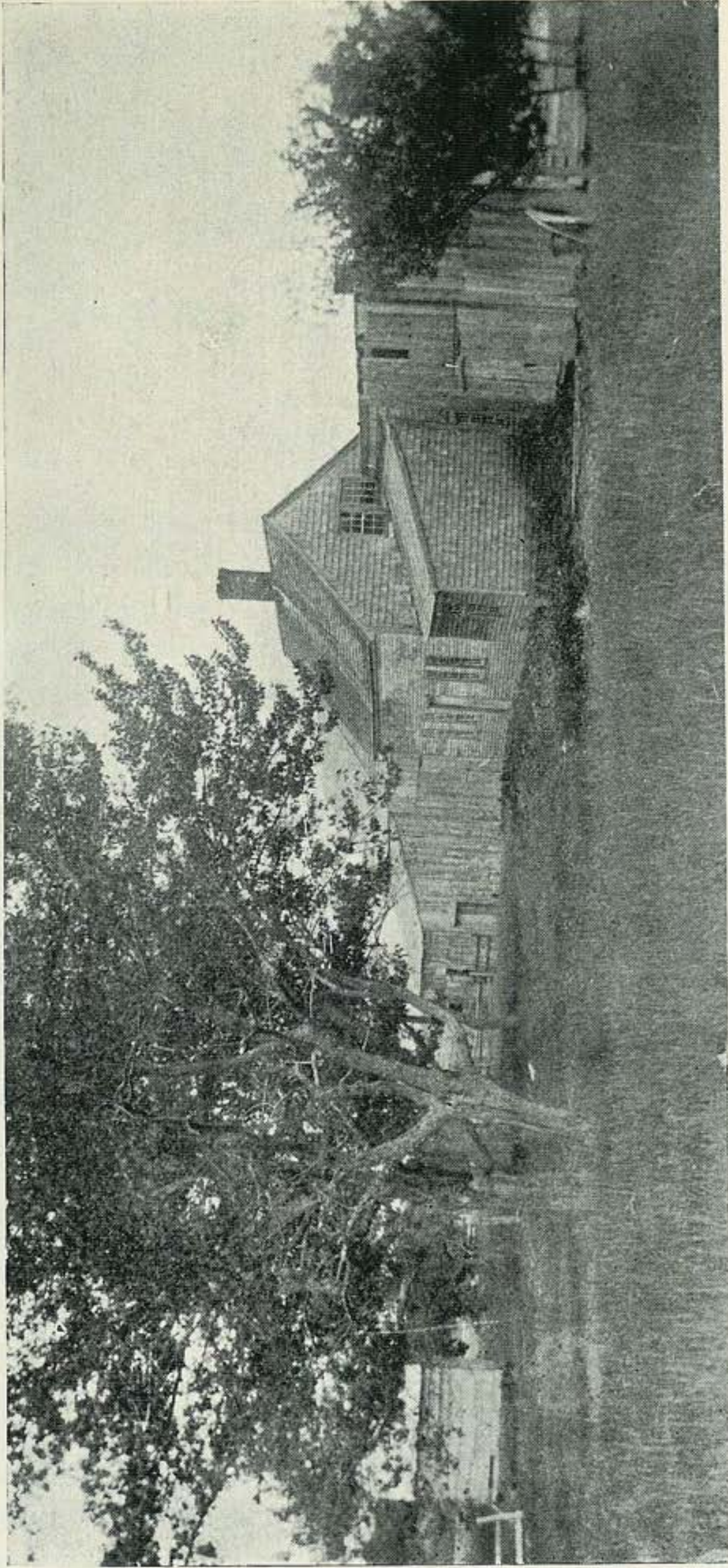
Penobscot rolled its tranquil tide
Between green banks where poplars waved.
The Indian's bark canoe would glide
And skirt the shores its waters laved.

When Spring releases Winter's snows
That cluster round Katahdin drear,
With swollen tide Penobscot flows
And naught can stay his mad career!

The flood recedes, the skies grow bluer,
As summer decks the vale with flowers;
Anon dark clouds those skies obscure,
And burst in cool, refreshing showers.

Then summer evenings. Ah, once more
I feel the presence calm and still,
As holy evening settles o'er
The grey old house upon the hill.

Fond memory keeps that picture yet
While winter clothes the scene in gloom;
The loyal heart can ne'er forget
That sacred place, the boyhood home!



BOYHOOD HOME OF DANA AND ODELL FELLOWS

History of the Town of Lincoln, Maine

MAINE

For a long time the Province of Maine was under the control of Sir Ferdinando Gorges, and in 1678 it was purchased from him by Massachusetts, for twelve hundred and fifty pounds sterling. King James protested, but in 1691 the purchase was ratified by William and Mary and the Province was annexed to Massachusetts. From this time until the separation and the admission of Maine as a State it suffered many changes in local government, and was the scene of almost constant wars with the Indians along the coast.

W. W. Stetson, Superintendent of Schools of Maine, 1895 to 1907, says: "Maine had a history before Massachusetts had an existence. Instead of our being the daughter of New England's most assertive Commonwealth she is our foster-child, for had it not been for the corn which our settlers sent to feed these colonists, and the boards which we furnished to shelter them from the winter's storm, they would have either starved or frozen, or would have been compelled to return to England.

"We can claim that the first city organized within the limits of New England was founded within our borders; the first fort built to protect us from foes without and savages within was erected upon our coast; the first American vessel that ever cut these western waters was built of timber that grew in our forests, her keel was laid on our shores, and she was launched upon one of our rivers and went forth to her work, and to carry the flag of England to conquest and

glory; the first Protestant sermon preached on this wilderness continent was delivered within the present limits of the State of Maine, and the first time the British flag came down to the colonies on the sea was in obedience to the demand of the brave, enterprising citizens of Machias."

The agitation which resulted in the separation of Maine from Massachusetts, and its admission to the Union as a State, extended over a period of thirty-five years, beginning in 1785. Conventions were called and adjourned and went to sleep, and the people remained indifferent. After several years of inaction a convention was called and met in Portland, measures were taken to secure a vote of the people on the subject, and a majority of nearly ten thousand was finally obtained for the separation of the District, which then consisted of the counties of York, Cumberland and Lincoln. The Convention again met in Portland 11 October, 1819 and formed a Constitution, the Legislature of Massachusetts ratified the action of the Counties, and on the 4 March, 1820, Congress admitted Maine as a State, the act to take effect 15 March, 1820. The first election of State officers took place 3 April, and the first meeting of the Legislature was at Portland 31 May, 1820.

The townships of Lincoln and those adjacent are constantly described as lying in a certain range "north of the Bingham purchase." The purchases of Mr. Bingham in Maine formed a somewhat important epoch in the history of Maine and a statement of facts in connection with these purchases is briefly given.

At the close of the Revolution Massachusetts, in common with the other American Commonwealths, found herself hard pressed for funds to pay her debts, and it seemed to her that the lands in the Province of Maine, of which she held the title, should be made to yield some revenue. As a means of accomplishing this a lottery scheme was proposed and surveys were made by which about two million acres of land in the Province were to be disposed of. Some tickets were sold but not enough to make the affair a success. Gen. Henry

Knox, a prominent officer in the Revolution, and afterwards Secretary of War under Washington, contracted to take one million acres on the Kennebec River and fifty-two townships east of the Penobscot for \$265,000. This was about ten cents an acre. Gen. Knox, however, had not the funds to pay for the land, and he induced William Bingham, a wealthy citizen of Philadelphia, to take the whole amount of the two tracts, for which Mr. Bingham paid cash \$311,250, about twelve and a half cents an acre. The deed was made but was not to be delivered until forty settlers had been placed upon each township. Within the required time settlers had been secured for only a comparatively few of the townships; the time was extended seven years and still the condition was not fulfilled. Bingham went to England and in 1806 he died in Bath, near London. He had one son, William, Jr., who is mentioned as "unpromising," and five daughters. Three of these daughters married prominent men in Philadelphia and Baltimore, and two married Baring, prominent bankers of London. The Maine lands were left to Mr. Bingham's sons-in-law who employed an agent to look after their interests in Maine. This agent, Mr. Black, seems to have done all that was possible to promote the sale and settlement of the land.

Mr. Bingham had taken measures to advertise his holdings. In 1793 he published a small book, a portion of which was devoted to a series of questions which were answered by General Benjamin Lincoln, setting forth in detail the many advantages possessed by Maine for settling purposes. Some of these were the vast amount of lumber, with *plenty of snow* for transporting it, granite and other rock for construction work, fish and game and maple sugar, as well as unlimited areas of excellent land for the cultivation of corn, grain and other crops. This little book was widely circulated but it is now extremely rare. Mr. Black, also, spent considerable sums in building roads and making the country accessible. All this, undoubtedly, had much effect in inducing people from other states to go to Maine, but Mr. Bing-

ham's investment was disastrous, and later the State was called upon to make concessions, which it did.

MAINE

“You're just a rugged, homespun State
Perched on the nation's edge,
A stretch of woods, of fields and lakes,
Of ocean-pounded ledge.

But rugged deeds and rugged men
You've nurtured for your own;
Much good the world has harvested
From broadcast seed you've sown.

And, we love you, rugged State,
We love your smiling skies,
We love you for your deep-piled snows,
Your jagged coast we prize.

We love you for the lofty seat
You've reared 'neath Heaven's dome;
But best of all, we love you, Maine,
Because you're Maine—and Home.”

—Lester Melcher Hart

LOCATION

Location. Lincoln, Penobscot County, Maine, lies on the east side of the Penobscot River, or more strictly speaking, on the south-east side, as the river, from its turn at Mattawamkeag, flows directly south-west although its general direction throughout its course is south. It is in the northern central portion of the county, forty-five miles nearly north from Bangor.

As incorporated the town of Lincoln consists of two and a half townships,—number two, range two, number three, range three, north of the Bingham purchase, and the half township which was formerly granted to Joseph E. Foxcroft. The two river townships are of a somewhat irregular form and are not as large as regular townships in Maine which are six miles square. Thus the town contains about fifty-seven square miles, or nearly thirty-seven thousand acres. The south-westerly portion of the town was number two, and the north-easterly was number three, the half township lying on the east. These two townships were separated by a line running parallel to the north and south boundary lines and passing very nearly through the center of Mattanawcook Pond.

Boundaries. Lincoln is bounded on the north-east by number four (Winn), east by number four, range four (Lee), south by half township number one and number two range (Burlington and Lowell), south-west by river township number one, range one (Enfield), all north of Bingham's Penobscot purchase, and on the north-west by the Penobscot River, across which lies the town of Chester. Lincoln village lies in latitude 45 degrees and 22 minutes north; and 68 degrees, 30 minutes west from Greenwich.

Township Number Two. This township belonged to the State of Maine and as settlers came the Land Agent, Gen. James Irish of Gorham, was authorized to sell lots, and by a

resolve of the Legislature the price was left to his discretion. He fixed the price of river lots at one dollar an acre. The back lots could be bought by the first ten settlers at twenty cents an acre, the next ten to pay forty cents, thus increasing by twenty cents until forty settlers were placed.

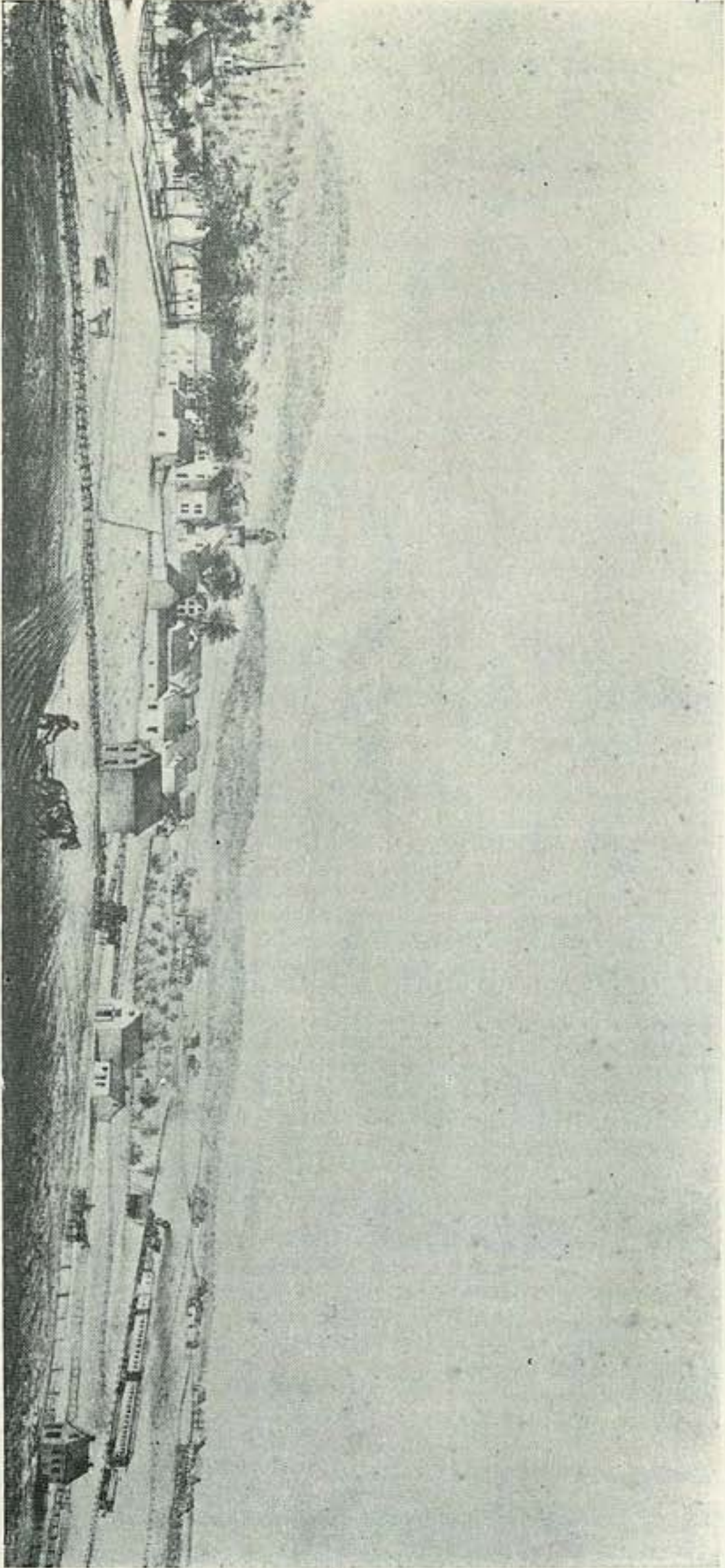
Township Number Three. This was part of a section which was retained by Massachusetts at the time of the separation. It was sold by the Commonwealth at auction in 1823 to Simeon Cummings of Paris, Me., who took into partnership six others, namely, Enoch Lincoln, Cyrus Hamlin, James Daniels, Jr., Jacob Jackson, Moses Hammond and Caleb Cushman, all of Paris. Enoch Lincoln served a term in Congress and was Governor of Maine at the time Lincoln was incorporated, and for him our town was named. Cyrus Hamlin was the father of Hannibal Hamlin, U. S. Senator and Vice-President of the United States. Hannibal Hamlin came to Lincoln very early in the history of the town for the purpose of locating here for the practice of law, but while on his way to Paris for his library, he met a friend who urged him to go to Hampden, which he did. Moses Hammond was a brother of Benjamin Hammond, one of our earliest settlers, but Moses probably never lived in Lincoln.

Benjamin Chesley, who came to Mattanawcook in 1823, was made the agent of the proprietors to sell lots to settlers. He and his brother Edward surveyed the township. The price was one dollar an acre. Joseph G. Cole made the deeds.

Half Township. By an act establishing Bowdoin College in 1794 Massachusetts granted to the Trustees of the College, five townships of land, each supposed to be six miles square. Later, Joseph Ellery Foxcroft of New Gloucester, having bought one of these townships from the trustees for seven thousand nine hundred and forty dollars, claimed that the township did not contain the amount of land expressed, and petitioned for suitable aid and relief. The General Court of Massachusetts granted the petition and conveyed to Fox-

croft this half township, which is now a part of Lincoln. This was one-half of township number two, range two, according to the survey of John Webber, 9 Aug. 1819 and contained eleven thousand five hundred and twenty acres. The deed was made and signed by George W. Coffin 7 Feb. 1821. This same tract was conveyed by Foxcroft to Ira Fish who was acting for the Wendell brothers of New Hampshire, for nine thousand dollars, as a source of supply for logs for the Mattanawcook mills. The names of three Wendell brothers appear in connection with the Mattanawcook operations, namely, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Wendell.

It may be stated here that, owing to the different surveys, at different times and by different persons in those early days, discrepancies sometimes appear which cannot be reconciled, in the numbering and description of townships, as well as of parts of townships.



LINCOLN AS IT APPEARED FROM BALLARD HILL ABOUT 1870
—From a Drawing by George Baker