

STORY OF AN OLD NEW ENGLAND TOWN.

Chapter I.

DESCRIPTIVE.

THE town of Lee is sixty miles northeast of Bangor, but three and one-half miles from the Penobscot River at its nearest point along the northeast line of Lincoln, and twelve miles from Lincoln Post Office. The nearest railroad station is Winn, on the Maine Central R. R. ten miles away. It is on the stage-route from Lincoln station, which runs through the heart of the town to Carroll. It is among towns and plantations that are still rather sparsely settled, but has itself quite a respectable population, in 1920 numbering 724. It is a regular six-mile square township, containing thirty-six square miles, or 23,040 acres. On the north it is bounded by Winn, on the east by Springfield, on the south by Township No. 3 in the First Range, and on the west by Lincoln. Webster Plantation corners with it on the northeast, Lakeville Plantation at the southeast, and Burlington at the southwest. For the northwest corner the dividing line between Winn and Lincoln runs off to the Penobscot.

The principal water of Lee is Silver Lake. It was formerly known as Mattakeunk Pond. It is a fine sheet southwest of Lee Village, lying somewhat in the shape of an isosceles triangle, with its base at the westward one and one-fifth miles long, and its perpendicular from the middle of this shore to the outlet about the same length. It has an area of about two square miles. At the northwest angle a winding tributary of about two miles' length flows in from the border of Lincoln. From the interior of that town comes a larger stream, but with a shorter flow in this town, which enters the pond about two-thirds of the way down its west shore. The waters of Silver Lake make their way through a pretty broad outlet into and through Lee village, where they form the Mattakeunk

Chapter II.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

JAMES A. GARFIELD, our second martyred President, gave that study and received that disciplined mind fitting him for his heroic life work, at Williams College. In aid of that institution the State of Massachusetts granted Township No. 4, Second Range North of Bingham's Purchase and east of the Penobscot river, afterwards Lee, the subject of this historical sketch. (February 19, 1805) The deed was not recorded until February 15, 1820.

This grant was sold to different parties, — a majority to Nathaniel Ingersoll, of New Gloucester, Cumberland county, Maine, for which the College received, as appears by records in Massachusetts, the sum of \$4,500.

The grant to the college was with the condition that thirty settlers were to be put on within three years, probably extended, as Ingersoll did not complete by himself, or those he sold to, the settling duties before 1828, or as appears by the college conveying the township to John Webber on May 11, 1835. Webber lotted out the town in 1820, and seemed to have paid a debt of Ingersoll and other grantees to the college, or a trustee for them.

In 1822 Ingersoll began to perform these settling duties, and to that end he employed a man in Lowell to commence a clearing in Lee. This man, arriving at a point sloping Lee-ward and in good soil, thought he had reached the point intended and felled ten acres — the amount required. He then reported the same to Ingersoll, or agent, who was about to pay him, when, it being uncertain that the clearing was made in Lee, a man by the name of Harrison Strong was sent to investigate, who reported the land situated in Lincoln half-township.

In 1823 a clearing of ten acres was made on what is now the Harrison Rich farm which is owned by Raymond Curtis, in the southwest part of the town; and in 1824 Jeremiah Fifield and wife, of Howland; Thomas Lindsay of Lowell; and Enoch Stone went to Lee and cleared up and planted the cutting made the year before.

Mrs. Lucy Fifield, wife of Jeremiah Fifield, afterwards received one hundred acres of land as a reward for being the first woman to penetrate the wilderness of Lee. March 13, 1825, Jeremiah Fifield and family located on the ridge on the farm later occupied by Soloman and George Crocker and now abandoned. This ridge lies on a cross-road lying between the Winn and Lee and Lee and Lincoln roads.

In March, 1826, John Tucker of Dexter, Maine, came to Lee and located on the ridge just west of the lot now occupied by Bert Smith. In June, Samuel Parker of Lowell located on the lot just west of Tucker's. About the same time Isaac Hobbs, of Howland, located on what was later known as the Ames lot and is now owned by Daniel Murchison.

In 1827 the first white child born in Lee saw light. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Tucker. Her name was Mary Lucy. She became the wife of John Varney. Her son, George A. Hanscom, resides in Lee.

The first marriage in Lee was in 1826, when Lucy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jeremiah Fifield, became the wife of Thomas Lindsay, one of the 1824 pioneers.

Judith, a daughter of Samuel Parker, was the first child to die in Lee; while the first death of an adult was that of a Mr. Robinson, of Sydney.

The first school in Lee was built by Jeremiah Fifield and was taught by his daughter Lucy. It was a warm and home-like log-cabin. Among the first male teachers were John Towle, son of Joseph Towle, of Bangor; Benjamin Arnold and John Jackson.

At this early day there were two outlets to civilization, but when they were made can not be ascertained. The United States Government cut a road through the woods from below Lincoln mill. It ran through Lee and Springfield, direct to

Houlton, and was used for the transportation of troops and rafters, and for getting supplies to the troops at Houlton. This road was followed by the county road now known as the Lee and Lincoln road, and east of Lincoln as the Lee and Springfield. In the deed it is called the St. Johns road.

Oaks and Cowan who had been engaged in lumbering in Springfield and on what is now Webster Plantation, east of Winn, had a winter road start from where Joseph Snow had located in Winn, in 1820, about a mile from the Lincoln line, running back, very soon struck the town line between Winn and Lee. Following this it very soon struck the line between Springfield and Webster Plantation, and so on to the Mattagordus Stream, where Oaks and Cowan were lumbering in 1826-27. Mattagordus Stream emptied into the Mattawamkeag less than a mile above the village of Kingman. This Oaks and Cowan road was used for a while by a mail carrier to Houlton. Starting from Snow's with the mail bag over his shoulder, he trudged along this road until he reached the Mattawamkeag, beyond Prentiss. From here he rowed to Haynesville, where he again took up his journey overland to Houlton. Over this road the immigrants came into Lee with their families. This route can not be traced now as the new forest growth has entirely effaced the old road.

In the meantime, from the time Ingersoll had commenced the clearing on the Rich place in 1823 he had been actively engaged in inducing settlers to locate in Lee, and had negotiated a large number of tracts from two hundred and fifty acres to one thousand acres in extent to different parties, but had not yet performed his settling duties sufficient to obtain a deed, and in fact did not until 1828.

In 1825 Williams College sold to Samuel J. Mallett, of Litchfield, Kennebec county, Maine, fifteen hundred acres for which he paid the same price as Ingersoll, on condition he should settle upon it. Mallett looked over the situation and concluded to put in some mills on the west branch of the Mattakeunk Stream, which crosses the Lee and Springfield road at Lee Village. This sale was made June 5, 1827, Mallett giving a mortgage to the college for the payment, which, however, he failed to pay, though he performed his

settling duties as agreed. The same year, Mallett and James D. Merrill of Litchfield, who had purchased from Roger Merrill a claim of two hundred and fifty acres, joined their means and built a saw-mill and in 1828 a grist-mill, on the Mattawamkeag Stream, a few rods east of the crossing of the Winn and Lincoln roads at the center of the village. A saw mill stands on the Stream today, not on the location of the first one, however.

During the years 1826-27-28, a large number of settlers came into town, especially in 1827, so that by the following year Ingersoll and Mallett completed their settling duties, and obtained a deed of the township from the State of Massachusetts.

Mr. Mallett's settlers were: Samuel Mallett, James D. Merrill, David Maxwell, Caleb Wilbor, Godfrey Jackson, Hiram Staples and William Randall.

Mr. Ingersoll's settlers were: Bradley Blake, John Jackson, Enoch Stone, Thomas Lindsay, Jeremiah Fifield, Samuel Parker, John Tucker, Joel Barnard, Captain Benjamin Arnold, Alpheus Hale, Samuel Moulton, Joseph Hanscom, Joseph Smith, John Carpenter, Jabez Norton, Benjamin Whitten and Moses Thurlow.

Among the other early settlers were: Alvah Tibbets, Joseph and Aaron Rollins, Winslow and Jeremiah Staples, John Lunt, John Moss, Alvord Cushman, George Trask, David Henry, Peleg Jones, Albert Getchell, William Doylers, Captain J. W. Hall, John Snyder, John Mallett, David Dyer, John Ludden, Benjamin Jackson, Alexander Potter, David Bailey, Stephen Lee, Elisha Brown and John Gott.

In 1829 Benjamin Whitten came from Litchfield, and located about a mile and a half from the village on the road to Lincoln, now known as the Chesley Whitten farm and occupied by Charles Thurlow, Jr. Mr. Whitten was afterwards a contractor to get out the timber for the Mattawamkeag bridge, near a brook running into the Mattawamkeag, which later became known as Whitten brook. His grandson, Fred C. Whitten, is Town Treasurer and one of the more prosperous merchants of the town, today.

One of the most active business men of Lee was Arthur

Prentiss, who came here from Paris. He was a trader and blacksmith. He built the Elm House, now occupied by H. L. Haskell, and kept the first hotel in Lee. He and his brother, Addison, were the first traders in Lee. He was a cousin of Henry Prentiss, one time professor at West Point and later Mayor of Bangor.

Godfrey Jackson, one of Mallett's settlers, came to Lee from Sydney in 1827, being a skillful carpenter, he framed the Mallett mills. He made a location near the mills, at what is now the Tuck place; and afterwards, through sickness in his family, he had his attention called to medicine, and took up the study at a medical college. After completing the course he returned to Lee and became the first settled physician. He was a lover of the great out-of-doors and spent much time trapping. He caught twenty-two bears and one wolf during his stay in Lee.

Somewhere during the next decade, two important lawsuits occurred, which greatly interested the settlers in Lee, and lasted for twelve years in the State and United States Courts. Nathaniel Ingersoll, the purchaser of the College grant, conveyed his titles in Lee to Joseph E. Foxcroft, a resident of New Gloucester, who had been a member of the Massachusetts Legislature which gave the Lee grant. When Maine became a State Mr. Foxcroft became a member of the Maine Legislature. He soon brought suit for the Mallett mortgage, which then remained unpaid; and obtained judgment before Judge Shepley for his claim against Mallett and against the settlers on Mallett's land.

Previous to these suits Ingersoll had by many expeditions endeavored to obtain from the settlers pay for his land sold them, or for the land on which they had made improvements, but they in many instances declared that they had paid enough.

They felt harassed by Ingersoll and his agents, and in more than one instance gave evidence of those sentiments by acts hardly to be misunderstood, and yet not unmingled with the ludicrous.

On one occasion Ingersoll had gone to Lee with a Deputy Sheriff, Sanders, from Passadumkeag, and had taken a load of goods which one William Doble was hauling out to Lincoln

for him, when crack went a rifle from the woods nearby, and the officer's horse fell under him. The driver unhitched his team, and cleared for Lincoln over the hilltop nearby, with Ingersoll and the officer, leaving the goods and the vehicle in the woods. Soon after one William Randall, living in Lee, who was something of a resident agent, went out to Lincoln to get some word from Ingersoll about his affairs in Lee, as he (Ingersoll) rather feared to come back to Lee, and Randall, as he got along to the horse, was trying with the aid of his knife to get the shoes and nails off the dead horse. While intent on this, a bullet struck the frog of the horse's foot. Randall fled, not even taking his knife, which he afterwards sought for in company with a friend. For years after that horse's feet were to be seen on the roadside fence as a reminder of the troublous times in Lee that tried men's souls and horse's feet.*

On another occasion, while the tenantry were itching to give Mr. Ingersoll a personal castigation, the wife of John Tucker, a big, brawny, muscular woman, of whom there are innumerable anecdotes told, volunteered to perform a "birch withing," for which she was to receive a new gown. So, hearing he was in town, she got her birches and placed them behind the door, and when he called she very cordially invited him in and then gave him an unmerciful beating. Ere the morning sun illumined their household she had her gown, but Ingersoll took her back to the Police Court at Bangor, where she was fined one cent and costs, which was paid by her neighbors in Lee, while she worked in a hotel to pay her way at Bangor and return.*

As appears by a suit of Joseph E. Foxcroft vs. David E. Barnes, to recover the westerly half of lot 12, fifth range, in Lee, the trustees of the college conveyed the township, May 11, 1835, to John Webber. Nathaniel Ingersoll had conveyed all his interests in the township to John Webber on June 19, 1835, and John Webber, on July 19, 1835, conveyed one-half the lands which he had purchased of Ingersoll and of the

* Taken from a historical sketch by B. F. Fernald, Esq.

trustees of William College, to Joseph E. Foxcroft, of New Gloucester.

An abstract furnished by A. W. Paine, Esq., of Bangor, one of the counsel for the Mallett land and tenants, in the several lawsuits which involved nearly all the settlers' claims in town, may afford a clearer idea of the situation and the principles involved:

"The township of Lee was originally granted by the Legislature of Massachusetts to Williams College, and by the College sold in individual parcels to various individuals, as occasion offered, but mostly to parties in Cumberland county. The town was incorporated in 1833. Soon after its incorporation, in 1834, a series of lawsuits was commenced, which lasted for about a dozen years. The litigation pertained mainly to lots No. 11 in the Fourth and Fifth Ranges, though several other lots were involved. They were the lots on which the mill privileges were located, and then owned and occupied by Samuel T. Mallett and his sons. The village was built mostly on these lots.

"The point in dispute was in many respects simple, though calling out a great amount of legal learning, both on the part of counsel and Courts. The original grant was made subject to the condition that the grantee should within three years place on the township thirty settlers. Mallett, having become interested in the town and settled there, had bought and paid for fifteen hundred acres, with the purpose of performing one-fourth the conditions of getting settlers, the acres known being in common. He afterward took a deed of six thousand acres, made in common, and mortgaged the same back to the college, describing the land as 'The same this day conveyed to me and subject to the settlers' lots as land drawn on plan.'"

A proprietors' meeting was then held to make partition of the land among the owners, at which meeting fifteen lots were assigned to settlers of the fifteen hundred acres, in Lots 11, in Fourth and Fifth Ranges, being a part, but the lots were not marked as such on the plan referred to in the deed, Mallett having thus seventy-five hundred acres in all, six thousand of which were subject to the mortgage. The mortgage was produced, and the holder then filed a petition for partition in the State Court, which was resisted on the ground that the mortgage did not cover the settlers' lots. The case was severely contested, but the court over-ruled the objections and granted the petition, and then affirmed the partition, which assigned the lots in question to the petitioner. Other suits were

brought, all of which met with a like fate, the court being fixed in the purpose of dooming all the settlers' lots owned at the time of the mortgage, as forming a part of the land included therein.

In 1842 Mallett, having fought the State Court some eight years without success, by advice of counsel, assigned all his interests to his son David, who moved to New Hampshire and brought his suit for right of the two lots in question in the Circuit Court of the United States, where it was tried before Judge Story with success to his side. From his decision the case went to the United States Supreme Court, which in January, 1846, affirmed the judgment of the Court below and gave Mr. Mallett his land free from all adverse claim; thus overruling the whole series of decisions in the State Court, and established his title as good and valid. W. P. Fessenden and A. W. Paine were counsel for Mallett in United States Court, and Judge Preble and Deblois, for Foxcroft. In the State Court F. Allen and T. P. Chandler appeared for Mallett, and Abbott and Rogers for the College.

On February 2, 1832, Township No. 4, in the Second Range of townships east of the Penobscot River and north of Bingham's Purchase, was incorporated into a town by name of Lee. The act of incorporation is on the records of Lee attested by John A. Hyde, town clerk.

Probably if the town had been called for some waterway, it would have been named Mattakeunk, but instead, it bears a short English name.

It is said that Stephen Lee, suggested his name, while others say the modest gentleman suggested the name of General Lee, the Revolutionary Patriot, and to insure the success of his patriotic suggestion offered a barrel of rum as treat.

Another version is that, at the time the citizens were trying to agree on a name for the town, it was decided to name it after the next child born. The next child was that of the Lees!

Chapter III.

REMINISCENCES.

THE customs and manners of the early settlers of Lee were so different from those of the present day, that the author devotes an entire chapter to them. With few exceptions, the first settlers came from Kennebec county, and were strictly Puritanic in their religious views. A rigid observance of the Sabbath, which with them usually began at sunset on Saturday evening, was enjoined on all, and when the town was incorporated several tything-men were chosen, whose sole duty consisted in keeping a sharp look-out for Sabbath-breakers.

To the log-cabin of the early pioneers of Lee, poverty and want were no strangers. Money was scarce, roads almost impassable, and markets for produce a long way off. Food and clothing were of the coarsest quality, and not infrequently insufficient in quantity. The agricultural implements, and those of the household were few in number and of the most primitive sort. When a clearing had been made and the grain sown, a hoe was often used to cover the seed for want of a harrow and a suitable team to drag it. Hay and grain were usually hauled on sleds or carried to the place of stacking, by two men, on a couple of long, slender poles. The plow of the early settler was a rude, clumsy affair, a mould-board hewed out of wood and covered with a mail of iron. With such an implement it is plain to be seen that plowing could be done only in the most imperfect manner, in fact, it was but a step in advance of the modes of tilling the soil as practiced by the ancient nations. The hoes, like the plows, were heavy, awkward affairs, — hammered out by the nearest blacksmith, with a sapling from the forest for a handle. Doubtless in their day, these were considered very effective instruments, but to-

day there is not a boy in town who would consider one of them suitable to dig bait enough for a day's fishing. The scythes were formed by the hand of the same artisan who made the hoes, and the snath was of the same material as the handle of the hoe, only of a larger size. The scythe was hung to a straight snath, which was grasped in the hands while mowing, ribs or handles, had not come into use in those days. To mow with such an implement must have been very fatiguing, for while at work the farmer was obliged to stand nearly half bent. The boys, whose duty it was to do the tedding, were supplied with "tedding-sticks" made from small saplings pointed at both ends, with which the hay was thrown to the right and left, using each end of the stick alternately. After the hay was properly cured it was usually stacked in close proximity to the hovel where the cow and other stock were kept during the winter.

The bread for the family, usually made of corn-meal, was either cooked on a board before the open fire, in the cabin, or in an oven built of flat stones laid in clay mortar, which was "blasted" whenever the supply of that needful article became low. Soda was not known in those days, but many substitutes for it were devised by the frugal house-wife. One of these was the burning of corn-cobs, which made very white and strongly alkaline ashes, which were used much in the same manner as the soda of today. Sugar and molasses, save what was made from the sap of the rock-maple, were luxuries seldom if ever seen in the home of the hardy pioneers. Friction matches, now an indispensable article in every household, were unknown in the early days of the town. Various expedients were resorted to in lighting the fires; one of the most common ways of keeping a fire over night was to cover up a brand with coals and hot ashes in the large open fireplace. Some kept a box of tinder which was ignited by a spark produced by striking flint against steel. Others would put a little powder in the pan of their flint-lock musket, and with the flash of the powder ignite a bunch of tow. Occasionally, when none of these conveniences for starting a fire were at hand, a brand would be borrowed from a neighboring settler's fire. If the distance was long, a slow match would be made by

Stream, known beyond East Winn Post Office as the West Branch, which, after union with the East Branch, becomes again the Mattakeunk Stream and flows into the Mattawamkeag River near the north line of Winn. The banks of this stream, for a mile, more or less, in width on each side for about four miles of its course in this town, are almost the only parts of Lee that are uninhabited.

In the southeast angle of the town is Ware Pond, a narrow sheet about a mile long, closely parallel with another of equal width, but somewhat east of it, the two forming the headwaters of Passadumkeag Stream, no other part of which flows in this town.

Two smallish ponds in the northern part of Township No. 3 send their upper edges just inside the south boundary of Lee. Between them flows into No. 3 a small stream rising very near House Pond, south of the village. Within a mile from Lee Village, northeast, the Mattakeunk has two small tributaries from the northwest and one from the south. A mile and a half further and quite near each other two more come in from the east. Half a mile from the north line of the town a larger stream from the westward, with an affluent passing near the Stetson School, enters into the Mattakeunk. West of the heads of this tributary are the sources of another stream which flows about two miles north into Winn. The tributaries from Merrill Pond, Park Pond, Ricker Pond, House Pond, Cobb Pond and Mill Pond all enter the Mattakeunk. The damming of the Mattakeunk at East Winn has caused a large pond in the northeastern part of Lee, called Dwinal Pond.

At the time of the advent of the white man, all these streams literally swarmed with speckled trout, which were caught in large numbers and were highly prized as a nutritious and healthy food by the pioneers.

Before the sound of the woodsman's axe ever resounded through the forests, the entire town was covered with a heavy growth of timber. It was certainly a timber township. The stately moose, the shy deer, and the yet more timid caribou roamed these forests at pleasure, and were never troubled except by the Indian. Here on these streams the industrious

tightly rolling a live coal in a piece of linen rag. In this manner fire was sometimes carried for more than a mile.

The grain when ready to harvest was usually reaped and bound into bundles or sheaves, and when thoroughly dried was threshed with the old-fashioned flails. When corn was planted the bears proved a source of much annoyance by eating and destroying large quantities after the kernel was filled. To prevent these depredations fires were sometimes kindled around the piece at nightfall and kept burning until morning.

If the settler was fortunate enough to own a cow, a bell was suspended from her neck and she was allowed to wander through the forest at her own sweet will. Hogs were marked and, like the cows, turned loose in the early spring and were not driven home until it was time to fatten them in the fall.

After the early settlers had become well established in their new homes, the whir-r-whir-r of the spinning wheel and the rattle of the loom were familiar sounds in many cabins, and by their aid the industrious housewife wrought nearly every yard of fabric from which her own and her family's wardrobes were replenished. Flax was extensively cultivated, and the little foot-wheels whereon the fiber was twisted into thread can occasionally be found. Home-made tow and linen cloth were the housewife's main reliance, and from them were made a large portion of all the clothing worn by her family. When the flax was ready to harvest no small amount of labor was required to prepare it for the spinner. After it was pulled, dried, and deprived of the seed, the stalks were spread upon the ground to be rotted by the alternate action of the dew and sunshine.

This process rendered the woody portion of the stalk brittle, but left the tough fibre intact. The bundles were then rebound and packed away to await the leisure of the winter months. It was then broken, swunged, hatched and spun into thread. The hatching, as well as the spinning, was done by the madam. There is a tradition that John Carpenter, Lee's first Representative in the Legislature, was clad in garments all of which were manufactured by members of his own family.

The first innovation made in the early methods of cooking was made by the introduction of the tin baker. These bakers

beaver felled his timber and built his dams, traces of which are plainly visible today.

Here too, in these same forests roamed the black bear and wolves at pleasure, after paying their compliments to the early settlers in midnight raids on their sheep and other livestock.

The stage road from Lincoln Post Office through Lee into Springfield is the most thickly settled part of the town, especially that part from Lee Village to the Springfield line. In 1881 the most densely settled road was that one which today is known as the Blake road. It runs southwest and south from the village. This road makes an angle at the town line, about two-thirds of a mile from the southwest corner, and runs northwest and north to a junction with the Lincoln and Lee road. About one mile from the village on this road another branches off to the southeast and east, past the Cobb school, to a north and south road running from near the south line of the town to the main road from Lee to Springfield about one mile east of the village, and across it about one mile to the farm of Horace Maxwell. About a quarter of a mile further on is what used to be the Town Farm. The Lincoln-Springfield road is again crossed, three miles west of the village, by a north and south road starting near the northwest corner of the town, meeting, a mile below, the road from East Winn village, and thence running southwest to the neighborhood of Mattakeunk Pond, then turns still harder toward the west and ends near the town line about a mile from the Pond. The part of this road lying on the north of the main highway is today called the North road. East of this road and one mile from the post-office a road branches to the north where it forms a right angle to another running west from the Lee and Winn road about two miles from the post-office. This is called the Ridge road. A north and south road connects East Winn and Lee. The road running from East Winn to Springfield crosses the northeast corner of Lee, about one and one-fourth miles of it lying within the borders of this town. One mile from the village on the Winn road, a road branches to the east and runs about one mile when it forms a junction with a road running north from the Lee-Springfield

road. This is known today as the Mill road. In all there are about fifty-five miles of road to be kept in repair by the town. In 1859 there were approximately sixty-five miles of road in town. Some of the pieces of road which have been discontinued are — a road connecting the North road with North Lincoln. A road running south from the Stone place. A road connecting the Whitten farm with Silver Lake. A road from the Maxwell farm to the old Town Farm. A road connecting the Brown place with No. 3. A road between what is now Preston Hanscom's farm and the old Bartlett farm owned by H. R. Lowell. A road running from Charles Gray's to Emery Cobb's farm.

Today the road between the Village and the Winn line is State road and about one-fourth of the road from the village to the Springfield line is State road; the remainder is common highway.

There are no large mountains in Lee but one finds several hills. The largest of these is known as Mt. Jefferson. It lies directly south of the village and is 708 feet above sea level. It was named in the early days by students of Lee Normal Academy. About two thirds of it is owned by Jefferson Mallett and the remainder by two sisters, Mrs. Estelle Lasky and Mrs. Albert Bishop. The whole area is used as pasture. In 1912 it was nearly all cleared and one lone tree could be seen on its peak for miles. Today it is nearly a wilderness with the exception of the part owned by Mrs. Bishop and the utmost peak which is a barren, wind swept ledge.

Mrs. Lasky and her son Herbert have erected a very nice cottage on their part of the mountain. It is on the western slope and has a fine view of the village and surrounding ponds and streams.

Some ten or twelve excellent springs are found on Mt. Jefferson. The Academy, Dormitory, Parsonage and nearly every residence together with the Hotel find their source of water supply at these springs.

Without doubt the most beautiful piece of nature's work to be found in Lee is Hedgehog Mt. Only a small trail leads to its summit, which is covered with vegetation, there being enormous great oaks. The north side slopes very little, it be-

ing nearly level with the surrounding country. The south side is extremely steep. It is covered with great shelves of ledge. These shelves are fifteen to twenty feet wide and covered with vegetation. A drop, straight down, some twenty-five or thirty feet brings one to another shelf-like precipice and so on until the valley below is reached. An excellent view of the great wilderness south and southeast of Lee can be obtained from the top. Mr. Mallett, the owner of this mountain, has placed benches on the moss covered ledges for the use of summer visitors. Strange as it seems, a very small percentage of the citizens of Lee have ever visited this little mountain.

Another hill, known as Burke Hill, about the same height as Mt. Jefferson, lies directly south of the latter. Owing to the excellent view of the wild lands which one could get from this mountain, the State Forestry Department erected a lookout station in 1914. It was discontinued four years later owing to the fact that a steel tower had been erected on Passadumkeag Mt. from which the same territory could be watched. In 1921 the lookout station was sold to Henry F. Merrill of Portland, and moved to his camps at No. 3 Lake. The watchmen at this station were Vernard Cobb, Vinal Cobb, Earl Ware, and Paul Hanscom in the order named.

Directly east of Hedgehog Mt. is another large hill. It has no name and is seldom visited except by hunters. It is covered with a hardwood growth. Bagley Mt. rises in the northwest corner of the town.

The surface of Lee is rough and uneven, and in some parts hilly and mountainous. The soil is generally fertile and is a vegetable loam, very little clay being found. It yields well the usual farm crops. In some parts of the town the early settlers experienced much difficulty in clearing the land and rendering it suitable for cultivation. But when once cleared, the land was found to possess unusual degree of fertility, and bountiful crops rewarded the farmer's toil.

The principal growth of wood is maple, birch and beech, of which the last named variety predominates. Besides these varieties are found cedar, hemlock, spruce, poplar, red oak and scattering trees of several other varieties.

The scenery of Lee is by no means uninteresting. Mt.

Jefferson, noted for its wind-swept ledges, the commanding view from its summit and the springs of cool, pure water issuing from its rugged sides, is a source of constant admiration to the summer visitor. Mattakeunk Lake furnishes a constant attraction as a summer resort. This is the summer home of many New York artists. Parties frequently come here from adjoining towns to hold picnics on the cool, shady banks and to enjoy the fishing, sailing and bathing which this lake offers.

About 1840, a bird's-eye view of the town of Lee, taken from the peak of Mt. Jefferson would have revealed a vast expanse of forest dotted here and there with "openings" made by the axe of the settler. In each of these might be seen a log cabin with the smoke curling upward from its rude chimney — the home of the settler and his family. A rude hovel would be seen, provided the occupant of the cabin was not too poor to own a cow, which was not unfrequently the case. A story of toil and want would have been told if a closer acquaintance could have been made with these cabin homes and the families that occupied them, a story of which few have any conception. Food of the coarsest kinds and clothing of poor and sometimes insufficient quantity were some of the many privations incident to the pioneer life of the early settler and his family in Lee.

One of the older residents of the town made the statement that children used to go to school barefooted in winter. This statement has caused quite a controversy. A former resident of Lee, now living in Lincoln, writes as follows:

"I well remember as a child hearing old people tell (and meaning them as their near and dear ones) of boys who went barefoot even in the winter, and that they did not feel the cold. Today, a man who served in our Civil War, and is just beginning to get gray haired, told me he had heard his father and mother tell how Jock (who also served in the war of the rebellion), used to go barefoot and in winter had run across the ice of Morse Pond — from his home to other points — (now Mattakeunk Lake) and his feet lasted warm for the run back. This pond isn't far from Lee, as the crow flies, and Jock was the older brother to the man who tells the tale. And his people weren't pinched with poverty either.

"Barefooted boys went a mile to school and a mile back in winter and no woolen rags on them, and they didn't think it any hardship — and their feet weren't so very cold either."

Another former resident of Lee, now residing in Houlton, writes as follows:

"I went to school in Lee more than sixty-five years ago. I never saw anyone barefooted except in warm weather and as the mercury ranged from 26 to 40 below zero, no one could have gone to school barefooted in those winters and lived.

"A kind old colored woman once told her boy if he ever had to lie to try and tell one that somebody would believe. It is a pity that the one who wrote such an absurd story had not been so instructed and followed directions, thereby saving himself ridicule.

"We did not wear Dorothy Dodd shoes or four buckle arctics. Calf skin and cowhide were plentiful and answered every purpose when supplemented with our homespun clothes. Perish the thought that scholars ever went to school barefooted in winter."

From 1840 until 1870 the town increased quite rapidly in population due to immigration. In 1870 it suffered a slight decline, came back somewhat in 1890 but since that time has been steadily declining.

The village of Lee is finely situated at the foot of Mt. Jefferson and on the shores of the mill pond. The streets are four rods wide, and all are supplied with concrete sidewalks. Shade trees of maple and elm abound, some having a growth of over one hundred years. The roads are kept in excellent repair, and have the reputation of being the best of any town in this part of the county. Strangers passing through the town cannot fail to be impressed with the prevalent appearance of prosperity.

In 1925 the village consists of, the Baptist Church, the Academy, Gymnasium, Dormitory, Dew Drop, Mt. Jefferson House, Model School, Elmwood Hall and Forest Grange Hall. One garage, electric power plant, saw mill, shingle mill, two cobblers' shops, two blacksmith shops, Athletic Field, Post-Office, livery stable, seven stores and two lunch rooms. There are two cemeteries. In the outlying districts we find one hun-

dred and nine productive farms, two additional saw mills, one shingle mill, one carding mill and one cemetery.

On the road leading from the old Thurlow farm to No. 3 township, but two farms now exist, though several fields and old clearings nearly grown up to bushes attest to the pioneer unwisdom and subsequent discouragement and desertion.

THE VILLAGE GREEN

The Village Green as it is today stands as a monument to the efforts and zeal of the town's Village Improvement Society. Less than six years ago it was an eyesore in an otherwise pretty village, and located as it was at the very center of the town, it made an unsavory welcome.

The first steps toward establishing the Village Green were taken when Harold L. Haskell purchased the old Weatherbee block and proceeded to move the buildings from the corner. The store and rent above was sold to Frank P. Lowell, who moved it to his lot on the western end of Main Street. This building has been extensively repaired and is now a double tenement and also the central office and headquarters of the Lee Telephone Company.

The ell of the old Weatherbee block, which contained the barber shop and rent above, was sold to Joseph John, who moved it to his lot on the Springfield end of Main Street, near the Lee Motor Company's garage.

Mr. Haskell offered to present the town with a deed of the lot but the voters refused to accept the gift when the matter was taken up at the annual Town Meeting in March.

Then the Lee Village Improvement Society was organized and this lot purchased. The old cellar was filled, the lot graded, shade trees were set out, and a very artistic wall was constructed on the sides bordering the streets. The mason work was in charge of W. H. Hanson.

After this work had been completed, Mr. J. W. White of Jacksonville, Florida, presented the Society with a magnificent marble fountain, which was erected in memory of his sister, Nellie White.

On each side of the concrete walk leading from the street to



LEE, MAINE.

Time has wrought but few changes in Lee village which nestles down at the base of Mt. Jefferson just as it was fifty years ago.

the steps of Elmwood Hall, is a small pine tree, and at the foot of each is an American flag. These pines were planted by public-spirited citizens of Lee in memory of the two boys from Lee who made the supreme sacrifice during the World War. The tree on the left stands as a memorial to Pvt. Willard C. Houghton of the U. S. Army who was killed on the field of battle. The tree on the right stands as a memorial to Seaman Vance H. Lowell of the U. S. Navy who died at the Naval Hospital in Newport, R. I.

Now with its great spreading elms and the walls bordered with plants and ferns, the Village Green makes a pleasant greeting to the visitors of Lee. This is but one of the achievements of the Lee Village Improvement Society.