CHAPTER XX.

CANALS, STAGE LINES, AND TAVERNS.

HENRY MCFARLAND.

Long before the steps of a settler had rustled the leaves on the shores of Horseshoe pond, Canadian voyageurs had chanted the songs of France on the upper St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, and the Father of Waters; but when men of English descent came at last to dwell in the upper Merrimack valley, in May, 1726, they knew what they wanted. It was to possess themselves of broad, productive meadows, and woodlands bearing oak and pine strong enough and tall enough to carry an admiral's flag in his majesty's navy. The mishaps which befell them on the way from Massachusetts were so many inducements to complete, in the following autumn, a sufficient cartway between Haverhill and Penny Cook. This settlers' road, without important change of line, was long the route for travel into our portion of the valley. Along that way went the wood-cutter, the huntsman, the lumbering ox-cart, the pacing horse carrying a frontierswoman with a child in her arms, the soldier hurrying to Bunker Hill, the village parson driving to Boston in a chaise, or Benjamin Thompson (afterward Count Rumford) with his span in a curricle going to Woburn.

As gain in population was slow, so was increase in travel and traffic; but by 1790 Haverhill and Newburyport were regarded as important commercial towns. Their shipwrights had for fifty years been building ships that sailed to London and the Indies, and their merchants had credit in Threadneedle street and the Windward Islands. The linens and woolens of Londonderry had found sale, and were borne up and down the country in the packs of peddlers. Concord had ceased to be on the frontier; that border line had moved away gradually toward the Canadian settlements. The five towns of Salisbury, Claremont, Lebanon, Plymouth, and Hanover had in 1775 rather more than two thousand, and in 1790 almost six thousand, inhabitants. The "college road," from Boscawen to Dartmouth college, was laid out by authority of the state in 1795.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the demands of the north country had so grown that one prosperous merchant of Haverhill was sending annually to Lebanon foreign goods valued at forty

thousand dollars, on slow ox-carts, which returned laden with potash and pearlash, flax-seed, and other marketable products.

During the toilsome period between 1726 and 1800, the Merrimack, most interesting of New England rivers, was of course pouring its abundant waters southward, making its power manifest to the dullest dweller on its lower shores by an occasional freshet, and by a famous one in 1740. Raftsmen entrusted ship and house-building timber to its bosom, to find domestic and foreign markets by the way of Newburyport; but its falls were barriers to upward navigation, and to shoot its rapids taxed the nerves of canoemen skilful as any who swept inland waters with a paddle.[1]

In the last decade of this period, people were not quite content to keep to the older ways: perhaps contentment is a flower that rarely comes to full bloom in the New Hampshire air. Then, too, the second great wave of emigration was breaking on the coast, and with it came men who had driven in a mail-coach to Bath, or lodged at the Red Horse Inn at Stratford. There were also those who knew the value of canals in the old countries. So it came about that in 1794 a stage wagon was put on to run from Concord, by way of Chester, to Haverhill, where it connected with a conveyance to Boston.

Between 1796 and 1809 state charters were obtained for twenty-four turnpike roads, at least six of which when built were of direct concern to Concord, namely, the New Hampshire (inc. 1796), to Portsmouth; the Fourth (inc. 1800), from the Merrimack in Boscawen to the Connecticut in Lebanon; the Grafton (inc. 1804), from a junction with the Fourth in Andover to Orford; the Mayhew (inc. 1803), from Hill to Plymouth; the Chester (inc. 1804), between Pembroke and Chester; and the Londonderry (inc. 1804), from Concord, via Hooksett and Londonderry, to a point on the Merrimack where is now the city of Lawrence.

The Concord end of the New Hampshire or Portsmouth turnpike road was that street in East Concord which bears the name of Portsmouth. The junction of South Main and Turnpike streets was the point of departure of the Londonderry turnpike road, and within the memory of living men the stone which marked its beginning was standing, inscribed "Boston, 63 miles."

Among the canal enterprises of that period were some of special local interest. It being expected (1793–1800) that there would be navigable water from Boston to Concord, ambitious minds were

[1] In 1761 a number of persons petitioned for colonial permission to blow up the rocks in Amoskeag falls. This was (to quote their own words) "in order & more Especially that the Trees provided for his Majesties' Navy may not be attended with so much difficulty as it now is."

agitated with other projects, for instance such as would carry navigation beyond Concord, up our river and Winnipiseogee stream to the lake; and a still larger scheme was to unite the Merrimack and Connecticut rivers, by the way of Sunapee lake, at a cost of two million dollars.

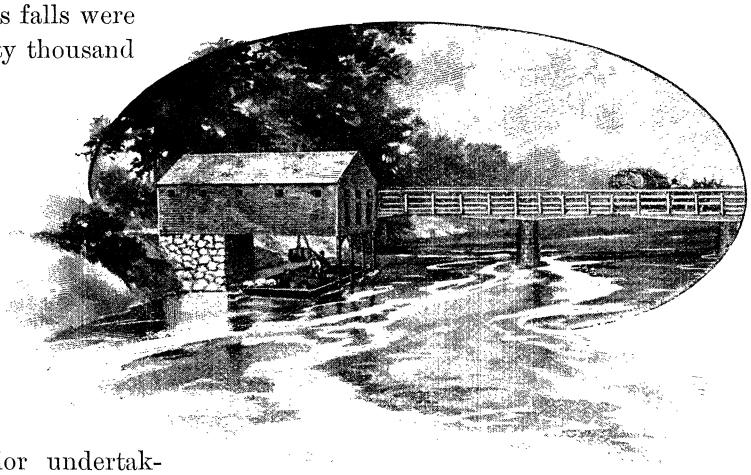
In the office of our secretary of state are excellent maps and profile drawings, made in 1816, for a waterway from a point on the Merrimack river, just below Sewall's falls, to the outlet of Sugar river on the Connecticut. The necessary surveys were made by the younger Loammi Baldwin, John Farrar, and Henry B. Chase, who were acting, two of them in behalf of the state of Massachusetts, the other for New Hampshire. The scheme which these drawings disclose contemplated making use of the Contoocook, Warner, and Sugar rivers, deepening them wherever necessary, and providing many locks; a new channel was to be constructed from the Merrimack to a point on the Contoocook where are now Holden's mills, and another like channel was to be cut from the head-waters of the Warner river into Sunapee lake. A resurvey for this canal was made by engineers of the United States Army, and results reported to congress by the secretary of war in 1828. There were those so bold as to mention in this connection Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence, but money could not be obtained for undertakings so vast.

The Middlesex canal, a Massachusetts enterprise, to connect Boston harbor with the Merrimack river at Chelmsford, opened in 1803, was incorporated in 1793, and in that or the following year Samuel Blodgett, a native of Woburn, attempted a canal at Amoskeag falls, whereby water-power was to be obtained as well as tolls from traffic. He was an adventurous gentleman, who had served in that dauntless New England enterprise, the capture of Louisburg. He had gained money by buying and floating a tea-laden ship stranded at Plymouth, and sought permission to raise the *Royal George*, a line-of-battle ship sunken at Spithead, but the canal, and the quarrels which grew out of it, exhausted his means, beside funds derived from lotteries,—in which our townsmen, Peter Green and Timothy Walker, served with others as commissioners,—and he barely lived to see it in operation in 1807. It was poorly constructed, and almost entirely rebuilt in 1816.

Boston, ten years older than Haverhill, had by this time twenty thousand inhabitants, and was the chief market of New England, yet the people on the lower Merrimack strove to keep the business of our valley in what was deemed its natural channel, and the canal around Pawtucket falls at Lowell, completed in 1797, availed them something. It is a newspaper statement that in 1817 the sum of

eighty thousand dollars was subscribed at Newburyport toward a contemplated canal across Rockingham county to the Merrimack river above Hooksett falls.

After the Middlesex canal had entered the Merrimack, two miles above Lowell and twenty-seven from Boston, there remained several minor falls to be surmounted, and the more lordly ones of Hooksett and Garvin's, but, as we have seen, a canal had been built at Amoskeag. In 1812 the Merrimack Boating company was formed among Middlesex canal people, and under the supervision of its agent the way was cleared to Concord. The *New Hampshire Gazetteer* of 1823 says the Middlesex canal cost five hundred and twenty thousand dollars, the works at Wicassee, fourteen thousand dollars, Union locks and canals (by which Merrill's, Griffin's, Goffe's, Coös, and Cromwell's falls were overcome), fifty thousand dollars, the Amoskeag canal, fifty thousand dollars, Hooksett, seventeen thousand dollars, Bow, twenty-one thousand dollars, and it appears that for these junior undertakings the parent company provided the sum of eighty-two thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven dollars. The Union canals obtained thirty thousand dollars as the avails of lotteries. The Bow, Hooksett, Amoskeag, Union, and Wicassee enterprises had independent charters and gathered independent tolls. The original dam at Garvin's falls (Bow) appears to have been built under the superintendence of John Carter, of Concord, a soldier of the Revolution and a lieutenant-colonel of the War of 1812. The Middlesex company owned, as a corporation, shares in the Bow, Hooksett, and Union canals; it owned the whole of the Wicassee; and its shareholders as individuals owned the whole of the Amoskeag. John L. Sullivan is reported to have said, in 1817, that the assessments paid in to the Middlesex company, which covered its interests in the smaller canals, amounted to five hundred ninety-two thousand dollars. Other accounts say the sum was twice as great.



Canal Boat and Freight House of Merrimack Boating Company.

The first boat of the Merrimack Boating company made its way to Concord, October 20, 1814, and in June, 1815, regular semi-weekly service was established, with the promise of more frequent departures if the traffic should permit, as shortly thereafter it did. One landing was constructed just below the site of Concord bridge, with Samuel Butters as agent, and another near Federal bridge, where Stephen Ambrose did the honors. This was ten years before the completion of the Erie canal.

These events were important to an inland town, but the arrival of the first boat, toward the close of the war with England, did not disturb the gravity of the people. Three years later, July 18, 1817, President Monroe embarked on the canal boat *President* to view the picturesque water above Turkey falls, now the summer solace of the Passaconaway club, and to pass through the five locks at Garvin's falls. The Middlesex canal had proved to be of national consequence. Albert Gallatin, secretary of the treasury, had made it a topic in a report on inland navigation in 1808, and Commodore Bainbridge reported later that by its use he got materials to build the *Independence* frigate, refit the *Constitution*, and so send the latter out of Boston although that harbor was blockaded by a British fleet.

The fame of these Merrimack river waterways so filled the land that in 1819 contractors and laborers were sought here for like undertakings in other states.

The distance by canal and river from Boston to Concord was eighty-five miles, and the earlier rate for freight to the upper landing in Concord was thirteen dollars and fifty cents a ton, to the lower landing, thirteen dollars; downward freight, eight dollars and fifty cents or eight dollars. These rates were gradually reduced until in 1842 they were five dollars a ton for upward and four dollars for downward freight. A considerable reduction in boat freights and canal tolls was caused by the competition of the Portsmouth and Concord Wagon company in 1818. The granite to build Quincy market was boated down for three dollars and fifty cents a ton, and like shipments went beyond Boston to New Orleans and Baltimore. These shipments of granite are mentioned as early as 1819. Hayward's *New England Gazetteer*, published in 1839, has, in an appropriate place, a steel engraving wherein is Rattlesnake hill and a horse railway by which granite is going to a landing on the Merrimack. On the river is a canal boat under sail, with boatmen in dress suits, a picture of the imagination. Cord-wood was also a considerable item of downward freight.

On June 27, 1817, a rival to the Merrimack Boating company was chartered by the New Hampshire legislature (Richard Bradley

and others being grantees), which, although it put some boats on the river, did not gain a great share of the business. It was called the Concord & Boston Boating company.

There was discontent in 1820 with the rates of the Merrimack Boating company, and another was formed, called the Union Boating company, with Abel Hutchins, Albe Cady, William Kent, Joseph Low, Benjamin Gale, and others, among the stockholders. This provoked the Merrimack company into storekeeping, and it dealt here in rum, sugar, molasses, tea, flour, iron, and general merchandise. In 1821 both interests were merged in the Boston & Concord Boating company. The service of the latter company required twenty boats of fifteen tons' capacity each. Each boat was navigated by three men. On favorable reaches of water, with fair wind, sails were stretched. Between seven and ten days was required for a round trip between Concord and Boston, and boatmen's wages were from fifteen to twenty-six dollars a month. The gross earnings of the Concord boats from 1816 to 1842 have been stated at six hundred eighty-nine thousand six hundred and ninety-six dollars, out of which one hundred eighty thousand six hundred and eleven dollars was paid the canal companies for tolls.

Steam navigation on the Merrimack was attempted in 1819, when a steamboat came up the river and made some local voyages. From 1834 to 1838 there was a steamboat called the *Herald*, owned by the Merrimack River Steam Navigation company, plying between Lowell and Nashua. John L. Worthen was master of this boat in 1837, and General George Stark, in an article in the *Granite Monthly*, volume IX, page 9, says Jacob Vanderbilt, of Staten Island, a brother of the commodore, served in the same way a single year. Passengers going to and fro between Boston and Concord, by rail below Lowell and by stage above Nashua, dined on this boat, which made two daily round trips.

James Sullivan, afterward a governor of Massachusetts, was the earliest friend of these boating enterprises. John L. Sullivan was a manager of the Merrimack Boating company,—a lively man, apt to use printer's ink. He had a canal route surveyed to the Winnipiseogee. Theodore French was for more than twenty years manager of the boating company's interests in Concord, and remained in such control to the end.

The upward freight of the boats was merchandise of infinite variety, but it is rather surprising to find that among this freight were flour, corn, butter, and cheese, agricultural products coming to our country valley, as do now onions from Bermuda and Egypt, melons from the Carolinas, and beef from Texas and Nebraska.

The boats could, of course do nothing in winter, and teams claimed part of the business in summer. The baggage-wagons of Isaac Clement, of Concord, were advertised liberally.

There must have been a charm to the river in the summer days of this inland navigation. There was nowhere more delightful water, no greener shores, no more fragrant air, no sweeter bird songs. Here were the leap and plash of salmon, there a cloud of pigeons that ought never to have been called wild, and are now unhappily almost extinct. The sound of the boatman's horn floated along the valley. Sails could be seen across points of land, and conjecture busied itself as to whose might be the coming boat. To a careless observer this might seem the land of the lotus, but toil stood beside the boatman.

As to these river men, were there ever people bred to the water who failed to be adventurous, generous with earnings, careless of health? Such were the boatmen of the Merrimack. Reverend Edward L. Parker has put it on record, in the History of Londonderry, that when he was clerk in a store near Piscataquog landing, frequented by raftsmen, so constant was the demand for "flip" that the loggerhead was kept always hot, ready to perform its office. In the "Sketch of a Busy Life," by E. D. Boylston, of Amherst, is related the author's not altogether pleasant recollection of a Sunday night in 1829, which he, a homesick lad of fifteen, spent at a Thornton's Ferry tavern filled with boatmen.

Until 1819 the income of the Middlesex canal was applied to its betterment, but between 1819 and 1836 the dividends were sufficient to restore the original investment without profit to the shareholders, that is if such investment was the smaller of the sums hereinbefore mentioned. The Boston & Concord Boating company made regular dividends after 1826, until in 1842 the Concord Railroad put the whole business at rest. The canal made a stout struggle against the inevitable. Its friends declared, in 1830, that "there never can be sufficient inducement to extend a railroad from Lowell westwardly and northwestwardly," and hence they argued that as the canal served the public so well, it was not worth the while to build the Boston & Lowell Railroad.

But the days of the canal were numbered. The casual traveler to Boston may still trace the crumbling outlines of its channel, and the hollow of its tow-path; and some, who look beyond a veil of trees, see in Wilmington a pool of the old waterway where fair white lilies bloom and quicken the thoughts of such as appreciate achievements of the past.

A little way off from the main line of the railroad one may still find various picturesque reminders of the canal, such as the lock at

Talbot mills, the abutments and pier of the aqueduct over the Shawsheen between Billerica and Wilmington, and the stone bridge on the Brooks estate at West Medford. There is a reach lying between obsolete embankments in Woburn, still filled with water, which needs for complete restoration only a weary horse towing a boat laden with sugar, coffee, molasses, and, likely enough, Jamaica rum, for William West, John D. Abbott, William Gault, and other Concord traders. Any loiterer here, if he be accompanied by some person familiar with the neighborhood, will be shown where the constructor of the canal dwelt, and told of careful maps for a grand northern canal system, as well as picks and shovels used in primitive construction, now regarded as family heirlooms.

One of the fruits of the Middlesex canal is the Baldwin apple. Discovered in obscurity, and propagated by the surveyors of the channel, it was named for their chief, and has outlived the activities of the canal itself.

The canal enterprises beyond Concord which were contemplated early in this century have had brief mention in this narrative.

The Sewall's Falls Locks & Canal company was incorporated in 1833, the grantees being John Eastman, Stephen Ambrose, Cyrus Robinson, Elisha Morrill, Jonathan Eastman, Jr., Robert Eastman, Jeremiah Pecker, and Robert Pecker, most of them East Concord real estate owners. Asaph Evans, who had a store at "Parliament Corner," and other Main street people, were, to their eventual regret, promoters of the undertaking.

The purpose of the Sewall's Falls company was to build a canal, two and a half miles long, from a point on the river near Federal bridge to an inlet above Sewall's falls. Beside its service to navigation, this canal was to provide power at East Concord, where it was estimated the drop at ordinary stages of water would be sixteen feet. It was intended to construct two watercourses to lead off eastwardly from the main canal, and between these would be situated mills seeking power. After performing its helpful office, the water was to run out by a raceway to the valley of Mill brook. It was estimated that there would be power enough to drive twenty-three mills of five thousand spindles each, and this estimate was confirmed by so good an authority as the second Loammi Baldwin.

The embankments of this partly-constructed canal, thirty feet apart, may yet be readily traced along the meadows west of East Concord village. Just above its south junction with the river were to have been the needful locks for lifting boats to the upper level, and the expectations as to boating were so ardent that there was talk about steam navigation to Plymouth.

So far as construction went on the Sewall's Falls canal it was substantial and impressive. The solid walls of shapen granite for the locks held staunchly in their appointed places down to a time within the memory of many living people, or say to the year 1847, when the excellent work of the old builders was hauled away to be used for piers and abutments under the adjacent railroad bridge. The dam at the falls was about half completed under the direction of "Boston John" Clark of Franklin, whose stout figure is well remembered on our streets.

Various hindrances came into the way of this enterprise, and further legislation was sought in 1836, 1837, and 1840. By this time the coming of the railway may have disheartened the shareholders, the hard times of 1837 had done their fateful work, and although the corporation lingered into the forties, the whole was abandoned after the expenditure of forty thousand dollars.

Some interest in Sewall's falls as a source of water-power was manifested again in 1859, when Mr. Baldwin's report and the estimates of 1836 were reprinted. In 1884 it appeared once more, and in 1893 the existing dam was built, which has its place in another story.

Another project which was then obtaining local attention was the Contoocook canal. This was designed to leave the Contoocook river either at Horse Hill bridge or at the Borough, come down through West Concord, west of the parish church, past Blossom Hill, past the old prison site, and go through the main town west of State street, reaching the Merrimack either at its confluence with Turkey river, or at a point about half a mile above the old Concord bridge. One line would have been about nine miles long, the other a mile and three quarters shorter. Real estate in West Concord on the line of this canal was advertised as very desirable.

It was estimated that this canal in condition for navigation would cost, exclusive of land damages, one hundred and forty-six thousand three hundred and seventeen dollars and twenty-nine cents, a sum which persons familiar with later values of money and labor would deem too small. Such surveys as were made were by Professor James Hayward, who afterward constructed the original Boston & Maine Railroad, and Captain Benjamin Parker, who lived and died on Centre street. The canal was to be eighteen feet wide at the bottom, and the whole fall, from the point of beginning to the Turkey river terminus, was found to be 124 89-100 feet; to the other point of connection with the Merrimack, 121 94-100 feet. It was intended to divide the whole descent into four falls of about thirty feet each. These falls were to be located at convenient situations,

and each fall might drive eight or ten factories of three thousand six hundred spindles each, and so, it was argued, there would thereby be provided power more than equal to that at Lowell. Each mill site would be worth, so the old estimates say, ten thousand dollars.

This project was opposed naturally by people owning mill privileges on the Contoocook below the point whence this canal would depart, and by others interested at Sewall's falls; so it came to naught, and, as not a spadeful of earth was turned in its behalf, it has been well-nigh forgotten.

Returning to the topic of transportation by highways, it should be kept in mind that in 1790 only seventy-five national post-offices had been created in the United States. In February, 1791, the legislature of New Hampshire established four weekly post routes, made rates for postage, and certain allowances to post riders, who should be appointed by the president of the state and his council. Thomas Smith was appointed to ride from Concord to Keene; John Lathrop, to Haverhill; Ozias Silsby, to Portsmouth. George Hough then received a state appointment as postmaster of Concord, and a like United States appointment in 1792. He located the post-office on the east side of Main street, near the junction with School, on property which he purchased from Aaron Kinsman. It had been the Kinsman tavern.

In 1794 there were five national post-offices in New Hampshire. Postal rates were so high that it was customary for obliging travelers to carry all the letters of a neighborhood to their destination. On December 28, 1799, Postmaster Hough advertised in the *Courier of New Hampshire* unclaimed letters which had come to his office for persons in Antrim, Boscawen, Canaan, Derryfield (for John Stark), Enfield, Gilmanton, Goffstown, Hillsborough, Merrimack (for Matthew Thornton), New London, Pembroke, Pittsfield, Plainfield, Sanbornton, Sandown, Salisbury, Warren, and Windham. So many letters were advertised as unclaimed that it seems probable some were rejected because postage was not prepaid. It was a long while the custom to communicate with friends by mailing a newspaper in which a column had been selected and needful successive letters dotted with ink; thus an intelligible message could be readily made out, if the plan had been pre-arranged.

High rates for postage sometimes provoked individual competition with the government. In 1844 A. Roberts & Co. conducted a letter express business, Concord being one of their stations, with an office at the drug store of Foster & Rand, opposite the state house. Their charges were, to Boston, five cents; as far as Buffalo, eleven cents.

In 1845 national postage rates were reduced, and a penalty affixed to carriage of letters by express.

There was at least a quarter-century which was the period of the post-rider, who is mentioned in Parson Walker's diary as early as 1780. That useful individual was the herald and news-agent of his times. He carried parcels, to quote the advertised words of John Lathrop, one of the fraternity, "for a reasonable reward." He dealt in newspapers, buying from publishers and selling to people along the way. He received and gave credit, and half yearly or yearly his appeals for settlement got into print, in form somewhat akin to that by which the country editor has from generation unto generation made his plaints known to a not too tender world. Thus the names of many of these worthy men have not been forgotten, but it would be difficult to follow all their routes and their terms of service accurately.

☞ *POST-RIDER'S NOTICE.* ☜

ALL delinquent subscribers for Newspapers on the route from Concord to Exeter, are requested to hold themselves in readiness to *Pay up* the amount due from them, up to the first day of January next. Those who live off the road are requested to leave their respective proportions in *money*, where their papers are left. Those who neglect this seasonable notice, may expect to receive a *call* in a more disagreeable way.

SAMUEL MARTIN

Concord, Dec. 20, 1824.

In 1781 John Balch, of Keene, under authority of the Committee of Safety, rode fortnightly from Portsmouth by way of Concord and Plymouth to Haverhill, thence down the Connecticut valley to Charlestown and Keene, and across country to Portsmouth. Timothy Balch appears to have performed like service as late, at least, as 1785. In 1790 Samuel Bean was post-rider to Boston, and Nathaniel Wilcocks rode by Hopkinton, Warner, Sutton, Newbury, Sunapee, and Newport, to Claremont. John Lathrop rode to Dartmouth college. In 1799 one Mitchell rode through Hopkinton, Warner, Sutton, New London, Newbury, Bradford, Henniker, and Weare. Many of the routes were, like his, circuitous. Stephen Abbot informed the public that he had undertaken a route through Loudon, Gilmanton, Alton, Wolfeborough, Middleton, New Durham, Farmington, Pittsfield, and Chichester. Ezekiel Moore, Peter Sleeper, and Josiah Abbott were early riders to Plymouth. In 1807 Samuel Tallant was on that route; in 1818, between Concord and Fryeburg, Me. In 1809 James Tallant rode a circuit through Bow, Dunbarton, Pembroke, Chester, Candia, Deerfield, and Allenstown; at another period to Amherst. Samuel Wales in 1809 was courier to Chichester, Epsom, Loudon, Pittsfield, Barnstead, Gilmanton, Alton,

Wolfeborough, Tuftonborough, Moultonborough, Sandwich, Centre Harbor, Meredith, and Gilmanton Academy. Some time prior to 1814 Ezekiel Dimond rode through Hopkinton, Warner, Sutton, New London, Newport, Newbury, and Bradford. Jonathan Philbrick, 1812–'20, seems to have held the route between Concord and Charlestown.

In 1813 Samuel S. Norris, mail-rider from Concord to Fryeburg, Me., gave notice that he would run a carriage for passengers and baggage, if sufficient encouragement was given; in 1814 Norris & Bean intended to run a two-horse wagon thither; and Josiah Fogg, on the same route, advertised that he intended shortly to run a covered carriage.

James McColley was riding from Concord to Keene in 1817, and James C. McPherson in 1819; Simeon B. Little from Concord through Hopkinton, Boscawen, Salisbury, and Andover in 1818–'19. In 1815 Benjamin Small, Jr., was on a route from Concord to Amherst; and Jeremiah Emery to Hopkinton, Boscawen, Salisbury, Andover, and Canterbury. Joseph Smith at one time had a route through Charlestown to Walpole. Peter Smart was seen as a post-rider in 1814, and will appear again later on. Jeremiah Blake drove to Exeter, 1818–'20; John H. Durgin to Hopkinton, Henniker, Hillsborough, Lempster, Acworth, and Charlestown, 1815–'17.

On a route to Claremont and Cornish, Smith Downing rode in 1810, Richard C. Gile in 1812, Benjamin Hill in 1814, and Thomas Hackett later. Silas Hathorn rode to Walpole and Keene in 1810, and the Shannons (Samuel and John S.) and Robert Tibbitts appear to have ridden to Dover, 1816–'20. John S. Shannon for a time rode to Gilmanton. Richard Dicy, Mical Tubbs, and Ebenezer Clark were in the fraternity.

Doubtless others there were who rode as stoutly when the midsummer sun smote the highways, and when storm swept the hills, who sold the annual election sermons, carried news of war and peace, tidings of weddings and of death, the duns of weary creditors, and the billets of lovers, but their names have been omitted from the chronicles of the times. These post-riders were forerunners of the rural mail delivery men of 1900.

These details may be monotonous, but they serve to show to how wide a country, for a long time, Concord was the centre of news and information; and searching them out has developed another impressive fact of similar import, namely, the excellence, variety, and abundance of the books then advertised for sale here.

Such means of communication as have been herein described became gradually insufficient. The *Concord Mirror* of August 12,

1793, stated that gentlemen of Concord, Chester, and Haverhill, Mass., had agreed to put on a stage line hence to Boston in the following September. The History of Haverhill, *p.* 454, says such a line was put on in the following November, but quotes no authority for its statement. However that may be, satisfactory evidence of a southern stage in the next year is found in the following advertisement copied from the *Courier of New Hampshire* of October 2, 1794:

NEW LINE OF STAGES

FROM CONCORD, IN NEW HAMPSHIRE, TO BOSTON.

The Proprietors of the above Line inform the Public that a Stage will in future leave Concord on Saturday morning, at 6 o'clock (thro' Chester) for Haverhill—leave Haverhill on Monday morning, 8 o'clock, for Boston—leave Boston on Wednesday morning, 8 o'clock, for Haverhill—and leave Haverhill, on Thursday morning, 6 o'clock, for Concord. Another Stage will leave Haverhill on Thursday morning, 8 o'clock, for Boston, and leave Boston on Saturday morning, 8 o'clock, for Haverhill.

The best Drivers, Horses, and Carriages are provided for running the above mentioned route; and the utmost punctuality in setting off and arriving will be observed. The Proprietors therefore flatter themselves they shall be able to give entire satisfaction to all who are pleased to embrace so easy and expeditious a mode of travelling as is here offered.

Each Passenger will be allowed to carry 14 lb. Baggage gratis.

For passage, apply to Mr. Robert Harris, at Concord; Major James Duncan, at Haverhill, or at Peabody's Tavern in Boston.

Oct. 1, 1794.

Whether this was a successful and permanent beginning of local stage lines may be open to doubt. William A. Kent, a lifelong citizen of Concord, who was fourteen years of age in 1807, has been quoted as saying there was no stage between Concord and Boston until that year. Daniel Webster, in his autobiography, says that in 1805 "stage coaches no more ran into the center of New Hampshire than they ran to Baffins Bay."

North of Concord, John M. Shirley, in his history of the Fourth New Hampshire Turnpike, printed in 1881, says: "One of our townswomen (Andover, N. H.) remembers the stages passing up the turnpike just prior to the War of 1812."[1] Charles W. Brewster, probably writing with evidence in his hands, in "Rambles about Portsmouth," Series I, *pp.* 187, 188, says the earliest stage from Portsmouth to Boston was a two-horse "stage chair," April 20, 1761. He mentions Bartholemew Stavers, of the Portsmouth flying stage-coach, of 1763, with four or six horses, as the first regular stage-

[1] *Granite Monthly*, Vol. IV, *pp.* 430, 448.

driver north of Boston. Stavers was a loyalist, and hurried off to England in 1774.

Hayward's *Gazetteer of New England*, under the title of Shrewsbury, Mass., says Levi Pease of that town, "the father of mail stages in this country," started his first line of mail stages between Boston and New York in 1784.

To some minds, perhaps, nothing is a stage except a stage-coach, but it will be convenient in this narrative to use the word in its common, every-day sense, and regard as a stage any advertised conveyance making regular trips for the carriage of travelers. On primitive roads, with few passengers, stout wagons with no more than two horses would be sufficient for the traffic.

It was quite natural that after the Londonderry and the Chester turnpike roads were completed, there should be, as there were, stages on each. On the more easterly route by way of Allenstown, Chester, and Atkinson, Thomas Pearson, who in ordinary speech was called "Tom Parsons," held the reins for many years, and kept a relay of horses at Anderson's in Candia, where hot rum sling was the favorite tipple. About 1822 this tavern was burned, with Tom's best four white horses, reserved for the run into Concord, and, like a good honest man, he wept bitterly at the painful fate of his favorite team. He was a driver to whom mothers entrusted children going down to visit Boston cousinry.

Nathaniel Walker was a favorite coachman on the line by way of Londonderry.

In the *New Hampshire Statesman* of April 30, 1859, is a communication signed "*Senex*" (ex-Governor David L. Morril), in which the writer says he rode from Reed's Ferry to Concord in August, 1805, in a crazy old thing called a coach, driven by Joseph Wheat, and, staying in Concord over night, went on to Hanover by the same conveyance. In 1807 Simon Harris, a mail-carrier from Salisbury to Plymouth, gave notice that he had taken the route from Concord to Newbury, Vt. In October, 1808, a stage between Portsmouth and Concord was to make two round trips a week, be eight hours on the road, and connect at Concord with the Hanover stages. In December, 1810, citizens of the region around Newbury, Vt., gave notice in Concord that a weekly line of stages was "erected to run from Quebec to Boston," probably by use of established stage lines this side of Newbury. The War of 1812 was near; in 1814 it became difficult to carry heavy mails, so books and pamphlets, except magazines, were excluded by order of the government. There was a stage from Concord to Amherst in 1813.

Between 1815 and 1820 a new semi-weekly line to Portsmouth,

via Deerfield Parade, was put on; the service to Hanover, and that to Boston via the Londonderry turnpike, were made tri-weekly, as was that of the rival Chester turnpike line which carried the mail. Each Boston stage then came up on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. There appears to have been double service on the Londonderry line, which started from 9 Elm street, one coach being called the Burlington, the other the Hanover line. The stage via Chester started from 45 Ann street. For a few days in July, 1820, competition was sharp and the fare one dollar. In that year Lyman Hawley and others put on a new tri-weekly line from Concord to Haverhill, N. H., via the Grafton turnpike, and Samuel Tallant, a semi-weekly line to Plymouth via Canterbury and New Hampton. Hawley was a famous driver, and in 1825 held the lines over the six white horses which brought General Lafayette into Concord.

In 1822 the "expedition mail stage from Boston to Stanstead" was driven three round trips a week, with Peter Smart at the helm between Boston and Plymouth, via the Londonderry turnpike and Concord, leaving Boston at three a. m., and arriving at Plymouth (one hundred and two miles) at nine p. m.[1] This stage is remembered by a few living witnesses. Speaking of Peter Smart, the *New Hampshire Statesman* of January 3, 1857, says: "He performed labor at one time that would have broken down three common men, viz.: driving a stage team from Plymouth to Boston and back again day after day and night after night." In 1826 there was a semi-weekly stage hence to Thornton. Stagemen thrived in the decade which ended with 1830. Trusting to newspaper advertisements, it seems safe to say that at its close Concord had six stage lines to Boston, occupying different routes and providing four coaches each way three days in the week, three each way on other days, also daily coaches to Hanover and to Royalton, Vt., two tri-weekly lines to Portsmouth, and tri-weekly lines to Conway, Claremont, Charlestown (Albany line), Haverhill, Bradford, Vt., and Plymouth. In 1827 the Plymouth line gained a connection with Franconia and Waterford, Vt., via the Franconia notch. In 1830 there was a stage hence to Haverhill, perhaps an opposition to the regular line, which departed at four o'clock on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. This Sunday departure was shortly cancelled. There was in 1824 a tri-weekly line to Salem, Mass., which was afterward run to Boston via Salem, the time for the trip being thirteen hours.

Probably no English coach was ever in use on a New Hampshire stage line. Coaches were built in Salem, Mass., as early as 1794. One such was driven between Concord and Dover in 1839. It had

[1] Advertisement in *New Hampshire Patriot*, October 28, 1822.

a door on one side only, and was known to drivers as the "hen-coop." The Concord coach came into general use after 1828. It had seats for nine inside and six outside passengers, including the driver. It was roomy and grand, with rhythm in the roll and play of its wheels. Honest hands made it of wood slowly grown, and the toughest iron of the forge, so it held together through all stress and strain, and bore a good name to every quarter of the globe.

The period from 1831 to 1842, in which latter year the Concord Railroad was opened, was that of high tide in stage travel. There was a line hence to Pittsfield, Barnstead, and Dover in 1833, also one to Wolfeborough, and one to Peterborough. The last was in 1834 a tri-weekly line to Brattleboro, Vt. The Boston & Lowell Railroad was opened in 1835, and some of the Concord and Boston stages at once made Lowell their southern terminus; others did not. There was in 1836 a line via Pembroke, Chester, Hampstead, and Haverhill, Mass., to a connection with the Haverhill & Andover Railroad (then building, since grown into the Boston & Maine). In 1837 there were still stage lines through to Boston via Londonderry and Essex turnpikes. The Mammoth road, completed in 1834, through Hooksett, Londonderry, Windham, Pelham, and Dracut, Mass., became the best stage route from Concord to Lowell. Joseph P. Stickney, of Concord, whose stable yard was where is now Stickney's north building, had stages on that road in 1834. So did William Walker, Jr., in 1836-'37. Robert Parker Kimball, noted for his wide white collar and cuffs, gentle manners and soft voice, whirled a coach over this road in its early days. Gilman Palmer and Joel Conkey, whose names are told in stagemen's stories, drove to Lowell via Amoskeag in 1838. In 1837 J. P. Stickney was sending two daily stages to Nashua, where they connected with the steamboat to Lowell. Ira Foster, who was something of an Oliver Cromwell on the road, had a coach of his own on the same route. The railroad was opened to Nashua in 1838, but stages continued to run between Concord and Lowell. In 1839 William Walker, Jr., and Nathaniel White had a tri-weekly line from Lowell to Meredith Village, through in one day. In 1840 George W. Sherburne had a tri-weekly line from Nashua to Meredith Bridge. In 1841 John P. Gass, N. S. Chandler, and others had stages from Nashua to Royalton. There were at this time frequent departures hence for Nashua, namely, at four, half-past six, and ten o'clock a. m. There was a daily stage hence to Lowell, via the Mammoth road, as recently as 1841, and that same year Elias Pinkham was driving a coach bound to Nashua out of the court-yard under the great elms of the Washington tavern at the North end. During some of the summers of this

period the Portsmouth and Exeter stages went through to Hampton Beach, then the favorite watering-place of Concord people.

Harrison B. Marden, of Plymouth, himself a stageman for fifty years, has kindly furnished from memory, which may not be infallible, the following table of coaches out of Concord in 1839:

CONCORD STAGES IN 1839.

	STABLED AT.	ROUTE.	TRIPS.	OWNERS.	DRIVERS.
1	Eagle.	Dover via Pittsfield and Barnstead.	Tri-weekly.	Jas. F. Langdon.	H. B. Marden.
2	Col'mbian.	Portsmouth via Epsom and Northw'd.	Tri-weekly.	C. C. Jackson.	C. C. Jackson.
3	Phenix.	Portsmouth via Allenstown and Deerfield.	Tri-weekly.	S. B. Marden.	S. B. Marden.
4	Phenix.	Haverhill, Mass., via Chester.	Tri-weekly.	Wm. Sawyer.	Wm. Sawyer.
5	1 coach at Eagle. 1 at Ph'nix.	Lowell via Mammoth Road.	Daily.	Geo. Clough. Peter Dudley.	Geo. Clough. Peter Dudley.
6	1 coach at Eagle. 1 at Ph'nix.	Nashua.	Daily.	Wm. Walker. Nathan'l White.	Wm. Walker. Nathaniel White.
7	Stickney's own st'ble.	Nashua.	Daily.	J. P. Stickney.	Samuel Gale. Joel Conkey.
8	American.	Nashua.		John P. Gass. N. S. Chandler.	Gilman Palmer.
9	Eagle.	Nashua.	Daily.	Ira Foster.	Ira Foster.
10	Col'mbian.	Keene.	Tri-weekly.	Richard Cilley or Geo. Ward.	Richard Cilley or Rob't N. Corning.
11	American.	Claremont.	Daily.	Lewis and Silas Dutton.	Lewis and Silas Dutton.
12	Phenix.	Hanover via Boscawen, Salisbury, and Enfield.	Daily.	Ephraim Hutchins and others.	Elbridge G. Carter, Porter K. Philbrick.
13	American.	Hanover.	Tri-weekly.	John P. Gass. N. S. Chandler.	Horace Langley.
14	1 coach at Eagle; 1 at Ph'nix.	Hanover via New London.	Daily.	Henry George and others.	Henry and Jas. George.
15	American.	Haverhill via Canaan.	Tri-weekly.	Robert Morse and others.	Henry Shattuck.
16	1 coach at American; 1 at Eagle.	Haverhill via Bristol and Rumney.	Daily.	Robert Morse and others.	Jas. F. Langdon. Jabez W. Burnham.

17	Washington.	Haverhill via Plymouth.	Daily.	Robert Morse and others.	Wm. B. French. Willard Graves.
18	Eagle.	Meredith Bridge.	Daily.	Harrison Messer & Co.	Jacob Libbey. T. D. Baker.
19	Eagle.	Gilmanton.	Tri-weekly.	Joseph C. Bean.	Joseph C. Bean.

The Concord Railroad (September 6, 1842) caused the withdrawal of the stages to Lowell and Nashua, but there was in 1844 still a daily stage to Manchester, driven by William G. Hoyt (son of a landlord of the South end tavern), at a fifty cent fare. The following is a correct list of other stages of that year:

Claremont via Newport (Eagle Coffee House), Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Peter Dudley, driver.

Claremont and Woodstock, Vt. (American House), Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Lewis Dutton, driver.

Conway (Eagle Coffee House), Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Jacob Libbey, driver. (Coach and driver changed at Meredith Bridge.)

Deering (American House), weekly. Franklin Wallace, driver.

Dover (American House), tri-weekly. Charles Robbins, driver.

Dunbarton (American House), tri-weekly. N. S. Chandler, owner.

Franconia (Eagle Coffee House), tri-weekly. Willis Hall, driver.

Franklin via Sanbornton (Columbian Hotel), tri-weekly. Peter Smart, driver.

Hanover via Andover (Phenix Hotel), Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Frank Thompson, driver.

Hanover and Royalton, Vt., via Andover (American House), Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Horace Langley, driver.

Hanover via New London (Phenix Hotel), Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Henry George, driver.

Hanover via Hopkinton and New London (Eagle Coffee House), Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Elbridge G. Carter, driver.

Haverhill via Bristol (Eagle Coffee House), Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Jabez W. Burnham, driver.

Haverhill via Bristol (American House), Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. William B. French, driver.

Haverhill via Salisbury and Andover (American House), Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Henry Shattuck, driver.

Haverhill via Plymouth (Phenix Hotel), Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Peabody A. Morse, driver.

Haverhill, Mass. (Phenix Hotel), tri-weekly. R. H. Ayer, driver.

Keene (Columbian Hotel), tri-weekly. John Brown, driver.

Meredith Village (American House), Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Elias Pinkham, driver.

Portsmouth via Exeter (Phenix Hotel), Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Thomas W. Aiken, driver.

Portsmouth via Epping (Columbian Hotel), Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. S. B. Marden, driver.

Wolfeborough (Eagle Coffee House), tri-weekly. Joseph C. Bean, driver.

The Northern (December 28, 1846), the Boston, Concord & Montreal (May 22, 1848), and the Concord & Claremont (October 1, 1849) railroads thrust other coaches backward into the country, and the heyday of the business, so far as Concord was concerned, was over; but as late as 1850 there were tri-weekly stages hence to Portsmouth via Durham (Richard Cilley); to Portsmouth via Epping (Thomas W. Aiken); to Dover (W. Libbey); to Gilmanton (Cyrus Corning); to Dunbarton (Isaac Clement); and a daily to Pittsfield, owned and driven by True Garland. The latter, continued until 1868, was the last four-horse stage-coach to keep the road out of Concord; and Charles Sanborn, who succeeded Garland, as Holt Drake preceded him, was the last of the old drivers to swing a whip with a twelve-foot lash.

There was (1842–'46) a weekly three-horse parcel and money express which left Concord at eight a. m., and reached Montreal in fifty hours, by way of New London, Hanover, Montpelier, Burlington, and St. John, driven sometimes by William Walker, Jr., Nathaniel White, or George Herrick. This grew into the daily United States and Canada express. There was another weekly two-horse express to Stanstead.

For several years prior to 1849 the Concord post-office was in a small wooden building which stood on the west side of North Main street, about four rods south of the junction with Centre. This was the final point of departure for mail coaches, and here, after the daily arrival of the morning train from Boston, they assembled, a street full, to await the outcome of the process going on within the humble building, called "sorting the mail," the office being a distributing one. Here in the street was a daily scene. The stage horses had taken their preliminary trot. Brought around from their stable by the chief hostler, a personage like in importance to a cub pilot on a western river, they had swept in a true circle before the tavern sign post, passed the survey of the driver, taken up passengers at the railway station and all about town, and were fretting to be away. Each alert driver was impatient to fasten his stout fingers on the mail pouches of his line, because waiting was dreary, and there was natural longing to lead the procession up the broad street, free of a rival's dust. All the loungers of the neighborhood gathered. A door opened with a thump, and a clerk emerged dragging heavy mail sacks which he flung on the front platform. There was a brisk hustle; then,—

"Smack went the whip, round went the wheels—
Were never folks so glad."

People peered out at all the windows to see who was first to go. It might be Willis Hall, with a basket of small stones on the footboard to fling at an unruly or sluggish leader, or Jacob Libbey, whose kind heart and big, freckled hands guided a team into the Sanbornton Bay country. Whoever it might be one day, it would probably be another the next.

If there was not the foreign coach, neither was there the traditional English coachman, built up on pots of "'arf an' 'arf." Such as he would have cut no figure in a race with Henry George, driving all the way from Concord to Burlington to prove to the authorities that this, rather than any other, was the route for the fortnightly mail between London and Canada.

There was an annual procession in our streets that attracted still more attention. This was the winter afternoon parade of sleigh stages, filled with gay passengers, seeing and being seen, which preceded the yearly stagemen's ball, held usually at Grecian, sometimes at Washington, hall. To this social event gathered stage-owners, stage-drivers, and their friends from far and near,—Stanstead, the two Haverhills, all the Merrimack and the upper Connecticut valleys. Pushee's band was summoned down from Lebanon to rehearse familiar music, and there was at the ball as much merriment and dancing as the hours of one night would permit to a company in rude health and high spirits. Some latitude was permitted in the choice of guests, and the scrutiny of doorkeepers was not too severe.

Along the country side the stageman was regarded as holding a good place among worthies of the time. He could tell to loitering villagers news and gossip from tavern firesides in the larger lower towns. Perhaps Daniel Webster, Jeremiah Mason, Ichabod Bartlett, or George Sullivan had sometime been passengers in his coach, and he had spoken with some familiarity with those great men, or he had exchanged polite salutations with Dudley Leavitt, Professor Edwin D. Sanborn, or the governor of the state. Judges going up to hold court sat beside him, and held the reins while baggage was landed at wayside inns. Perchance he had clinked the social glass with Philip Carrigain, Esquire, and wished him success in his errand at Hanover. On the sightly highest seat of his yellow coach rustic beauties, going home from service or from school, with handsomer faces than those depicted by the skilful hand of the Concord painter on the panels of the coach, perched where the long whiplash made its surprising whirl past their sunbonnets before it shot forward to make its still more surprising crack behind the ears of the leaders on the six-horse

team. School-boys by the roadside swung their caps to the driver, and echoed his cheery whistle to the horses. The village blacksmith and saddler came to the fore wheel to take his orders when he drew rein. All the countrymen deemed it worth while to be on good terms with him, because he knew about their horses, and from his opinion as to what a likely animal would bring at Concord or Portsmouth there was no appeal.

It did not require very abundant resources to provide outfit for a stage line. A Concord coach cost five hundred dollars, horses about eighty dollars each, a set of harness for four horses, one hundred dollars. Drivers' wages in 1839, according to the memory of H. B. Marden, were about twenty-five dollars a month. Tact, patience, and endurance were necessary. So was punctuality. Sandeman Marden went over his route to Portsmouth so regularly that people set their clocks when he drove past. Exposure to rude winters on bleak roads was a condition not to be lightly regarded. The mid-winter defenses of a driver were a long, buffalo-skin coat with a girdle at the waist, deep boots, a thick, knit woolen hood drawn closely over his ears and neck, and leggins of the same material and make. What kept his gloved hands from freezing is one of the mysteries of history.

There were other skilled reinsmen driving out of Concord, whom there has been hitherto no occasion to mention in this narrative, such as Lysias Emerson, Harrison G. Clark, Moses E. Gould, John S. Russ, John H. Elliott, Seth Greenleaf, James Prescott, Albert Foster, Washington Simpson, Hiram Plummer, Daniel Green, and "Trimendous" Clough, whose real name may possibly have been Daniel.

There were few serious local accidents. A northern stage leaving Stickney's tavern at four a. m., went off a narrow causeway at the foot of Chapel street into the gulf of West's brook. Harrison Messer upset the Meredith coach on Bridge street in July, 1843; Fred P. Hill, the Haverhill stage on the Penacook road in 1846; and the Newport coach turned over in 1848 at the Main-Centre street corner. The writer of this page has lively recollections of an overturn of the Nashua stage on a road with deep ruts in Hooksett, about 1839, when William Walker, Jr., was the officiating Jehu. There was an urgent call for smelling salts and spirits of camphor from ladies who had been on top of the coach, but no bones were broken, and no irreparable nervous shocks inflicted. Sleigh stages turned over more easily. One driver upset the Hanover stage seven times in one winter on Choate hill in Boscawen, and lifted up his voice as often to helpful neighbors to bestir themselves and get him out of difficulty.

When stage-coaches were driven off the road many stagemen found employment on railways.

During the coaching period some things carried themselves to market. Cattle from a thousand hills and flocks of sheep facing southward were a common spectacle on Main street; so were long lines of Vermont horses tethered to guide-ropes which were fastened at both ends to driven wagons. At rare intervals in the autumn, flocks of turkeys went slowly down the way guided by men who carried long, pliant switches in their hands. It was a common pastime for school-boys to spend their Saturday half holidays as volunteer aids to drovers in getting cattle and sheep past the side openings and temptations of the street.

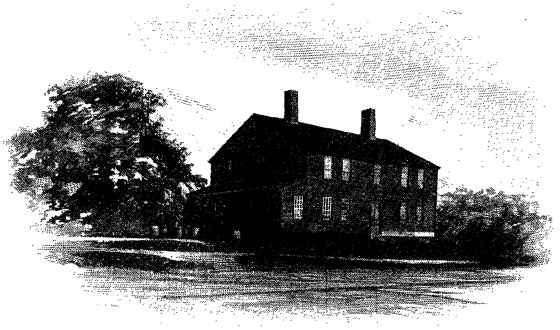
All day long in the winter months of good sleighing, up-country teams—pungs they were called—poured through the town, laden with farm products, butter, cheese, dried apples, and the like, stowed below, while round hogs above pointed their stiffened limbs back reproachfully toward the styes whence they had been torn. There was a perch at the back end of these pungs from which the driver, wearing perhaps a buffalo coat and a fox-skin cap, with the tail hanging between his shoulders, could manage the horses and watch his belongings. The street being so busy with travel, there was need of many places for the refreshment of man and beast, although some of these travelers, like Mrs. John Gilpin, had frugal minds. Such carried food and wanted nothing but shelter, like the first settlers of Concord, who, as their report relates, tarried at the inn of John Barr in Londonderry, refreshed themselves and their horses with their own provisions, and "had nothing of him but Small Beer."

The first public house in Concord was a development of James Osgood's garrison, on the east side of North Main, just south of the junction with Depot street. This refuge from danger became gradually and naturally a house for entertainment. Thither were borne the slain in the fight with Indians on the Hopkinton road, August 11, 1746, an indication that its shelter was then a place of common rendezvous. Osgood died in 1757, and was succeeded by his widow, who kept tavern there, and afterward where is now Exchange building, until about 1798, and history has given to her firesides a convivial as well as colonial reputation. The house which was the first Osgood tavern was burned August 17, 1854. Asa McFarland, in an article entitled "Memorials of Olden Time," printed in the *Statesman* of February 14, 1845, says he was told by an old citizen that the Prince de Talleyrand was in Concord, a lodger at the Osgood tavern, several days during his exile from France, 1793–'95.

There was a tavern long ago at the corner of North Main and Church streets, kept by Benjamin Hannaford, who dwelt there as

early as 1777, and owned that or neighboring property in 1790. That he was a good citizen is shown by the fact that in the latter year he was a contributor toward building a court house large enough to hold the great and general court. He was a carpenter as well as a landlord, and owned outlying farming lands. In 1795 he bought real estate at the north corner of North State and Walker streets, kept public house there, and died in 1810.

The earliest South end tavern was that of Samuel Butters, a portion of which remains, numbered 131 South Main street. The *Concord Gazette* of September 18, 1810, mentions it as having then been a tavern since 1780. During the years of teaming, boating, and staging, it held a desirable location, and was a thriving inn. It was called usually by the name of its successive landlords, who were, as nearly as can be ascertained, Samuel Butters, 1780–1811; Timothy Butters, 1811–'14; John Carr, 1814–'22; Joshua Sawyer, 1823–'29; George Southwick, 1830; William Manley Carter and Carter & Priest, 1831–'42; Leonard Bell, 1843; Daniel N. Hoit, 1844–'45. In its later years it was entitled the Concord Railroad House. It was there that in the decadent days of the old militia the red-coated company of troopers in the Eleventh regiment disbanded. In one of its rooms a meeting was held on February 3, 1795, for the organization of the corporation which built the lower or Pembroke bridge.



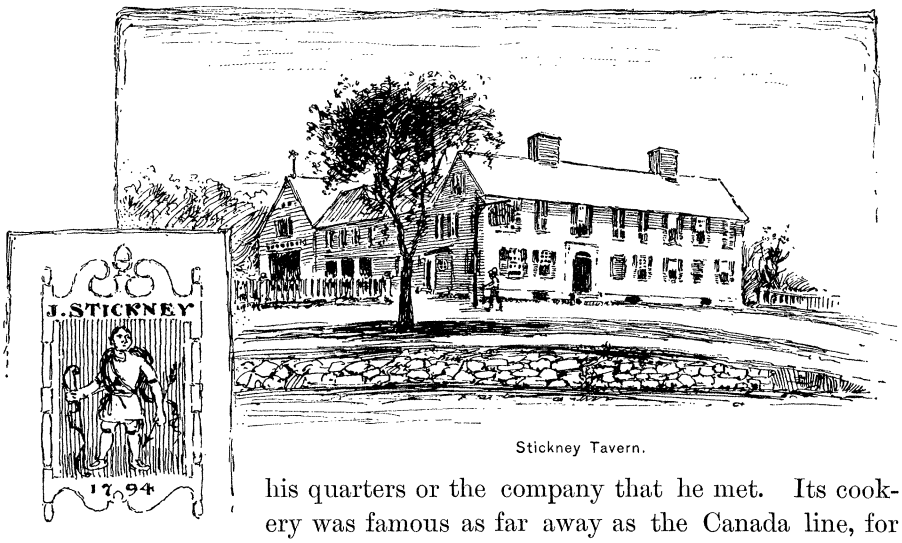
Butters' Tavern.

There was in the last century a Kinsman House. The host was Aaron Kinsman, who served as captain in a New Hampshire regiment at Bunker Hill, and owned an eight-acre estate with a good frontage on North Main street, opposite School. On this site he kept a hotel before 1790, when he married a Hanover widow and moved away to the college town. The property was sold in 1791 to George Hough, who maintained there a printing-office and the post-office; in 1817 it went into the ownership of Joseph Low.

The Stickney tavern, which bore on its sign a picture of a bold Indian chief, was on North Main, just north of its junction with Court street. Broad green yards, gardens, and orchards surrounded it, reaching back as far as Summer street, and enclosing ground now covered by Court street, as well as a part of City Hall square. Its

site came near being chosen in 1816 as the place for the state house. The tavern was a plain, spacious New England mansion, with generous front, sitting high enough to be seen advantageously, well away from the street, and its outbuildings drew off to the westward to hold up a public hall. William Stickney opened its doors to travelers January 8, 1791, and it evidently took first rank among public houses of the town. Both lines of Boston stages drew rein at Stickney's, and up its crescent-shaped driveway, which turned off Main street as far away as Pitman, and returned almost as far north as Chapel street, Pearson and Walker reined their best relays of horses, to the admiration of the towns folk, big and little, who gathered to the hailing note of the driver's approaching horn.

Stickney's was an eminently respectable inn, where a judge of the superior court of judicature might stay and not be ashamed of either



Stickney Tavern.

his quarters or the company that he met. Its cookery was famous as far away as the Canada line, for northern stages stayed at Stickney's.

On March 7, 1798, there was a ball at Stickney hall to celebrate the ordination that day of a pastor for the old North church. That day, too, so Benjamin Gale, taverner, estimated, there were one thousand two hundred sleighs driven into Main street by people who came, nominally at least, to witness the ordination. The hours of dancing parties at Stickney's were seemly, for the newspapers of 1808 make mention of such assemblies to begin at 5 p. m. Wandering portrait painters, too, had rooms and received their sitters at the Stickney tavern. This house kept its good reputation until its close, probably in 1837, and so long as it was a hotel it remained a Stickney tavern, John Stickney having succeeded William at the death of the latter in August, 1827.

Gale's tavern obtained mention as early as 1797, and as late as 1832. It was at the north corner of North Main and Warren streets, and was in some instances designated as "the well known Anchor Tavern, kept by Benjamin Gale." It was a resort of the early post-riders. Being a public house of entertainment, in a good situation, it became a place for important auction sales—say Sherburne Wiggin's tan-yard, or ten thousand acres of land in Stewartstown. In January, 1815, the United States collector of internal revenue invited persons who wanted licenses to keep carriages to meet him at Gale's, and in May of the same year the manufacturers and mechanics of Concord were requested to assemble there on business which concerned them nearly, but what that business was is left to conjecture. Benjamin Gale died in 1856, at the age of eighty-seven years.

It is difficult now to realize that in the early part of the nineteenth century the north end of Main street was the busiest portion of the town. The postmaster was there, and general storekeepers; so were printers, carpenters, jewelers, hatters, smiths, tailors, barbers, and probably other shopkeepers. The Portsmouth Wagon company of 1818 had its headquarters there. In 1815 two taverns were there. One, the Washington Hotel, was the home of Solomon Mann, an estate which he purchased of David George in 1807. David George was himself mentioned as an innkeeper in various advertisements in 1806. The main portion of this house, in existence still, is numbered 250 North Main street. There was a hall of moderate size in a separate building on the premises, which was a place for dancing as early as 1808. A Portsmouth, and at times a Boston, stage departed from the Washington. One of the great events of its time and vicinity was a Fourth of July celebration in 1812, when a miniature ship, the *President*, was brought hither from Amherst, a sham battle fought with an imaginary *Little Belt* on Horseshoe pond, and a dinner served on the field east of the tavern. Another affair was the political ball which the Adams men held on the 22d of February, 1828. For this it became necessary to construct in forty days of midwinter an L to the southward, to contain a spacious hall—afterward known as Washington hall—sufficient for such an assembly, and it is related that the gathering was a brilliant affair, attended by four hundred people of this and adjacent towns.

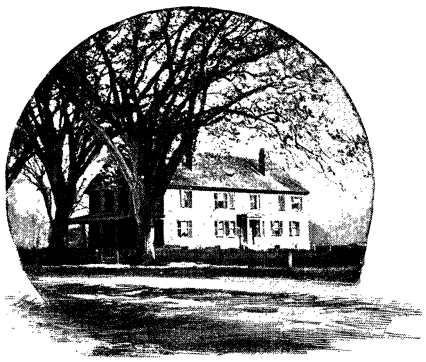
President Monroe was entertained at the Washington in July, 1817, when it was probably at the height of its renown. In 1843, Concord printers, binders, and booksellers had a great supper there, Nathaniel B. Baker, afterward governor, and Jacob H. Ela, afterward member of congress, being of the number.

People still observe the majesty of the four elms, a century old,

which mark the front of the Washington tavern site. In the lower branches of one of these was long ago a large platform, with railing and seats, where a band of music might be stationed, or a group of ladies and gentlemen find an airy shelter from the summer sun.

The teamsters and pung-drivers who frequented the Washington a half century ago were accustomed to pay fifty cents for supper, lodging, and breakfast. This included a cigar and a glass of rum.

The Washington ceased to be a tavern before 1852. Its landlords appear to have been, Solomon Mann, 1807–'11; Lemuel Barker, 1812–'26; John Coleman, 1830; Benjamin Emery, George Southwick, 1831; Obadiah Kimball, 1832; Jacob Rogers, 1834; William Walker, 1836; Daniel N. Hoit, 1837–'42; H. & J. Moore, 1842–'46; John L. Nevins, 1847–'48; and Robert P. Kimball, 1849–'50.



Washington House.

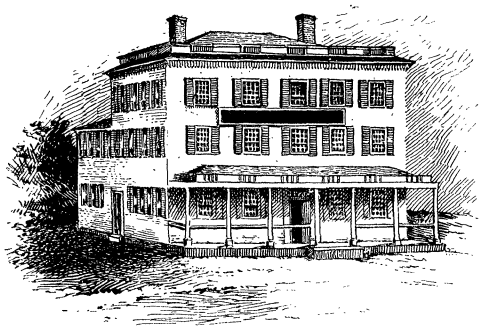
The prosperity of the Butters tavern at the South end brought a rival to its neighborhood in 1810, when Samuel Willey invited the public to "try and see the new tavern, on cheap and liberal terms, at the head of the Londonderry turnpike, at the oval sign of S. W." This tavern was on the triangle between Turnpike and Water streets, and, whatever its success may have been, was occasionally mentioned in print until 1821.

There is reason to think that before 1816 Major Peter Robertson, a townsman of varied accomplishments, was owner of a bake-shop at the northeast corner of what is now State House square. When the capitol was built, this bakery found temporary lodgment just below the southeast corner of the square. Thence it went a little further away to the site of the existing Columbian building, and the major seems to have become taverner for a time as well as baker. In the latter calling he surely had professional success, for the grateful fragrance of his gingerbread lingered long in the memory of boys whose homeward way from the Bell schoolhouse led them at noon past the major's door.[1] There came a day when the premises were enlarged, and Robertson, with Artemas Evans, kept a general store therein. Then it became the Columbian Hotel, and John P. Gass, a young man of twenty-seven, of considerable celebrity afterward, was its landlord. In 1823 the house could seat at table one hundred and twenty-five guests. Mr. Gass was original in his style of writing advertisements. In December, 1823, he said:

[1] *New Hampshire Statesman*, May 28, 1859.

"Gentlemen who may attend the January Court are respectfully invited to make trial of the Columbian Hotel, and it shall not be the landlord's fault if Lawyers do not argue, Witnesses testify, and Jurors unanimously give their verdict in its favor."

In 1825, June 22, the Columbian served a dinner in the State House square to General Lafayette, and six hundred more, among whom were two hundred soldiers of the Revolution.



Columbian Hotel.

The Columbian had abundant stable room, and was a resort for horsemen. In 1830 stages to Boston, Portsmouth, Haverhill, and Charlestown departed from its door. In the glorious days of the state militia this house was the headquarters of the Columbian artillery, a company of no mean repute, organized about the beginning of the century, composed in later years largely of printers. It seems probable that this choice of headquarters fell on Major Robertson's house because in this company, when it marched to the defense of Portsmouth in 1814, like John Gilpin, "a train band captain eke was he."

Mr. Gass left this house in 1826, to return later. After that year there were the following landlords: John Wilson, 1827–'30; Paul R. George, 1830; John P. Gass, 1831–'32; Hoyt & Pinkham, 1833; N. S. Chandler, 1833–'34; Mical Tubbs, 1835–'43; Orin Foster, 1843–'47; Thomas Stuart, 1848–'52; Charles H. Norton, 1853–'55; Thomas Stuart, 1856; Enoch Watson, 1857–'62; Langdon Littlehale, 1863–'66; George C. Fuller, 1867–'68. The Columbian was destroyed by fire February 18, 1869.

George Tavern Sign.

The premises 205 North Main street were maintained as a tavern from about 1814 to 1840. This was the Eagle Hotel, John George, proprietor, and the estate remains still in possession of his descendants. There was an interesting public dinner at this tavern in February, 1815, when toasts were drunk and cannon discharged to celebrate the peace with England. In

the same year William Butters, collector of internal revenue, gave notice that he would there receive the public dues. Governor Benjamin Pierce lodged at this Eagle Hotel when he came to be inaugurated in 1827. In November, 1820, James Madison, barber and hair-dresser, late from Paris (so he styled himself), could be found in constant attendance, one door south, from sunrise till 9 o'clock in the evening,—evidently not a member of any barbers' union. It was Mr. George who gave the name of "Parliament Corner" to the down town locality where the legislature sat.

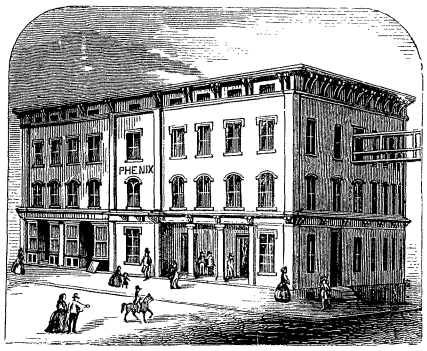
Another Concord hotel around which pleasant memories cluster, was the Phenix (as the name is locally spelled), built by Abel Hutchins on the site of his burnt dwelling, and opened to the public January 4, 1819. Its situation was advantageous, and the mail-stages to Boston via Londonderry, to Hanover, and to Haverhill, came down from Stickney's and made it their booking-place. It was built in the hotel manner of that time, with two front portals and one at the side, broad piazzas, and a large central room where in cool days an open fire gave warmth and welcome to people who lifted the latch.

Old Phenix Hotel.

The Phenix became the rendezvous of gentlemen of the Whig party. There they celebrated their infrequent political victories, and consoled one another in defeat. If they were beaten, they lost neither hope nor honor. A long line of famous names might be culled from its registers, among them those of Abraham Lincoln, Winfield Scott, Horace Greeley, Adalina Patti, Teresa Parodi, Anson Burlingame, Lord and Lady Amberley, Edwin Booth, and Caroline Ritchings. Daniel Webster was often there. The old house was destroyed by fire December 28, 1856, and the existing hotel was built on its site the following year.

Abel Hutchins conducted the Phenix until 1832. Afterward it had the following landlords: Ephraim Hutchins, 1832–'42; William Dole, 1843–'44; A. C. Pierce, 1845–'51; Pierce & Dumas, 1851–'53; S. H. Dumas & Co., 1853–'56; Hutchins & Clark, Corning & Clark, Corning & Dumas, 1857–'62; Dumas & Thompson, 1863–'66; Langdon Littlehale, 1867–'68; J. L. Seavey, 1869–'71; J. R. Crocker, 1872–'75; W. S. Baker, 1876–'80; James R. Hill, 1881–'85; Oliver J. Pelren, manager, 1885–'93. The Phenix has been maintained in connection with the Eagle Hotel since 1890.

The house numbered 220 North Main street was a tavern for a period of thirty years and more, bearing at different times the names of Merrimack House, Merrimack Farmers' Hotel, and Pavilion. During sessions of the legislature it was the abiding-place of a goodly number of "court boarders," as representatives were then termed. George Dame, who was its host in some of its later years, ran an omnibus between the railroad station and his door. On one panel of this vehicle was a picture of an unlucky Portsmouth train butting through the north doors of the passenger station; on another was the state house. In 1856 it made hourly trips through certain streets. The successive landlords of this public house appear to have been,—Richard Herbert, 1824–'34; B. E. Langmaid, 1834–'35; True Osgood, 1836–'37; Samuel T. French, 1838–'39; Stephanus Kelley, 1840; James D. Bailey, 1843; Albert Herbert, 1850–'51; George Dame, 1852–'54; Philip Grant, 1855; C. C. Hartford, 1856–'57.



Phenix Hotel, 1860.

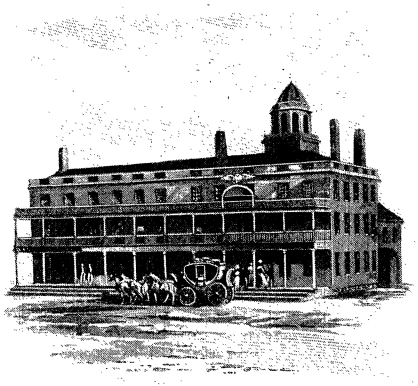
The original Eagle Coffee House was built by William Richardson in 1827 on the site where the Eagle Hotel still stands. The building resembled other public houses of its period in being constructed of wood, painted white, with green window blinds, and having piazzas along the front of its first and second stories. In an L joined to its easterly side, as part of the hotel property, was Grecian hall, the scene of many a hop and festivity.

The landlords of the Eagle have been: William Richardson, 1828–'29; John P. Gass, 1829–'34; Zebina Lincoln, 1834–'35; Hiram Locke, 1835; William Walker, 1836–'49; John Gibson, 1849–'56; Charles H. Norton and S. H. Dumas, 1857–'58; S. H. Dumas and E. Sawyer, 1859–'61; John Lindsay, 1861–'66; H. O. Cram, 1867; T. A. Ambrose, 1868–'71; Nathaniel White, 1872–'73; John A. White, 1873–'89; Oliver J. Pelren, manager for the Eagle and Phenix Hotel company, 1889–1903. Mr. John P. Gass, who left the Columbian in 1826, came to the Eagle in 1829, having been meanwhile landlord of the Broadway House, New York. In 1831–'32 he managed both the Eagle and the Columbian.

In May, 1832, an enlargement was made to the Eagle, and its landlord declared "the living is so good that I have already got the gout, and as for the bar, that is well enough." In the following June he applied to himself the words of Falstaff, "A good portly man, i' faith, and a corpulent, of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and

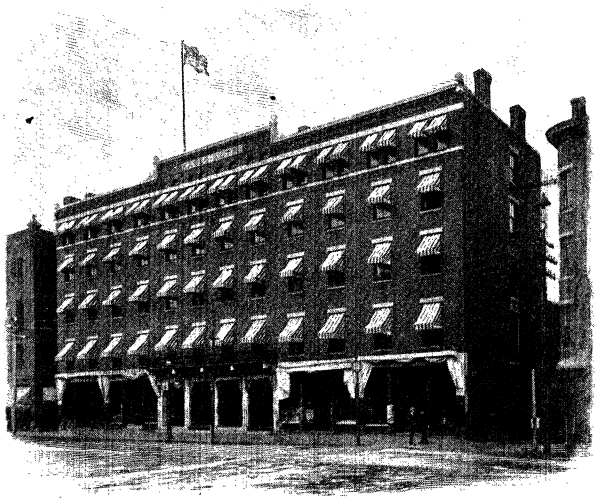
a most noble carriage," and closed with a pun, a bit of unconscious prophecy, to wit:

"Almost every one at all conversant with modern discoveries in chemistry is aware of the many purposes to which *gas* has been applied, but the individual who now addresses the public is not informed that any one save himself has hitherto availed of this important agent in carrying to perfection the art of cookery."



Eagle Coffee House.

Among notable events at the Eagle were the Jackson ball of 1828, and the banquet in 1843 to Colonel Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, the reputed slayer of Tecumseh. In Grecian hall were presented the first public dramatic entertainments ever given in Concord; in July, 1828, for two weeks, such plays as the Honey Moon, and Othello; in the following November, for three weeks, She Stoops to Conquer, the Heir at Law, Timour the Tartar, and others; in November, 1829, for one week, the Apostate, etc. The players in these were the company of Gilbert and Trowbridge. In February, 1835, for one week, another company — among whom are found the names of Weston, Morton, Rounds, Herbert, Spear, and Durivage, —gave The Brigand, Rent Day, Forty Thieves, Major Jack Downing, etc. As there were then none but weekly newspapers, probably many of the plays presented did not obtain printed mention. On Saturday evenings neither of these companies gave entertainments; both gained popular favor. It may be doubted whether so many good plays have since been given in Concord by players of equal excellence. The Gilbert of the first company was John Gilbert, then a youth of eighteen, afterward one of the most famous American actors. Some of the others can be identified with



New Eagle Hotel.

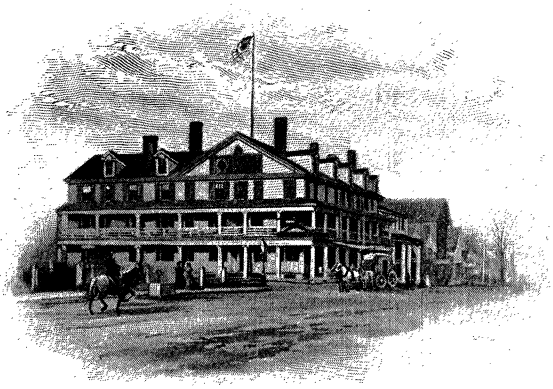
tolerable certainty. The Trowbridges were probably Henry Trowbridge of New Haven, and his wife, a pleasing English actress. Mr. and Mrs. John Herbert, Jr., were both English by birth; her name was Helen Kent. John M. Weston is mentioned with commendation in dramatic chronicles. He was a favorite at New Orleans and Mobile. J. E. Durivage and George G. Spear were Boston actors of good standing; the last named died a few years ago in the Forrest Home near Philadelphia.

There were noted names on the books of the Eagle, among them Andrew Jackson—who, it is said, neglected the dainties and ate bread and milk—Benjamin Harrison, Levi P. Morton, who dwelt there when in business in Concord, 1841–'43, Sam Houston, and, in 1853, Jefferson Davis and A. D. Bache, who visited the White Mountains under the guidance of our townsman, William P. Hill.

The rates at the Eagle may be taken as specimen charges at the better Concord hotels. These in the time of William Walker were one dollar a day. Tourists to the mountains paid one dollar and fifty cents, and if a guest looked like a real millionaire two dollars was rather timidly suggested.

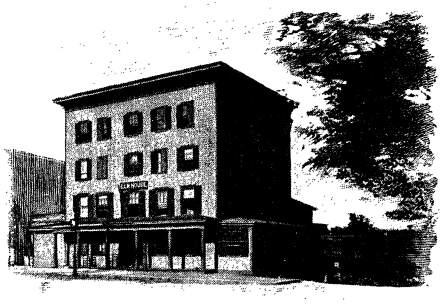
The original Eagle Coffee House was destroyed by fire August 25, 1851. It was rebuilt in 1852 as the Eagle Hotel, and enlarged and reconstructed in 1890.

The hotel which first had the name of American House in Concord was a spacious and picturesque structure, bearing family likeness to many New England taverns of its time, three stories in height, with white paint and green blinds, two-story piazzas on both fronts, standing at the north corner of North Main and Park streets, with two entrances on one and one on the other street. It was built in haste, to be ready for the assembling of the legislature of 1834. Six weeks of April and May weather sufficed for its construction. It was in an admirable place; the real estate in the block northward of it was rather better then than now, and the dining-room and gentlemen's parlor had outlooks toward the State House square. More than thirty years this hotel was a grateful abiding place to many travelers. Its atmosphere was peculiarly agreeable to men of the Democratic faith, and it sheltered noted individ-



Old American House.

uals of that party before and after the nomination of General Franklin Pierce for the presidency. The names of James K. Polk, James Buchanan, Commodore Charles Stewart, who sailed the frigate *Constitution* in 1813–'14, George Barstow, John A. Dix, John Van Buren, William F. Richie, editor of the *Richmond Enquirer* (who married Anna Cora Mowatt), Levi Woodbury, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Isaac O. Barnes, and Isaiah Rynders, could be found on its registers. Pierre Soulè once made an address from the upper piazza. It was conducted by the Gasses, John P. and John, and was regarded locally as in the same rank with the Eagle and Phenix hotels. J. S. Appleton took charge of it in 1859 or 1860, and Charles H. Norton in 1861–'62, Oliver E. Coffin, 1863–'67, and John Muzzey, Jr., a few weeks before it was destroyed by fire July 13, 1867. George W. Hoyt—the father of Charles H. Hoyt, writer of many plays—was clerk with John Gass for a considerable period, about 1845–'52.



Elm House.

The Elm House, which for nearly half a century occupied the northeast corner of North Main and Pleasant streets, was a dwelling before the railroad station was located. In 1844 it became a hotel. Its site was so advantageous, and it was usually so well conducted, that it was always prosperous. Its landlords and their periods of occupation, as nearly as they can be stated, were William M. Carter and John Priest, 1844–'52; William M. Carter, 1853–'55; Albert Foster, 1856–'66; J. S. Dutton, 1867–'75; George F. Bean, 1876–'77; John L. Coffin, 1878; Brown & Wilkinson, 1879; Poore & Brown, 1880–'81; Dutton & Moore, 1882; Thomas Gray, 1883–'87; Merrick & Martin, 1888–'90.

The widening of Pleasant street in 1890 occasioned the removal of the Elm House, which obtained its woodland name from a handsome group of trees which stood along its front. The last of those trees was felled October 30, 1871.

The Brown tavern at West Concord was built by William Fiske in 1808. Orlando Brown was its owner, 1810–'36; Mrs. Orlando Brown, 1836–'39; George W. Brown, 1839–'50. This was a house of note and prosperity. Divested of its barns, which formerly sheltered forty or sixty horses nightly, it is standing at the corner of North State and Knight streets.

There is early mention and nothing more, of the Sun tavern (1792), of William K. Smith's hotel (1817), Nathan Walker's (1827), and

Smart's (1829). The house of William Low, formerly at the corner of Main and School streets, and that of John West, which was opposite the Historical Society building, have been mentioned in a sketch of Concord as taverns, but such they never were.

There have been within the town limits wayside inns which obtained a share of the tavern business, sheltered drivers and teams, and fed flocks and herds on their way to market. Such were the East Concord taverns of John Hoyt, 1780–1805; Ebenezer Eastman, 1795–1830; Nathaniel Ambrose, 1810–'20; Meshech Lang, 1825–'30; Isaac Emery, 1812; James Eastman, 1835–'36; Aaron Austin, 1800–'13;[1] and Samuel Carter, 1828–'53, the last being at the corner of the Canterbury and Sewall's Falls roads. It has not been very long since occasionally at nightfall a time-honored vehicle drew up at the door of this ancient hostelry, a traveler looked out, with an interrogation mark on his face, for the well-wrought old sign-board, bearing "1828" on its panel, which has been in honored retirement these forty-seven years, inquired if that was the Carter tavern, and found shelter because of the traditions of the place. Then there was Barnard Elliott's tavern on the Borough road, once the main road to Hanover, 1830–'40; that of B. H. Weeks on the Hopkinton road, 1805–'30; and that of Samuel Farnum, which has been the property of the family above a hundred and fifty years, on the West Concord road, now North State street, 1831–'40. Captain Enoch Coffin, who dwelt in a house which stood where is now number 1 Fiske street, is mentioned as an innholder in 1797.

Washington Hotel, Penacook.

A tavern on the Loudon road, 1861–'80, known in common speech

[1] A glimpse of the social life of East Concord in old tavern days is shown by an invitation in existence yet, written in a careful hand on old English paper. It reads as follows:

"Saml. W. Lang presents compliments to Miss Polly Eastman and will be very happy to accompany her to a Ball at Mr. Austin's on Wednesday the 5th of June at 3 o'clock p. m.

Please to send an answer by the Bearer.

I am, Dear Madam,

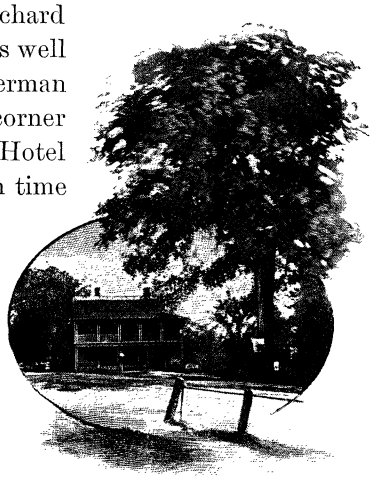
Your Humble Servant

S. W. LANG."

Aaron Austin's tavern was at the corner of Shawmut and Penacook streets; John Hoyt's beyond the Mountain; Ebenezer Eastman's in the home of the late John L. Tallant; Nathaniel Ambrose's, in the house of David Morrill; Meshech Lang's, opposite the site of the Eastman school, and James Eastman's stand is at the corner of Penacook and Depot streets.

as the "Break o' Day," will not escape recollection. The Birchdale, near Birchdale Springs, built in 1868 by Dr. Robert Hall, was an attractive resort until destroyed by fire July 26, 1885.

There was a hotel called sometimes the Union, afterward the Merrimack House, on North Main opposite Bridge street, 1852–'61, in a house formerly the residence of Captain Richard Ayer, destroyed by fire October 4, 1861. That, as well as the existing American, started as the Sherman House, 1864; the Central-Commercial House, corner of North Main and Centre streets, 1876, and the Hotel Nardini, may present more graphic features when time shall impart perspective to their history. The Washington Hotel at Penacook was built in 1846, and has had George Dame, Major Jeremiah S. Durgin, the Edgerlys, Morrisons, Gilman Shaw, John Hopkins, Cornelius O'Brien and others, as landlords. Another famous tavern is Bonney's, just across the river at Penacook, but largely associated with the history of Concord. There have been within the town lines other public houses of lesser note.



Bonney's Hotel, Penacook.

The canal-boat and the stage-coach have gone more surely out of local use than have the canoe and the snowshoe. Old tavern methods are gone, too. The bell which the host rang at noon by the front door, with many a dextrous sweep of the arm, is laid away; likewise the Chinese gong, which made the guest wince and the household Argus howl. Seven hundred travelers' horses can no longer find nightly shelter in our tavern stables. The last of the old stagemen, who not many months ago gave us a page of his recollections, has gone to the country whence no traveler returns. The portly landlord no longer stands in Macgregor's place and carves the roast. The bar where decanters stood in as plain sight as were the andirons on the hearth is banished. The old American House where loud voices discussed the Dartmouth college case years after it had been decided in the courts, and the old Phenix, where friends of Webster and Clay read their speeches aloud by the winter evening fire, both went out in smoke. Stickney's, where the great London banker, George Peabody, once in his youth sawed wood to pay a tavern bill, and Colonel Darrington, Philip Carrigain, and Major Bradley danced to the music of dark Heman Tye's fiddle, is nothing but a memory. If one could find the shelter of the old Eagle Coffee House, it would be proper now to select a pair of sheepskin slippers from the public supply in the half-open bar-room drawer, light a candle, and go quietly to bed.