

**Characters, Houses and Events of the
Forge Pond District**

by

Helen Tyson Woods.

Notes and Comments

by

Emily F. Drew.

Notes and comments by E. F. D. on Mrs. Woods' paper on Characters, Houses and Events of the Forge Pond District, not in the spirit of unkind criticism, but with the intention of throwing yet more light on the chronicles which Mrs. Woods desires to perpetuate.

Mrs. Woods quotes Mr. Walter Faunce as saying that the community was one of the oldest settlements in the United States. Mrs. Woods was thinking in terms of the Forge Pond district, whereas I think Mr. Faunce referred to the older larger community of Jones River of which Forge Pond is a part. Settlement at Jones River, near its mouth began very early, probably soon after 1628, certainly before 1630, whereas I find no record or reference to any settlement at the headwaters of the river until about 1735 (?) when the Cookes sold to a group of men certain lands and the privilege of erecting a New Forge, the old one on Hall's Brook not being adequate for the business which came in. There had been a sawmill at this point before 1731, but that does not pre-suppose a dwelling house, as a grist mill might. Mr. Alexander Holmes, a descendant of the Holmeses of "North West" (Forge Pond), in his very careful research regarding the Forty One Original Petitioners, places Jonathan Bryant at the house on Grove Street (Hanson Road) mentioned by Mrs. Woods as the Peleg Bryant house; West houses also on Grove Street, near its crossing of Jones River; and other houses to the north or northeast of the Forge on Beaver Dam and Pine Brook, but not at the North West Forge. This was in 1717. There may have been other houses which Mr. Holmes failed to find, but I question whether there was any considerable settlement at the head of Jones River, i. e. the Forge Pond district, until nearly one hundred years after the first settlements along the seacoast, or Bay. It was not until lands available or suitable for farming had been divided as far as was desirable, (near the coast (the first grants)) that the virgin forest was invaded by those looking for home sites. Sawmills there were, for the turning of raw material into lumber was a profitable business hereabouts, but generally the establishment of a gristmill is a better sign of a settlement. The gristmill at the New Forge privilege (Forge Pond) was established or mentioned in 1751; that at the Grove Street crossing, established by Jonathan Holmes in 1767, was the one where Miller Tom Johnson served as miller, as mentioned by Mrs. Woods.

Mrs. Woods' house may be the oldest in this neighborhood. I had supposed that the Eben Plimpton house was older, but there is certainly some evidence of the Woods house being built by someone previous to Col. Charles Holmes. I must search the records and see what I can find regarding earlier ownership of these two houses. The type of house represented by both the Woods and Plimpton (Moody) houses is "ageless", but we do find several of the type here in Kingston which were built between 1690 and 1750. The gambrel-roofed type represented in the house called by Mrs. Woods "the Squire Holmes house" was built around here between 1753 and 1765 or if not built at that time, re-roofed.

Col. Charles Holmes, son of Jonathan and ^{Rebecca (Holmes)} Mary (Waterman) Holmes was born in Kingston, January 26, 1769. He married Rebecca Briggs of Halifax, in Halifax, January 15, 1797. He died in Kingston, February 17, 1845, aged 76 y. 22 d. "strangury". (John F. Hall was born December 11, 1837, which would have made him about 7 yrs old when Col. Charles died.)

*I + certainly
facts with
as to the
Squire Holmes
house (a sym-
metrical
house
Olmsted
house
facts of the
highway (int)*

*Wish
Holmes
Woods*

I wonder what "war" Col. Charles Holmes could have served in, and where and how he gained his title or rank of "colonel". He may have served in the second war with England, 1812-4, tho we think of that as a naval war; he may have served in the Indian wars which preceded the great French and Indian War which began in 1754; he may have served in one or more of the expeditions against Canada. The incident regarding the horse may have had no connection with war, or may have been an incident of some militia meeting or "muster".

The Bearse or Long Point estate, mentioned by Mrs. Woods, was held in the Bearse family for many generations, and the old family burial plot is still in evidence there. Mrs. Abigail Adams, wife and widow of Samuel Adams of cotton factory fame, who was born a Bearse, enclosed the little burial plot and erected memorial stones to certain of her ancestors.

Sarah, daughter of Joseph and Mary (Brewster) Holmes married John Bearse of Halifax. The Bearses were connected with the Holmes mills at Forge Pond, and owned lands in the vicinity of Jones River Pond, now Silver Lake. Check up and see if the Long Point estate was ever the land or home of John Bearse, and how it came into the Bearse family if John did not own it. John Bearse was a well-to-do man and owned a great deal of land which came into the possession of, I think, Jonathan Holmes at the time he was enlarging the Forge at North-West and raising the level of Silver Lake as a storage basin.

Mrs. Woods was misinformed: Mrs. James Holmes was born Lucia McLauthlen, daughter of Robert Jr. and Pamela (Holmes) McLauthlen, who inherited the home place of Joseph and Mary (Brewster) Holmes at Egypt, or who bought out the other heirs so that they acquired it.

Where was the North West schoolhouse at this time? I had supposed the children from the Forge Pond district went, at this time, to a schoolhouse at Egypt, which they would reach by following the old road from the Forge to the Jonathan Bryant place near the Second (R.R.) Crossing, then by the Holmes sites to the clearing where there was a schoolhouse from early times. It may be that by the time Mr. Edwin Maglathlin (born 1849) was old enough to go to school, the schoolhouse had been moved from Indian Pond district to the corner of School and Pembroke Streets, where it stood until recently. The statement that the little boy hurried to his mother's on Grove Street (which would have been almost on his way to school if the schoolhouse was still at Egypt) makes me wonder if here again Mrs. Woods had misunderstood something which had been told her, --- or if, on the other hand, I am the one in error. *a schoolhouse was built at North-West in 1792? See SVS 200th booklet under schools*

The Porter Reed tack factory had been acquired by Horace Maglathlin and run by him for some time before Brockton acquired the water privilege at the Forge Pond.

The old Squire (Jedediah Sr.) Holmes house as it is called by Mrs. Woods, is of the gambrel-roofed 1753-65 type mentioned. I have the feeling it was built by Jonathan Holmes Sr. for his second wife, Rebecca Tilden. They were married in 1752. His son Jonathan Jr. son of the first wife, Mary Waterman, married Rebecca Holmes in 1763. A second son Micah married Rebecca Bradford in 1753. Still another son, Jedediah Sr., known as "Squire" Holmes, married Sarah Adams in 1773, which was later than the house was built, I think. The squire could have acquired it some time after it was built. Check up.

*d 1845a
76 = born
1769
first before
Revolution
only war*

*John B. Adams
Mary (Wagon)
John Holmes
1753*

*John B. Adams
Mary (Wagon)
John Holmes
1753*

*Mr. Lane
Bryant said
Silver Lake
children went
to school
from the
house
to school
to school
to school*

*See
Notes?
#6*

*Micah was son of Joseph and Mary Waterman, and brother of Jonathan Sr., + much of Squire's
Micah sold his place to Col. Charles Holmes rich a house on it.*

It was the Silver Lake School which was moved from Indian Pond district

The Old Mill Hill.

Here we come all hale and hearty
Down the hill a merry party,
Dinner pails swinging, all intent,
Grasping the branches, twisted and bent,
Each one a motive, a wise old look
To be first to cross the Old mill brook.

Some would stop to wade in the stream,
Others over the rail would lean,--
To watch the water come bubbling through --
From under the road, a pretty view,
And the grand old maple bound to lean,
With spreading branches, o'er the Old mill stream.

One, down the horse briar path would march,
Eager for the fish sleeping under the arch,
With pants rolled high, frock buttoned snug
He neither feared Snake, Turtle, or bug.
One with steps as fleet as could be
Would stop under the Loring sweeting tree,
Which stood in the corner of the little field,
That partly shaded the Old mill wheel.

Two would climb the cherry tree
To gather the grapes, as sweet as could be,
While a laughing girl, round as a Spud,
Would jump on the wheel to catch lucky bugs.
You can guess who this was, not wait a minute,
To the size of this spud, there has been no limit.

Another, with auburn hair, slickly combed,
Never stopped to play but tiptoed home,
A little brown jacket, clean calico dress,
Neither paused, nor lingered to play with the rest.
With a sober face, cautioned one of the others,
"You come straight along, or I shall tell Mother."

Then away we would go, up Grampa Drake's hill
Leaving behind the scenes of the Old grist mill.

I don't remember when the Mill ground corn,
But I do of hearing Harvey tell of plaguing Miller Tom.
George McLauthlen too, a sport, tip, top,
Used to stuff the chimney, the smoke to stop.
George, and Bill, and Oliver B---
Used to add a bit to the fun you see.
Hiram, and George W--- and Orin C---
With a dozen more were in the spree.
I heard mother say when I was quite young,
They were valuable neighbors, Aunt Elsie and Uncle Tom.

The house is still standing, the well with its pole,
A part of the cleared land, the brook swimming hole,
Where early in Spring time, Father would freshen you see,
A ham in a meal bag, tied firm to a tree.

The Old Mill Hill #2.

Oh! well I remember the hard cinder hill,
Where I stubbed my toes, and occasionally fell.

The tall pine trees walled it in, on one side,
When icy in winter, a good place to slide.
The Holmes apple, Pearmain, (one is there still),
And the many good times spent,
On the Old Mill hill.

I wonder if Leora would remember the time,
I tied on my boot-tap with a piece of cod line.
We would not be satisfied, took a few more slides,
Although the ice was melted,--
Nearly off the sunny side.
Seated on her sled once more, down the hill she flew,
Until she struck a soft place,
(Something like a poor man's stew),
Off she went, like a Pickerel, I tell you, it was
quite a spill,
This ended our sliding, on the Old Mill hill.

Dear Brother,

I have written you hurriedly a verse I wrote a year or more ago. You will remember the little hill we came down before reaching the brook. There were Frank Drake and Morton Hamilton (his cousin) in wading, Horace under the Arch, Helen and Nathan climbing trees, myself after the lucky bugs, Ella Drake under the Loring Sweeting tree, Carrie tiptoeing home. You were not there in them days, but you will remember all the names included. --- It is just for you. --

(The verses were written by "she that was" Angie Maglathlin and sent to her brother Edwin Maglathlin, now of Lake Street, Kingston, and by him loaned to me for copying this day. The Old Mill Hill was probably the hill at the Jonathan Holmes Grist mill on the old Hanson Road, now Grove Street, Kingston. Grandpa Drake's hill on which the old Miller Tom Johnson house still stands and which Marden Drake owned and occupied was on Grove Street nearer Plympton Railroad station and the Silver Lake village of today. Leora (Drake) Bryant is the one of whom Mrs. Helen T. Woods speaks so interestingly in her paper on the Silver Lake Neighborhood, "Leora" being the one who sat for her daguerreotype. Horace, mentioned, is Horace Maglathlin who with his brother "Uncle" Ed(win) are the last survivors of a large and interesting family. I am very glad that "Uncle Ed" allowed me to copy the verses which show so vividly the simple, childish pleasures of an earlier generation.

Copied January 6, 1936.

Emily F. Drew.

Edwin M. died in 1936 or 7 in Kingston
Horace died 1942 or 3, in Florida, at his winter home.

Both
Some
1943.

The old "Squire Holmes" house is a charming old house, and the more recent owners have done much to increase its comforts according to modern standards, without decreasing its quaint charm. The old, original, house was however lovely in its simplicity, as can be seen from the photograph of it as it was before changes were made. (See Plate _____).

This is the house associated with the "bride" or "grandmother's" rose, of which Miss Helen Holmes tells so charmingly. A bride of the family, a daughter of the house, coming or going as a bride, planted a slip of a rose vine beside the front door of the cottage. The vine grew and flourished and was cherished by generation after generation in the Holmes family, slips from the vine going out to start the garden of many a Holmes bride, taken from the "grandmother's" rose vine. Other branches of the Holmes family came to call it the "bride" rose, but the Holmes descendants of the Forge Pond family always called it "grandmother's rose". Within a few years, Miss Holmes discovered the same rose in Europe, where it was called "the white rose of the House of Savoie". It would be interesting to learn the connection with the little Holmes bride of North West. Was she Sarah Adams? Or did Rebecca Holmes bring it from her old home at Egypt? And if so, is there a connection with Mary Brewster, daughter of the Elder's house of Brewster and friend of courtiers and nobles in England?

The Porter Reed place was owned ^{recently} in recent years by Feri Felix Weiss, interpreter and Secret Service agent for the Federal Government for many years. Mr. Edwin Maglathlin, the "Uncle Edwin" mentioned, has within a few years built a house next to the Porter Reed place and opposite the Moody (Plimpton) house, where he is constantly in sight of his beloved Silver Lake. He had previously lived at the Barse or Long Point estate, after some years in or near Kingston village.

The story regarding the Miller Tom Johnson house may be wholly correct, but to me the evidence points to a house built at two quite different periods, just as the old cottages were in Old England. This seems to be the site of the house built by, or owned by, Elisha West in 1717. It has the old-time capacious chimney. The chimney at the westerly end of the "extension" is of modern type, yet this may be the older end, the chimney having replaced a huge, older one. I have never been inside the house nor studied it at all carefully. Miller Tom lived there and Marden Drake, at a later time. Now owned by Wallace Maglathlin, son of Onslow and Hattie (Bradford) Maglathlin.

Mrs. Woods might be thought to place the mill run by Miller Tom here at the house. The mill, erected by Jonathan Holmes and others in 1767, stood where Grove Street crosses Jones River, the old flumes, piling and the water-wheel or gears showing plainly at the present time. The gristmill building was moved by Alexander Holmes down to the Triphammer privilege in or about wartime (1861).

Regarding the brick house at the Plympton station, I do not believe the present house existed as early as Revolutionary War times, altho I may be very wrong. I think the house was built or remodelled by Capt. Richard Johnson, father of Thomas Jefferson, who was son of John and Mary. Capt. Richard or Richard Francis, Johnson married twice: (1) 1790 Mary or Polly Turner; (2) 1832, two years after the death of Polly, Mrs. Sally Mason of Pembroke. He was a sea-

of Peter
of Sarah
of Mary
of Rebecca

Said
1941?

captain, and he was also interested in several of the mills which were established here in Kingston. Like so many of the mill-owning families, Holmes, Cooke, Tilden, Turner, Bearse, Hyde, Stetson, who married and intermarried, he chose a wife who was of the same class, in this instance kin of the Jacksons and Lothrop's of Plymouth. Capt. Johnson was one of the owners of the mill on lower Jones River where the United Shoe Machinery Co. (formerly E. P. Hurd) now own, and in 1825 he bought out the interest of Seth Johnson in the upper Forge at North West, but whether he was actively interested in the upper Forge I do not know. With his children, Capt. Johnson was financially interested in the Foundry on Smelt Brook and before that, the same business as conducted in what had been the first Baptist Meeting house. (Verify this. The children Francis and Sally were owners; was Capt. R. F. J.?)

As for the house, I have always understood that this was one of the houses which were built in Kingston about 1805. Mr. Walter H. Faunce told me years ago that the Bradfords, brick-makers, got out a lot of brick for building purposes; that the best ones went into the Johnson house at Plympton station; and that the poorer ones were used to built the brick house on the north side of Main Street now owned and occupied by Dr. Harry R. Briggs. At a later time, after Mr. Faunce's memory became less reliable, he told me the same story except that the poorer brick went into the Stephen Bradford house on Wapping Road now owned by Dore, which was the home of Stephen Bradford, brickmaker and potter. The Briggs house was Bradford also, having been built in 1808 by Spencer Bradford son of Stetson. The Dore house is supposed to have been built in 1805 or 1806. If either of these houses was built from the poorer brick, then it would seem as if the Capt. Richard Francis Johnson house must have been built not far from the same time, which would be between 1805 and 1808. Tom Jeff Johnson lived in this house with Capt. Richard.

If the Tom Jeff Johnson house was not built until about 1805, the statement that soldiers on the way to Concord and Lexington gathered in front of the house may need some modification. It may be they did gather in the field which is in front of where the house was later built, or in the "Spring Pasture" where shade and cool clear drinking water near the forks of several roads, would have made an attractive meeting place. The "Spring Pasture" is opposite the junction of Lake and Grove Streets, and the spring was probably the one used by the earliest inhabitants of the neighborhood. *In hollow north?*

At the auction when the possessions of Thomas Jefferson Johnson were sold, one of the interesting pieces was a Liverpool pitcher called "The Two (or three) Pollys". On one side was a picture of Capt. Johnson's ship and on the other, so I have been told, a picture of a beautiful woman, which might stand for his wife Polly, or his daughter Polly, or both. I have been told that Mr. Horatio Adams secured this pitcher.

The story of the Johnson man who hurt his head finds a parallel in the story of "Silver Head Tom" said to have been Tom Clark of Plymouth who was tomahawked by the Indians at Eel River, injured so that he became imbecile, and according to Jane Austin, operated on by Dr. LeBaron and made sane again. See "Doctor LeBaron and his Daughters", chapter on Silver Head Tom.

Pelham Brewster, who lived in the house restored by Maglathlin & Stein, owned the beautiful "Grove" on Silver Lake, where so many

(1) Mr. Faunce are

Mrs. F. Lane (2) (Hill) Wash. house, who took thousands of cows by first (milk) string

R.R. and agency book which feeds the farm. Then runs into Jones River below. Street from

pleasant picnics have been held. There is a lovely view up the Lake from this place, also. On this or adjoining property, the famous Silver Lake Excursions were held, at the time when the railroad company ran excursions, with picnic dinner, steamboat trips on the lake, and general sports. Then steamboat racing the length of the lake was added as an extra attraction. All went well until one day the boiler of one of the boats exploded injuring many, who were cared for by the people living around the lake. I believe there were some deaths and many painful injuries. This put a stop to the excursions and altho the picnic ground was used to a limited extent for some years (I went to more than one Sunday School picnic there about 1890), the lovely grove fell into disuse.

Charcoal, made from wood, was used in the early days in the smelting of iron. Any group of investors starting to form a company or partnership for the purpose of establishing a smelter or furnace, recognized the fact that large tracts of woodland were a necessary part of the equipment. "Hundred acre woodlots" were mentioned in connection with the forges and furnace here in Kingston. Charcoal produced the best results. When there was no other fuel, they had to use it. As coal became known, it was believed that it would replace char- or wood-coal for blast furnace and smelter use as it had done along other lines. After ~~considerable~~ experimenting with the new fuel, iron workers found that they could not secure as good results using coal as by the old method, and went back to the use of charcoal. Here in Kingston, I understand that the foundries gave up the practice of smelting their own iron or using local product, because of the difficulty of securing iron ore locally, and the expense of importing it from New Jersey, about the time coal came into use; but in the western part of the state, where furnaces continued to thrive for some years longer, coal gave way to the earlier charcoal, as giving better results. Bridgewater and Easton, as well as Pembroke and Kingston, were "iron-mill" towns.

The man "who built boats" and who sold the boat to the Maglathlin boys was probably Ichabod Peterson, "Uncle" Ichabod, as he was called. He lived in Stony Brook neighborhood.

The railroad was extended from Whitman in 1845. Previous to that time, passengers came out from Boston by train to Whitman and rode, drove or walked from Whitman home. My great grandfather, John Chandler and other members of his family did that when they came down, to visit my grandmother, Rebecca (Chandler) Holmes, and her husband, Joseph Holmes 2d. This is probably what Peter West Maglathlin did, altho Horace probably walked all the way from Boston with his little colt.

Peleg Brooks of Kingston ran the Plymouth and Boston Express for many years. He lived in the house later owned by G. Herbert Clarke near the hotel. Later Charles Childs carried on the same business. People entrusted them with all sorts of errands and they were a valuable part of earlier life in Kingston. These local express agents succeeded the earlier stage drivers, after the railroad came through.

The curious naming of a child of a second marriage was not unusual here. Many times a widow or widower married a close friend

of the previous spouse, and this may have been the case with Seth Delano and Ephraim Bradford. It certainly is a curious custom, if there is no such explanation as I have given.

I have never heard of any such lawmaking for Turner, Maine, as Mrs. Woods describes, tho we may have done it here in Kingston. It would seem, that unless the entire town of Turner returned in the fall to Massachusetts, the representation here would have been insufficient to justify making laws for those who did not return from Maine. It seems probable that those who emigrated to Turner, carried with them the manners and customs they had followed in the home town, as they naturally would have done, even to following regulations determined at the annual town meetings at home. I do not know of any rulings or votes recorded in Kingston regulating the acts of people living and working in Turner, Maine.

Every community had its "flaxing place" where flax was rotted and prepared for hatching or breaking, before it became spinning fibre or tow. Smelt Pond in Kingston was long used for the purpose and other quiet coves where the beach was clean and sandy and the water clear and shallow, were selected as suitable for the preparation of linen thread for spinning, weaving or sewing. By the presence of thorn trees, I wonder if The Flax Waterin place was also used as a place to wash sheep or fleeces. I have never heard of any fulling mill near Silver Lake, but local fleeces could have been washed there, in small quantity. I say this because we hear often of thorn trees springing up where waste from fulling or carding mills were established. Sometimes they are said to have grown from seeds carded or washed out of the wool; sometimes they were said to have been planted so as to provide a plentiful supply of thorns for tying up bags of prepared fleeces. One such tree, a beautiful great ^{thorn} tree, stood until a year or two ago on the dam of the carding mill on the Fountain Head Brook in Kingston. This use of thorns and watering places to bleach the flax is new and interesting to me.

Arthur Moody died March 2, 1935 in Florida, Palm Beach, I think.

I do not think Mr. Walter Faunce was correct in saying the three Holmes houses were built by three brothers, altho three brothers may have lived in them at the same period. Jonathan and Mary (Waterman) Holmes had three sons: Jonathan Jr. who committed suicide; Squire Jedediah; ~~and~~ Charles; but Charles did not live to grow up. Col. Charles was son of Jonathan Jr. and Rebecca. I do not know of any three Holmes brothers occupying at the same time. Jonathan Sr., Jonathan Jr. and Squire Jedediah could have, and probably did. Micah may have, but was he a brother? *He was a brother of Jonathan Sr.*

The same is true of the three houses Mrs. Woods mentions in the latter part of her paper: Malatieh (Bouchard's), William, his son (Capt Amos Witherell, or Mrs. Tobey's); and the old place on the cross road between John F. Hall's place and the Bryant place on Grove ^(Beach farm Robert H.) Street. Tradition seems weak here.

Initials "J. H. and J. Holmes" might be those of any one of several members of the family. Joseph, Jedediah, Jonathan, repeat in several generations.

My notes the

located near [unclear]
went to N. West school
(see Old Mill Hill - poem)
following Egypt Road from
Brow St. & the Bryant fork
road, taking right fork
road, cleared. Left fork
passes Ina Holmes house
comes out on Park St
John Hall's house & mill
Park cut hill ^{not path} ^{John Hall's house at West St.} ^{impact house + into original}
road ^{cut}

#2 Uncle Ed M. says there is an old
cellar hole back of his (new) house
on Lake St. That may be
the Elisha West or it may
be that of the son
who inherited the southern
half of his father's farm.

#4 Mrs Frank C. Hill says
that she lived there so
it was the J. J. Johnson
she said "I don't think it strange
that we lived there so
many years (the Johnson town with
strongly the Johnson town with
& lived around from town into
the area for many years a great
many years."

#6

Thomas Holmes lived in
that district, is listed
among tax payers as-
signed to watch Holmes
as highway surveyor