

Old Landmarks of Litchfield.

The Section Known As Potterstown—Some of the Old Families and Homesteads—Reminiscences of Old Settlers.

[Written for Lewiston Journal.] Litchfield is a town that has done much to make up the history of Maine. The old landmarks are still there and the names of the pioneers are still borne by its leading people. In common with many country towns it has greatly suffered by the migration of its sons and daughters who have gone out to enrich the industrial and intellectual centers of other states but even the despoiled of much of its best blood it still remains as a model community. Some of the old homes are still here, but in many cases are used merely as summer resorts for the descendants of those by whom they were reared. In other cases they have disappeared and only a moss-grown cellar or the clid ruin remain to mark the spot once trodden by the feet of happy childhood.

It was a lovely day in early autumn when the writer made the tour of the old town in company with Mr. A. P. Hildre and Horace Libby of the city. The first stop was made at the house of the late and there a stop to examine the relics of some pioneer or enjoy a chat with some of its people who could tell the legends of the old days.

On returning from the old cemetery, described in our former article, a brief stop was made at Litchfield Corner and a call made on James E. Chase, the village trader. An interesting man is he and one of the solid pillars of the town. Here is the old Congregational church, whose organization dates back to 1811 and where many generations of worshippers have come and gone. Among the distinguished men who have preached in this congregation was Rev. Daniel Lovejoy, father of the great anti-slavery leader and martyr, Elijah Lovejoy. Well has Rev. Smith Baker said of the men and women who have worshipped in this church of Litchfield: "No painter's brush has shadowed their plain faces upon canvas, no sculptor's chisel has carved their rugged features upon marble, no poet's verse has immortalized their names in song, no monumental pile perpetuates the day of their death in bronze, no historian's pen records their deeds for future libraries. They were only plain, common men and women who were born, lived, died, sacrificed, worshipped, buried, and were buried in common graves. The present generation has quite forgotten them, and to the next generation they will be unknown as pebbles dropped into the ocean."

Burning words are these and only too true. The animals now burrow in their graves, but every leaf that floats in the morning air, every flower that blooms by the wayside and every song bird that warbles its notes of joy with the breaking of the sun over the eastern hills will help to swell the grand anthem which reminds us that nature never forgets to honor her dead. Just across the way stands Litchfield Academy organized in 1844. Not an old institution of learning is this, but one that has contributed many distinguished men and women to our common country. Between this Academy and the old Litchfield Liberal Institute a bitter rivalry once existed, but time has leveled all wounds and to-day the two schools are merged into one. The Academy is now under the direction of Chas. A. Rush, A. B., and is still enjoying a fine prosperity. These old academies still have their place in our educational system and fortunate is Litchfield in having one under so able an administrator as Prof. Rush.

From Litchfield Corner our route was CORNELIUS TOOTHAKER'S HOME—AN OLD LANDMARK.



LIBBY HOMESTEAD ON LOON POND STREAM, IN FRONT OF WHICH STOOD THE FIRST GRIST MILL IN THIS SECTION.

over the Richmond road which is one of the oldest in the town. We passed long stretches grown to bushes and brambles where years ago were



ORAMANDAL SMITH.

cultivated farms. Said Mr. Libby: "I can remember when Isaac Starbird had a fine farm here and his fields were the best in this section. It pains me to now look at this place in its present wild condition." A little farther along the road and the old homestead and birthplace of the late James Nickerson was reached. This gentleman was long a resident of Lewiston and conspicuous as a prominent citizen. The old house, once the abode of a large and happy family, is now vacant and fast going to decay. Not far away is the last remnant of the Isaac Chase place which years ago was Litchfield. Here was a great farm and finely cultivated fields, but to-day only the cellar walls remain to tell the sad tale of desolation and neglect. And then we drew up at the country home of Hon. Oramandal Smith, which may easily take rank as the finest country estate in Litchfield to-day.

Mr. Smith is one of the best known citizens of Maine, as for many years he has been before the public in official positions. He is a direct descendant of one of the pioneer families, and for 65 years has lived on the old homestead on this wife. For twelve years he was a teacher and supervisor of schools, and then represented the town in the Legislature. In rapid succession he was then made commissioner of insurance, assistant clerk in the Maine Legislature, secretary of State, member of Governor Powers' and finally State treasurer. No ordinary man could thus tread the thorny path of political preferment and make so great a success.



CHARLES A. RUSH, A. B., Principal Litchfield Academy.

quite likely it was from him that the place took its name. Still another saw mill was built by Daniel Perry on Loon Pond stream, and all of these continued

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ORAMANDAL SMITH HOME, LITCHFIELD.

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Industries gave to Potterstown its deserved reputation as being the industrial centre of the town. Near by, and yet within the limits of the ancient Potterstown, we came to the birthplace and early home of Mr. Libby, our guide of the excursion. This gentleman is a descendant of a pioneer family as his grandfather, James Libby, came here from Bowdoin in the early days of the last century. He became a prosperous citizen of the town and after raising a fine family of five sons and four daughters, was gathered to his father's full of years and honors in 1881. This son, Samuel Wentworth Libby, became a resident of Lewiston and remained here until his death in 1888, honored and respected by all. Mr. Horace Libby, who figures so largely in this story, was born in Litchfield, in 1848, but he has for many years been an honored resident of Lewiston having come here with his parents while yet a young man.

The Libby family were important factors in the older generation of Litchfield. They owned a large grist mill near their family home and for many years conducted a large business. This mill was built in 1790 by a man named Tibbetts, and by him sold to the elder Libby in after years. While standing by the old ruin Mr. Horace Libby said: "This place is to me a sacred spot. It was here that I was born, and here I passed my childhood days. My grandfather, James Libby, bought this mill of Mr. Tibbetts in 1800 and I can easily remember when this yard was daily crowded with teams bringing their grain. Our house was also built by Tibbetts and dates back to 1770, which makes it one of the very oldest in town. This mill was built at a later date and there was much excitement when they commenced to bolt flour. This has never been done in the town before and naturally it brought much patronage. It doesn't look now very much as it did when I was a boy. Everything here seems to be going to decay, although I can still see many things to remind me of my childhood days. The dam of the old grist mill is now gone but there remains several reminders of this once flourishing industry. The mill stones which were placed there more than a century ago are now lying on the banks of the little stream and these are mute witnesses of an age that has forever passed. The stream is dry and the whole place is again reverting to the wilderness. The father of Mr. Libby sold the mill to Joseph Williams in 1823, and continued to run until 18 years ago, when it was dismantled and became a ruin.

While standing on the former site of the old Libby mill we were met by a fine appearing gentleman who in a simple

lar manner was wandering among the ruins. It turned out to be Mr. H. Shorey of Chicago and on saluting him he remarked: "I was born on this spot and am here today to take one more look at the dear old place. When I was a child this was a famous place and people came here from all the surrounding country for business and pleasure. There was a debating society here 60 years ago and able speeches were often heard in the old hall where the meetings were held. To me it is very sad to see the place so different, but I suppose it is the fate of humanity."

The John Randall farm remains much as it was in the days of yore. For 20 years this man was a deputy sheriff, and during that time became a terror to all evil-doers. This was in the long ago, as he was one of the pioneers of the town. More than 50 years ago he was old and infirm in addition to being in straightened circumstances financially. Being a member of the Masonic fraternity, a large number of his brethren in the mystic tie gave him a visit and incidentally left a goodly sum of money. The tribute was deserved, as he was one of the bravest of officers and most faithful of friends. The old farm is still kept up and a granddaughter of Randall still lives on the place.

Reaching "The Plains," in Litchfield, several objects of historic interest were found. Here is the Baptist church, and just across the street is a large and fine appearing cemetery whose central feature is the soldiers' monument. This beautiful and stately statue was procured largely thru the efforts of the Libby Relief Corps, and will long stand to the credit of its members as well as to the memory of the boys in blue. This is comparatively a new burial ground, and to this fact is doubtless due its clean and well-kept appearance. What will it be 50 years hence? That is the true test in matters of this nature. Without public ownership and a system of perpetual care it will surely go the way of all our old burial grounds in the past. History hath not one page regarding this matter, and as soon as the interest of a generation passes on, the succeeding one will allow this yard to pass into desolation and decay. All this might be avoided if public ownership, and this would impose no special hardship on the generations yet

"The pioneers suffered very much at the hands of the proprietors who were Massachusetts men. These pioneers for the most part were originally squatters and the actual proprietors said nothing but allowed them to go on and make improvements of all kinds. After



JAMES E. CHASE, Litchfield Corner.

clearing the forests and building roads and developing their farms the proprietors came on and forced them to pay from three to four dollars per acre for the land. It meant ruin for many of them but the law was with the proprietors and the pioneers had to settle or quit. Some of them abandoned their

30 years before the proprietors came upon them with these demands. It was a cruel thing to do but they had no choice but to pay up or leave their homesteads.

Living here in Litchfield at that time was anything but a picnic. Before the Libby mill was built the settlers had to carry all their goods on their backs to the Cobbeosecontee stream where it was taken by canoe to Gardiner to be ground. That was the usual method, although many would take it thru the woods to Topsham a distance of sixteen miles. It was a hard life that they led, at least, and many doubt so by the expectations of the Massachusetts proprietors."

Litchfield has produced her full share of noted men and women and the names of many of these have passed into history. The Lovejoys of anti-slavery fame once had their home in this good old town, and here they first imbued their hatred of that dark blot on our national escutcheon and civilization. The family names of True, Smith, Palmer, Wedgwood and Chase are among the most numerous in the town as they have also been the most progressive and influential. Hon. William H. McAllen of Belfast, was born here and educated in her old academy. Thru all the years that have passed since childhood days he has never lost his love for her hills and vales. Many other strong characters have gone out from Litchfield, but the ties which bind them to the old town remain unbroken. No matter what political or social honors may have fallen to their lot they still love and reverence the spot made dear by the memories of childhood days. They will not soon forget the example and the advice received in the town of their birth, nor cease to practice those virtues which came to them as a part of their birthright. Well has the illustrious Byron said: "The best of future prophets is the past." Judge by this standard, it is easy to predict that Litchfield will long continue to contribute their full share to the glories of our civilization and the prosperity of the generations yet to be.

L. B. Bateman.



MILL STONES AT SITE OF LIBBY'S MILL, LITCHFIELD.

to be. It is simply a matter of public duty and public decency.

And then we stopped a moment to look at the stately old mansion once owned by Deacon Cornelius Toothaker. While the good old deacon was not a pioneer, he was at least an early settler, as he came here from Harpswell in 1810, and here he soon became recognized as one of the ablest business men in this entire section. If he was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth, he at least had the ability of putting one there himself, and for many years previous to his death was known as the wealthiest man in town. He was a man of more than ordinary executive capacity, and his home was one of the business and financial centres of the town. Lacking the advantages of education, he made ample provision that his children should not be reared in the same manner, and to each of them he gave the best possible training. If he was shrewd in making money he was never suspected of unjust methods in gaining it or of being miserly in its use. He was a man of high ideals and was one of the first to respond and advocate the cause of the southern slave. In an age when the use of liquor was well-nigh universal, he became a pronounced temperance advocate and identified with the first movements in that cause. In short, Deacon Toothaker was one of those strong characters who always make a deep impression for good on the age in which they may live. The Baptist church at this place was organized and built up largely thru his efforts and his memory is now revered as its founder. The soldiers' monument is just in front of this church, and may be regarded as the finest work of art that the town can boast. This statue is the work of John True of Auburn, and it speaks volumes for his ability and skill as a sculptor. There is nothing else of special interest to be seen at "The Plains." The Litchfield fair grounds are close by and here the people gather each year to perpetuate the custom of the old-fashioned cattle show. It is one of the last of the old-time town shows, and we may add that it is one of the most successful.

And then the horse's head was turned towards home and Mr. Hildre's recollections. But few towns in Maine have seen more ups and downs than

homes as they could not meet the obligations. This is only another evidence of the injustice of the early titles to these wild lands in Maine. In the town of Bowdoin, where I was born, the pioneers were treated much better. They came in as squatters, also, but the proprietors only charged them two shillings per acre after they had made many improvements. What made the matter much worse for the Litchfield settlers was that they had lived there

Hints from the Medical Men.

Home Remedies for Croup. I had five children who were subject to croup in the worst form, and I lived seven miles from a physician, says a contributor to Pictorial Review. My eldest boy died before the physician could reach him. My serious problem, then, was, "How could I meet this dread disease until help could arrive?" An old lady solved the problem by telling me of a method that had been used in her family and neighborhood for 25 years, not only for croup, but also for pneumonia and diphtheria, and which had proved infallible, even in cases which had been given up by physicians. Chop 20 onions; add same amount of rye meal and vinegar. Simmer until thick. Fill three bags with this paste, putting one on throat and lungs, the others on soles of feet; give doses of syrup made by putting sliced sugared onions between hot weighted plinics. The most of two sets of poultices, kept as hot as the patient can bear and changes made so quickly and deftly that there will not be a moment's exposure of body surface. The result is magical.

Disease Scents. "Every disease, almost, has its peculiar odor," said a doctor. "This odor helps us greatly in diagnosis. "Gout imparts to the skin a smell precisely like whey. Diabetes causes a sweet, honeylike smell. Jaundice occasions a smell of musk. Smallpox has a very strong and hideous smell—it is like burning bones. Measles has a malodorous smell, like that of a hen with a fresh-plucked feather. "The fevers have most distinctive odors. The odor of typhoid is ammoniac; that of intermittent is that of brown bread hot from the oven; that of typhoid is musty, recalling to the mind old, damp cellars; that of yellow fever is like the washings of a dirty gun barrel. "So, you see, to speak of a doctor

MONUMENT, LITCHFIELD PLAINS.

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scouting out disease is not to use a mere figure of speech."

Treatment of Muscle Strain. A muscle which has been strained either by overuse or by use in some unaccustomed way often gives rise to such serious symptoms as to lead to a diagnosis of some other and more serious trouble. This affection is not the same as that called myositis, which induces a constant pain in muscle, but is usually of rheumatic or neuralgic nature. The trouble here meant is something less serious, being nothing more than a strain, says Youth's Companion.

It is easy to see that any muscular pain may be mistaken for rheumatism or some acute inflammation, as it may give rise to precisely the same painful symptoms. For example, when it occurs in some muscle of the right side of the abdomen it has been known to look for a time exactly like the colic of appendicitis, and it has time and again been treated like true rheumatism.

There are several ways in which the facts may be discovered. On questioning it will be found that some muscle or certain set of muscles has been subjected to an unusual strain and is in a state of mutiny in consequence. The pain will be worse at night and better in the morning after the night's rest, proving that it has a basis of fatigue. Furthermore, it will yield entirely to a proper amount of rest. In fact, this is one thing—rest—comprises the whole of the treatment.

When the abdominal muscles are involved there must be rest in bed, with perhaps some anodyne to deaden the pain at first—this, of course, to be given only under the order of a physician. In milder cases the patients can go about their usual duties if fitted properly with an abdominal belt.

When the muscles at the back of the neck are affected it is a great relief always to use a high-backed chair, and when the pain is in the arm a sling should be worn. When this condition of painful muscles is found in conjunction with general loss of tone, as shown by lack of appetite, pallor and debility, then in addition to local rest to the particular muscle involved, a general course of tonic treatment should be instituted. When the trouble can be traced directly to the daily vocation of the sufferer, change should be made in the habits for a time where this is possible. Unfortunately with most persons their habit has well become a habit, and in these cases there is nothing to do but placate the part with all the rest that can be given. It is better to make a chanical support for a time if this is feasible.

Snake Bites. As is well known, not all snakes bite, and not all that do bite are poisonous, but it is not always easy to distinguish between the harmless and the poisonous reptiles by their looks. Appearances in the snake world, as well as elsewhere, are often deceitful, and it is not safe to assume that a strange snake is harmless because he looks like one that is known to be non-poisonous. One had better, therefore, not make an intimate acquaintance with any snake if his exact status in ophidian society is not known.

In this country the principal poisonous snakes are the rattlers, the moccasins and the copperheads.

Snake venom belongs to a large group of organic chemical compounds called proteins. The poisonous effects are usually both local and general. The local effect is a severe inflammation with hemorrhage, often ending in gangrene. The systemic effects are marked by convulsive symptoms, followed by paralysis, death occurring usually thru paralysis of the nerve-centres, which control respiration. Sometimes it is due to thrombosis, or the formation of blood-clots in the heart and large arteries.

In the treatment of snake bites the first object is to prevent the absorption of the venom by tying a cord or rubber band as tightly as possible round the limb, between the bite and the heart. Then an effort must be made to get rid of the poison in the wound by cutting it freely, so as to promote bleeding, and sucking out the venom.

Thirdly, an endeavor must be made to destroy what remains in the tissues. This is the result of accomplishment but the best remedy is probably a one per cent. solution of permanganate of potassium, applied freely to the wound and in contact with a hypodermic syringe into the tissues in the neighborhood of the bite. A solution of hypochlorite of lime, one grain to the dram used in the same way, is also recommended. Proprietors, hunters and others who are in danger of meeting snakes in their traps, often wisely provide themselves with a piece of rubber tubing about one-third of an inch in diameter, some permanganate of potassium and a bottle of distilled water—in order to make a solution quickly—a hypodermic syringe, and some aromatic spirit of ammonia as a stimulant. Whisky is less useful than the ammonia, and it is no sense an antidote.—Youth's Companion.