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VOL. XXIX, 1892**

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JAN., FEB., MARCH, 1892.

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HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS
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VOL. XXIX. JAN. TO APRIL, 1892. Nos. 1-3.

THE DWELLINGS OF BOXFORD.

BY SIDNEY PERLEY.

(Continued from Vol. xxviii, page 56).

136.

CURTIS CELLAR.—There is an old cellar about a quarter of a mile west of Mr. George W. Curtis' residence, where, it is said, stood the original Curtis house. Zaccheus Curtis, from Gloucester, erected his house here, when he settled in Boxford about 1661. By his wife Joanna he had half a dozen children, of whom Zaccheus, jr., became the ancestor of the late Francis Curtis, and Ephraim, under his father's will, which was made upon his death-bed in 1682, became possessed of the old place, which he resided upon.

This is all we know of this old cellar.

The following lines were written years ago, but the writer is unknown :

“ O little house lost in the heart of the cedars,
What would I not give to behold you once more!
To inhale once again the sweet breath of your roses,
And the starry clematis that climbed round your door—

“ To see the neat windows thrown wide to the sunshine;
The porch where we sat at the close of the day,
Where the weary foot traveler was welcome to rest him,
And the beggar was never sent empty away;

(1)

“The wainscoted walls, and the low-raftered ceilings;
To hear the loud tick of the clock on the stair;
And to kiss the dear face bending over the Bible,
That always was laid by my grandfather's chair!

“O bright little garden beside the plantation,
Where the tall fleurs-de-lis their blue banners unfurled,
And the lawn was alive with the thrushes and blackbirds,
I would you were all I had known of the world!

“My sweet pink pea-clusters! My rare honeysuckle!
My prim polyanthuses all of a row!
In a garden of dreams I still pass and caress you,
But your beautiful selves are forever laid low.

“For your walls, little house, long ago have been levelled;
Alien feet your smooth borders, O garden, have trod;
And those whom I loved are at rest from their labors,
Reposing in peace on the bosom of God!”

137.

E. S. GOULD HOUSE.—The small house in which Mr. Justin Curtis resided a few years ago was built by Eben S. Gould about 1873. A Mrs. Johnson also lived here awhile.

138.

JACOB GOULD HOUSE.—The house in which Capt. Jacob Gould resided during the Revolutionary period is quite old.

Captain Gould was born in Topsfield in 1729, and was a son of John Gould. He married Elizabeth Towne of his native place in 1751, came to Boxford and it is believed built this house three years later.

Mr. John H. Gould of Topsfield, the genealogist of the Gould family, thinks that Captain Gould's father, John Gould, moved to Boxford from Topsfield and built this house about 1725, and that Capt. Jacob was born in it. There is evidence to show that he is right.

There used to be an old house here, and perhaps the father built the old one, and the son the present one. In the old house about seventy years ago lived Molly Smith. She was quite aged, and the house was also very old. She had one room, in which she kept a loom and used to weave as long as she was able. The house was a mere shell. Mrs. Eliza G. Lane, a lady who was born at this place in 1804, writes :—

“The room was ceiled, and looked very black, the entry and upper part being nothing but boards. I think grandmother told me that her father Gould built it for one of his children, but which I cannot tell, though I am inclined to think for a daughter. One of his children lived in it. The house has been down as many as sixty years. This Molly Smith lived with her mother over in the woods south of Stoney field. Molly was quite aged. She probably looked older to us when we were children than she really was.

“I well remember many pleasant chats I heard between my grandmother and her, and also visiting her, or running in as we called it. Many pleasant recollections come to my mind of bygone days, and some painful ones also.”

Jacob Gould was chosen captain of the military company of this parish, and marched with them under his command when the news of the battle of Lexington came. He died in 1809, at the age of eighty. He had twelve children, one of whom was Huldah, mother of the late Ancill Dorman, Esq. His son Jacob settled at No. 142, and John in this place.

John Gould was born at this place in 1778, and married Polly Prince of Danvers, who died in 1847. Mr. Gould followed her in 1864, having passed his life of eighty-five years on his birth-place. He left three children, Mrs. Lane, who has already been mentioned, Olive, who always

lived at home, and died at the age of seventy, having never married, and Polly.

Mr. Gould took down the oldest part of the house about 1824, and built the eastern end. The chimney being in a bad condition he erected the present one at that time. Benjamin Herrick of Topsfield was the carpenter and Porter Bradstreet of the same place was the mason employed in making these changes in the house. Of the present house Mrs. Lane writes as follows:—"I think the westerly part of the house is some over two hundred years old according to the information I received from my grandmother, and that the easterly or more ancient part was built forty or fifty years before. There were three windows in that part of the house, one decent sized one and two smaller ones. One had only four squares in it. Upstairs, the room was only a shell, and had one small window, with diamond-shaped glass set in lead as a sash. There was a door on the easterly end of the house that opened outside. That room was quite large and ceiled with dark looking boards.

"Mr. Joseph Gould of Topsfield went up into the woods with his team and was some distance above the house, when, by some means, the tackling that held the horse gave way and the chains fell on his heels. This frightened him so that he ran down the road past the house very furiously with the chains striking his heels. He began to descend the hill, a few rods beyond the house, when he turned a somersault. When he got up, his head was toward the house and the open door. There was no fence around the house, and he came rushing in at the door. He ran furiously into the fire-place, hit his head pretty hard and perhaps burned himself a little. There were eight persons in the room. My grandfather, then almost four score years of age, was sitting with myself and baby-brother in