

OLD DARTMOUTH HISTORICAL SKETCHES

No. 6

Being the proceedings of the Summer meeting of the Old Dartmouth Historical Society, held in the Town Hall, Fairhaven, on June 29, 1904, and containing the following papers:

FIFTY YEARS ON THE FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL
BOARD

by Job C. Tripp

THE TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN IN FOUR WARS

by George H. Tripp

[NOTE.—The "Old Dartmouth Historical Sketches" will be published by the society from time to time and may be purchased for a nominal sum on application to the Secretary].

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SUMMER MEETING
OF THE
OLD DARTMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
AT
FAIRHAVEN, June 29, 1904

Mr. Crapo, the president, in opening the meeting, expressed in behalf of the officers of the society, their satisfaction and appreciation of the cordial co-operation and efficient service rendered by the Fairhaven members in promoting the objects of the society. Referring to the local history of Fairhaven as full of interest and importance, he spoke as follows:

"Although the grandchild of old Dartmouth in municipal incorporation, Fairhaven can point to events which transpired within its borders which ante-date the early doings of other parts of the ancient town. Some who live across the river at times speak of Ralph Russell and Anthony Slocum, who located at Russells Mills in 1662, as early settlers of Dartmouth; but the distinction of pioneer settler belongs to John Cooke. His name, with William Bradford, Miles Standish and others, styled purchasers and old-comers, appears as one of the grantees in the deed

from Wasemequin and Wamsutta, which deed was executed in 1652, ten years prior to the coming of Russell and Slocum. John Cooke's signature was affixed to that deed. He was the chief promoter and negotiator in the purchase. Prior to this transaction he must have traversed this region from the Acushnet to the Acoaxet and after he had explored the 104 square miles of territory embraced in the grant he selected for his home the fairest spot in Fairhaven, Oxford village. Mr. Cooke was a man of prominence in his day, holding many public offices in the town, and his name is first on the list of those who took the oath of fidelity.

But I did not come over the bridge to talk about John Cooke. For me to do so would be rank presumption. Every Fairhaven boy and girl in early childhood is taught the story of John Cooke, and a knowledge of his career is essential to eligibility for membership in the Im-

provement society. I have mentioned him to demonstrate that Fairhaven can go back as far in antiquity as any of the neighboring towns.

The earliest local controversy of which we have knowledge is connected with the eastern boundary of old Dartmouth, the dividing line between Fairhaven and Mattapoisett. The deed from the Indians in this respect was vague and indefinite. It described the east boundary line as three miles east of the Acushnet river. But from what point on the river should the three miles be measured? If measured from some point on Sconticut Neck near the bay, instead of from Fort Phoenix, the territorial area of the grant would be materially increased. This early led to a dispute between the Indians and the settlers. The dispute was carried to Plymouth, and year after year came before the Plymouth court, to the great annoyance of the court. At last, in 1667, to be rid of the matter, as the record says, the court directed that Robert Hazzard of Rhode Island should run the line and report, and if he could not be procured that John Cobb of Taunton should perform the work. This was done, and the next year, after due consideration and to end the controversy, the court ordered that the three miles be measured from the river, and not from the bay, and that the tree that had been the bound so long the court saw no reason to change, and that the inhabitants must rest satisfied therewith. The inference from the record is that the Fairhaven men of that day wanted all that belonged to them, and were insistent in efforts to secure it. But what concerns us tonight is whether the site of that black oak tree is known, and if known, whether the selectmen of Fairhaven and Mattapoisett, who are required by statute to perambulate at stated times the town lines, have marked the spot with a suitable and permanent monument.

The disposition and temper of the men of Fairhaven from the earliest days has been that of independence in thought and action, an unyielding stubbornness in the maintenance of their opinions, and a readiness to contend for what they believed to be right. There are many incidents in the local history of the town confirming this estimate of Fairhaven character. You have read the story of the first naval conflict of the War of the Revolution, which occurred in the outer harbor of the Acushnet, when Captain Nathaniel Pope of Fairhaven, in the sloop *Success*, recaptured two vessels which the British sloop of war *Falcon* had seized and fitted out with British officers and seamen for the work of plunder along our coast. Their capture by Captain Pope

was an exploit as worthy of admiration as any achieved by Major Fearing. When the news reached the peace-loving people living on the west side of the river, they were horrified at the audacity of the act. They said there had been no formal declaration of war, that Captain Pope and his men had no commission from any authorized body, that the act would provoke the resentment of Great Britain, and the *Falcon*, then at anchor in Tarpaulin Cove, would come up the river and burn their dwellings and destroy their shipping. They insisted that the British officers and sailors who were held as prisoners by Captain Pope must be at once released and sent back to the *Falcon*, that it might avert disaster and reduce the severity of the punishment for such an illegal act. The Fairhaven men demurred and stoutly refused, but fearful that the peace sentiment of Bedford village might prevail, they marched the British by night to Taunton and lodged them in the jail. Neither international law nor humanitarianism could prevail against the Fairhaven sense of patriotism.

Another illustration of Fairhaven spirit is found at the time of the political controversy that preceded the war of 1812. Fairhaven favored war with Great Britain, New Bedford opposed the war. The west side of the river, with its larger population, controlled the affairs of the town. Fairhaven could not endure the mild-mannered Quakers of New Bedford, and so it seceded and set up housekeeping on its own account.

In my boyhood there were differences of opinion and contentions between the New Bedford boys and the Fairhaven boys. I remember the conflicts when the river was frozen over, and New Bedford boys used to go over there in numbers, while the Fairhaven boys would meet them midway the stream, each party determined to drive the other back and invade their territory, and both determined to resist to the death. There were many tumbles on the ice and numerous bruises and much rough encounter. In those days the New Bedford boys sometimes called the Fairhaven boys "Corsicans" in tones of reproach, the epithet being the survival of an earlier period, when the star of the belligerent Napoleon was in the ascendent.

But whatever animosity existed between the boys, there was no antagonism between the New Bedford boys and the Fairhaven girls. The old toll bridge received many, many fares from ardent New Bedford youths who crossed the river to pay their adorations to the pretty Fairhaven girls. Such is the softening, subduing influence of woman.

One of the obstacles which the student of early local history encounters

is the seeming improbability or inconsistency of the early narratives when the light of recent years is thrown upon them. For example, Gilbert Archer was the journalist and historian of the Gosnold expedition. He chronicled what took place on the voyage and he recorded what occurred on the land. No one doubts the accuracy of Archer's narrative. He was not given to falsification or exaggeration. We know that Gosnold and his voyagers landed on the mainland, where they had many interviews with the Indians. There were no Indians on Cuttyhunk. We know they came up the Acushnet and Apponegan-sett rivers, and doubtless they landed on the Fairhaven side of the Acushnet. Archer relates that the Indians they met here had articles made of copper, trinkets and crude implements. The Englishmen were curious to learn where the copper came from, thinking they might be enriched by the knowledge of the deposit. They interrogated

the Indians, who replied by taking a stick and making a hole in the ground and then pointing downwards, indicating that the copper came from the earth. But where? No one supposes that any of Massasoit's tribe of Indians went to Montana for their copper. But where did they obtain it? That question has puzzled historians for more than 300 years.

A few weeks ago the Morning Mercury with sensational headlines made the startling announcement that copper had been excavated in Fairhaven. This seemed to be a confirmation of Archer's narrative and to promise a solution of the mystery. But alas! the Evening Standard rudely crushed our exultation with the statement that the copper found was nothing but the remnants of an old copper kettle. Let us hope that some Fairhaven member of the Old Dartmouth Historical Society will yet reveal the secret and tell us where the Indians found their copper.

Fifty Years on the Fairhaven School Board

By Job C. Tripp

In giving this company some account of the Fairhaven town schools in the olden time, my narrative must necessarily be incomplete, for although my memory runs back to 1835 and since that time I have been connected with the schools either as scholar, prudential committee or school committee, this connection has been a broken one. The most I can hope to do is to give you some hint or illustration here and there from which you can estimate the spirit of the times and the steady advance made since then. As this paper is largely filled with my own experiences, please pardon the personal element that appears. In the early time the best schools were the private schools. My first recollection of school life was when I went as a little boy to a private primary school kept by a young lady. Her mode of punishment was peculiar. The naughty boys were compelled to sit on a seat with a girl. It is only recently that this teacher has passed away. To me it seems strange and hardly possible that my first school teacher should have lived to such an advanced age.

Later on I attended in 1840 the public intermediate school located on the north

side of Centre street opposite the Unitarian church parsonage, where schools had been established for the primary and intermediate grades. This was the first school house of any pretensions erected in Fairhaven and was built by the firm of Fish & Robinson in the early thirties I think.

It is astonishing how the mind will go back and remember little things of the most trivial importance while matters of note at the time are entirely blotted from remembrance. At this school it was the custom in the morning to read short selections from the New Testament at the dictation of the teacher. A young and green Irish boy struggled with his verse one morning and then rendered it "And he arose and rebuked the wind and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased and there was a great CLAM." The roar of laughter and the apparent earnestness of the boy and his subsequent confusion are still with me. On another occasion at the close of an afternoon session, the teacher informed the pupils that at that precise moment in London, England, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert of Germany were

being married by the Archbishop of Canterbury at Royal chapel, St. James, in the presence of the nobility and aristocracy of England. Although this was 64 years ago, this incident was vividly impressed upon my mind and has remained there with full force to this day. The personality of the teacher, the stillness in the room, the words spoken and even the bright sunshine streaming in through the western windows. In this school I have no recollection in connection with either scholar or teacher other than the two incidents named.

A short time after this a private school was established in the old academy at the Fairhaven end of the New Bedford bridge. Lewis Bartlett was teacher, and a most excellent one. Children over the primary grade were taught, but mostly children requiring the higher grammar grades. The school was so fully attended that a new school house was built on Spring street to accommodate the increasing numbers. One of the rooms was devoted to the boys under Mr. Bartlett. The other room for girls under Mrs. Bartlett.

There was at this school a dark colored (almost black) boy with straight black hair, shy and quiet in his demeanor, always gentle and polite and profoundly interested in his studies from his A B C's to the higher mathematics, including navigation. The story of this Japanese youth, Nakahama Mungero, and how he was rescued with his ship wrecked companions from a lone rock in the China seas by Captain Whitfield of this town, how he was educated by the captain in the best schools, how he returned to his native land at the risk of his life, how he was finally promoted by the Japanese nation to positions of power and honor and the important part he probably played in connection with Commodore Perry of the United States navy in opening the ports of Japan to the world, thus showing how the world is indebted to a New England country school for the consummation of such important results, reads like a fairy tale.

It was a short time after this and in consequence of the good results springing from the Bartlett school that the citizens voted to have a public grammar school, which was established in 1843 in the upper story of the new school house formerly referred to, under excellent teachers, one of whom is still living in town. The school was a success. This was the last school that I attended in Fairhaven.

Later on in 1852 action was taken by the town to establish a high school. The building formerly occupied by the Methodist church near the new bridge was bought for that purpose and has been used ever since; but at present is found to be inadequate to meet the

wants of the increasing numbers who apply for admittance.

I think my earliest connection with the town school system was in 1854 in the district school period and when the town house was placed half way between the village and the Head of the River, to accommodate that part of the town which is now Acushnet and which since then has been set off as an independent township. Being a young man at that time right in the height of the know-nothing political movement I was amazed at my election by that party as chairman of the town school committee. When at this meeting an appropriation for schools was asked for all eyes were turned on me, a man who had no practical knowledge as to the wants of the schools, I never felt in my life so much like a veritable know nothing as I did then; but a man behind me punched me in the ribs and said in a low voice, "Ask for \$6000." I did so, fully expecting the motion would be defeated, but to my surprise up went a sea of hands in response and the motion was carried. This sum was considered extravagant by some of the citizens, as it was considerably in excess of former appropriations, but remember, this sum was given for all the schools in nineteen school districts within the bounds of the present towns of Fairhaven and Acushnet. The appropriation for Fairhaven alone this year is \$16,700.

The school system then was governed by two heads, one of which was the school committee chosen by the town, whose duty was to have nominal charge of the schools, to arrange its curriculum, decide upon text books, to divide or apportion the appropriation among the various districts. If necessary to examine the teachers and to render annually a report of their doings to the town.

The other head was the prudential committee man, chosen by the district, who selected the teachers, looked after the repairs and supplies for the school house and attended to prudential affairs generally. With this unwise and complicated system, it may be imagined that friction would arise between the two constituted heads.

The men selected for the latter position were not generally of a high intellectual order. Men were chosen who were considered practical and who would be sparing in expenditures. Good smart girl teachers were usually selected with but little or no previous training for teaching, who boarded around and who were paid from \$16 to \$24 per month.

It was sometime during the fifties that a man filling the office of prudential committee in one of the northern districts of the town became dissatis-

fied with a teacher whom he had engaged for a winter term and went so far as to claim the right of discharging the teacher and closing the school. He locked up the school house; but the school committee of the town advised the inhabitants to open the school house and also advised the teacher to finish his school, which he did. But the prudential committee man would not approve his bill for wages and so it was brought before the town meeting in March. A member of the school committee made a simple statement of the facts to the meeting and a motion to pay the teacher was promptly adopted.

A decision (11 Pickering—260) says the prudential committee of a school district in hiring a teacher for a district school act as agents of the town and not the district, and his claim (the teachers) is not upon the latter but upon the former.

In the forties the school committee were severe in their reports on the niggardly expenditures for school purposes, and the total lack of necessary equipment in the school rooms, especially in the country districts. Seats for the children, built so high that their feet could not reach the floor; some of them with no backs, veritable instruments of torture; soggy wood to burn in the stoves, for many of the school houses had no wood sheds and some of them with no out-houses. No vestibule or entry, or if any were provided so cramped in accommodation that hats, caps and coats were hung around the walls of the school room. No school libraries. The school houses were placed as near the centre of the districts as possible and generally in most unattractive places. The houses were altogether too small and cramped for room, unpainted, most unsightly and unattractive, with bare white washed walls except where the plastering had fallen away. Low in the walls, from 7 feet 4 inches to 8 feet, no ventilation except through the cracks in the poor floor and the open windows; the only adornment, that made by the boy's jack knives. The lots provided for the houses were in most every case cramped, allowing no room for playgrounds, so the children were obliged either to use private grounds adjoining or the public road. In one case the school house just covered the whole lot. Is it any wonder that the children had colds, coughs and headaches, and that often times they were stupid and dull in the fetid atmosphere? Was it strange that the average attendance was only 50 to 75 per cent of the number of children enrolled? Is it any wonder that the parents did not visit such unattractive places? The people in putting up their barns provided better accommodation for their horses than they did in the school houses for

their children. The object seemed to be to see how little money could be expended to build something called a school house.

The prevailing cry was economize and reduce taxes. The school house here in the village was placed on swampy ground, the cellar usually filled with water, while the only method of ventilation was the open windows. The school committee felt that their office was a thankless one, the most popular committee being those who would say nothing, spend nothing and do nothing.

The friction and jealousy already alluded to was exemplified on the school committee board of 1848 when two independent school reports were issued, one from the two members at the north end of the town and one from the remaining three members at the south end. This jealousy was not allayed until the town was divided later on.

It was my duty one day to visit a country school some miles away where there were some thirty scholars under a male teacher. I dined with the prudential committee man. I expressed some complimentary remarks about the teacher when I was surprised at his retort, that the teacher was very unsatisfactory, so much so that he would not be re-engaged after this term. I never saw or heard of the prudential committee man afterwards but the teacher, who was afterwards chosen by his people in the neighborhood to represent them in the state legislature, who was appointed to high and trying positions by this commonwealth and afterward chosen to an honorable position in one of the chief cities of this state and was always found fully equal to fill with satisfaction these difficult and trying positions, ought to have been good enough and capable enough for the little country school. I think he was, and that the prudential committee with his limited and narrow views was mistaken.

About this time one of the board of school committee was also a member of the board of overseers of the poor. He acted as the commissary of that department and bought a barrel or so of sugar for the Alms house at wholesale price. As the quantity was larger than usual he took a portion for his own family at the same price. Somehow the transaction got out and the report got round town that this school committee man was using the poor house sugar, which of course was not true, but he could never be chosen again on either board. He was a man very close and economical in all business matters but of integrity, and honest to a cent. I afterward at a town caucus, largely attended, made a special appeal for his reinstatement and challenged any one in town to produce any evidence as to

his dishonesty. There was no reply in words but I was voted out of sight. When I think of this incident I also am impressed with the saying. "What a great matter a little fire kindleth."

The school committee in these former days were often called upon to perform many duties which now fall upon the superintendent, especially in matters of discipline. I remember in particular an ignorant and dissolute Irishman, but recently arrived, whose boys were a terror to the school and neighborhood. When I complained to him about the wayward acts of his children he replied "Ah, Mr Tripp, they don't know how to run the schools here as they do in the auld counthree." I had no better encouragement from one of our Yankee citizens whose numerous sons were a continual disturbance. He said that the school committee were remiss in their duties and made great mistakes in not offering prizes for good behavior.

The committee were often cramped for money. Some of the citizens strongly objected to any raise in teachers' salaries. One of them in open town meeting made the charge that the school teachers marched round town dressed like queens.

The school district system was abolished in 1869. It was hard for some few citizens to give it up. One of the cranky speakers in town meeting denied that the school could be carried on by the school committee and that the prudential system would still be continued in this town, for Fairhaven had not accepted the act; but he lived long enough to find out that neither he nor the town could defy the commonwealth of Massachusetts.

But prior to the new system now vested in the school committee, districts numbers twelve and thirteen, ashamed of their poor, shabby and limited accommodations for school purposes, made a desperate effort to have a new school house built with modern improvements and equipment. Several evening meetings were held at the old grammar school house on Centre street. The attendance was large, the interest intense, the excitement out of the ordinary and some of the language used

wouldn't bear printing. Both the advocates and their opponents were well represented.

Some trouble on the start was found in the choice for a chairman, but finally Deacon Lemuel Tripp, whose standing and respectability was unquestioned, was chosen. A number of the ungodly and irreverent were there to see the show. At this juncture one of the wags sung out, "Now old man go ahead." The meeting burst out in a roar of laughter in which the chairman, who appreciated the humor of the situation joined. He finally declined to serve, when a new chairman was chosen, and the debate went on. It resulted in a vote to build a new school house and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 therefor. The next step was to procure the money. The committee called upon James Arnold of New Bedford, who promised to furnish it, thus making the way smooth for the completion of the whole affair, but several of the citizens of means in this district felt that the district tax would be burdensome. Nathan Church, by far the wealthiest man in town called upon Mr. Arnold and upon his representation that the loan was a dangerous one, as a number of citizens would refuse to pay their district taxes except under legal compulsion, Mr. Arnold finally reconsidered his action and the whole matter fell through; and it was as well in view of the generous action shown afterward by a noted graduate of the Fairhaven High school in providing princely accommodations to meet the educational wants of the whole town and a large portion of the towns of Mattapoisett and Acushnet as well.

And now in closing it is only fair to say that these schools of olden time both private and public produced results far reaching, and from them there have gone out over all our country and in foreign lands men and women noted in the profession of teaching medicine and engineering, in the arts, architecture and painting, in business, finance, commerce and manufacturing, in official positions in army and navy, greatly to the credit of the town.

The Town of Fairhaven in Four Wars

By George H. Tripp

Among the valued relics preserved in the rooms of our society are various arrow heads, spoons and cooking utensils dug up on the site of Cooke's garrison, one of the three places of refuge for the few residents of the old Dartmouth of 1675. Around this spot cluster the few incidents of Fairhaven's first war.

Although Dartmouth suffered severely in King Philip's war, the relations between the white settlers and the Indians had been amicable, and the Dartmouth engagement, signed Sept. 4, 1671, by forty or fifty Indians living near the town of Dartmouth, had been in the main observed. In this pledge they had promised to behave faithfully and friendly towards the whites.

But the spirit of unrest was abroad. King Philip's brutal treatment by the Plymouth authorities had aroused a spirit of revenge, and it was necessary to prepare for defence.

By the old military law of the Plymouth colony passed in 1632, every freeman was provided with arms and ammunition and furnished with two pounds of powder and ten pounds of bullets.

In 1667 Sergeant James Shaw was sent to exercise the inhabitants in arms.

The town of Dartmouth, which had been incorporated in 1664, had three garrisons, namely Russell's, Cooke's, and one on Palmers Island.

On the outbreak of hostilities in the second month of the war, July 1675, Dartmouth was almost immediately destroyed, thirty houses left in ruins and the inhabitants fleeing to the garrisons for shelter. As told by Dr. Increase Mather, "Middleboro and Dartmouth did they burn with fire and barbarously murdered both men and women, stripping the slain, whether man or woman, and leaving them in the open field as naked as they were born. Such also is their inhumanity, they flayed off the skin from the faces and heads of those they get into their hands, and go away with the hairy scalps of their enemies."

Because of the maintenance of garrisons, no soldiers were called upon from Dartmouth during the war. John Cooke and his family with others were saved, taking refuge at the garrison, but four of five of the people living on this side of the river were killed.

Ensign Jacob Mitchell, a nephew of John Cooke, with his wife Susannah

and her brother John Pope, were killed early in the morning as they were riding, Jacob and his wife on one horse, from the blockhouse at the head of Sconticut neck to the garrison. This block house was 100 feet from the Matapoisett road and was built in 1653. The log house of Thomas Pope, who had a grist mill and carried on trading with the Indians, was near the block house. These people were killed just back of the site of the Unitarian church on Washington street, only a few hundred yards from here. Their children had been sent on the afternoon before and were safe. William Palmer, a recently elected selectman, was also among the killed. He was of the Palmer family that owned Palmers island.

The Indians of Dartmouth did not have any hand in these atrocities, and the leaders of the whites, Captain Eels and Ralph Earl, persuaded them to put themselves into their hands for protection from the other Indians. This they did; and were marched, 160 in number, to Plymouth. But the Plymouth authorities, anxious for revenge, disregarded the urgent appeals for clemency made by Captain Church, Eels and Earl, and sold them all into slavery and transported them out of the country. The result was that the Indians remaining were rendered bitterly hostile, and the settlement at Dartmouth had to be abandoned, the people fleeing to Rhode Island and to Plymouth for safety.

As a direct result of the hardship endured by Dartmouth, the Plymouth colony exempted from taxation for four years after peace was declared all residents of this vicinity, and no soldiers were called for to serve during the war. In fact, so liberal was the government that "persons maimed in King Philip's war received a certain sum of money, a lucrative liquor license, and an annual pension for life." The bitter sufferings of the people of Old Dartmouth had more than local interest since the Irish Christians sent over a fund of £124 10s. for the relief of those who had suffered during the war, and of this amount, Dartmouth received £22 more than any single town except Rehoboth.

The court at Plymouth gave its interpretation of the extinction of the Dartmouth settlement in an order of Oct. 14, 1675, in which "taking into their serious consideration the tremendous

dispensations of God towards the people of Dartmouth—the enemy being greatly advantaged thereunto by their scattering way of living, do therefore order, that in the rebuilding and resettling thereof, that they so order it, as to live compact together—to defend themselves from the assault of the enemy, and the better to attend the public worship of God, and ministry of the Word of God, whose carelessness to obtain and attend unto, we fear may have been a provocation of God to thus chastise their contempt of his gospel." Then followed an earnest appeal to reform their ways, to put forth a vigorous endeavor to secure a faithful dispenser of the word of God amongst them, and any neglect would not be permitted in the future by the court.

Slowly the settlers returned and rebuilt, we trust more "compact," but the preacher selected did not suit the Plymouth authorities, and for fifty years there was conflict with the colonial theocracy. The only relic of the regathering of the settlers after King Philip's war is the chimney of the Annis house, built by Thomas Taber, a son-in-law of John Cooke, and now standing at Oxford directly east of the Burgess house.

During a hundred years of peace Fairhaven which included Acushnet but was still a part of New Bedford grew slowly. Probably if Joseph Rotch had been able to buy shore property at a reasonable rate, his business would have been carried on from this side of the river, and the comparative size of the two communities have been reversed; but shore prices then as now were prohibitive, and New Bedford became the chief whaling port of the world.

At the time of the Boston Port bill and the obnoxious tax regulations passed by parliament, Dartmouth patriotically assumed her share; as in a town meeting of 1774 it was resolved not to "purchase any goods manufactured in Great Britain and Ireland imported after this day, and to buy no goods of hawkers or peddlers." No foreign teas were to be used, no flax to be sent to foreign markets, and they voted to raise money for congress by subscription. They later started a private subscription for aid to the poor of Boston, suffering by the Port bill.

At the beginning of the Revolution there were eighty whaling vessels in the Dartmouth fleet. Permits were required of vessels going out lest they sell oil to Great Britain. Owners were required to give security.

No whaling was allowed without permits, and many small vessels were equipped for defence and offence, as the sloop *Friendship*; sloop *Warren*, the privateer with four 4-pounders, two

2-pounders, and fifty men; privateer *Prudence*, Captain William Stoddard, and many others. The legislature voted to station 75 men here for defence and £300 was put into the hands of Hon. Walter Spooner. On the 28th of March, 1776, William Tallman was chosen commissary, Benjamin Dillingham captain, Manassah Kempton first lieutenant. Walter Spooner was directed to procure ten old whaleboats for the defence of the neighboring islands. The commissary general was directed to furnish 25 rounds for each of the six cannon at the fort, which had recently been built at Nolscot (Fort Phoenix).

Captain Benjamin Dillingham and Eleazer Hathaway directed the work of building this fort, which was begun sometime before June 1775, and was two years in building. There had previously been a fort, probably a relic of Indian warfare on the site of the Beacon, and called on the map of 1762, Fort Ruins, whether as a title or stating a condition is a question.

On December 7, 1776, Colonel Craft was ordered to detach a lieutenant and twenty matrosses to be stationed at the Fort. The garrison was kept up by reinforcements for from three to five months.

The warlike energies of the people of this section were not confined to defensive operations. Probably the first naval engagement of the Revolution occurred in Buzzards bay not far from West island, and was engineered by Fairhaven men, an incident not mentioned in school histories, but fully as worthy of note as many events there recorded.

Early in May, 1775, a month before the battle of Bunker Hill, Daniel Egery and Captain Pope headed an expedition, secret because of the scruples of many of the inhabitants, which recaptured two sloops, one belonging to Wareham, which had been taken by the British sloop of war *Falcon*. Captain Linzee of the *Falcon* had captured the sloops at New Bedford, and intended to send them to Marthas Vineyard to freight sheep to Boston, but Egery recaptured them with fifteen men aboard, three men of the *Falcon* being wounded, one mortally. Thirteen prisoners were captured and sent to Cambridge secretly, as an effort was made by the Quakers of New Bedford through a writ of habeas corpus to counteract the results of this truly Revolutionary act, and return the prisoners with an apology, but their pacific efforts were in vain, and the first naval prisoners of the Revolution were sent to headquarters from Fairhaven.

Among those who took part were Benjamin Spooner, Noah Stoddard, of later privateering fame, Barnabas Hammond

and about thirty others, sailors and rangers. The whole exploit was quite dramatic; the news brought by a solitary horseman, selecting a crew of 25 from fifty eager volunteers, sailing from the Fairhaven wharf at nine in the evening, the crew concealed below decks to allay suspicion, signals given by tapping on deck by the helmsman. The whole story as narrated in the Pope manuscript, and fully told in Ellis's History is most interesting and thrilling.

In 1778 Captain Timothy Ingraham, 28 years old, was in command of the fort. The armament consisted of ten or eleven guns from 18-pounders down to one 6-pounder. In all about 36 men constituted the garrison. Lieutenant Foster was second in command. On the fifth of September Worth Bates, a fisherman living in New Bedford, reported at the fort that General Gray's fleet was approaching. Three guns were fired from the fort to give the alarm, and dispatches sent to Howland's Ferry. There were 25 casks of powder at the fort, twenty having been received a few days before from New Bedford.

Of the landing at Clarks cove and the march through New Bedford we will not speak except to say that the object of the expedition which was to "exterminate some nests of small privateers which abounded in the rivers and creeks of Buzzards bay," seems to have been fully accomplished, as 26 store houses and two rope-walks were destroyed, and some seventy vessels burned and sunk, some of which lay at the bottom of the river for over fifty years. Most of these vessels were privateers, eight of them vessels from 200 to 300 tons.

By moonlight the 4000 British troops marched around the Head of the River, probably among them being Major Andre. They were guided by the Tory Eldad Tupper. The first house on the Fairhaven side which was destroyed was on the west side of the road, occupied by Colonel Edward Pope. Next on the east side was the house of Stephen Hathaway, who sending his children into the woods and hiding his silver spoons in the well, calmly awaited results. The enemy pried his desk open with their bayonets to find money, but with little success. On receiving some courtesy from the Captain of the company, Mrs. Hathaway furnished a lunch to her unwelcome visitors. The next house visited was that of Thomas Hathaway which occupied the site of the Laura Keene house of later days. A nephew of Mr. Hathaway trying to escape with silver in a chest was relieved of the silver, also his watch, and only escaped being carried off as a prisoner by bribing one of the soldiers

with one of the two pairs of breeches in which he had thoughtfully encased himself.

When the column reached the house of Bartholomew West, the old gentleman was in bed, and his housekeeper had to carry him out of the house and lean him up against a tree to save his life, as the house was destroyed. This place was on the site of the John Cook house. From this house was taken the famous West Bible which is still in the possession of the 46th regiment, the Duke of Cornwall's, as their most valued relic, and one of the many Bibles on which tradition says that Washington took an oath of Masonry. At Richard Delano's house furniture was destroyed. The store of Obed Hathaway opposite the Dana place and filled with East India goods was burned, also a school house next to the site of the George H. Taber house. The next house visited was that of Zeruiah Wood on Adams street. At Thomas Taber's house between the present Washington and Spring streets, milk was furnished by the family to the soldiers who wantonly destroyed the pans after satisfying their thirst, and coals were dragged out of the fire place on the floor, but the family extinguished the flames and saved the house.

At the John Alden house, near the junction of the Mattapoisett and Sciticut Neck roads, oxen were hitched ready to carry away the household goods to a place of security, but the owner possessing a small store and being called upon to supply a neighbor with some rum, the slight delay allowed the British to capture the oxen, which later figured in a barbecue at the end of Sciticut neck. The last place visited before they embarked was the John West house, whose chimney was but recently demolished, where the only depredation was the killing of a pig. They re-embarked near Daniel Deane's house on the Neck, but did not sail until Monday.

A part of the fleet had landed troops at West island, where they supposed that sheep would be obtained, but the militia under Manassah Kempton were ready for them, and threw up entrenchments for defence. On the evening of the same day a detachment was landed at Sciticut neck for the purpose of destroying the fort. An eye-witness named Macomber says that they were somewhat delayed with their light-horse and artillery by the marsh, east of the fort. The garrison fired two guns at their approach, spiked the cannon, and retired to the low wall at the north of the fort, having previously laid a slow match and retreated with flying colors. At the wall one of their number was wounded by a British volley.

On gaining possession of the fort the

British knocked the trunnions off the cannon, destroyed the barracks, burned the gun carriages and platforms, and blew up the magazines. The next day, Sunday, boats from the fleet made another landing at Fairhaven with the purpose of destroying vessels on the docks, and completing the devastation of the village. They would have been completely successful were it not for the gallantry of Major Israel Fearing, who, in spite of the timidity of his superior officers, made a stand with his small force of 100 to 150 men, threatened with his sword any who might falter, and prepared for active defence.

Some damage had been done to the few storehouses near the water front, and the village seemed doomed, but when the British approached within easy gun shot a terrific volley was fired from the place of Fearing's company, which completely routed the enemy, who fled to their boats and rowed back to the fleet.

Some few houses in the town showed for years the evidence of the shot-marks of the enemy; among them the Killey Eldridge house on Eldridge lane, and the Calvin Delano house on Water street. One building which was set on fire belonged to Captain Isaac Sherman; the fire started in the cellar, which was filled with rum taken from a prize, but Captain Nathaniel Pope and others put the fire out before it did much damage. Daniel Ricketson in his "History of New Bedford" says that the act of Major Fearing merits a statue from the inhabitants of Fairhaven.

It is worth while at this time to give the story of one of the cannon which was in service at the fort at this time. This gun was taken from Nassau by the warship Alfred, which sailed in February, 1777, from Delaware bay on a privateering cruise, among the officers on board being Paul Jones. This vessel entered Nassau harbor in March, captured many military stores and a hundred cannon, and took off General Brown, acting governor, as prisoner. She landed at New London 34 days from the time of starting.

Captain Nathaniel Pope secured this cannon, and it was set up at the fort after the trunnions had been knocked off by the British, as told above. It was set up at the corner of William and Water streets, and remained there until 1833, when Union wharf was built, then it was placed at the Four Corners, near its present location, where it staid until 1846, when it was moved to the foot of Washington street, then to Union street to the north of the Pope house. In 1883, through the efforts of Captain Alexander Windsor and others, it was placed in its present permanent position. The Improvement association

placed upon it in 1885 a tablet giving its history.

On the 1st of December, 1778, the term of service of the garrison at the fort had expired, and in the succeeding February the selectmen petitioned the council and the house of representatives at Boston for protection. In answer Captain Crafts was sent with twenty men under Lieutenant William Gordon. April 2 a small fleet from Newport attempted to invade the harbor, but shots from the fort deterred them, thus preventing a second invasion. For two months in 1779 four Quakers who were drafted and refused to bear arms were confined at the fort. Lieutenant Gordon continued in command until the close of the war.

The reconstructed fort in 1780 was called for a time Fort Fearing. It is known that on the Dark Day of 1780 the fort contained a garrison of 100 Continental soldiers. In 1784 the fort was known as Fort Phoenix.

As evidence that Dartmouth did her part in the war, there is a record of nearly 500 soldiers from the town of Old Dartmouth.

All through the war Dartmouth harbor was a great rendezvous for privateers. Perhaps the most noted privateering captain from Fairhaven was Captain Stoddard, who commanded the privateer Scammell from Philadelphia. His home was near the site of the National bank. His most noted exploit was the capture of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, in 1782, where he made prisoners of Colonel Creighton and other prominent citizens. The story of privateering, alone, would fill the limits of a half-hour paper.

In the early years of the century, Fourth of July celebrations were often very elaborate. In 1801 a mock assault on Bunker hill, represented by the hill where now the brick church stands, was carried on with vigor and great enthusiasm.

In September, 1812, a company was formed of regular militia with John Alden, Jr., as captain, and a company of volunteers under Captain Joseph Bates.

Recruiting officers were established at the fort and on Water street, New Bedford. Advertisements were put in the papers for volunteers from eighteen to 35 years of age, who were promised a bounty of \$16, and after five years an honorable discharge, three months pay and 160 acres of land.

The fort had been repaired and put into serviceable condition by General Sylvanus Thayer, for many years superintendent of the military academy at West Point, and a most distinguished officer. The work at Fort Phoenix was said to be his first assignment as a young officer.

Previously, on account of the fancied insecurity of the fort, a mud fort was constructed at Love or Rodman rock or upon the ledge recently removed, at the foot of Fort street. This was built by Captain William Gordon, and the so-called mud was turf or bog dug from the marsh east of the beacon, and was fastened together with wooden pegs.

The rock on which the mud fort stood, a rock of sufficient geological importance, to be specifically mentioned in early American geologies, has played no mean part in Fairhaven history.

Of gneiss formation, showing very marked crossed strata, it is a part of the foundation rock which has ever united New Bedford and Fairhaven. Used as a rock of defence in both wars, and contributing of its substance to repair the old fort, it has now been dedicated to the God of Peace, and is the stone with which the beautiful new church in the town has been constructed.

The mud fort mentioned above and probably Fort Phoenix were first garrisoned by the Sea Fencibles, William Gordon, captain. The barracks were one story high and 80 feet long, and situated near the cedar trees to the west of the rock.

In an unhappy moment the design was conceived of testing the mud fort, and the second shot proved its utter uselessness.

Upon the site of the brick church across the street from the hall was a battery of two guns, and there was a powder magazine under Phoenix hall.

For some time the fort at the point was called Fort Madison.

The principal object of the British visit to this neighborhood in 1814 was, as they expressed it, "to clean out that damned little hornets' nest in Fairhaven." The hornets' nest was the group of privateers that were building and fitting out at this place. Among the privateers hailing from this port was the Governor Gerry, Captain Joshua Hitch, a fast sailor which was captured in the early part of the war after running out of a French port; the privateer Cameleon, Ellis, 174 tons, built at Oxford, was called the Handsaw after the following toast was proposed on the Fourth of July: "The enemies of our country, may we lather them with aquafortis and shave them with a handsaw." This boat was 40 feet long, with lateen sails. Among her crew were George Whitfield and Francis Neal.

One of the privateers from Bristol counting six guns had an exciting experience in our river. She was driven into the harbor by the Nimrod in June, 1814, and her captain, named Wilson,

sent to Manassah Kempton to open the draw. There was a disposition not to offend the British by complying, but Wilson threatened to smash through the draw with his boat, so it was reluctantly opened and he was allowed to go through into safety above the bridge.

On the night of the attempted landing of the barges of the Nimrod, she lay off Black rock, La Haux and the Superb near by in the bay. On Thursday, June 9, an alarm was given at the fort, and word was sent to two companies belonging to Acushnet and Fairhaven which were drilling at Acushnet; one of the companies was of regulars, commanded by Captain William Nye, and the independent company, under Reuben Swift. The horseman messenger arrived just as the drill was over. On Friday they were ordered by General Lincoln to Clarks point. They refused to go because they were Fairhaven and Acushnet men, but they came down to the bridge and quartered at the Lamson house; on Saturday night at the Hitch house.

In Fairhaven, on Monday, the 13th, the British attempted to land from five to seven barges having scaling ladders on board. They had approached to a position near Palmers island, when on the still night the sound of a post horn, some say, or the rattling of the heavy Boston coach on the bridge, which they mistook for artillery coming over to support the brave gunners at the fort, drove them away, and the threatened invasion was over. The next day they wreaked their vengeance upon Wareham, and the privateers upon the stocks at Fairhaven were safe. By another account the boats became separated and confused by going on opposite sides of Egg island, so the attempt was a failure. At any rate, the booming gun at the fort showed that the plucky defenders of the town were ready for them, and though some of the timid inhabitants fled, yet they soon returned, and the "Corsican jigs," as the sturdy Democrats of Fairhaven were called, for their strenuous upholding of the war, could turn their attention to the domestic broils with the Federal or Anti-War party in Bedford.

The Nimrod carried sixteen 34-pound guns, two long nines, and one 18-pounder. She first appeared in 1813. While in the bay she grounded on Great ledge, not far from the place where the Brooklyn grounded nearly ninety years after. Two American gunboats had a great opportunity to attack her while she lay aground, but neglected their chance, and the tide came to her assistance and floated her off.

After the attempted landing of the Nimrod's barges, a cordon of minute

men was strung along Sconticut neck to guard against further surprises. The people of the Nimrod saw them and supposed them to be soldiers. The fort during this time was in charge of Sellick Osborne, who, with a company from Boston, took charge of the fort one rainy day when the national salute resounding from the guns at the remodelled fort proclaimed that New Bedford and Fairhaven were again properly defended.

As a result of the intense war feeling between the two sections, Fairhaven in 1812 was separated from New Bedford and became an independent municipality. A pleasing incident occurred on March 13, 1813, when Lieutenant Parker of the frigate Constitution, who had married the daughter of Thomas Adams of Fairhaven, was given a public dinner at the academy in celebration of the great victory over the Java. At a town meeting in 1814, \$1200 was voted for the payment of additional wages to enlisted and drafted men and for other expenses of defence, but the court declared this illegal.

Many exciting and interesting events might be cited if there were time. One interesting story concerns the finding of a traitor at Fort Phoenix by Captain Noah Stoddard who, casually looking through a window of the officers' quarters, saw papers hurriedly secreted at the approach of footsteps. On investigation the prospective guilt of the officer was established and he was sent away for trial.

On February 22, 1815, the peace bells rang from Phoenix hall and were answered by the guns from Fort Phoenix.

One result of the war was that many of the privateersmen and others who were captured at sea and impressed upon British vessels were sent to Dartmoor prison. An interesting account of the life in this prison was written by Joseph Bates of Fairhaven, whose autobiography is an exceedingly entertaining book.

All the Dartmoor prisoners from this locality were landed from a Russian cartel ship in New Bedford in September, 1814.

After the close of the war the guns from the fort were taken from Boston on a schooner, and the guns which are there now were cast in 1828. A Mr. William Webb had charge of the fort for nearly 45 years, almost to the time of the Civil war.

In September, 1841, Lieutenant Isaac Stevens was put in charge of the repairs at the Fairhaven battery, as it was called, and in these repairs used 200 tons of stone from the ledge near by.

There was a notable Fourth of July celebration in 1823, when a dinner accommodating 200 was served in a large tent south of Union street, between Main and Middle streets. The military spirit was shown by independent companies which were constantly springing up. The Franklin Blues in 1833 was a notable company, commanded by Captain Ezekiel R. Sawin. Moses Delano was a private in this company, and the ensign and clerk was Tucker Damon. There was a juvenile company formed in 1820, under Captain Edward Marchand and Lieutenant Isaiah F. Terry.

During the Civil war period the fort was garrisoned. The New Bedford Home and Coast Guard occupied the fort for six months—from May 12, 1861 to Oct. 5—and to the boys of that time it was a rare treat to sit upon the fences and watch the relief march through the streets to the fort with Major Dunbar on his flute and his son with drum playing "The Girl I Left Behind Me."

The only active work at the fort during this time outside the customary drills was the enforcement on one or two occasions of the rule that no vessel should come into the harbor without displaying the national colors. Captain Barnabas Ewer of this town was in command of company D.

A few figures will prove that this town nobly responded to the exigencies of the war, and flinched from no sacrifices entailed by its demands.

From the selectmen's report at the close of the war it was stated that 257 men enlisted from this town, but Schouler, who compiled the statistics of Massachusetts in the Civil war, says that about 300 better represents the total, since all her quotas were filled and seventeen over. There were furnished ten commissioned and a large number of non-commissioned officers. This from a population of 3118 in 1861, or about one in ten sent to the war. The population of the town in 1865 was only 2548.

In financial support the town was not behind. The money appropriated and expended by the town on account of the war of the Rebellion, exclusive of state aid, was \$34,411.53. The state aid from 1861-1865 was \$8792.97. By private sources, fairs, etc., \$10,000 was raised for clothing, hospital stores, etc., and sent to the sanitary commission. Fairhaven's response was prompt. On the 4th of May, 1861, the selectmen were authorized to raise \$5000 to equip a guard.

At the close of the war the fort was in charge of Jeremiah Hayes till 1867 when Sergeant John Wetzel took charge and remained till 1873, when it

was turned over to the care of the selectmen, who put in Ira Reed as caretaker. Now the property is looked after by the Fairhaven Improvement association which has recently also acquired by gift of Mr. Howland of the Board of Selectmen, the site of the Cook garrison of Indian War fame, thus controlling at the two ends of the town the scenes of Fairhaven's defensive operations.

Though not so thrilling and so worthy of recital in song and theory, the present uses of the Fort as a breathing spot for picnickers, where a beautiful view of the river and bay, where sunsets rivalling those of Italy, can be seen over New Bedford's hill, where the tired worker can bring his children and

delight in healthful recreation—all this is to be preferred to grim war and its preparations. Better the birds nesting in the cannon bore, and lovers photographed on the useless gun carriages, than the necessity for drill, and muster, and impending battle.

Better the pop of the picnickers' ginger ale, than the alarm guns warning the inhabitants of the approaching foe.

The glamour of war is losing its charm and nobly as has this good old town borne itself in the four wars of our story, yet we hope that the twentieth century will pass without the waters of our bay being furrowed by any hostile fleet, and that the old guns at the fort may remain unused and unneeded for a century more.