

The History of "Green Hill"



Brookline, Massachusetts

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BY JULIA GODDARD

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IN accordance with the kind wish expressed by our President, Mr. Candage, that I would prepare for the Brookline Historical Society some account of the aged house in which I am living, and which has now received four generations of our family within its walls, I have gladly done my best to draw up this paper, and desire also to acknowledge with sincere thanks the welcome aid vouchsafed me by the secretary of our society, Mr. Edward W. Baker, and my neighbor, Mr. Charles White, both of whom have given me very kind assistance in my efforts to discover the history of the earliest possessor of the dwelling.

In the appendix to the address made by the venerated and Reverend John Pierce, D.D., on the occasion of the opening of the Town Hall of Brookline, on October 14th, 1745, it is set forth that the house of which we are speaking was built about the year 1732 by Nehemiah Davis, who was the son of Ebenezer Davis of Roxbury, and was born June 7th, 1707. At the early age of twenty-one he married Mary, daughter of Samuel Clark, but their life together was sadly short, as she died in 1736, leaving one young son, Samuel. In 1739 her husband married for his second wife Mary Payson, and this union remained unbroken till January 5th, 1785, when Nehemiah Davis died in the house he had built so early in his life, and where we may take it for granted that at least four of his five children were born.

I have searched the records of Boston and of Dedham very carefully, to discover in the first place how much land was owned by Nehemiah Davis in connection with his homestead in Brookline, together with the names of those from whom he bought it, and the dates at which he acquired his various parcels of territory, and I have felt much regret that I have been able to find recorded no purchase made by him earlier than the last part of the year 1735, when he bought thirty-seven acres of land of Samuel White for

"One thousand pounds," and six and one-half acres of John Seaver, Jr., for "Two hundred and fifty-five pounds," yet Dr. Pierce's record sets the time of the building of the house as about 1732, and we know that Dr. Pierce was famed for his accuracy; so it would seem as though there must have been some transaction of which I have not discovered the details, which possibly might never have been preserved by any system of records whatever, as was often the case at that time.

From 1735 onward, however, Nehemiah Davis continued to purchase land from various parties, especially from Elhanan Winchester and Joseph Winchester, until he finally owned ninety-seven and one-half acres, which would be considered as belonging to his home farm in Brookline, though half a dozen acres of this were salt marsh, and so not near his dwelling.

The house when he built it consisted of four rooms of very moderate size on the first floor, the largest of these being the kitchen with three pleasant windows in it looking towards the west and northwest, and with a very large fireplace, which was still in existence and in active use, too, when I can first remember my surroundings, and stood by it to admire the beautiful blaze of the wood fire, wreathing itself around the huge iron kettle hanging on the heavy crane, ere darting up the dark, wide chimney mouth, where it was lost to view and where I thought it was such a pity it had to go. Upstairs, the long, slanting roof eked out the number of sleeping rooms to six, by adding two that were built over the wood-shed, partly for summer use, the other four being all supplied with generous fireplaces; and the house was evidently intended to be very comfortable, with its arrangements for warming every one of the eight apartments, none of which had sloping roofs. No doubt the youthful wife of Mr. Davis felt rich and proud when she took possession of the new and pretty abode, which she must have fondly hoped, poor little soul, would be her happy home for many years. Very retired must this little house have been, since the road that we now call Cottage street and which conducts to Jamaica Pond, was not in existence till 1763-64.

In 1761 it was voted in town meeting that the Selectmen of that year "should be a committee to Lay and Stake out a Road two Rods wide, from Mr. Nehemiah Davis' Gate to Roxbury line," and in 1764 it was, at another town meet-

ing, voted, "that ye way from Mr. Nehemiah Davis' Gate to Roxbury Line as stak'd out by the Towns Committee for that Purpose, be Accepted and Recorded." Previous to that time, we must suppose that the way, leading from our present Walnut street (then called Sherburne road) to the Davis farm, could have been little more than a grass-grown lane, it having been laid out in 1700, by vote of the town of Boston, merely to reach the abode of Joseph Buckminster, whose house was situated midway between what was later the Davis farm and Jamaica Pond, and this "highway," so called, was crossed at intervals by two gates, one of which was to be maintained by the said Buckminster, and the other, which was at the northerly end, next Sherburne road, was to be maintained by Josiah Winchester, over whose land the new roadway was laid out.

That part of our present Warren street that passes the house built long ago by Mr. John Warren was then a little grass-grown track, called "Woodward's lane." I have no doubt it was an outgrowth of the roadway that was laid out to Mr. Buckminster's place, since in the earlier records of the town I can find no mention of its original laying out.

But Mr. Davis spent by no means all of his time on his quiet farm, for he was a man much in request in the town when public needs were to be cared for, and to them he seemed to give unsparingly of his time and his effort, when called upon to do so. We find him serving the town as constable, or as surveyor of ways, or as an auditor of accounts, and he was on an innumerable number of committees, in behalf of the schools and of the church especially, and was one of those who was appointed to take charge of the Edward Devotion legacy to the town. Also, he was one of a committee who was appointed to give instructions to the representative of the town, as the trying days of the Revolution drew near, and in 1778 he was one of the three men appointed by the town to go to Dedham, and there to confer with the committees of other towns on the important subject of the form of government, then lately offered to the people of the State for their approbation or the reverse. In short, it would be quite impossible to enumerate all the services, whether of greater or lesser importance, that he did for the town, and he continued his career of usefulness till an advanced age. Withal, he also paid careful heed to his own personal affairs and he was a constant purchaser of land, and it is interesting to record that he became an

owner at one time of the old Punch Bowl Tavern in the village of Brookline, that well-known hostelry in the old days.

But, at last, the useful and excellent life of this good citizen came to its appointed end and he died, as we have said, on January 5th, 1875, leaving behind him a carefully drawn up will, in which he bequeathed to his widow the sum of ten pounds in good silver money (equal to about seven hundred and fifty dollars in paper money, as the currency was, at or near that time) and further declared that, in lieu of her right of dower, "she should be comfortably and honorably supported, in sickness and in health, in the mansion house where he then dwelt, by his daughters, Mercy Davis and Lois Child; and in case she was not thus comfortably and honorably supported, then she should have the right to take her dower out of his real estate and improve it for herself," while she remained his widow.

He also bequeathed to his grandson, Nehemiah Davis, the sum of fifty pounds for his support, "he being by act of God incapable of providing for himself," and he appointed Captain Joseph Williams of Roxbury as guardian of the person and estate of the said Nehemiah, and also further provided that, if any portion of the fifty pounds was left at the time of his poor grandson's death, it should under certain circumstances be given to his granddaughter, Elizabeth Davis, who would appear to have been his favorite grandchild, inasmuch as he also bequeathed to her a silver cup and saucer that, as he said, was her "grandmother Davises." This grandmother thus alluded to had been, of course, his beloved first wife, who had so early died.

To his daughter-in-law, Sarah Davis, he gave the improvement of his house in which she was then living, so long as she remained his son's widow, but no longer, and he also bequeathed to her (provisionally) a cow, but proceeded to add that, if she or any one under her direction should produce a note of his, for about forty pounds, which he had given about twenty years before to his son Samuel, "and which ought to have been destroyed," then the cow should not be paid her and, moreover, his granddaughter, Elizabeth, should under these circumstances receive none of the possible residue remaining of the fifty pounds at the death of his poor grandson, Nehemiah. He also bequeathed three or four other and smaller legacies, of no interest to

recount, and then gave all the remainder of his estate, both real and personal, to be equally divided between his daughters, Mercy Davis and Lois Child.

As we subsequently find that none of his real estate in Brookline was claimed by his widow, we may feel sure that her daughters carefully provided for their good mother and, as we further find that in the year 1795 the town refused to give the personal estate of Nehemiah Davis, deceased, to Elizabeth Davis, we are led to the conclusion that probably Mrs. Sarah Davis never did produce that note of which her father-in-law spoke, and also that possibly there was something left of the poor grandson's fifty pounds when he died. It is a pleasure to know that this feeble grandson was also remembered with another legacy from a lady, Miss Lothrop, the amount of which I do not know. Also, I am happy to state that in 1796 the town reversed its decision concerning Nehemiah's estate, and did give it to Elizabeth Davis, who thus successfully inherited all that her good grandfather had had it at heart to leave her, which included also three pounds in silver specially given her in his will.

The next eventful change which occurred in the history of the house took place on December 10th, 1793, when, for the sum of eighteen hundred and fifty pounds, the Davis farm in its entirety, which was held to include also nine acres of land situated in Newton, and therefore not mentioned in the tax records of Brookline, was sold to Honorable George Cabot, who in 1791 had been chosen Senator of the United States from Massachusetts, and who assuredly bore the most distinguished national reputation of any one who has ever been the possessor of the old house, whose owners have indeed been few, considering its advanced age.

As the history of any house is to a very great degree the history of its owners and inhabitants, we shall not stray from our subject in giving certain details as to the life and character of Mr. Cabot, who certainly conferred a distinction upon the pretty cottage with its charming surroundings of land, by his choice of it as a residence. Let us therefore carefully record that he was the son of Mr. Joseph Cabot, a prosperous merchant of Salem, Massachusetts, who had married Miss Elizabeth Higginson, a direct descendant in the fifth generation of Francis Higginson, the first minister of the Massachusetts Bay colony, and who was a lady of high ability and very noble character. Their son George was their seventh child, and four little brothers

succeeded him in the family of children who numbered eleven in all, of whom two only were daughters, who must have been esteemed quite as little princesses in their own right when ushered by a kind and smiling fate into such an overwhelming circle of brothers.

One of these little sisters eventually married Mr. Joseph Lee of Salem, and under his auspices her younger brother George sailed on his first voyages, Mr. Lee being the commander of one of the merchant vessels of that day and accounted a very strict disciplinarian, not very markedly relaxing his rules even in favor of his young brother-in-law.

Early impressed by the display of unusual ability on the part of his son George, Mr. Joseph Cabot had departed from the usual course followed at that time of sending only the eldest son to college, and had sent thither this younger boy, who had, however, only completed two years of his college course when his father died, and, being unwilling to remain a charge upon the paternal estate under these circumstances, he left college, where we may be sure that he was distinguishing himself, even as he had always done at school and, "true to the then custom of his native country and town," set out to seek his fortune on the sea, where he succeeded so well that even before he was quite of age he himself commanded a ship. Yet his love of study remained strong within him, and his many leisure hours were thus earnestly improved, and this course, together with his considerable practical abilities, made of him the distinguished man that he grew to be. In company with his brother-in-law, he soon became a most prosperous merchant and, having quitted his early career as captain of ships, he married, in 1774, his double first cousin, Miss Elizabeth Higginson, and their union was long and happy. The country was then entering on the War of the Revolution, and many were the privateers dispatched from the shores of Essex County "to prey on England's commerce, a pursuit both profitable and patriotic, as the injury done to the enemy was very great, and many of these vessels were owned by Cabots and Lees," and met with good success, much to the credit and to the emolument of their owners; and Mr. Cabot having thus become doubly well known, both as a patriot and as a man of very much ability, it was quite a foregone conclusion that application should be made to him to enter the important arena of politics, and this

he consented to do, attending as delegate at many important State conventions, when governmental questions were under serious consideration, and becoming eventually a strong member of the Federalist party. In 1783 he became State Senator, to fill a vacancy unexpectedly occurring among the Essex County Senators, and finished out the term of office, declining, however, to be re-elected; but later he consented, as we have already stated, to become United States Senator in 1791, and shortly proved himself a very able and active member of the Senate, upon whose ability and wise judgment great reliance was placed.

And now, carrying no further our sketch of his earlier years and political life, we will turn to that which connects him with the history of the estate that he purchased in Brookline, and will explain that, notwithstanding his great ability for public life, he yet possessed an earnest love for retirement and for an uninterrupted opportunity to pursue the extensive courses of reading in which he so delighted; and therefore he resolved to make preparation for these future happy years, which he anticipated with longing, and to possess himself of a country place that should be pleasing to him both for its beauty and for its other advantage and, being greatly attached by the pretty situation and extensive domain of the old Nehemiah Davis place, he gladly purchased it and at once bestowed upon it the name of "Green Hill," a title which the present occupant has had great pleasure in trying to preserve, as a remembrance both of Senator Cabot, and also of the aged house itself, which has been beloved by all who have occupied it for any length of time.

In accordance with information derived from more than one of the older dwellers in Brookline, which would seem to be confirmed by a certain short paragraph discovered in the volume of "Muddy River and Brookline Records," and which will be given later, we are led to believe that the picturesque addition made long ago to the front of the little Nehemiah Davis cottage was the very tasteful work of Senator Cabot, whose family needs must have required much more space than that afforded by the narrow limits of the original small dwelling, not to mention the pleasant necessity that was upon him of providing for the comfort of the many distinguished guests, his old friends, whom he so often entertained at "Green Hill," one of whom, Judge Iredell of the Supreme Court, in writing home from Boston

to Mrs. Iredell in Philadelphia, admirably mentions that the estate which Mr. Cabot had recently purchased was a beautiful place.

In order that the large drawing-room, with good-sized bedrooms over it, now built for the old house by its new possessor, should be of greater height than the smaller apartments of the cottage, it was placed on a level three steps lower than they were, and connected with them by a longish hall of sufficiently comfortable width, from which two flights of three steps each ascended, the original old front and side doors of the Davis farmhouse standing at the top of them, where they remain to the present day; and when thrown open on the occasion of some social gathering the appearance of the quaint old house is very interesting and so pleasing as to reflect great credit on the taste and good judgment of Mr. and Mrs. Cabot. The large, old-fashioned, two-storied bow window, built to enlarge the dining-room, was constructed either at this time or a few years later by Mr. Stephen Higginson, Jr., and thus the little abode which worthy Mr. Nehemiah Davis proudly speaks of in his will as "the Mansion house where I now dwell," assumed a little more of the appearance of size usually associated with that title and, if we may place any confidence in the physiognomy of inanimate as well as animate bodies, we may please ourselves by imagining that the older dwelling must have given a cordial welcome to the youthful newcomer that begged to join its untried roof-tree to the patriarchal timbers of the more aged structure, since so sweet has been the air of harmony that has ever seemed to preside over this pretty union of the old with the new.

Though Mr. Cabot had intended to give up all his political duties when he resigned his Senatorship which, "becoming weary of the asperities of politics," he did in 1796, he found it was really not possible to avoid giving counsel to those of his friends, still in political life, who sought his opinion on the many important points that constantly presented themselves for consideration; and his correspondence was voluminous and occupied his time and thoughts to a degree quite unexpected by him when he gave up his position in Congress. Finding himself so occupied he placed the charge of his large estate in the hands of one who was his tenant, yet who, by a certain arrangement made between them, was also subject to his supervision and direction, and Mr. Cabot's busy days were then still more devoted to the

consideration of measures and events that vitally concerned the Government. Many of the most important letters written by him in his correspondence with leading men of his time, including General Washington himself, were dated from Brookline and, when we stop to realize that "he was five miles from the nearest postoffice," to quote his own words, we may realize how great must have been the pleasure that he found in his country residence, since he could submit to so many inconveniences and efforts as were a necessary condition of his life there. In summer, he delighted in daily drives about the rural country with Mrs. Cabot and, as I am informed by a most kind reply made by Senator Lodge to a letter addressed to him by myself, he also received many visits from his old friends, Fisher Ames, Judge Lowell, Governor Strong, Governor Gore, and many others.

I wish I could record that General Washington had ever visited "Green Hill," but that was an honor conferred upon Mr. Cabot's home in Beverly. Of all his friends, none seemed to be so near to Mr. Cabot's heart at this time as Mr. Ames. His residence was in Dedham, and many were the visits interchanged between these friends, Mr. Ames coming round to the farm on his long carriage journeys to and from Boston, and Mr. and Mrs. Cabot, in return, taking many a drive through the quiet leafy lanes to their friend's house, still further in the country than their own.

In examining certain old deeds and papers connected with the history of our old house, it was very interesting to be let into the secrets of the past, so far as to acquire a knowledge of the more important belongings of the house estate, as, for instance, its precious possession called "the big well," which was situated on the land now owned by my opposite neighbor, Mr. Francis White, and access to which was granted as a favor to a neighbor who later purchased land of Mr. Cabot. Evidently, no fear existed that this treasury of water could ever cease to give of its abundance, and specially favored must any farm have been considered to be that could boast a water supply sufficient, even in times of drought, to supply needs other than its owner's. The "front field" was also another important adjunct to the estate and was frequently alluded to in many ways, while several successive deeds most carefully united to preserve a certain "bridle way," which had its beginning in a spot nearly opposite one of the present driveways from the public road to

the old house, and wound through all intervening fields and woods to the abode of Mr. John Goddard; this grassy road being inclosed with gates at either end, which Mr. Goddard was pledged to keep in proper repair. Many a time, as a very little girl, have I walked that pretty, lonely cart path, holding my father's hand, and watched with interest the careful opening and closing of at least one of those important gates, which never was left open after our passage through it; but as time went on the little-used road grew fainter and fainter in its outlines, and at last became an indistinguishable part of the fields through which it had long made its way, and sorry I was, though but a little child still, when I could no longer trace with my onward gaze the pretty winding path that I had soon learned to love.

For nearly ten years "Green Hill" continued to be the truly beloved abode of Mr. and Mrs. Cabot, and then only important considerations connected with their four children, now grown to young manhood and womanhood, wrought with Mr. Cabot to quit the spot; but the isolation of the dwelling during the severe storms and cold weather of the winters was so complete as to deprive his daughter, especially, of the society proper to her age, while it also separated the sons, now entering business in Boston, from the home intercourse that was dear to them all; and in January, 1803, Mr. Cabot gave up the ownership of the place which he had so adorned and beautified, to Mr. Stephen Higginson, Jr., and took up his own residence in Boston. Before coming to an arrangement with Mr. Higginson, Mr. Cabot had, however, parted with portions of his land, but a considerable number of acres passed into the hands of Mr. Higginson.

In closing our account of Mr. Cabot, whose ownership of the old house must ever be one of the most important of the reminiscences attaching to it, it would perhaps be of interest to describe his personal appearance, which was very striking. He was of noble height and size, and of very dignified appearance, and his countenance was considered very handsome, he having blue eyes, a somewhat florid complexion, and (in his older age) very white hair, which he wore "tied in a queue, as had been his custom from his youth," and he possessed the gift of a beautiful voice, which was low, but clear and powerful. His manners being remarkably mild and courteous were very attractive, and his attire added to the dignity and elegance of his appearance,

as he never forsook the fashion of knee breeches and silk stockings. In his whole physique and bearing he very noticeably resembled Washington. Such is the description given of him by those who personally knew and remembered him.

To those who may have observed the curve of the road that is so perceptible just in front of the old house, we may explain that the town in 1794 gave leave to Senator Cabot to change, at his own expense, "the direction of the road leading from the Meeting-House to his Dwelling-house, in such a manner as that the said Road, when it passes by said Dwelling-house, may be more distant from the same than it is at present, provided that the said alteration shall in no place exceed twenty feet, and shall in its whole extent not exceed twenty Roods." This would seem to be strong confirmation of the assertion that the present front part of the house was built by Mr. Cabot.

Let me also mention in this place how greatly I am indebted to Senator Lodge's delightful History of the Life of his great-grandfather, Mr. George Cabot, for much of the information concerning Senator Cabot which I have been able to give.

His successor in the ownership of the house, Mr. Stephen Higginson, Jr., made such a short residence in it that but little scope is given for the history of his life there; but it is interesting to record that during this short stay he joined with other prominent residents of the town, who were presenting gifts to the new church then building for "The First Parish," and gave to it the Southern cherry wood of which the pulpit and the caps of the pews were made; and it may here be mentioned that Mr. Stephen Higginson, Sr., then also a resident of Brookline, generously gave to the church its new bell. Delightful and interesting memories these are to recall.

Mr. Higginson added certain pleasant fittings to the interior of the old house, but I am not certain that he in any way altered its external appearance, although he may have built the large bow window above mentioned; but I have reason to think that the charming care that had been taken of the grounds about the house was not suffered to grow less during his ownership of the place. Deciding not to remain a resident there, he soon sold a large portion of his land to Captain Nathaniel Ingersoll, who erected upon it the delightful house now occupied by Mrs. John L. Gard-

ner; and the *old* mansion house with three acres of land having a very long frontage on the road, Mr. Higginson sold to Captain Adam Babcock, April 14th, 1806, for six thousand five hundred dollars. As Captain Ingersoll very shortly after this time married Captain Babcock's daughter, Miss Eliza Babcock, to whom I should surmise that he was already engaged when he made purchase of his land from Mr. Higginson, we may easily imagine how happy must have been the arrangement that enabled the beloved daughter to remain so near to her father and mother.

Like Senator Cabot in his earlier life, Captain Babcock had been a most successful merchant and a commander of ships. He was born September 27th, 1740, and on March 23d, 1779, he married for his second wife Miss Martha Hubbard, daughter of Daniel and Mary (Greene) Hubbard of Boston, who was born June 13th, 1758. Their children were Eliza, who married Captain Ingersoll; Martha Hubbard, who married Mr. George Higginson; Mary Greene, who married first, Mr. John Gore and secondly, Mr. Russell; then came two sons, Henry and Francis; and after an interval of thirteen years another daughter was born, and named Louisa. Not all of these children, however, survived their mother.

For the above dates and names I am gratefully indebted to certain ladies who are relatives or connections of Mrs. Babcock.

Possessing a larger share of wealth than fell to the lot of most people at the time in which he lived, Captain Babcock was able to spend much time and taste on the adornment of the place that was especially dear to his wife, "Madam Babcock" as she was always called, whose affection for this, their country home, was both unusual and touching. The period of her later years of residence here is still recalled with great interest by several who are still dwellers in our town, and who love to remember the happy afternoons when they were privileged to be the guests of this kind and lovely old lady, who, being then much in years, frequently received her little visitors in her sitting room upstairs, which became more and more her abiding place as time went on; and, after welcoming them sweetly and graciously to her presence, she was wont also to delight their childish hearts by tapping gently on the wall near which her chair was always placed, as a signal to her excellent old man-servant of many years, whose name was

"Green," to bring the plates of gingerbread and other delicacies wherewith the little guests were to be amply regaled before being dismissed to their play in the charming garden that surrounded the house. Who is there among us but can imagine all the delightful expectancy of the moments that intervened between the sound of that magic tap and the appearance of the much longed-for tray.

Madam Babcock long survived her husband, who died September 24th, 1817, and during these years she spent her winters in Boston, where her house stood on the site of what is now the Tremont Building; but a long summer was always passed at the still better loved home in Brookline, and between these, her two residences, she frequently drove in her carriage, built after the fashion of those that we see pictured in the illustrated books of a century ago, with her coachman on his high box seat in front, and Green, her unfailing attendant, standing behind the coach on a platform made for that purpose, and steadying himself by the two long lapels of cloth, or ornamental leather, that were appended strongly to the wide back panel of the chariot; and a very dignified and picturesque appearance must this equipage have presented as it made its way through the sweet and quiet roads and lanes of Brookline, as they were in the days of old, so rich in overhanging trees that shaded these rural highways, and bounded by the aged and quaintly piled stone walls that were almost hidden in places by the clustering barberry bushes, so gay with yellow blossoms in the spring and with deep red berries later in the year.

Being very fond of flowers, Madam Babcock's attention to her garden was unremitting, and the wide walks, coated with fine red gravel, that were laid out around its western portion, were bordered on each side with continuous beds of bright blossoms, among which the gay and various colored rows of tulips and the large clusters of the single and double white narcissus shone conspicuous, with roses and honeysuckles hanging thickly over the arched trellises, each set with a turnstile within, that were placed as gateways of entrance to the garden paths on each side of the house, the walks on the eastern side being edged with a tall shrubbery of the old-fashioned white and also purple lilacs that, growing later to the height of trees, still survive, and blossom as sweetly now as in the days when they were first set out, although their aged branches and stems require many a prop here and there to sustain them. Two very

large syringa trees, set nearer to the house, whose spreading branches covered many feet of ground in their efforts to reach each other, poured their delightful perfume in blossoming time into every room whose windows opened near them; and, together with one large white lilac tree also planted near by, were the beautiful objects that might offer unending delight to the eyes of the aged lady whose chosen apartments always overlooked them. These years of which we now write being the special gala time of beauty to this old place, we will not fail to recount how charmingly the long and luxuriant wreaths of woodbine, swinging on large ropes fastened from pillar to pillar of the two-story piazza, encircled all that part of the house; while a double-flowering cherry tree of noble size that in the late spring with its thickly hanging clusters of whitest blossoms, resembling tiny roses, looked like the veritable commingling of the soft snows of winter with the summer's green leaves, made an enchanting background to the picture. Sorrowful, indeed, was the heart of the writer of this record, when this superb tree succumbed to the forces of time and of many a relentless gale of wind, nor have the several efforts that have been made to replace it ever proved successful; yet in memory, as once in reality, it still reigns with sweet supremacy as the most beautiful object in that dear garden of the olden time.

Being almost, if not quite, as fond of the birds that inhabited her fair domain as she was of her flowers, Madam Babcock would not tolerate the presence of that cruel household pet, the cat. No such beast of prey would she endure that should carry havoc and desolation to many a nest; and so, being free from the fear of this prowling enemy of their race, her elm trees and shrubs abounded with the homes of the robin and the oriole, and the bird-boxes that were carefully affixed to the upper part of the tall columns of the eastern piazza all had their families of the swallow or the wren, who year after year returned to these abodes, and feared nothing of those who often watched them by the hour together from the nearby windows. And though it must be confessed that the *mice*, too, rejoiced and thrived during the absence of puss, and that many a corner was gnawed off and many a door by their sharp little teeth, yet this sort of destruction, though doubtless very objectionable, was much less distressing to the feelings of kind Madam Babcock than would have been the sad spectacle

of many bright feathers scattered not infrequently about her walks or piazza, betokening the pitiful death of some pretty and happy songster. The *carpenter* could mend her doors, and no doubt did so time and time again, much to his content and emolument, but who should bring back, when once caught in fierce claws, the exquisite bluebird or robin redbreast to its nest in the syringas or lilacs where it had flown in and out to tend its young, all day long, or uttered its dulcet note of joy and peace from a heart devoid of any apprehension, adding also by its own beautiful life a constant charm to the hours of the dear protectress who had rejoiced to witness its daily happiness. Thus thought sweet, gentle-hearted Madam Babcock, and when the aged house passed from her own to other hands, many a sign manual was found impressed upon it, betokening her long patience and forbearance in behalf of those who tenanted the garden world about her.

In the days of which we now speak but few places were kept up with the taste and care that had ever been bestowed upon this one, and therefore it was an object of special remark and admiration to many eyes, and by none was it more appreciated than by a little boy who had been used, now and then, to make his way thither across the fields from the home of his "Grandfather Heath," on Boylston street, and, climbing on the gates that inclosed the place, or gazing up the driveway when no barriers chanced to interpose, used to admire profoundly the beauty that lay before his eyes, and would wish and wish again that he might grow to be a man rich enough to buy that prettiest place that he had ever seen and to live there himself.

And so the many years, one by one, came and went, and at last brought age and infirmity to dear Madam Babcock, whose eightieth year was by this time nearly completed; and feeling sure herself that her mortal life was now to be very short, she requested to be brought somewhat earlier than usual to the well-beloved place in Brookline, saying that she greatly desired to see the coming of the spring there once more, and again to listen to the singing of the birds, adding also that if she were going to die, as she felt sure she must soon do, she would rather die there. Her wishes were complied with, and she did see again the blooming of the spring, and once more hearkened to the bird songs that she so truly loved; and then, one quiet night, when she was laid down to her accustomed rest, a certain

of many bright feathers scattered not infrequently about her walks or piazza, betokening the pitiful death of some pretty and happy songster. The *carpenter* could mend her doors, and no doubt did so time and time again, much to his content and emolument, but who should bring back, when once caught in fierce claws, the exquisite bluebird or robin redbreast to its nest in the syringas or lilacs where it had flown in and out to tend its young, all day long, or uttered its dulcet note of joy and peace from a heart devoid of any apprehension, adding also by its own beautiful life a constant charm to the hours of the dear protectress who had rejoiced to witness its daily happiness. Thus thought sweet, gentle-hearted Madam Babcock, and when the aged house passed from her own to other hands, many a sign manual was found impressed upon it, betokening her long patience and forbearance in behalf of those who tenanted the garden world about her.

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silent messenger, sent from afar, who comes but once to any one of us, unseen and unheard entered the room and, while she still slept and knew and feared nought of his majestic presence there, her peaceful spirit, all unconscious of the great transition moment, gently departed from the dear home on earth to the beautiful land of heavenly awakening, that is both so distant and so near.

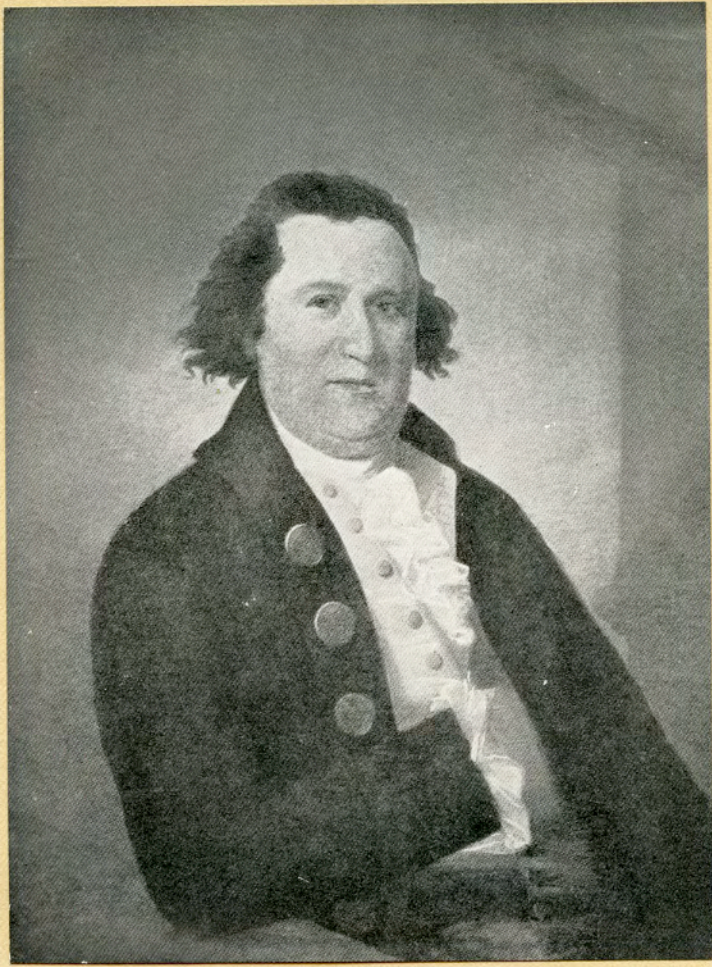
Madam Babcock died May 15th, 1838, peculiarly beloved by all those who were so happy as to be numbered among her friends, and leaving behind her a memory so sweet as could endear her even to those who only knew her through the words of others.

And thus, for the first time in its history, the aged house was left tenantless, and awaiting with uncertainty the coming of those who in their turn should cross its threshold to dwell at home within its walls.

Not long was the time of its waiting for, one pleasant day in the early summer that followed, it happened that a friend of Mr. George Howe of Boston entered his office to ask if Mr. Howe could tell him of any suitable place at the seashore where he could remove his family for the summer, as his only son was not thriving and a change seemed necessary on that account. Replying to this question with an expression of regret that he could not give the desired information, Mr. Howe added, "But I can tell you of something else that may perhaps interest *you* as it does *me*. Did you know that the old Babcock place is to be sold at auction this afternoon? I am not intending to be a purchaser myself, but I am really interested to see which way that old place will go and, if you feel the same, suppose we drive out there together. My chaise is already at the door, as the auction is set for just an hour from now." The invitation thus given was eagerly accepted, and the drive was accomplished only a few minutes before the hour fixed for the sale, so that there was but time to make the circuit of the place in haste, to ascertain the boundaries and extent of the land that was to be sold with the house. "Only three acres," said one of these two friends, rather sorrowfully to himself, "but *that* will be large enough for the children to play in." The auctioneer entered upon his task sur-

rounded by an eager assemblage and, after a short season of spirited bidding among those who were really intending to be purchasers, the estate was declared sold to the gentleman who had accompanied Mr. George Howe from Boston. And so the little boy who had always so admired and loved the beautiful spot, and had longed to buy it "if he could only be rich enough when he was a man," obtained thus unexpectedly the wish of his heart, and the place passed to the ownership of Mr. Samuel Goddard, in whose family it has ever since remained, a most dear and valued possession.





WILLIAM DAWES, JR.

Paul Revere—William Dawes, Jr.

Should aught the historic names divide
Of those who dared that glorious ride!
No rivals they, who through the land
Bore Liberty's renowned command,
But comrades in a cause most dear,
Were William Dawes and Paul Revere.

When Warren, of the hero-heart,
Sought who would act a fearless part,
Would safely bear through danger's hour
The word that checked tyrannic power,
He made his hidden purpose clear
To William Dawes and Paul Revere,
And bade them, as they patriots were,
To accept the charge he would confer.

True "Sons of Liberty" indeed,
They sprang to serve her hour of need;
Staunch messengers who, near and far,
Woke the still earth from sleep to war.
One sped amain on his dangerous way,
And crossed the beleagured waters wide
Where the Somerset swayed on the heaving tide,
Her lofty topmast, slender and gray,
Just touched by the signal lantern's ray.

One taught his steed to face the foe,
Where barriers swung on hinges slow,
And by the torchlight's wavering glow
Red-coated men marched to and fro.
But when the sudden order-word
Commanding change of guard was heard,
Then, as the challenged gate withdrew,
This man, courageous, passed it, too;
The venturous path successful tried,
Pressed by the English column's side,
And instant gained the country wide,

Where the star-crowned heights through the gloaming
showed,
And was off and away on his longer road;
And the goal of each would be bravely won
If they met together in Lexington.

The wooded lane—the silent street,
Lay wounded 'neath their horses' feet.
The furrowed course, unseen the steed,
Might well proclaim their arduous speed,
While gathering clouds, the moon's pale sheen,
Now lit, now dimmed, the midnight scene.
Apart, alone, foes near at hand,
They went to rouse the slumbering land,
Their voices, piercing through the gloom,
Might seem the very voice of doom.
To clustered homes, by lonely door,
They rang the summons o'er and o'er;
No time to hearken a reply,
As gallantly their steeds rushed by.
But listen—from the higher air,
The mighty murmur gathering there
As a great-destined nation heard
And answered "adsum" to their word.
Through deepest watches of the night,
That solemn call, that speeding flight!
Ne'er might that warning cry have peace,
The hillside's ringing accent cease,
The trusted horse with panting breast
Renounce his toil for welcome rest,
Until the noble race was run,
And the riders clasped hands in Lexington.

Brothers for aye in Freedom's cause—
Brave Paul Revere! Brave William Dawes!
What generous blood beats through the heart
Would hand their memories down apart.
Should statesman's pen, the poet's verse,
Fail *each* man's service to rehearse;
Or tongue of truth forget to tell
How *each* brave messenger did well?

No! Let one line of Honor's roll,
One page of History's ampler scroll,
Declare their deed, with merit due,
Accorded ne'er to *one*, but *two*,
And a remembering country say,
"Revere and Dawes" on Patriot's Day!

O Lexington! True field of fame,
Our lips are proud to speak thy name,
That, writ within the halls of Time,
Appears in characters sublime.
Still, shall our Stars of Victory spread
Their shining circle round thy head,
And, from the azure soft and bright,
Oh! still shall fall their glory-light,
In silent homage o'er each mound
Where patriots sleep in holiest ground.
When Liberty, upon her throne,
Makes her long list of heroes known,
Bids to her presence each dear son,
With stately greeting to each one
And conqueror's wreath for every brow,
Once struck to dust but radiant now,
Who calls she first among her brave,
Feared nought of death their land to save?
Whose sacred honors doth she name?
Who rise in ranks at that acclaim?
Hark! 'Tis her trumpet's clarion tone,
"Come! Minute-men of Lexington!"