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Centennial Memorial Services of Old Alna Meeting-house, Alna, Maine, September 11, 1889

Rufus King Sewall

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revised by R. K. Sewall

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CENTENNIAL 

—OF—



OLD ALNA



MEETING-HOUSE

—BY—

RUFUS KING SEWALL


FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS


Price 25 Cents



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CENTENNIAL
MEMORIAL SERVICES

—OF—

OLD ALNA MEETING-HOUSE

Alna, Maine,

SEPTEMBER 11, 1889.

—
BY RUFUS KING SEWALL.
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WISCASSET:
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CENTENNIAL MEMORIAL SERVICES

OLD MEETING-HOUSE, ALNA, MAINE,

SEPTEMBER 11 A. D. 1889.

This house had been standing a century's measure of years. By the munificence of individuals, at home and abroad and of the town, it had been repaired and painted in a substantial manner, preserving its original form and features in and out of its antique original.

The big beams supporting galleries, quaint square pews, high pulpit with sounding board, and deacons' seat, and in all antique original finish, had been carefully re-produced at a cost of eight hundred and sixty-one dollars and a half.

The day of celebration dawned auspiciously. Multitudes from the hill-tops and valleys of the Sheepscot in Alna and adjacent towns, and from cities in Maine, filled the old meeting-house.

The old stage coach, the farm wagon and the dashing barouche, piled in their contributions of living and interested comers, from near and from far, till the crowded aisles and seats were oppressively filled. The arrangements of the committee led by B. W. Donnell, Esq., for accommodation and successful execution, were admirably carried out.

The Wiscasset choir aided from other places crowded the ancient singing gallery, and filled the old meeting-house with praise in a volume of song to the tunes of a century ago, which waked the echoes of the dead past, with life and joy of its youthful days.

The services opened with an invocation by Rev. T. R. Pentecost of Sheepscot.

The great assembly joined in singing, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

Rev. C. C. Cone of Bowdoinham led in prayer.

Rev. F. V. Norcross of Union, Me., preached from Haggai 2, 9: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of Hosts." It was eloquent and appropriate; and listened to with absorbing attention, as it was full of deep Godly sentiment and old-time God-honoring fervor and evangelical truth of Puritan relish.

Scripture readings out of the original pulpit Bible by Rev. W. H. Crawford of Wiscasset covering the 8th chapter of Kings; 2nd chapter of Haggai, and the 122nd Psalm,—prepared the way for the following poem, by Charles H. Dennison, Esq., of Wiscasset.

POEM

No gallant conquering host my strain inspires,
 Which comes resistless bearing war's dread fires;
 No sounding trump that speaks alone of fame,
 No great heroic deeds do I proclaim:—
 My modest verse is of those noble men,
 Whose silent march filled every fertile glen,
 And scattered wide and far the golden grain
 Upon the hills and valleys fair of Maine.

I sing the virtues of the Pioneers,
 Their trials, conquests, labors, doubts and fears;
 They founded on this rude Atlantic shore
 A model church, whose stainless standard bore
 God's signet blazoned on its ample fold
 And made men free;—a greater gift than gold!
 "In hoc signo vinces," by this sacred sign
 "We in His vineyard plant this fruitful vine."
 No sooner said than done they raised this roof,

Enduring signal of their faith the proof,
 To them the Ark of God, His mercy-seat,
 And laid this offering at their Saviour's feet.

An hundred years have gone since those men came
 To this lone spot, and raised God's Oriflamme.
 They mustered here with souls in free accord
 To testify the goodness of their Lord ;
 To worship Him in freedom, not in fear,
 And braved the savage tenants roaming here.
 Upon these rugged hills, then thickly clad
 With towering pines, they raised their voices glad ;
 From man to man the whispered word went round
 To fix this banner on this storied ground.
 To firmly stand by God's great Magna Charta,
 And die for it, or for its truth a Martyr.
 Should Tyrants follow, here they stood to die ;
 No further would they go, no further fly !

Enraged, so stands the noble stag at bay :
 Let him beware, expecting easy prey.

So on the mountain peak the flakes of snow
 In silence gathering threat the vales below ;
 And when the groaning cliff succumbs to weight,
 Who guides the avalanche can rule the State.
 I see them now, those sturdy men of yore,
 Each Sabbath issuing from the farm-house door,
 The saddled steeds impatient at the gate,
 To take the road and bear their precious freight.
 The aged grandsire leads the smiling flock ;
 Their faith in him is steadfast as a rock,
 And his in God is likened to a shield,
 A strong defence on any battle-field ;
 He leads them now through devious paths along,
 And in the service leads them in the song,—
 No rosined violin, no grumbling viol bass
 Disturbs the sweet harmonics of the place ;
 But softened tones from each melodious throat,

The deacon's voice raised to its highest note,
 The prompters line by line the hymns repeat,
 And each uneasy urchin keeps his seat.
 The tithing-man, majestic, stern but bland,
 Is in his place convenient to command ;
 E'en his raised finger takes away the breath
 Of any youngster, while his threat is death.

"Eighteenthly" comes, and now the parson ends,
 And through the house the tension strong unbends ;
 The stillness deep, that for a time prevailed
 Was broken, and some weaker children wailed.
 Aunt Eunice thought the sermon short enough,
 And emphasized it by a pinch of snuff,
 Arranged her glasses then to join in song,
 And add more volume to the choral throng.
 With heads low-bowed, the benediction given,
 The reverent had a sweet foretaste of heaven.

And now in groups they sought the open air,
 Discussed the weather ; "would the crop be fair?"
 Or did they think the storm that seemed a brewin'
 Would join the frost and both complete its ruin?
 "When will your annual apple bee come off?"
 To Deacon West said charming Nellie Hoff ;
 And quickly, ere the Deacon's answer came,
 Said blushing Willie Dole, "I ask the same."
 Inquiries of the feeble and the sick,
 Advice to youngsters how to build a rick,
 Or how to drive a double-team a-field,
 And how good tillage would increase the yield,—

These topics were to them of import great,
 And not despised by makers of the State.
 Their temporal wants, the duties of the day,
 Their aspiration for the heavenly way,
 Went side by side among those godly people,
 Whose churches had no bell, nor towering steeple ;—
 A useful "sounding-bell," to save his voice,

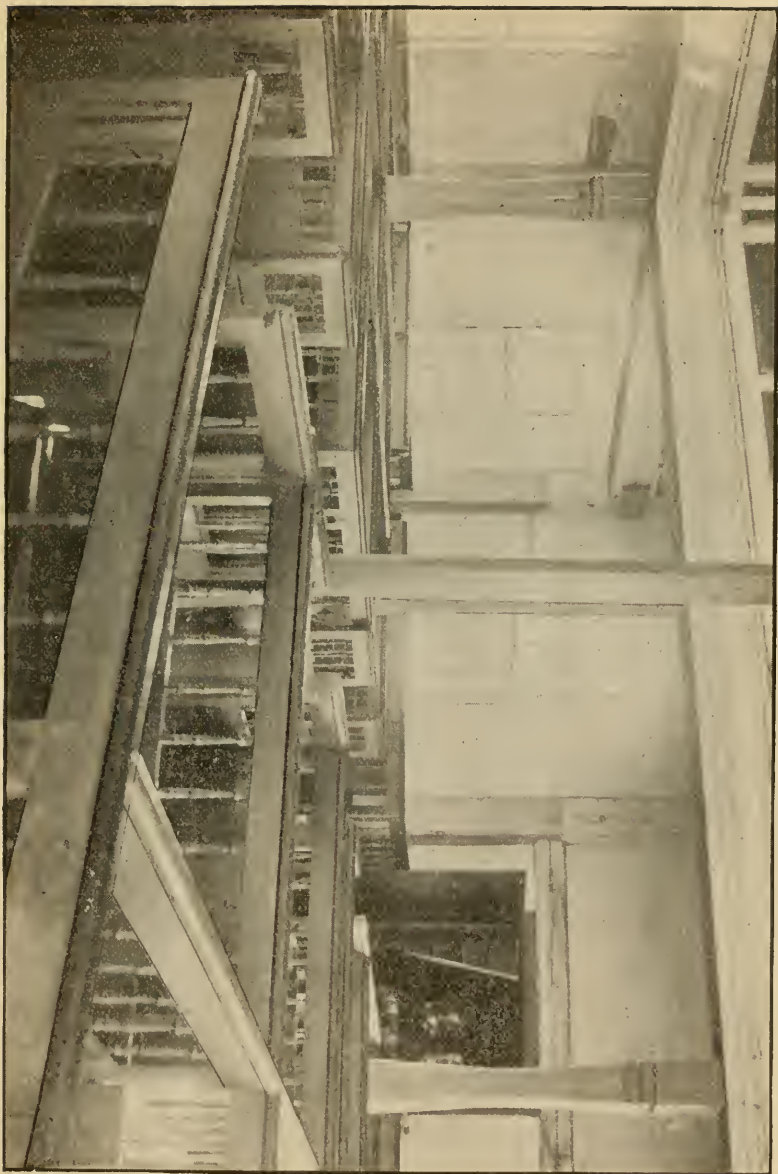
Was hung above the parson's head of choice ;
All other belles demurely sat in pews,
With ears to list, not tongues to tell the news.
The daily trials of their frontier life,
Like Christian warfare were a constant strife ;
The plow that upturned sods of richest land
Was guarded by a strong and well-armed hand ;
"Thrice armed is he who hath his quarrel just,"
Armed better he, who hath a shot the first ;
In conflicts fierce they kept with wise foresight
Their powder dry ; and barred their doors at night.

Their spiritual wants were always well supplied
By one whose hand and heart were opened wide ;
The Bible tale of friendship from the heart
Had in this early church its counterpart ;
For every member loved their pastor Ward,
And knew he lived in favor with the Lord.
He smoothed the pathway of the dying saint,
Was never weary, in goodness did not faint ;
When others faltered, he would firmer stand
For God and right, and for his native land ;
Was with those heroes brave at Bunker Hill,
Read Paley's work, and "Edwards on the Will,"
And led his flock in heavenly pastures green,
Joined faith with works so both were not unseen ;
For twenty years in this rough wine-press trod,
His primal thought the glory of his God.

And with him worked a corps of faithful men,
Their acts above the efforts of my pen ;
Some names are known, I give a few with zest,
All deacons : Donnell, Pearson, Dole and West.
They helped their pastor comfort doubting souls,
As now appears by your historic rolls ;
They lived by faith, and walked within its light,
Along the pathway with their goal in sight.

All honor to those Christian soldiers bold,
For gathering here Christ's sheep within this fold ;
They practiced what they preached, that love to man
Was greater part and portion of God's plan :
The rule they thought the only one,—to do
To others as you'd have them do to you.

And thus they lived, and worked, and passed away,
As stars before the advent of the day,
Whose stellate light is hid as He draws nigh
Who fixed there distant splendor in the sky.



Rufus K. Sewall, Esq., of Wiscasset followed with an historical sketch.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

CHRISTIAN CITIZENS :—

An hundred years ! What an epitome of human experiences, stored with fruition of hopes and fears, life's beginnings and endings, joys and sorrows, weal and woe !

Like the ghost of Samuel in the enchantment of the witch of Endor, more than three generations rise in centennial shrouds within these ancient walls before us ! Forms invisible crowd this scene whose bodies have filled these seats ; whose voices here have been tuned to praise, and whose souls, along these ancient aisles, have been led up to the gate of heaven ! We cannot dally with the inspiration of the place and of this occasion.

We turn back to the facts and record out of which this ancient house of God arose. Technically it is a "*MeetingHouse.*" This was its ancient name. The name tinges the structure with Puritanical Congregationalism. It was designed to be the *God-Meeting place* of the fathers ;—the Shilo of the sons and daughters of this Precinct of old Pownalboro ; and a visible pledge of their loyalty to God as well as to the calls of conscience and duty in their day and generation.

It is human to obey instinctive impulse. Therefore, it is natural to recognize the existence and duty of worship of God. The natural sequence is a *place* for Divine intercourse in prayer and praise, and to listen to the word of God.

These instincts have had varied development, according to the light and knowledge of man, and the ages and places of his action as a religious being.

The Puritan idea was, *that* of a *God-Meeting place* ; and the sole conditions thereof, were practicability and simplicity, in form, time and place. This house, therefore, in its original design, was the place of *God-meeting* to the *fathers of Alna.*

It is sacred : and could we see what Moses saw, when he met God in the burning bush, the cry from all these seats would be,—“ how dreadful is this place ! ”

The poor Indian “ sees God in clouds and hears Him in the wind.” Civilization with its clearer and more logical and intelligent

observation, localizes the Divine presence and intercourse. It has "places of prayer." The features of this localization, here, and in New England, we propose to trace in material development.

PLACES OF WORSHIP.

A. D. 1604.

Two hundred and eighty-five years ago, in the north-east corner of Maine, on an island half a league in circuit, Frenchmen landed to make a home. The island was rolled into a mound on its sea-ward front, and made a natural breastwork, and was mounted with cannon. A fort was erected on the north end. Beyond, barracks for soldiers and other little houses were reared, and the intervening space filled in with gardens. Near the battery a *place** for *public worship was also built*, and in *Indian fashion*,—"a wigwam." It was called the "chapel." This, I think, was the earliest structure in New England for public worship of God.

A. D. 1607.

At the mouth of the Kennebec River, on a peninsula, west shore, called by the Indians "Sa-bi-no," one hundred and twenty Englishmen landed in August of that year; organized a town, as the nucleus of a "great state;" nominated a chief magistrate and called him President, who was then and there inducted to office by oath and solemn religious services, to govern the Embryo State. It was Lord Popham's Colony of English Emigrants. Before the close of December of that year, there was finished an entrenched fort, fortified with twelve mounted cannon: and within its lines, fifty houses were built, besides a store house and a place for public prayers, which the Englishmen called a "church." *This church* was an ordinary structure of wood, English fashion, with a tall steeple† in the west end. Nahanada of Pemaquid, his wife and other notable savages went to meeting there morning and evening, attending with marked reverence and silence. A ship-yard was opened and a thirty ton vessel built and launched from it. These Englishmen had the means to cut plank and boards; and the structure of their place of public prayer was, not necessarily, a log cabin,—and is no doubt, the earliest framed building for a place for public worship in New England and of old English style.

The next form we have is in the Pilgrim Advent of 1620, at Plymouth.

**Les Carbot.* †*Hunt's Spanish sketch of 1608.*

PILGRIM MEETING-HOUSE.

In their peril and straitness, 1622, at Plymouth, a fort of good timber, strong and comely, good for defense, was built on the hill overlooking the Pilgrim hamlet. It was made with a flat roof and battlements, mounted with cannon; fitted also for a place of public worship, esteemed a great work, and called a "Meeting House." The meeting house had further and fuller development in Puritan ideas of church architecture in the colonization and settlement of Cape Ann, Salem and Shawmut neck, 1624 and 1629.

After this date a separate edifice for public worship of God and use for religious services, called the "meeting house," became a feature of every considerable New England community; a structure in its architectural make up like a *barn*,—and internally arranged with seats, pulpit, stair ways, and, in Massachusetts, with a chimney. Hence, in 1662, in Salem it was ordered "that there be a bier for carrying corpses to the grave; and that the chimney of the '*meeting house*' be the place for it to stand* in;" and in 1663, galleries are mentioned in the furniture of the meeting-house. The idea of pulpit as the place for the exposition of religious truth, I have no doubt, was borrowed from the record of Ezra's public reading and translation of the sacred scriptures in the age of Cyrus, and that it is not a Puritan novelty. The Puritan notions and policy, as held in Massachusetts Bay, had now become the dominant policy in New England Towns. The Pilgrim complex notion of a fort and chapel had passed with the necessities of the day, and the English steepled place of public prayer and reading the scriptures, soon superseded the common, barn-like structure.

Turning back to the incidents which led to the erection of this Puritanic relic of church service, at the "fords and mills" of the upper tide-waters of the Sheepscot, now Alna, we find, that in the spring of 1621, the Pilgrims of Plymouth had lost half their number by want and disease. Disease, want, and terror of savage surroundings, had so demoralized the survivors that despair pervaded the settlement. In the extremes of their distress and calamity, but six or seven could be found able to help the sick and impotent. In this emergency, suddenly the cry was heard in broken English, in the lanes of Plymouth, "Much welcome Englishmen! Much welcome Englishmen!"

A tall straight man, hair on his head black, long behind, straight before, and none on his face at all; with a leathern girdle about his loins, and a fringe a span long or more, with a bow and two arrows in his hand, the one headed and the other not, boldly walked by the cabin doors of the hamlet, uttering these words of good cheer. The effect was most salutary. It was Sa-mas-set (Samosset of Pilgrim history) the savage Lord of Pemaquid. His coming and presence in this emergency, among the sick and dying Pilgrims, it is said, was as the vision of an angel. He told the Pilgrims all about the "Eastern parts" whence he came and where he lived. This seems to have been the first definite knowledge Plymouth had of Maine; and it related to Monhegan, Pemaquid and the notable Sagadahoc, afterward called "Eastern Parts" by the Pilgrims.

Among the struggling scattered specks of civilization, dotting the skirts of the green primeval forests of North America, says Chas. Francis Adams, however the little colony of Plymouth was not the least in 1622. The smiling month of May had come laden with its freshness and bloom of renovated nature. The Pilgrims had lived some sixteen or seventeen months on "Plymouth Rock" and struggled through a second winter and had become reduced in number and supplies. The hamlet was sorely distressed. Entirely destitute of bread, they had lived on clams and other shell fish until all were greatly debilitated.

When planting was finished, their victuals were spent; and at night they did not know where to have a bit in the morning, having neither bread or corn for three or four months together. It was an emergency of starvation.

A SURPRISE.

Suddenly a boat was seen crossing the mouth of the Bay, and to disappear behind the head-lands. A signal gun was fired. The boat altered her course and headed into the Bay. This boat was a tender of the "Ship Sparrow" from the Pemaquid dependency of "Damariscove" in Maine. Seven men composed her crew; and a letter from Maine was her cargo.

This waif from the "eastern parts," brought news where bread could be found.

**Pulpit of the Revolution.*

The Sparrow's boat's crew piloted the way, and Governor Bradford manned the Plymouth Shallop and cleared for the "eastern parts" to buy bread. She safely reached the shores of Samasset's home, where thirty ships were harboring for freight to England. The representatives of the hungry Pilgrims were kindly received, and a Shallop load of bread furnished, without money and without price, which was a very seasonable blessing and supply, to the famished Pilgrims, who, by this incident, learned the resources of, and the way to the corn-fields and beaver haunts and fishing grounds of Maine. The fact was utilized at once. The knowledge thus gained was improved by the Pilgrims, in securing possession, east and west of Pemaquid, of the river banks, at their mouths, for trade. Good crops of corn thereafter grown and harvested at Plymouth, the Pilgrims sent their Shallop loaded, into the Kennebec. The success of the voyage was a cargo of beaver pelts. This proved an opening, to Plymouth acquisition of land title, on both shores of the Kennebec, "fifteen miles wide," by purchase of the Indians, January 13, 1629.

The proprietors of this purchase, with untiring zeal and great sagacity, stimulated settlement of their lands, and with so much success,—as to colonize a new town, and secure its incorporation Feb. 13, 1760, by the name of Pownalboro, with some one hundred and fifteen families, broken into three precincts for religious uses, viz.: West, north and east. East was Wiscasset Point.

The north precinct had industrial water privileges, where were fording places and mill-sites on the Sheepscot, near Head of the Tide.

CIVIL ABSORPTION.

In the meantime the commonwealth of Massachusetts had absorbed the Pilgrim territory, and also the ancient "eastern parts," and converted them into the "District of Maine;" and imposed its Puritan theories of the fundamental law of its civil polity,—theories, rooted in theocracy,—modified by the Roman idea of "*vox populi est vox Dei*,"—so far as it concerned church relations and services.

Its declaration of principles as a code of law, was:—"the right as well as the duty of all men in society, publicly and at stated seasons" to worship God; that as the happiness of the people and the good order and preservation of civil government essentially depends upon piety, religion and morality; and as these cannot be generally diffused

through a community, but by the institution of the public worship of God, and of public instruction in piety and religion and morality :

“Therefore, the people of the commonwealth have a right to invest their Legislature with power to authorize and require towns and precincts, and other bodies politic to make suitable provision at their own expense for the institution of the public worship* of God.”

These legal postulates broke Pownalboro into parishes ; and, in 1794, into the municipalities of Dresden and New Millford. At the site of the milling industries of old Pownalboro, an industrious and enterprising population had become resident near the falls and shoals or fords of the Sheepscot, before “New Millford” was incorporated ; and as a Precinct the forces of Puritan religion and law had taken effect ; an in 1788 secured a site ; and prior to 1790 erected a “meeting house,” by force of a Pownalboro tax, under constitutional laws ; and this structure is that House,—an outgrowth of Massachusetts church architecture, as well as in the form suited to social and public worship of God.

The Wiscasset Point precinct of Pownalboro, before this, had a house of worship ; and as early as A. D. 1771. In structure it was like this originally ; but in 1792, the old barn-like edifice had its northern porch stretched into a lofty spire, in which was hung a bell cast by “Paul Revere” of Boston, expense of which was met from the proceeds of the old Deacon seats converted into pews. (*) Note.

Walpole, in Bristol, had erected the same style of building, 1772, still standing in all its antique architectural curiosity. Alna and Walpole are all that are now left of these ancient Puritan places of worship ; and by the beneficence and consideration of the generation of sons of worthy sires, they are likely to be preserved as public memorial curiosities, as well as monuments of the loyalty of the fathers to the faith and hopes of the Gospel as beacons of civil and religious New England polity.

I must now turn to these fathers and founders of Alna.

The fording places and mill privileges of the Sheepscot here had tended to attract and concentrate an enterprising community under the stimulus of milling industry.

* See *Bill of Rights*.

The influence and activities of the industries here, created an export trade at "Wiscasset Point" below, which became the center of a lucrative and extensive business in West India commerce. The Carletons, the Doles, the Pearsons, Jewetts, Averills, Cooks, Donnells and others, actively engaged in the building of "West Indiamen," for the profits of lumber for freight out, and rum, molasses and sugar back.

The hamlet soon grew to the size and importance of an independent municipality, deriving its name, I think, from its business advantage of being a travel passage and mill site at the Sheepscot fords. The Point below became a "commercial bee-hive," then so-called, as the center of an export and import business and commerce.

POWNBORO CONTRACTED.

In 1797 Wiscasset Point was all that was left of the old town of Pownalboro and which had been created a Port of entry; was very flourishing; had one hundred and twenty houses. Its navigation was greater, in proportion to its size and population, than any Port in Massachusetts.*

Soon, however, sea-reprisals in French captures on the sea, of West Indiamen, struck both Wiscasset Point and New Millford. The leading men of business were crushed by the robberies and ruin of that lawless episode. Whole families were bankrupted. But the plant of their religious and Puritan faith survived and flourished.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

To foster and fill the services of this house of God, a church of five members, the 27th of September, 1796, had been organized. The original officers of the church were Nathan Newell and Ezekiel Averill. Deacon Jeremiah Pearson is a survivor. The Averills have been eminent in the religious history of the old church. Of this family, Ezekiel Averill, whose body lies in the old burying ground at the Point below, Wiscasset, is recorded to have been of the body guard of General Washington; and James Averill was the father of Albert Averill, Esq., of Chicago, whose munificence has essentially contributed to the rejuvenation of this old house of God.

The next day after organization of the church, Rev. Jonathan Ward, a native of Plymouth, N. H., a graduate of Dartmouth, was ordained its first pastor, and so continued for twenty years. During this

*Exports for a single year before 1796, \$23,320.—Morse's Geography.

Pastorate the church had reached such eminence of relation to the interests of Evangelical Congregationalism that in 1809 its pastor called a meeting of the association to examine and license Johnathan Cogswell, a tutor in Bowdoin college, to minister in the service of the Payson Memorial church in Portland then called the "New Society;" which fostered the organization of Evangelical beginnings in that city, and which has since been so famous and influential in the annals of Evangelical Congregationalism in Maine, if not in New England.—See Appendix A. Letter.

Parson Ward long resisted the use of the "bass vial" in his choir as an unholy intrusion. Wearied out and over-ruled, he finally yielded, seeing the instrument in the choir, and as a punishment, bid them sing the 119 Psalm, and "fiddle it to their hearts content."

It is current rumor that father Ward preached in town before his settlement, in the year 1795; and resigned his pastorate there in 1818. Forty-one members were added during Ward's pastorate. Rev. Samuel Johnson, a native of Georgetown, Me., a graduate of Bowdoin, (class of 1817,) succeeded to the pastorate, November 24, 1818, when he was here ordained and installed. He officiated till the 24th of May, 1828; twenty-seven members to the church being the fruits of his service. Rev. Moses T. Harris, on the 28th of September, 1830; followed and continued to serve the church up to 1832; adding nineteen to the church membership. Rev. Enos Merrill was his successor in November, 1832. During Merrill's ministry thirty were added; and five, during pastoral interregnums, up to 1841, when my record closes. The religious fruit of the service in this house, to the date given, was an ingathering of one hundred and twenty-seven souls, now garnered for the most part in heaven, and perhaps, hovering over and rejoicing in this scene and memorial occasion.

In addition to the worthy names of the fathers given, I must add that, of Josiah Stebbins, associate justice of the Court of Common Pleas.

A. D. 1811. NEW NAME.

New Millford had become dissatisfied with its industrial title and petitioned the great and general Court at Boston for a new name, and was allowed to live as a corporate body, by the name of Alna, a name suggested by the luxuriant alder groves over-hanging the banks of Sheepscot river fords; a name derived from the Latin word "*Alnus*—the Roman name for that shrub.

It was regarded a quiet, romantic, out of the world place, disturbed only by the murmur of the river over its dams and the clatter of mills. It was a students' retreat. Judge Stebbins was charmed and here cast in his lot with other worthies of Puritan notions.

Hon. John H. Sheppard, a contemporary, describes him thus :

"He was a man of terse, nervous wit, upright, honorable and astute, kind hearted, benevolent, and an unflinching friend of the oppressed."

"At the bar, he was wont to stand, his dark blue cloak around him, face pale with the lines of thought, his gray eye quick and flashing, with a well formed head, blossoming with age, brief in hand, pleading the Supreme Court to interpose its arm of mercy between the heart-broken client and the inexorable land proprietor." He finally secured the passage of the betterment act to cover the rights of the oppressed tenant, and saved Maine from menaced insurrection and blood shed. Such is the account of a contemporary and eye witness.

What more shall I say to enhance public appreciation of this Puritanic relic? It is now rejuvenated for a century to come. Let it stand, a memento of the faith in and loyalty to God and New England ; and the principles of the fathers and founders of Alna !

CONCLUSION.

Hallowed Shrine of the days of yore !

Lone relic of the past ;

Memory fondly lingers o'er

The scenes, within thee cast.

The web of years, oh sacred place !

Which wraps thine oaken limbs,

With century wrinkles on thy face,

No trace of age bedims.

The gray old trees which o'er thee stood,

To guard thy rev'rend head,

Tho' pledges of some fostering hand

Now mouldering with the dead :

Thine ancient aisles,—this sacred shrine ;

Where all were wont to seek

Their father's God and word divine,

To me they all do speak :

Hark ! a voice ; it comes from shades of the dead,

A voice I hear o'er their dark narrow bed :

Ye sons of New England, forget not the worth,

Despise not the right of your Puritan birth.

APPENDIX A.

Papers of Rev. Sam'l Sewall. (Copy.)

"New Millford, April 26, 1809.

Rev. Sir. I was in Hallowell Sabbath last. On Monday I attended the funeral of Mrs. Thurston. She died on Friday. She was, before her death, as I was informed, comfortable in her mind.

Mr. Gillet mentioned to me that the New Society, in Portland, had applied to Mr. Cogswell, tutor at Brunswick, to supply them, and he had in consequence requested that our Lincoln Association would approbate him.

Mr. Gillet therefore proposed to meet next Tuesday at 1 o'clock at my house to attend to his request; and wished me to inform you."

Yours sincerely,

Jona. Ward.

Rev. Samuel Sewall,
Edgecomb.





APPENDIX B.

1661.

ROBERT GUTCH.

At Bath, capital of Sagadahoc, earliest known as "Long Reach," a member of the first church of Salem, of the Puritan Colony of Cape Ann, 1624, made an extensive purchase of the Indians and there settled. His name was Robert Gutch; and he is reputed to have been a preacher of Righteousness to the pioneer population of these ancient domains till he met a tragic end by drowning, prior to 1667. The story is, that he and his wife, on horseback, attempted to ford a sand bar between Arrowsic and Parker's Island, when the horse lost his footing, fell into deep water, and Gutch and his wife were swept away. But a meeting-house had been erected on the north-west end of Arrowsic Island, near the present bridge, long since gone to decay, its site now marked by a mound and clump of bushes.

PURITAN USAGES.

A PURITAN SABBATH PROCESSION.

At about 10 A. M. the space before the meeting-house was filled with a respectful and expectant multitude. At the moment of service, the pastor issued from his house, his Bible and Manuscript under one arm, wife leaning on the other, flanked by his negro-man on his side and the wife by her negro-woman on her side, the little negroes distributed according to age and sex with their parents. Every other member of the pastor's family followed, according to age, in procession. It was a Bay State scene. As soon as it appeared, the congregation as if moved by one spirit, made for the church door and before the procession was all in were in their places in the meeting-house. On the entrance of the minister, the congregation rose and stood until he reached the pulpit and entered it and his family was seated.

CLOSE OF SERVICE.

Congregation rose and stood until the minister and family had retired.*

CHURCH OFFERINGS.

Contribution to religious uses and for the poor, was a Sunday duty. Sermon ended, the people in the galleries came down, marched two

* *Thornton's Pulpit of the Revolution.*

and two abreast up one aisle, down the other to the desk. Before it is a long pew where elders and deacons sit, one of whom with a money box in hand, received all offerings; and into it the people cast their benefactions, from one to five shillings, according to the ability of the donor; and all was concluded with a Psalm.

CHURCH ORDER.

Three constables stood at the great doors of the meeting-house every Lord's day, at the end of the sermon morning and evening, to keep the doors and suffer no one to go out before service ended; and all the boys in the town were made to sit on the stairs, two persons being assigned to observe their conduct and present them as the law directs.

ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT.

Rule was enforced by a major vote. The formulary was, "You that are so minded hold up your hands;" "You that are otherwise minded hold up yours."

SERVICE OF PRAISE.

Ordinarily, the minister, or some one by his appointment, read line after line and the people sang after such grave tunes as are in use.

Benediction begins: "Blessed are all they that hear the word of God and keep it."

PILGRIM MEETING-HOUSE AT PLYMOUTH—SUNDAY PROCESSION.

1622.

"The people gathered for worship at beat of a drum, each with his musket, in front of the Captian's door; with cloaks on, and there range in order, three abreast, led by Sergeant. Behind comes the Governor in a long robe: and on his right comes the preacher also in his cloak; and on the left the captian, also cloaked, with his side arms and a small cane in hand. So they march in good order to the castelated meeting-house, where he sets himself down with his arms at hand."

Bradford's History of Plymouth. Note p. 126.







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