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Report of the Investigating Committee on the Management and Standing of the Dexter Town Farm from 1875 to 1881

Dexter, (Me.)

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REPORT

OF THE

INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE

ON THE

Management and Standing

OF THE

Dexter Town Farm

FROM

1875 to 1881.

DEXTER:
HERRING, PRINTER.
1881.





16334

Report of the Committee.

At the regular March meeting of the inhabitants of Dexter a dissatisfaction was expressed to the report of the standing of the town Poor Farm, whereupon motion is was voted:

"To choose a Committee of three to investigate the affairs of the Town Farm for the past six years."

VOTED. "That the Committee be instructed to make an immediate investigation, and report to the Selectmen, and if in the judgment of the Committee a Town Meeting should be called, the Selectmen be instructed to call a Town Meeting to consider the matter."

In obedience to the above votes the Committee appointed at that time, having examined into the said matters make the following report to the Selectmen.

In the year 1875 Samuel Murphy was employed to carry on the Farm. Previously the Farm was reported in good condition and under a fair state of cultivation, but at this time appeared deficient in stock, furniture and farming tools. The cost of the Farm at this time was the original price, \$1200, to which was added an immediate outlay of \$800, and since added over \$1000 more in permanent improvements. We set the cost of the Farm at \$3000, beside the expense of repairs and alterations.

In order to show the actual cost of the Farm for the past six years, take the report of 1875, and we find the stock and produce valued at \$863. One item is 11 tons of hay at \$110. The report for 1880 gives 21 tons of hay at \$315. When the Committee visited the Farm, March 22d, we found only 12 tons of hay, and allowing two tons used from March 1st to March 22d we set the amount of hay at 14 tons instead of 21 tons, and the price \$140.

This will give the value of stock and produce March 1st, 1881, ..	\$1089 06
Deduct the value for 1875.....	863 00

And the gain in six years is.....	\$ 226 06
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The amount paid out by the town is as follows, as reported for

1875.....	\$1201 55
100 barrels of ashes.....	55 00
Paid A. R. Dunlap.....	107 50
School District Tax.	4 42
	<hr/>
	\$1368 47
Received for stock and produce sold.....	516 79

Making the actual expenses.....\$ 851 68

The sheep, farming tools and household goods added, are of course, or should be, on the Farm; but we are unable to report, after a searching examination of the accounts of the merchants, with whom Murphy dealt, but a very insignificant part of the \$150 laid out in tools and goods. It is proper to state here that the Farm books for 1875 and 1878 could not be found. That for 1879 Mr. Murphy brought forward but sadly we found upon an examination, that it contained but a few blank leaves, which Mr. Murphy explained, by saying that he had "a few days before cut out the leaves containing the farm account and burnt them up." No reason was given for this questionable performance except that he did not consider the book account of any use.

For the year 1876 the amount expended is.....\$898 38

Received from sales..... 641 97

Balance against the Farm.....\$254 41

A reduction in valuation of the stock this year of \$80 is carried to the profit of the Farm, which added to an increase of produce and stock, forces a balance in favor of the Farm of \$4 69.

The expenses reported for 1877 are.....\$983 77

Add paid for appletrees. 23 75

\$1007 52

Deduct for sales..... 660 50

And the balance is.....\$ 347 02

The Farm is credited \$34 for care of 34 tramps, when the poor fellows were entertained free from expense. On the same principle we might charge a dollar a day for each one of the paupers, and thus make the Farm a source of very great profit to the town.

The expenses for 1878 are.\$1170 73

Received from sales..... 515 00

Leaving a balance of.....\$ 655 73

We do not concede that because an ox worth \$70 died on the Farm, that the Farm should be credited with that loss.

The expenses for 1879 were reported.....\$1189 83
 Add a mowing machine. 65 00
 Add cost of buildings..... 774 00

\$2048 83

Deduct sales..... 343 11

Actual balance against the town.....\$1703 72

The expenses for 1880 are reported.....\$1374 77

Add cash paid out on well..... 53 00

Paid for appletrees..... 3 00

\$1430 77

Deduct the sales..... 562 67

\$ 868 10

The account for board of men working on the building does not appear to have been paid in money, but rather carried to the credit of the Farm, in reduction of expenses.

To recapitulate, we find the cost of running the Poor Farm for six years:

	Actual Cost.	Reported Cost.	Comparative Cost.
1875.....	\$ 851 68.....	\$340 30.....	\$279 30.
1876.....	256 41.....	232 41.....in favor.....	4 69.
1877.....	347 02.....	289 27.....	29 27.
1878.....	655 73.....	610 28.....	318 46.
1879.....	1703 72.....	768 72.....	158 44.
1880.....	868 10.....	809 10.....	809 10.
	<u>\$4682 66</u>	<u>\$3050 08</u>	<u>\$1579 88.</u>

In 1875 the Farm is credited with \$66 45 for money received from different sources. In 1876, \$24 are credited, and in 1878, \$38 45,—in all \$128 90 No return of these several sums appear to have been made to the farm, and they seem to have been laid out in supplies and no further account made. Give the town the benefit of the doubt and add the increase of the stock and produce over 1875, and there remains \$4327 70, as the actual cost of the Farm for six years. To this add the interest on \$3000 at 5 per cent. and the amount swells to \$5227 70. This, considering that the number of paupers on the Farm has been small, the last year only averaging 5½, is simply outrageous. Of the paupers on the farm more than one-half more than support themselves by their labor. Indeed the proof shows that for two or three years past Murphy has done but little work and that nearly all the work has been done by the paupers.

The question is now asked, how came the expenses so high? Our examination shows that the fewer the paupers the greater the cost, and the more

productive the farm the less the net profits. In the management of the Farm we find that everything was done in the most extravagant and costly manner. Mr. Murphy had full power to buy, sell and exchange just as he pleased, and all was left to his judgment, discretion and honesty, and the results show him deficient in some of these qualifications. Of this no one can fail to be convinced by an examination of the bills, as far as they can be found.

We will confine ourselves to a particular scrutiny of the bills of last year. We find the amount consumed by Mr. Murphy and family, of about 8½ people, during the year most remarkable. We cannot blame the Selectmen for boasting that the paupers lived well.

Among the items are 54 1-2 bushels wheat and 5 3-4 barrels of flour equivalent to 16 3-4 barrels of flour, about two to each person—double what any other family in town consumes; also 800 pounds of pork as near as we can estimate from the returns.

Take the items as they appear:

16 3-4 barrels of flour,....	\$144 00
85 pounds crackers,.....	6 50
800 " pork.....	57 50
200 " dry fish.....	5 60
93 " salt mackerel.....	6 09
75 " tongues and sounds.....	4 50
Other fish.....	7 50
570 pounds fresh and corned beef.....	38 24
6 cans beef.....	2 10
6 3-4 bushels beans....	11 00

and all the corn and potatoes needed. So much for the solids. The relishes are on the same magnificent scale. 100 pounds of dried apple, 47 gallons vinegar, 15 gallons pickles, 34 1-2 pounds tea, 65 pounds coffee, 73 gallons molasses, 125 pounds sugar, and the same profusion in everything. In the matter of clothing and cotton goods, Mr. Murphy bought from March 1st, 1879 to March 1st, 1881, 351 yards print, 358 yards sheeting, 64 yards crash, 48 yards flannel, 52 yards ticking; about equally divided for each year; yet so destitute was the farm after March 1st, that he bought immediately 66 1-2 yards of print, 61 yards sheeting and 11 yards crash. Mrs. Additon the present matron says that the paupers are now so destitute of under clothing, as not to have a change.

The stock on the farm was two oxen, four cows, four yearlings, one two year old, two horses, one colt, 26 sheep. We mention here that Murphy had the privilege of keeping a horse and cow on the farm and the town to have the use and benefit of them. He kept a horse until Oct. 1st, 1881. These are included above. Not much more than in 1873 when 22 tons of

hay were consumed, with but a small amount of other feed. Eighteen tons of hay was reported in on hand in 1880, and fifty tons cut, making 68 tons. Deduct 21 tons reported on hand March 1st, and we find that those voracious cattle have consumed during the year 47 tons of hay, 24 tons more than was used in 1873. But there was only 14 tons March 1st; add that and it makes 54 tons used. Let us be charitable and say the hay raised was overestimated and call it 44 tons. But this is not the whole, Mr. Murphy bought during the year 363 bushels corn, 89 bushels oats, 1000 pounds cotton seed, 1000 pounds shorts with the shorts from 54 1-2 bushels wheat; with what he raised, he used 373 bushels of corn and meal. Of this amount 92 bushels were whole corn; what he did with so much corn, let the farmers tell us. Of the potatoes raised he sold 67 1-2 bushels; suppose they used 61 1-2 bushels in the family, then there were 370 bushels to feed to stock. In the matter of beets carrots and turnips, besides what were sold 341 1-2 bushels were used on the farm. Allow 11 1 2 bushels for table and 330 bushels remain for those surfeited cattle. How they were fed! They were stuffed worse than the paupers; and yet Lucian Jose says that all of this great amount of feed was carried to the barn in two ten quart pans. This extravagance in feed was increased from year to year—from about 100 bushels of corn in 1875 to 373 in 1880.

Mr Murphy excuses this excessive outlay by saying that the cost of raising the pork made the expense. He fattened and butchered four hogs during the year; any farmer can tell what that ought to cost, and that giving him all the credit possible, the puzzle is unsolved. Of these slaughtered hogs, Murphy sold three and consumed one on the farm. We find that fattening and selling round hogs, and then buying the pork, by the barrel has been practiced. We do not believe this economical; and we are happy to report the present board of Selectmen as holding the same views.

As the paupers and the stock were abundantly fed; We also find that the farm was by no means neglected. Mr. Murphy says that he made a yearly application of about 100 barrels of dry ashes, at an average cost of 55 cents per barrel, and other fertilizers amounting in 1879 to \$15.81 and in 1880 to 17.45; this with the great amount of compost made should have made the farm the most fertile one in town. But all this outlay has only made an increased expense to the town. We advise that this genteel, experimental, model farming cease, and a common sense practical course be adopted.

In 1878 23 bushels of wheat were consumed and 11 barrels of flour, about the same proportion as in 1880; but we find proof that Mr. Horace Jennings had two barrels from the farm that year. We can only do justice to all parties by reporting the evidence. Mr. Murphy first stated to us that Mr. Jennings asked him to buy a barrel of flour for him, as he having dealings with C. M. Sawyer could get it at a reduced price. He got one, hauled it

to the farm, notified Mr. Jennings, and he came and took it away. Soon after Mr. Murphy made this statement the following article appeared in *Gazette*:

DEXTER, March 28th, 1881.

Mr. Editor: I wish to make a statement in regard to the flour my neighbors said Mr. Jennings brought from the Farm without paying for it. Mr. Jennings was at the Farm, I showed him the flour that I could get for \$6 90 per barrel. He thought it would be a good bargain and said he would like two barrels at the same price. I told him I thought I could get it for him. I had engaged some young pigs and seed wheat of him. I bought the flour with mine and hauled it home, not thinking to leave it at the store. Mr. Jennings did not know I got it until I hauled a barrel to his house when I went after the pigs. He asked me if I got it at the store? I said I hauled it home with mine. He said he had made a trade with Mr. Sawyer for it expecting to get it at the store. I said it would not make any difference as I had got to pay him for the pigs and wheat, then we would settle for it. Mr. Jennings paid me the balance in money. When the Committee called on me I could not remember the particulars until I had time to think it over.

SAMUEL MURPHY.

This not agreeing with his previous statement, we questioned him under oath, when he testified as follows:

"I bought for Jennings two barrels of flour, and hauled them to the Town Farm, and Jennings hauled away one barrel, and afterwards I hauled the other to him. The notice in the paper was written by Jennings and signed by me at his request. He paid me for the flour. I had dealings with him and when we settled the flour was reckoned in" Murphy's words were "I don't care a d—n for the article in the paper, Jennings wrote it and I signed it and Jennings put it in the paper." One thing is certain, the town paid for this flour, and we are not satisfied that the pay has ever been returned.

At this time Mr. Jennings was one of the Selectmen, and had the supervision of the Farm, and while we do not wish to question the honesty of the transaction, we do doubt the propriety. In such trades there is no one to look after the interest of the town, and if any one loses it will be sure to be the town.

The dairy kept on the Farm is a matter for consideration. In the fact that we have had four and sometimes five cows on the farm, the results are not encouraging. In 1879 with four cows all the time and five part of the time, only \$8 50 for butter and \$26 93 for cheese was realized. There is not a farmer in town, but will make a better showing with one good cow. The other years show some better, but the returns show that the dairy must have been an expense instead of a source of profit. We find proof

that Mr. Murphy furnished his father and mother with butter; that he frequently visited them, and like a dutiful son always carried packages of some kind to them. This he denies, we forbear to give the testimony in this, as well as some other points, considering it injudicious.

It is in the proof that when Murphy went on to the Farm, he carried one hen there, last winter he sent 20 to Mars Hill. Let him explain by what right he sent them there. Perhaps he claimed the increase; as the lamb which the Town Fathers gave to Mrs. Murphy, increased so greatly and sheared so much more wool, that his flock soon became more profitable to him, than the farm flock to the town. We find that the women on the Farm were kept steadily at work, spinning and weaving, knitting socks and mittens, braiding and hooking rugs, out of materials furnished by the farm; yet all those nice rugs were finally sent off to swell the plunder at Mars Hill. Mrs. Grover who lives on the farm, complained that Mrs. Murphy took a very good shawl from her, tore it up and wrought it into rugs; also that she tore up sheets and colored them for the same purpose. Mrs. Grover says "she took yarn that belonged to me and some belonging to the town and made it into a rug. She carried away most all of the rugs, she brought only one here which is here now." Nine rugs nearly all nice and new, were found at Mars Hill. Mrs. Grover further says: "I knitted last year 14 pairs of double mittens, which were carried to the village and sold. I knit 2 pairs of socks for Mr. Murphy, and Mrs. Safford knit 2 or more pairs of double mittens for him. I spun about 50 pounds of rolls into yarn. A part of this was doubled and twisted and sent to the village. Clara Murphy took away some yarn, Mrs. Murphy carried away 5 pairs of mittens." For all of this the town has credit for 2½ pounds of yarn. We have testimony that Mr. Murphy appropriated wool belonging to the town to his own use. Quite a quantity of apples were dried, of which were 6 bags of sliced apple. When Murphy sent away a load of goods three of these bags disappeared, and three bags of sliced apple were found in Murphy's house at Mars Hill. Three wash tubs were bought and paid for by the town last year. They are not to be found on the farm. Two of these tubs are at Mars Hill. The other was carried away from the farm at the same time. Eight new pails were bought last year; only two are on the farm, but five are at Mars Hill. During the last summer the women picked berries, and Mrs. Murphy put up 38 cans and jars of preserves, jellies and fruit. This was all hauled to Mars Hill. Of the molasses 63 gallons was bought at three different times in the same keg, and 10 gallons in another keg. A 10 gallon keg of molasses was found at Mars Hill, and no such keg at the farm.

During the investigation we found that Mr. Murphy had during the winter sent away to Mars Hill several loads consisting principally of boxes and

barrels; two double horse loads and one single horse load. He also went himself with two horses, and took a partial load. These loads consisted of what he called household goods. So great an amount being sent away, and such a deficiency appearing on the farm, that after consulting the Selectmen, and Josiah Crosby, Esq., Attorney for the town, it was decided advisable to send one of our number to Mars Hill, to ascertain if possible what Mr. Murphy had sent away. Accordingly V. A. Sprague, Esq., went to Aroostook Co., and with a search warrant went into his house and made a search, which resulted in finding a great number of missing articles, a part of which is already reported.

He reports that he found a house about 15x20 feet as full as it could be conveniently filled, with boxes, barrels and furniture. The latter comprised one bedstead, one extension table, one common table, nine chairs, one bureau and two clocks. The boxes were filled with crockery and tin-ware, enough to stock a hotel, beds, bedding, bed-ticks, bags, about twenty-five lbs. tea in five packages, and a great variety of other articles too numerous to mention in this report.

In one box were found a package of Japan tea, one of Oolong apparently about four and five pounds, five dozen clothes pins, a bunch of lamp wicks, a package of cracked bone, and one of nails. Feb. 2d, Mr. Murphy bought for the town, four pounds Japan tea, five pounds of Oolong, five dozen cloths pins, one bunch of lamp wicks, of Mr. Swanton; ten pounds of cracked bone, of Dustin & Co., and six pounds of nails, of Ayer & Carr. We find that a day or two after, Murphy sent away his second load of goods. We do not say that these packages are identical, but it is a remarkable coincidence. Mr. Murphy had already bought 25 1/4 pounds of tea the middle of March, 1880, and 9 pounds the middle of February, 1881, and the 5th of March his tea was all exhausted. Enough was found to justify Mr. Sprague in arresting Murphy whom he found at Houlton on his return from Mar's Hill, in an action of trover. A good feather bed and mattress were found among the bedding. When Thomas Bickell died on the farm he left a feather bed, mattress, pillows and bolsters, which were very good and nearly new. These have disappeared, and a very mean bed and mattress belonging to Murphy are left on the farm.

We can come to no other conclusion, than that the careless supervision of the farm has resulted in great loss to the town.

Upon inquiry we find that the habits and disposition of Murphy and wife are objectionable. The testimony shows that they were hasty, passionate, ill tempered, and that both had habits of intemperance. That no injustice be done them, we report the testimony. On the last charge Mr. M. admitted that one year he bought seven barrels of cider and another year eight, besides what he made, which he drank on the farm. To do him justice, he added that he paid for it himself.

Jethro Goodwin testified, "Mr. Murphy is a man who drinks some; he frequently showed signs of drinking. He always kept cider—made some and bought more."

Mrs. Geo. Murphy says, "saw Mr. Murphy twice when he could not keep the flies off of him; he appeared to be corned."

George W. Field testified: "I was at the farm threshing four years ago; saw Murphy under the influence of liquor so as to be unable to do his work. He sent away for cider two or three times. Hiram Bean went after the cider. The next summer in haying time Murphy got tight and raced his horse back and forth through the field with a horse rake until he broke it. Last summer, one Sunday, he run his horse to Warren Eaton's and back, whipping him and shouting and yelling; appeared to be crazy drunk. Have heard that Mrs. Murphy also drinks."

Otis W. Rollins says on oath: "I have seen Mr. Murphy when he was the worse for liquor. I have seen what we call rum characters go to the farm." Mr. Rollins says that prior to 1879 he told the Selectmen of Murphy's habits; that he abused the paupers, and when they hired him they had better buy him a barrel of rum to save the expense of boarding Emery and his horse. This Emery, by all the testimony, was there a great deal.

Mrs. Rollins says: "I have seen Mr. Murphy under the influence of liquor, not only at the farm, but driving on the road in that condition."

L. D. Packard says: "I have seen Murphy when he was in liquor." Notified the Selectmen that there was a wrong existing at the farm.

Mrs. Grover, who is a woman of intelligence, says "I know from Mrs. Murphy that whiskey, gin, and rum was used on the farm. Mr. Murphy drank a great deal of cider. He has frequently shown signs of liquor. Mrs. Murphy has always drank a great deal of cider, and other liquors. It made her very cross and abusive."

W. E. Skillins, of Garland, says, "I have been to the town farm several times and Murphy has always asked me to drink cider, I do not think they are fit people to take care of the farm."

This is not all the testimony, but we think it enough to show the habits of Murphy and wife, and sufficient to justify the general impression in this respect. We have said this testimony shows that Mr. Murphy and wife were hasty, passionate and illtempered. Let us examine this charge in connection with their treatment of the paupers. As we have no ill feelings toward them and desire to be perfectly impartial we report the testimony as we received it.

We learn that occasional complaints have been made to the Selectmen, by the paupers and by others, that the inmates on the farm were ill-treated; that such complaints have been either entirely neglected, or so slightly in-

investigated that we cannot report that they were properly attended to. Having confidence in Mr. Murphy's humane disposition, they treated the complaints as frivolous or groundless. Experience has proved that it is of very little use to examine the inmates of an asylum of that kind in presence of the overseer, or while under his care and control. The paupers should have been examined privately, and promised full protection, from any abuse or violence, on account of revelations made by them. If they stand in fear of the overseer they dare not give testimony damaging to him. If these investigations were made without some guaranty of immunity they were worthless as evidence. We considered it entirely useless to examine the inmates so long as Mr. Murphy and wife remained.

It is well known that Mr. Jethro Goodwin has lived on the farm for nearly two years, not as a pauper but working for his board, and that he left about the first of January last.

He says, "Last winter, wood was got about a mile from the house. I chopped the most of it, about 50 cords. I had to come to the house for my dinner. Mrs. Murphy said she would not put up any for me. The walk was so long that it lamed me so that I have not got over it yet. * * * In the management of the poor, Mr. Murphy was rough with them, but not so rough as Mrs. Murphy. I know of Mrs. Murphy striking Mrs. Safford several times. Once it made her head bleed. She was said to have been struck with a club. She bled badly from a cut in the side of her head. Sam Murphy struck Billy (William Sturtevant) once. From what Mrs. Murphy told me I thought she had been too severe with Mrs. Safford. When she went away she used to lock her into her room and there was no one to let her out, till she got home. She was frequently shut up during meal times. Mrs. Murphy would frequently lick Billy with anything she could get hold of. She would make him go without his meals, or drive him off to bed. The paupers seemed to stand in fear of Murphy and his wife. I think there are many women more suitable for taking care of the poor than Mrs. Murphy. I told B. F. Eldridge that I had rather drown myself than go to the farm and be obliged to be under the charge of Mrs. Murphy. I objected to going back, because the Selectmen told me that unless I went as a pauper, Mr. and Mrs. Murphy would make it uncomfortable for me."

Vesta Murphy says: "I have seen Mrs. Murphy strike Mrs. Safford on the head."

W. E. Skillings says: "I was at the Town Farm and heard Blake groaning. Mrs. Murphy told Sam that Blake's dinner was ready. He took a bowl of gruel, went into his room and said, 'here, take this.' Blake did not want it. Sam said, 'take it, and no words about it.' Murphy came back and said, 'I'll fix them.' I thought he abused him."

Henry Mower says: "Three years ago last summer, I saw Murphy in haying, kick Howard to make him work faster."

Mrs. Ruth Cobb says: "Sewall Blake was at my house six weeks. He was sick—a great sufferer. Said he had rather die than go back to the farm." Elder Blake and wife both testify to the abuse of Sewall.

Mary L. Rollins testified: "As to the treatment of the paupers, Mrs. Lovejoy complained of ill treatment. Again, a few days before she died. I also saw Mrs. Safford, at one time, with her head bleeding, and learned that Mrs. Murphy struck her with a long handle dipper. This was in 1879. I know that Charles Howard was ill treated. At one time Mrs. Murphy said he was lazy and hunted for him to make him go to work. She told me if her clothes stick had not broken Charles would have got an awful hiding. The next Wednesday he died. I cannot say that he died of ill treatment, but I gathered from what she said, that she had beaten him. I saw Sewall Blake at one time and remarked that he looked slim, and Mrs. Murphy said he had just been let out. as he had been shut up five weeks; said he was lazy. Billy Sturtevant told me that Mr. Murphy knocked down Sewall Blake, and jumped on him till blood run out of his mouth. Blake died in about two months after."

Mrs. Aroline Safford testified that ever since the first year Mrs. Murphy had abused her. She says: "Mrs. Murphy at one time beat me with a pan on my head and cut it so that the blood run over the front of my dress. At another time she beat me with a long handled dipper and cut my head badly. She beat me once over the head with a club and cut it so that it bled. When she was mad she used to hit me with any thing she could get hold of. She used to kick me, and lock me into my room 3 or 4 days at a time. Mr. Murphy knocked me down once with his fist. He broke his horsewhip beating me without cause. They have both ill used me since the first year. Mrs. Murphy was worse when she had been drinking. Afterwards she sometimes told me she was tight when she struck me, and was sorry."

Otis W. Rollins testifies: "The Saturday before Howard died, I saw two men out in the field digging holes for trees, and one sitting down. Sunday I was at the farm, and Murphy had a bad cold, and said he got it sitting out doors making Howard work. Howard died the next Wednesday."

Geo. W. Fields states: "I was there one day about three years ago and saw Murphy abuse and ill treat Mrs. Safford without cause. I think Charles Howard was starved to death."

Mrs. Sovina Grover testifies: "Mr. Murphy was very abusive. When the people were sick he would swear at them. I have seen him take a stick of wood and knock Charles Howard down. I have seen him knock Howard down with his fist. He once failed to do his stint (task) and Murphy

called him up and made him go to sawing wood in the night. I have seen Murphy kick Howard a good many times. I fully believe that the abuse to Charles Howard shortened his days. He was constantly ill treated by both. He had not enough to eat and was exposed to the weather. One day Murphy was gone, and Blake and Billy got to quarrelling; Mrs. Murphy struck Blake with a stick of wood. They have both abused Mrs. Safford, and constantly abused her. I saw Mrs. Murphy beat her with a heavy long handled dipper till the blood run down over her face. She also beat her with a stick of wood till the blood run all over her dress from cuts on the head. I heard Murphy horsewhip her and heard her screaming. I saw the whip broken. This abuse began the second year, and has been kept up; not so bad by Mr. Murphy the last year, but fully as bad by her. I have seen Mrs. Murphy lock her up repeatedly without cause. She once locked me up, but I told her never to do that again and she never did. She kicked me once, and I told her that must be the last time. No one on the farm but what was abused. No one was allowed to use a night vessel

Sewall Blake's child two years old was here, and once I saw her slap the child with a shingle till it was blistered. I saw the child whipped till it was black and blue and was so when they carried it off.

Mr. Berry said he was going to appeal the Selectmen again for justice; Berry died a fortnight after. Murphy hated Berry. He worked very hard.

Mrs. Lovejoy worked hard and was hurried into her grave by abuse. She was unwell Saturday, and Sunday did not get up during the day. In the afternoon she wanted something, and Murphy called her a d——d lazy bitch, and told her to get up and get it herself.

About 9 o'clock Mrs. Murphy came to me and said Mrs. Lovejoy was dying. I went in to see her, and she did not appear to me to be dying. Her pulse was strong. Mrs. Murphy wanted me to give her some tea that was there in a cup. Mrs. Lovejoy did not want to take it, and I refused to give it to her. Mrs. Murphy went in and made her drink it. In two hours she was dead. Her pulse was strong till a few minutes before she died. I believe she was helped out of the world.

Mr. Murphy told me that as soon as I was too old to work he should 'cart me over the hills.' He said that Mr. Jennings told them that if they killed the paupers, he would give them a bounty for every one killed. Told them to knock the paupers down and not hear a word from them. Murphy used to say, 'we keep slow poison and deadly poison.' Mrs. Lovejoy thought the tea was poisoned, and wanted to know if she should drink it and go peacefully."

Samuel Murphy testified: "I never struck or kicked a pauper. I do not know that my wife ever struck or abused a pauper."

This is the substance of the testimony in this respect. We cannot fail to give it great consideration. The most of the witnesses are well known to you as good and honorable citizens, and their testimony sustains that of those who might be affected by prejudice. We do not hesitate to recommend that Mr. Murphy and wife be arrested on a criminal process and held to answer these charges against them.

The poor, the unfortunate, the aged, who from sad necessity are compelled to spend their days in our alms-house are wards of the town; and entitled to protection, just as much as ourselves, who dwell in our own comfortable homes. That those inmates should be so brutally abused is enough to make the blood of any good citizen boil with indignation. We know not what may happen to us before we die. Misfortune may send some of us there and we should see to it that no one but kind, sympathetic people be placed in charge of our home for the poor.

In our examination of the management of the farm we naturally sought for a cause for all these extraordinary expenses. It is certain that Murphy entertained a good deal of company. Peddlers, horse jockeys, and other disreputable characters resorted to the farm with their teams, stopped as long as they pleased, living at the town's expense, without any rebuke from the Selectmen.

Let us take Murphy's own statements. He says: "I had a horse till the middle of October last. I had another one part of the time not mine. I supposed I had a right to keep a horse there without expense to myself." So Mr. Murphy thought he had right to board a horse at the town's expense.

He went to Mars Hill with a man named Dugan. This Dugan and wife, child and horse were on the farm about a week. Then he and Dugan were gone ten days. His wife and child were there all the time. His horse was there a week, when an officer came and took it away, it being a stolen horse. He further stated that "Elbridge Gerrish with two horses, was there last winter three weeks. When he left I furnished his dinners and grain on the road." He further stated that the oats he had of Hiram Bean of Ripley, 15 bushels.

Fred O. Additon testified: "Have seen Freeman Emery go there a great many times. In March, 1880, I saw three men and five horses go there at night and come away in the morning. During the time they swapped horses with Murphy. I have seen Dugan and the Veazies go to the farm frequently, remaining all night, and swap horses with Murphy in the time. Have seen Mory Mulliken go there often when he lived in Ripley."

Mrs. Grover says: "Gerrish was here with two horses as much as three weeks. Dugan and wife, child and horse, about a week; his wife, child and horse ten days longer. A good many people have been there to stop."

Mrs. Rollins said that Clara Murphy was on the farm about 15 months.

Jethro Goodwin said that "Dugan came there quite often; sometimes

stopped several days; he always had a horse. Murphy lost a horse and was away about a week hunting for him."

Mr. Murphy adopted a child two years ago. He says: "The child on the place is one that we adopted,—is two years old and has been there about two years. I did not say anything to the Selectmen about taking the child, and never made any allowance for keeping it. The mother was there fifteen months."

Mr Murphy has brought an action against the town to recover on the following items:

1½ months labor, Murphy and wife,	\$37 50
Bal. due Murphy for money paid out as items on cash book, ..	4 27
23½ bush. potatoes purchased of Mory Mulliken,	11 75
15 bush. oats purchased of man in Ripley,	7 50
Cash paid Mory Mulliken for labor on town farm,	13 00
	<hr/>
	\$74 02

Supposing this account correct; we claim an offset of 17 days of lost time; board of child two years; board of Dugan, wife and child and horse one week; board of Dugan's wife and horse and child one week; board of wife and child three days; board of others with their horses; board of Murphy's sister 15 months; butter furnished his father and mother; butter furnished Dugan and family; board of E. Gerrish and two horses three weeks; feather bed, mattress, bolsters and pillows; print and spices given Mrs. Dugan and Mrs. Burrill; poultry sold not accounted for.

The item for labor is the only legitimate charge in his account. As Mory Mulliken went to Mars Hill some three years ago, it is difficult to understand the meaning of those items

Let us borrow no trouble on account of this suit.

During the last year Mr. Murphy came to the village on 180 different days and as he himself said, sometimes twice a day. He paid for labor on the farm \$124.00. He did but little work himself. This may be unexpected to the town, but we believe the testimony sustains it.

It seems surprising that this man should have been continued there so long but when we read the annual commendations of Mr. Murphy that have appeared in the yearly reports of the Selectmen we may cease to wonder. Omitting the report of 1876 we find in 1877 they say, "The farm has been under the continued care of Samuel Murphy and wife. Mrs. Murphy has been very successful in her care of the inmates and in the management of her department. Mr. Murphy has also exhibited great skill and ability in the management of the farm." In 1878, "This is the third year that the farm has been under the care of Samuel Murphy, Jr., and wife, and the results show the right persons have been in the right place. Mrs. Murphy

is entitled to great credit for her excellent care of the inmates, and for the skill she has exhibited in the management of the dairy and poultry departments. Mr. Murphy is a live man, and the farm has greatly improved under his management, and the products increased." The next year the report says, "All that has been said heretofore as to the able management of the farm, and the care of the unfortunate poor, by Mr. Sam'l Murphy and wife, we most cheerfully acquiesce in for the past year, and the town, in our opinion, would be most fortunate if their services could be secured for another year, or term of years." They report in 1880, "This is the fifth year that Mr. Murphy and wife have had charge of the farm, and the results accomplished by them speak with more force than anything that can be said by us." In 1881 they say, "We are happy to report that the same satisfactory state of affairs exists at the farm under the management of Mr. Samuel Murphy that has heretofore."

We have already extended this report beyond what we intended, and still many facts are unreported. On account of the books being lost or destroyed our investigation has been pursued under great difficulty, and has been made very laborious. The merchants who have dealt with Murphy have furnished us full accounts which have materially assisted us, and for which we feel obliged.

The witnesses have generally been willing to testify, except that some have heard that Murphy and his friends have made threats of revenge, and desired that their names be not mentioned.

In this report we have endeavored only to give the facts, as they have been presented to us, and such conclusions as we have drawn are without prejudice, and as we believe fully warranted. We would advise that hereafter a person living near the farm be appointed a farm agent, to supervise and have the general management of the farm.

We recommend that a town meeting be called to consider this report, and take such action on the same as may be thought proper, when we propose to lay before the town the testimony taken, in full.

Dexter, May 24, 1881.

J. W. HODGKINS,
H. A. BEMENT,
V. A. SPRAGUE.

DEPARTMENT OF OVERSEERS OF POOR—CONCLUDED.

Amount brought forward.....	\$519 84
Paid Springall & Co., morphine for Augusta White.....	2 80
Bridgham & Son, " ".....	12 35
J. M. Jordan, keeping strangers.....	1 50
Jere Page, support of Thos. Higgins.....	4 50
support of French girl.....	10 50
Jere Page, support of Charles Renco.....	4 50
Geo. Hamilton, " ".....	4 00
Swanton Bros., " ".....	6 50
Leighton & Haines " ".....	8 25
N. F. Roberts, " ".....	1 75
Jenkins & Hill, " A. Lessau, Jr.....	1 51
G. R. Palmer, attending funerals of James Finley and John Bates.....	5 00
for support of sundry paupers.....	4 00
Total.....	\$587 00
Deduct amount due and received from other towns.....	290 66
	\$296 34
Balance against town farm.....	169 06
PL	
Total pauper support for the year.....	\$465 40
Appropriation.....	1,500 00
Balance unexpended.....	\$1,034 60

Received from Hartland.....	\$36 00
" Corinth.....	12 00
" Athens.....	21 00
" Abbot.....	91 48
" Shirley.....	20 93
" Detroit.....	31 00
" Canaan.....	6 00
" Harmony.....	30 00
Due from Hartland.....	16 00
" Corinth.....	8 00
" Parkman.....	18 25
	\$290 66