

The Narragansett Sun.

HISTORY OF WESTBROOK

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1895

CHAPTER XIII.

The Lunt Family of Westbrook.—Captain Daniel Lunt a Revolutionary hero and member of the Society of Cincinnati.—Extracts from a Diary kept by him while in the service.

Frequent references have been made in these chapters to the ledger of William Lunt, who built his house and resided upon the farm at Pride's Corner, now owned and occupied by Henry B. Walker, Esq. For the use of this book, as well as the deeds and other documents, from which I have already made copious extracts, I am indebted to Mr. Walker, to whom these and other mementos, yet to be noticed, belong. The most valuable, perhaps, from a historic standpoint of the latter, which lies on my table at the present writing, is a leathern pocket book about six inches in length, fastening with what was once a somewhat elaborate and substantial brass clasp, and bearing on its exterior the unmistakable indications of age and severe usage. In it are two compartments for the reception of papers and such currency as was in use in the days when it was new; and inside the pocket book itself, but outside of one of these compartments, a bold and not unpracticed hand wrote, many years ago, the following legend indicative of ownership:

“Daniel Lunt

In Collonel Tappers Regt.
General Pattersons Brigade
Bought of Nathaniel Dearing
Of Falmouth 1777.”

That which gives the chief historic interest to this mouldy relic, however, is the manuscript Diary, which it contains, portions of which were written amid scenes which have long since become the tourists Mecca, and events the most thrilling in the history of the great struggle which gave our country its independence. This document consists of twenty eight pages of what, in its day was white letter paper, stitched together at the back—probably by the hand of some affectionate wife or sister—and with the scissors reduced to a size to fit the space

where it was ever after to be carried. At the very beginning it introduces us to historic ground.

“Valy Forge May 1778 Sargt Small pr. stockings lent.”

This is the first entry: and fortunated indeed was he who made it in that he had, is the poorly clad and poorly fed army of our patriotic forefathers, a pair of sticking to lend, when many a poor fellow, forisooth, had no stockings at all or shoes, for that matter, to cover his bleeding and lacerated feet. The entries which follow are generally brief and to the point.

“Sarg't Nowel, one coat 3-10-0” Aug. 18 arrived at Camp Orange town. 23 marched to Tenneck very hot weather on front guard.

September 4, marched to Strenrophia one man died in my company

Sept 8, General Poor died in the night.

“ 10, Sunday this day Gen'l Poor was buried.

“ 11, on duty officer of day.

“ 12, one man was hanged for meroding the inhabitance.

“ 13, the hole army was reviid by his excellency and an number of the Indian Cheffs, no provision.

“ 14, no provision this day and that has been the case half this month.

No better evidence is needed than the private journals of the soldiers, of the obstacles that were met and overcome in that mighty conflict. This class of writings, too, is characterized by a vigor and directness for which one looks in vain in the works of the professional author. Even the bad orthography, the misplacing of capitals and the absence of punctuation, add to, rather than detract from, their value, and give them a charm which all the studied methods of the rhetorician are powerless to attain. But before we proceed farther with extracts from this interesting diary, the reader will naturally wish to know more of him who wrote it.

Three brothers, William, Daniel, and John, sons of Samuel Lunt, came from Kittery about 1760. William, born the 19th of September, 1742, by trade a shoemaker, settled, as we have said, in that part of, old Falmouth, now known as Prides Corner, within our coporate limits, where he died on the 21st day of March 1806. John, who was born the 5th of

July 1754, and died the 3rd of July 1709, settled in Gray. Daniel born the 19th of November 1749, settled in what is now Westbrook, on the farm now owned and occupied by Deering Colley. His first wife was Molly Frink whom he married about 1770, and who died on Christmas day 1787. She was probably the daughter of John Frink, and early settled in that part of the old town, the father, if I mistake not, of Samuel Frink, who died in the "fifties" of this century, at the house of his son, John, at Little Falls, Gorham. Mr. Lunt married as his second wife, Eunice a daughter of Bartholomew Conant, who survived him many years, dying on the 19th of February, 1841, aged 77. Mr. Lunt was a large real estate owner in old Falmouth, having extensive tracts of land on both sides of the Presumpscot river, as well as at the Duck Pond and Blackstrap. In the war of the Revolution he served till the close of hostilities, as a lieutenant in 1778, and as a captain in 1780 and subsequently; and after the war received a pension. He purchased of the Massachusetts committee a large territory in No. 1, now the town of Peru, in the county of Oxford, and thither several of his children removed and made for themselves homes. Portions of the original town were known as "Lunt's upper and lower grants." Captain Lunt died in Westbrook on the 27th day of November, 1823. His only descendants now residing in this city, are his granddaughter Mrs. Zelia A. (Lunt) Walker, wife of Henry B. Walker, and her children.

Captain Lunt, as a commissioned officer in the Revolution, took part in founding the society of the Cincinnati, the idea of which is said to have originated with General Knox, whose last days, as is well known, were spent at Thomaston, Maine. In memorials of the Massachusetts Society, (of the Cincinnati) by Francis S. Drake, page 392, is found the following:

"Daniel Lunt. He was of Falmouth; was a member of Brackett's Co. of minute-men in Apr. 1775; sergeant of same company in Phinney's reg. 10 May 1775; in Skillin's Co. of Francis's reg. 1776; com, 2nd lieut of Francis's reg. 3 Feb. 1777; capt in Tupper's (11th) reg. 18 Mar. 1780; in Voses (1st) reg. 1783. He was living in Westbrook, Me., in 1819 at 69, an invalid."

R.

TO BE CONTINUED.

HISTORY OF WESTBROOK

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1895

CHAPTER XIII.-CONTINUED.

Further Extracts from Captain Lunt's Diary.—
Arnold's Treason.—Capture and Execution of
Major Andre.

"16 (Sept 1780) This day marched to Mountain Meeting House and put up at Revd. Doctor Chapman's.

"20. This day Rec'd orders to March back of the New Work (Newark?) Mountains and bring off what fat cattle, sheep, oxen & cows would do for Beef."

Mr. Lunt, as we have noticed, was commissioned a captain in Tupper's regiment the 18th of March, 1780. It is probable that he had command of this expedition to bring off cattle for the use of the army.

"24 This day wrote home a letter by Capt. White."

The next entry is made with more than usual care, and betokens the deep interest which the writer took in events then passing.

"25 (September 1780.) This night at twelve o'clock the whole army was under marching orders on account of the filliny (villany?) that had been carid on betwix Genl Arnold, and the Adjt Genl of the British army—the Adjt Genl was made prisoner the 23 instant.—25th Arnold diserted to the Enemy before he was able to carry his hellish plot into execution."

The Adjutant General, whose capture is referred to here, was no other than the brave but unfortunate Major Andre, whose tragic fate, although it gave him a monument and final resting place in Westminster Abbey, will never cease to quicken the eye that reads the account thereof, even in the plain narrative of a private diary like that now before us.

"27 This day cold wett wether. 2nd October This day Major Andreo (Andre) was executed."

* * * * *

"26 This day the army was Revued by his excellency and the Embassador from france I left Camp. Lodged in cokitat."

Capt. Lunt now seems to have set out for his home in Falmouth, on a furlough that lasted till into the following spring. The stages of the homeward journey are of interest when compared with the modern facilities for traveling over the same route.

"27 This day crost King ferry and Lodged at West Point.

"28 This day Rany wether Lodged at the wido Sutherds.

29 This day Showers Lodged at Colo Morehouses.

30 This day pleasant wether Lodged at Mr. Baldwin's in heringto.

31 This day Rainy wether put up at Mr. Coses Simsbury.

1st November This day snow storm. Did not travel.

2nd This day cold lodged at Springfield parsols (Pearsol's?)

3rd This day lodged at Lincolns in Brookfield.

4th This day lodged at Baldwins in Shresbury.

5th This day lodged at Mr. Livermores Waltham.

6th This day lodged in Boston cold wether.

7 This day lodged at Capt. Clarks Chalcy (Chelsea?)

8 This day lodged at Beverly Capt. Francis.

9 This day lodged at Hampton.

10 This day lodged at Colo Littlefields, (Wells?)

11th This day arrived home."

The return home seems to have been for the purpose of attending to his private business while the army was in winter quarters.

"16 (same month) Thirsday Began to work on my house. Mr. Thos. Brackett, Mr. Walker, Mr. Frink, Wm. Lunt, Wm. Brackett, Saml Hicks helped me."

There is nothing in the Diary to indicate where this house was located. Possibly it was on the farm now owned by Mr. Colley in this city. The entries through the winter are few. 12 December, he states that he removes to Jacob Merrill's at Pursuma (Presumpscot?) He borrows five hundred dollars of Lt. Buxton, four hundred dollars of Capt. Partridge and four hundred fifty nine dollars of Capt. Starbird. Over each of the entries relating to these transactions, is a significant cross, indicating that the money was subsequently paid. The 12th of March he set said for Boston arriving there the next day; and the 14th met with Col. Tupper, Capt. Abbot and Capt. Emerson. The 19th he returned by ship to Falmouth. The 9th of April one Wm. Cressey began work for six months.

"23 Capt. Starbird, Thos. Starbird, Wm. pride and John proctor worked on my house.

30 This day sowed my Ry and a peck Sybami wheat.

May 7 This day sowed two pecks and ½ wheat.

That he expected an abundant harvest is evident from the fact that on the same day of this last entry he made a contract with Adam Barbour "for a Barn

frame sixty dollars, and to Bord and shingle it for fifteen dollars."

And with a house, either completed or under way, a new barn contracted for, his wheat and rye in the ground, and a man hired to work in the farm for six months, he was ready to return to his post in the army.

"22 (May) Tuesday sot out on my Jorny to Camp and got to Long Crik and Returned home.

23 Wednesday This day set out for Camp and put up at Capt. Bradbury's (probably at Kennebunk.)

24 Thursday put up at Goodwins York.

25 fryday Rainy put up at Greenland horse (?)

26 Saturday put up at Capt. Greenleafs Newbury Port.

27 Sunday put up at Doctor Jones Lodged with Lieut Shaw."

This was probably Dr. Benjamin Jones of Beverly, whose daughter, Lydia, married Parson Thomas Lancaster of Scarborough. Mary, another daughter of Dr. Jones, became the wife of Major Billy Porter of Wenham, of Revolutionary fame and was the mother of Dr. Benjamin Jones Porter of Topsham.

"28 Monday put up in Boston Mr. Tuffts."

"7 (June) Thirsday stormy went to the tresury.

8 Fryday Received from the tresury 85: 15: 5"

This was doubtless his pay as a soldier, and was received from the Treasury of Massachusetts.

"9 Saturday payed Mis Tuffts for Board thirty one dollars N. omination.

10 Sunday sot out for Camp Dind. W. Town (Watertown?) Jones. Lodged Colo Hawes Sudbury.

11 June Monday Brex Lawenc (?) Morbbrough (Marboro?)

17 Sunday arrived at Camp West Point.

25 This day we selebrated the day of St. Johns.

30 Saturday the Division was revued by his excellency on Gallos hill."

As this was not the hill in Salem where the witches were hung in 1692, it must have received its name from some other act or acts of legalized strangulation. Possibly it was the place where Major Andre had met an ignominious death in the previous year.

R.

TO BE CONTINUED.

HISTORY OF WESTBROOK

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1895

CHAPTER XIII.-CONCLUDED

An unhistoric battle.—Gen. Washington invites Capt. Lunt to dinner.—Gen. Enoch Poor, and what was said of him by Washington and Lafayette.—New data concerning John Webb who married Susannah Swett, his Ancestry and his Descendants.

“1 July 4 o’clock in the morning, marched from peeks Kill and on Monday morning 7 o’clock halted on Vanlentine’s Hill, the N. men we had killed was no wounded was the enemy’s los was killed wounded .”

The blanks seem to have been left to be filled whenever accurate information could be obtained, and remain blank to the present time. No account of this engagement is given in any of the histories of the Revolutionary was that I have met with; but Valentine’s Hill became famous from being occupied alternately, by the English and Americans, according us one or the other was in the ascendant. On its summit intrenchments were thrown up in the summer of 1776, and here Washington encamped a few days before the battle of White Plains. In a book entitled, “The Valentines of American” is given a picture of the old Valentine house which was occupied by Washington as his headquarters at this time, and perhaps at other times during the war; and it may have been to this very same house that Capt. Lunt was invited to dine with the great Commander who honored him with the yellow and time-stained missive, which he thought worthy of preservation, and which is one of the treasures in the collection kindly loaned me by Mr. H. B. Walker.

“General Washington presents his Compliments to *Cap. Lunt* and requests the favor of his Company at Dinner tomorrow at 8 o’clock

Thursday

Answer if you please”

The missive is without date and was doubtless one of several written by the General’s private secretary in a peculiarly elegant hand except the words which we have caused to be printed in Italics, which may have been filled in by the “Father of his Country” himself, thus making the honor of the invitation all the more distinguished.

Mention is made in the Diary of the death and burial of Gen. Poor. This was Gen. Enoch Poor, who entered the service from New Hampshire. He was born in 1736 in Andover, Mass., and died of a fever near Hackensack, N.J., on the 8th of September 1780. He was in several of the principal battles of the war where he displayed great courage and ability. He was alluded to by LaFayette, during his farewell visit to this country, as “Light-infantry Poor.” Washington mentioned him after his death as “an officer of distinguished merit who as a citizen and a soldier had every claim to the esteem of his country.

Less conspicuous than that of Gen. Poor was the career of Capt. Lunt, but no less useful in its way, and the encomium which the great Captain bestowed upon one of his Generals, he would not have withheld from the worthy commander of a company whom he honored with an invitation to partake at his own board, of the humble fare upon which officers alike, and privates were compelled to subsist in those days of privations and hardship.

* * * * *

When I took what was intended as a formal leave of the Webb families in a former chapter, I was not then the fortunate possessor of the materials respecting the John Webb who married Susannah Swett, and his family, which are now before me. They have been kindly loaned me, within the last week by one of his descendants; and the opportunity of giving data which I would gladly have included in a previous chapter had they been at hand, I now hasten for obvious reasons to improve.

From a well authenticated tradition it would seem that this John Webb was born in England and was brought to this country, when four years old, by his parents, who settled at Stroudwater in the present city of Deering. His father is supposed to have been a Shipbuilder. He had a brother Thomas who followed the sea; a brother James, already mentioned, who was a trader at Stroudwater, and a brother William by occupation a house joiner who lived on Saco street, Saccarappa. This was the William Webb, already mentioned, who bore the nickname, and is still remembered by our older citizens. I was therefore wrong in supposing him connected, unless very remotely, with the family of David Webb of Gorham. According to the data now before me, John Webb was born in England the 13th of March 1750, and died in Windham the 17th of December 1833—not in 1835 as formerly stated. His wife, Susannah Swett, was born the 15th of December 1755, and died the last day of the year

1825. The children of John and Susannah Webb were as follows:

1. Thomas, born 4 November 1779, died 1st November 1829; married Lydia Bickford and lived in Epping, N.H.
2. Polly, born 5th December 1781, died 4 April 1861; married John Goodell of Windham.
3. John, born 6 May 1784, died 23 March 1880. He settled in Danville, now embraced in the city of Auburn. He had ten children. The name of his wife I have not learned.
4. Betsey, married Josiah Freeman and settled in Windham. Mr. Freeman was the son of Benjamin and Eunice (Seavey) Freeman of Scarborough was born 10th October 1791, and died in Windham, 28 March 1868. Mrs. Freeman was born 9 September 1786, and died 19th May 1873. They had three sons and two daughters.
5. Hannah born 22 October 1789, died 28 February 1873; married Isaac Gibbs Walker. Mr. Walker was born in Hopkinton, Mass., 12 January 1786, and came to Saccarappa when a young man and was employed in the manufacture of nails, by Major William Valentine also of Hopkinton, and father of the late Hon. Leander Valentine. He was the son of Timothy and Lois (Gibbs) Walker. Isaac G. and Hannah (Webb) Walker had five children.
 - a. Isaac, born 16 February 1810, died in infancy.
 - b. Lois, born 25 February 1811, married James Babb of Westbrook, died.
 - c. Moses B. Walker, the veteran teacher, born 1st April 1813, married Caroline daughter of Mayor William Valentine.
 - d. Isaac N. Walker, born 2nd November 1815.
 - e. Lowell V. Walker, born 6th January 1818, died in Portland 22 August 1882, a well known locomotive engineer.
6. Stephen born 10 April 1792, married Mary Padden. He first lived on the farm in Scarborough which his father bought of a Mr. Knight, but subsequently removed to Windham where he died the 13th of May 1868. He left one son, John, father of Ex-

Mayor Webb of Westbrook, and two daughters, Betsey, widow of the late Mark H. Stevens, now living in Saco, and Hannabette, who died the 2nd of August 1840, at the age of 16. The latter was a girl no less beautiful in character than in person, and her early death was long and deeply mourned by a large circle of relatives and friends. The writer, although very young at the time, remembers visiting her in her last illness, and also being present at her funeral, which took place at the homestead in Windham and was largely attended.

7. Joshua, born 30 May 1796, died 4 September 1801.

I have stated in a former chapter that Henry Webb, of Stroudwater, who is described in conveyances of real estate as a mariner, was probably a brother of James Webb, the trader, and of our John; and although he is not included in the list of traditional brothers now given, I still think he rightfully belongs there.

R.

TO BE CONTINUED.