

LOOKING BACK

by

Elsie G. Calder

This collection of articles by Elsie Calder looks back far beyond her more than ninety years. She has precious records from her father and grandfather that allow her to do research without ever leaving home.

Her love for the history of Hanson and her gift for clear expression make for a true picture of the past; ranging from the patriotic to the amusing, from heroes to moonshiners and from hard workers to counterfeiters.

As with other authors, her work is as much a reflection of herself as it is of the town. We thank her for it.

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The Major's Purchase

Hanson, the West Parish of Pembroke, consists largely of the territory known as the Major's Purchase, a tract of land purchased in 1682 by Josiah Winslow and 34 others from the Indian Chief Josiah Wampatuck.

Boundary lines caused a great deal of argument and contention due to the loosely defined wording (Plymouth on one side, Bridgewater on the other side and north and south from Captain Southworth's land to the great ponds at Mattakesett).

These indefinite bounds made a more accurate description necessary so in 1690 the Proprietors chose John Thompson from Middleboro, John Soule from Duxbury and Nathaniel Thomas from what is now Hanson as a committee to settle the bounds. They conducted their work to the satisfaction of the remaining proprietors and each was given 250 acres for his service.

Mr. Thomas' land was in what is now the center of Hanson and there the house we now know (1987) as the Walkey house was built.

In 1695 he bought 250 acres more of the Indians and built a dam on the Indian Head Brook near the present Hanson Town Hall.

The original stone post marking one corner of the Major's Purchase lies in woods off Liberty Street. A half acre site around it was given to the town by Charles Oertel in 1949.

In mid 1963 the stone post was broken by vandals and in November 1963 Paul Clemons, Alvin Reid, and Antone Slaney carried five 84 pound bags of cement to the Major's Purchase location to cement the broken pieces back in place.

In 1820 after many meetings the General Court of Massachusetts agreed with most of the parishioners that the West Parish was large enough to become a township of its own and on February 22, 1820 the West Parish of Pembroke became the present town of Hanson.

OLD HOME WEEK

In 1899 Frank Rollins of New Hampshire originated in that state the plan of setting apart one week during the vacation season as the occasion of each town in the state trying to gather unto herself all her scattered sons and daughters to meet again at their old home for a grand reunion. The result was such a success that other New England states copied the idea, Hanson Massachusetts included.

Evie Drew, E. Trask Hill, Arthur Sampson, Roland Sawyer, Flavel Thomas and Barlette White were the committee members chosen by the Town to observe July 26 through August 3rd of 1902 as Old Home Week.

On Saturday evening, July 26th there was a parade from Town Hall to the bonfire on Bonney Hill. There were seventy horses in the parade and more

than a thousand people at the bonfire. Chats (branches) and tar-barrels were piled up 25 to 30 feet high, making this the largest bonfire ever seen in this section and Bonney Hill being one of the highest points in the County, the illumination was seen from long distances.

Old Home services were held Sunday at 10:30 A.M. at the Baptist Church (Joseph B. Reed, Pastor) and at 1:30 P.M. at the Congregational Church where Pastor Roland B. Sawyer told of early church history.

Monday was Reception Day of the organizations, the WCTU (Women's Christian Temperance Union), Kings Daughters of Gordon Rest, the Grange and the Theodore L. Bonney Post No. 127 of the GAR (Grand Army of the Republic). Otis Bonney told of the West Parish of Pembroke in the Revolutionary War and John Scates told of Hanson in the Civil War.

Evening exercises consisted of programs by "Briggs' Orchestra" and the Hanson Male Quartette with addresses by men of prominence.

Wednesday evening was for a School and College Reunion at Town Hall which was draped with various college colors and decorated with college flags and seals. The program included essays, historical papers, and music.

On Thursday there was a baseball game and a clay-pidgeon shoot at the Isaac Thomas farm.

A Thanksgiving service was held on Sunday August 3rd at the Town Hall. The clergymen of the Town expressed thanks to the people of Hanson for making "Old Home Week" a success and "one of the pleasantest of all the different celebrations in the year".

Theodore Lyman Bonney

Theodore Lyman Bonney, for whom the G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) Post was named, was born October 27, 1836 in Taunton Massachusetts but was taken to Hanson when a young boy where his youth passed in the usual manner of boys upon a farm and in a district school.

December 2, 1861 he enlisted for three years and became Sergeant in Company E 1st Massachusetts Infantry Battalion.

April 27, 1863 the Army of the Potomac broke camp and moved to Chancellorsville where it encountered the rebel army. Upon the forced march of retreat, overcome by exposure and fatigue, he sank by the way.

He was taken by a corps ambulance and carried to a field hospital very ill with typhoid fever. He died May 11, 1863 and was buried in Potomac Creek Station.

On June 9, 1863 Captain Steven Rich, Theodore's commander, wrote to Otis Bonney, Theodore's brother, giving information of Theodore up to the time he was last seen and of his death at the 3rd Corps Hospital. His grave was marked and his money, ninety odd dollars, was sent to his mother.

Otis Bonney had his brother's remains disinterred and brought to Hanson to be laid to rest in the family lot in Fern Hill Cemetery.

Wamptuck Hall

In the winter of 1886 five little girls of South Hanson started a sewing circle afterwards known as the "Little Workers Sewing Circle". The idea originated with Ella Everson and soon nearly every girl in South Hanson was a member. Older friends became honorary members and gave advice.

They made a quantity of useful articles which were sold as their friends patronized them liberally.

They soon found themselves with quite a sum of money and decided to purchase books and open a library. Mrs. Charles Keene offered a room in her home in which to keep the books. She helped in selecting books, caring for them and repairing them. Everyone was allowed to take out books upon payment of two cents a week.

A few years later people in this section of town became interested in forming a Library Association. The first regular meeting was held in March of 1889 and the name "Wampatuck Library Association" was given to the organization.

In November 1893 Wampatuck Hall was dedicated. The building was 33 by 50 feet. The first floor contained an entrance hall, ladies and gentlemen's dressing rooms, a library, kitchen and pantry. The second floor was given up entirely to a hall. Beneath the building was a large basement.

The hall brings a feeling of nostalgia to South Hanson seniors as they remember the Baked Bean Suppers on Thursday evenings and the fine entertainments that followed. On a Friday evening early in October an Annual Harvest Supper was held. Afterwards there was a sale of vegetables with Arthur Sampson as auctioneer.

Several minstrel shows were put on by the 20th Century Minstrels. End men were Mssrs. Walter Calder, Thomas Chamberlain, Frank Fisher, and Arthur Howland. Jokes were on well known local characters and were fresh and spicy.

On March 6, 1907, the Scottish Clan Ross, a new organization in this vicinity was instituted in the hall with Mrs. Orlando Charles extending greetings to the new order and paying tribute to Scottish history.

On the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month the Order of Ponemah Council No 82 met in the hall. This continued from May of 1919 until February 1952 when its charter was surrendered.

Pequod Tribe No. 74 was instituted on May 27, 1913 and from then on until 19446 Redmanship flourished in Hanson. The first meetings were held at Wampatuck Hall where Fred Snow was First Sachem (Presiding Chief); Ernest Blume was Chief of Records; George Turner was Collector of Wampum and

James Bourne, Keeper of Wampum. The Red Men were striking when they marched in full regalia; never more than at the Hanson's Flag Raising July 30, 1916 when they were headed by Prophet Charles Ruby all in white mounted on a white horse. William Farly was their last Sachem, he turned the charter in at the Great Council in June of 1946.

The Puritan Photo Play Circuit opened movies on Monday nights in 1916. The show started at 7:30 PM with popular prices (adults 15 cents children 10 cents).

In 1940 after more than fifty years of service to the community, the Wampatuck Library Association began to show signs of deterioration. The few remaining members then leased the building to Wampatuck Lodge AF and AM.

Today (1990) the building is owned by David Mansfield.

U.S. Navy Crosses the Atlantic

Shortly after 6:00 PM on May 16, 1919 three queer looking contraptions of wood, wire and canvas lifted from the waters of Trepassey Bay Newfoundland and headed out over the ocean. The first successful airplane flight to cross the Atlantic was under way.

Fifteen hours and thirteen minutes later, Commander Albert C. Read brought his Curtiss NC-4 aircraft safely down into the harbor of Horta in the Azores. From there he flew on to Lisbon. His was the only one of the three starting aircraft to finish. The NC-1 was wrecked, its crew saved by a passing Greek freighter. The NC-3 came down 200 miles short of the Azores and its Commander John S. Rowers taxied the aircraft over rough seas for something of a record.

Hanson's Albert Read had linked the continents by air in 26 hours and 51 minutes of flying time. He was called the "Christopher Columbus of the Air" and retired as a Rear Admiral.

The Burrage Hotel

"The Crest", a three story hotel made from cement blocks, was erected in 1907 on the west side of Pleasant Street between the railroad tracks and Reed Street by A.C. Burrage of Boston. He was the founder of the Hanson Manufacturing company and from him the village of Burrage took its name.

The hotel flourished with its 22 rooms, lobby, and business meeting rooms down through the years until, March 5, 1919 when an explosion and fire destroyed the nearby Dye Works. Two lives were lost; it was the worst disaster the town had ever known. With only the Wheeler Reflector business left, there was less need for the hotel so it was demolished and taken away piece by piece by a Brockton wrecking firm.

Hannibal G. Foster Champion Quilter

Born in Pembroke, he came to Hanson when only an infant. He was shoemaker by trade and was in business with his father on Maquan Street for many years.

He never married, lived alone, and was his own house keeper in a one room house. He had helped his mother make patchwork during her last days. Making patchwork quilts became his favorite pastime. He used a razor to cut out pieces and sewed everything by hand. He put many a lady to shame.

At eighty-eight he grew uneasy with this hobby, "It is not manly," he said. Once a man stopped his automobile to watch. "Pretty work for a grown man," he drawled. Furious, Foster pointed downward with his finger. "None of his business! He knew where I was telling him to go!

It was not unusual to see him walk back and forth to Whitman to purchase cloth. On his ninety-first birthday he was busily at work on his 100th quilt. Despite his advanced age he was as alert as a young man. He attributed his fine condition to total abstinence from tobacco and alcohol.

Professor Timothy Drake

Professor Timothy Drake was born and raised in Hanson.

During the summer of 1900 he devoted two months in Europe especially to witness the "Passion Play".

After witnessing the play he remained in Oberammergau a week to visit and become acquainted with the living characters in the world's greatest sacred play.

He secured the finest photographic views that could be taken and had many richly colored by artists in Europe who had made the work a life study.

Showing over 100 of these brilliant views with a calcium projection light Professor Drake lectured on "The Passion Play at Oberammergau" several times at the Congregational Church, Baptist Church, and Thomas Hall always as a benefit for some worthy cause.

While showing his views he endeavored to tell the story in a way that would draw the minds of his audience neared to the Master. An excellent picture of Professor Drake is shown in the 1962 volume of the "Pictorial History of Hanson" printed by the Hanson Historical Society.

Occupations of the First Settlers

At first we had only farmers, but soon there were other jobs.

Later residents are known to have made shingles by hand and were known as "shingle weavers". They would go into the woods and swamps remaining there while they cut the trees and fashioned shingles.

In scattered parts of the town coopers made barrels, buckets and tubs of various kinds.

In the 1700's Ebenezer B. Keene made nails and early in the 1800's Thomas Burney and Ephraim Cox were making tacks by hand.

Three generations of Bonneys were carpenters and there were several blacksmiths. Nathaniel Thomas had a shop near the saw mill at the foot of what was later known as Almshouse Hill.

In 1806 a steam driven mill was built by William Keene and Winslow Leavitt near the South Hanson Station for the purpose of sawing boards and making shingles. In 1870 it was purchased by Barnabas Everson who after moving it a short distance and building a new chimney stack sold it to John Foster.

The first water powered mill was located on Poor Meadow River near the old North Hanson Station. It was owned by Theodosius Moore who bought the land from Josiah Wampatuck's sister. Moore's operation consisted of a forge, a saw mill, a grist mill and a "finery" Local iron ore was refined in the "finery" before being forged into implements and other products.

Hanson's Long Ago Newspapers

The "Bode" was a weekly newspaper published every Friday in the interest of the religious, political and general welfare of the towns of Hanover and Hanson. It was published in 1899 by the Severance Printing Company of Whitman. Single copies were one cent each; subscriptions were ten cents per quarter.

Friend White was the editor, publisher of the "Bryantville Bee" which buzzed a brief season. It was a unique specimen. There was no written copy. The editor composed as he set the type and his wit and humor supplied the contents. All advertising was inserted without the knowledge of the parties advertised and absolutely free.

Frank L. Armstrong was the editor and proprietor of the "Hanson Bugle" started as an amateur monthly publication August 1, 1895. Copies were printed at the office of William Bradford in Bridgewater Massachusetts.

The decision to discontinue was determined about midnight on Thanksgiving Eve 1895 as the editor was wending his weary way along the railroad tracks halfway between Whitman and South Hanson with the weeks edition of papers on his back. He had found it impossible to perform the duties of reporter, editor and press man as he was but sixteen years of age at the time.

The "Bryantville News" was born February 18, 1903. It was a weekly paper published every Wednesday by George Edward Lewis and George A. Turner. The printing was done in their office over Bryant's store. Subscription rates were two cents per single copy or one dollar a year. This paper was a tireless letter writer prepared for those living here and for those who had moved away, telling of marriages, births, deaths, in fact, everything of interest and importance.

On November 24, 1951 the first issue of the "Hanson Courier" was printed by the Hanson Press. It was sponsored by the Hanson Chamber of Commerce as a medium through which the business people could advertise their services. It was mailed Thursday of each week. Marcus Urann reported that the folks at Ocean Spray were mighty proud to see the publication of the "Courier" and promised to bring news each week about Ocean Spray and what goes on behind their walls. Much to the delight of readers a "Who-Where-What-Why" section was added in 1952 and answers to the questions of a week before were answered.

Dana Moore Pratt

Mr. Pratt was born on Patriot's Day, April 19, 1870 in a farm house on Elm Street in Hanson.

His father was Edwin Pratt, a veteran of four years in the Civil War, who expected his son to assume responsibilities our own softer age would not consider suitable. At the age of ten, young Dana was sent with a team of oxen and a load of box logs to Plymouth, some fifteen miles away.

He had a lasting respect for his Primary School teacher, Clara Josselyn Langill, and his grammar school teacher Lillian Lewis. He was largely responsible for the naming of the L.Z. Thomas school on Main Street and he fought long and hard to keep the town from building a high school of its own which would have become with our limited means a second rate school.

Being outspoken and positive in opinion people opposed him through the years but they always knew where he stood when it came to a matter of the Town's best interest.

He was a trustee of the Fern Hill Cemetery and put the financial condition of the Cemetery Corporation on a sound basis. He was a secret service agent during World War One with the duty of making regular inspection trips to the Wheeler Reflector Factory employed in making shells for ammunition. He served with Walter Calder and George Bowker as a Water Commissioner for over a decade.

His social life was centered on the Sons of the Veterans Meetings, having begun his membership when the Order first started, serving in various positions, and never missed a Memorial Day Observance for over fifty years.

Death came on August 19, 1956. Birth had placed him in a humble spot but his own universal nature pushed aside those rural experiences.

Sham Battle

Two hundred horses and a seemingly unending stream of war apparatus unloaded August 14, 1909 at the South Hanson railroad station. War maneuvers were to be fought between the "Reds" and the "Blues" in the territory of Halifax, Pembroke and Hanson.

It was exciting to see a troop of cavalry, heralded by a military bugler, come trotting down Main Street.

One Company encamped in the No. 3 School yard opposite the home of Dana Pratt. The men soon learned that Mr. Pratt's house had a telephone and plenty of water. They went to the house often not only to use the phone but also to wash up at the sink. On the morning that they were to leave for their homes, the Commander asked Mrs. Pratt to make coffee for the entire company. The only vessel large enough was a new wash boiler which the Commander agreed was just right. He provided the coffee.

In 1959 a Hingham man who had served in that sham battle reported that the only casualties were the men who were unable to stay on their horses.

Dedication of the Memorial Auditorium

On May 5, 1952 dedication of the Hanson Memorial Auditorium and the unveiling by the Gold Star Mothers (whose children died in the war) of a bronze World War Two Memorial plaque took place.

Robert C. Andrews was chairman of the Dedication Exercise and planned an elaborate ceremony.

All veterans and patriotic organizations were invited to participate in a parade that formed at the Hanson Town Hall with Philip Robichaud, Commander of the Hanson Post of the American Legion acting as Grand Marshall. From Town Hall the parade proceeded to the Auditorium on Indian Head Street where the unveiling of the plaque took place and the formal dedication of the building was made.

At the annual town meeting in 1946 a proposal was made that the town plan some type of celebration to honor the young men and women who were then returning from military service. One young man took the floor and said "We are young, have been away, and have now come home. If the town has money to spend on a memorial or a celebration we would like to see it spent on something lasting rather than a monument." That young man's wish has now been fulfilled.

South Hanson's Most Destructive Fire

On the afternoon of April 4, 1906 there was a destructive fire at the mill of the John Foster Company and had it not been for the Silver Lake water obtained through two hydrants of the Brockton system the damage could hardly be estimated.

The fire was set by sparks from the 1:40 train and discovered by Winslow Wright who was unloading lumber. The alarm was sent out by telephone to the surrounding towns. Chemicals from Bryantville and Pembroke went at once, followed by David Gurney, Hose Number One of Whitman, and Simeon Thompson and his gang of Bravas.

By hard fighting the fire was confined to lumber back of Mr. Foster's residence. Burned were six sheds of hard pine; a car load of shingles; a large amount of white wood and kiln dried lumber.

During the fire Charles Keene's house caught fire in three places. Daniel McDonald's house on Bonney Hill also caught, besides Mr. Foster's house which was nearest the blaze. Five cars on the siding were removed by a special train from Whitman. The estimated loss amounted to \$75,000.

Theodore L. Bonney Relief Corps

On May 8, 1884 a band of women, mostly wives of Post Members, met in the Town Hall to organize a sewing circle for the purpose of cheering the brethren and benefiting the Soldiers' Unreturned Lot.

In 1887 the ladies served a dinner on Town Meeting Day and each year following until town meetings were changed to evenings.

On December 12, 1891 papers of interest from headquarters in regard to forming a Relief Corps was read by Isabella Scates. Each member of the Sewing Circle signed her name in favor of it, and on the evening of December 29, 1891 the following officers were installed for the Theodore L. Bonney Corps No. 146.

President:	Isabella Scates
Vice President	Sarah Calder
Secretary	Cornelia Cook
Treasurer	Sarah Pratt

On May 25, 1897 the Corps pledged \$200.00 toward the Soldier's Monument fund and after much hard work and several delays the monument was placed in Fern Hill Cemetery on the Unreturned Lot and dedicated October 20, 1906.

Carriage Painters

Garages were unheard of when I started the long trail called Life but we did have one artisan which has long since disappeared. He was the carriage painter. His large building was adorned with a long wooden incline plank driveway leading up to the second floor. There the newly painted carriage might dry exposed only to the minimum amount of dust.

The carriage painter had to be a man of considerable skill as a great deal of work went into the job. Much washing and scrubbing was involved. Rough paint had to be sanded down to smoothness and no carriage was considered finished until a coat of varnish had been added and some fancy stripes drawn to where they could show to the best advantage.

Striping was an art and only a few could do it well Joseph White of North Hanson was one of the few. His business was established in 1833 on Willow Street (now West Washington Street) and his name became a by-word in the carriage painting world of yesteryear.

The Wild West of Hanson

Joseph White had a man out west buying horses. They would come into Boston, and twice a week White would go there to check them and buy others.

The horses he wanted were shipped to the North Hanson depot or they might be ridden there by stable boys.

Many a time, six horses with their manes and tails braided and tied were seen heading for Mr. White's stables. They were held with one big halter by a rider whose fee was \$2.00.. plus 50 cents for dinner and the train fare back to Boston.

Hanson's First "Store Keeper"

Cornelius Cobb was the only "store keeper" in the section for many years.

His first venture was in the building in which Walter Chase once lived. Later he erected a store near his home. This store was converted into a dwelling and occupied by John Scates.

When Mr. Cobb went to Boston to purchase goods it is said that he and his son walked to Hingham, boarded the boat for Boston, went to the city and then returned the same way.

When goods were to be brought to Hanson the elder John Willett would drive an ox team over the road to Boston and return with the purchases. These always included a hogshead of molasses, a barrel of New England rum, a large box of brown sugar and other West Indian goods.

There were plenty of willing hands to assist with the unloading and mouths watered in anticipation of the promised treat with which the Hanson store keeper always rewarded them. In those days this was considered not only proper but the right thing to be done for assistance rendered.

Post Office Break

Around the turn of the century, the South Hanson Postmistress was Mrs. Fred Harley. Her assistant and only rural carrier was her husband who for many years faithfully carried the mail by wagon, sleigh and sometimes on foot when the snow was too deep for the horse to plow through.

At 2:30 A.M., one morning in 1908 a loud explosion was heard by neighbors. Carefully some of the more courageous citizens armed with pistols and shotguns investigated. They were just in time to see two figures fleeing out of the post office carrying a sack and running up the railroad tracks toward Whitman.

The safe was found to have been blown apart, windows and doors shattered and everything about the interior a wreck. After a lengthy investigation, Postal Inspectors captured the thieves.

Hanson's Privateer

Captain Joseph Smith want to sea at an early age and was the Second Officer on the privateer **Republic** in 1776 when the Revolution began in earnest. They surprised the British transport **Julius Caesar** and captured her even though she was larger and more heavily gunned than the **Republic**.

Smith was put upon the prize **Caesar** by the Captain of the **Republic** with orders to take her into Boston or if that was not possible to ground and burn her. Because Lieutenant Smith knew Boston harbor so well, he was able to guide her into Boston and tie her up at Rowes Wharf.

The guns and other cargo were welcomed at Boston and Smith's share of the prize money was quite a fortune. He used part of it to buy the farm on Maquan Street which became home to him and to his large family (five daughters and six sons). His daughter Caroline married Dr. Flavel S. Thomas and their children grew up in this lovely old home.

Hanson's Improvement Society

The Hanson Improvement Society was suggested in 1890 by Flavel S. Thomas and organized April 23, 1891 with 56 members. Henry L. Powers was President, Flavel S. Thomas Secretary and James McRoberts Treasurer.

The one object was to advance the interest and beautify the town; and it accomplished many good works.

In 1892 names of the streets were revised and street signs put up. Small villages received special definite names. Some of them were: Sodom, Bournetown, Fosterville, New State, Bonney Hill. People seemed to like these neighborhood names.

The next great work was the Fern Hill Cemetery arch in 1899. Much credit should be given to William G. Elms for the success of this undertaking.

The society had 17 years of active existence during which time an ideal alms house was completed, a library building built, an electric railroad opened, and Gordon Rest developed into a large institution (to provide vacations for working women). These projects benefited the town as a whole; the society had been careful to avoid projects that might benefit just one area.

On May 5, 1908 the last meeting was held.

A Service of Remembrance

On November 11, 1976 a Veteran's Day Memorial Service was held on the grounds of the South Hanson Baptist Church on Main Street. A memorial plaque was dedicated honoring two of Hanson's most famous citizens: Admiral Albert S. Barker and Admiral Albert C. Read.

Reverend Heigham offered the invocation and benediction; George Ford issued a welcome from the Hanson Historical Society; Patricia Stearns read a proclamation and Reverend Robert Lamson Pastor of the Baptist Church gave a historical survey of the two men who during their entire lifetime had been members of the Church.

Admiral Albert S. Barker was born March 31, 1843 and died January 31, 1916. He served the United States Navy from 1862 to 1905. He was the officer in charge of the "Enterprise" which went around the world taking soundings and preparing charts. He was highly promoted and honored by the United States Navy.

Admiral Albert C. Read was born in Lyme, New Hampshire. His parents moved to South Hanson when he was still a young boy. He graduated from Whitman High School in 1903 and the United States Naval Academy in 1906. He gained world fame by being the first to make a successful flight across the Atlantic Ocean. He retired in 1946 and died in 1947.

Members of various civic organizations were in attendance and at the close of the dedication Leo Connors, Commander of Hanson's American Legion gave the Veteran's Day Address thus remembering all the veterans living and deceased who had answered their country's call to duty.

Counterfeit Half Dollars

Sometime soon after 1930, someone conceived the idea of stamping fake silver half dollars out of heavy solid silverware. Hanson being a quiet country town seemed an ideal location. The interested parties rented a large barn on Holmes Street near the Washington Street end and started operations.

First they built a false section across the rear end of the barn constructing it so that anyone looking around would think that they were looking at the end of the building. Behind this wall they set up their stamping press and started manufacturing very good looking half dollars.

It was the custom of the counterfeiters to take the train at North Hanson with a travelling bag full of half dollars, distribute them around New York City, pick up silverware for more stock then return to North Hanson.

Their continued purchasing of second hand silver caused shop keepers to become suspicious. They reported the sales to the Federal Bureau of Intelligence who had been trying to trace the source of the counterfeit half dollars for some time and were glad to at last find a lead.

They located the source of the manufacturing with the help of the Hanson Police Force and raided the barn capturing the members of the counterfeiting enterprise.

Incidentally, when assayed, the counterfeit half dollars had a greater silver content than the genuine half dollars of that time.

A History of Hanson is Printed

On March 1, 1957 the Mayflower II Reception Committee extended to all the towns in Plymouth County and invitation to participate in the program planned for the arrival in May of the Mayflower II. The Hanson committee with Robert C. Andrews as Chairman voted to have a float of an historical motif represent us with Russell Gardner and Adolph Scott constructing it. Hanson had no English settlement until 1746 and was not even named Hanson until February 22, 1820 so the best historical theme seemed to be the friendly Aborigines (Indians).

The scene depicting an authentic Indian family as it really was in the Plymouth area featured a cedar bark wigwam made from a 150-200 year old cedar obtained from the Indian town of Mashpee on Cape Cod. The float was built upon an ancient fire wagon and was pulled by two great Belgian draft horses driven by Adolph Scott. Russell Gardner and his son represented their ancestors who were the first to tread the paths through "Tunk" that is now Hanson.

The Mayflower II arrived late on June 2, 1957. The Hanson float was well received and this pressed the trigger for our Selectmen to appoint a committee responsible for compiling a history of Hanson. At a town meeting in March 1959 the following members were appointed: Bertha Barasel, Elsie Calder, Harold Churchill, Harold Clark, Margaret Crossman, Russell Gardner, Beatrice Harley, Elizabeth Harriot, and Robert Rich.

The text of the history runs to 455 pages. Seventeen chapters are devoted to the town's churches, industries, old houses, schools, transportation, and even gives a nod to a moonshiner and a counterfeiter who once operated in Hanson.

Each section is illustrated with reproductions of old pictures supplied by interested members of the community.

January 1963 four large red bound volumes were presented to Robert C. Andrews who accepted them for the Hanson Board of Selectmen. They in turn placed a copy in each of our two libraries, the Indian Head School and the Town Hall. Unbound sheets were given to the Selectmen to store in the Town vault as they would prove advantageous if it should become desirable to copy the history at a later date.

Hanson's Soldiers Monument

In 1897 the Theodore L. Bonney Womens' Relief Corps voted to erect a soldiers monument and pledged \$200.

A committee consisting of Hannah Baker, Sarah Pratt and Mary Bates began the canvass of the town for funds. They found it hard work and at times almost hopeless as people did not respond. Then at the March 4, 1904 town meeting, Mary Bates asked the town to give \$300 toward the monument and to appoint a committee to work with the Womens' Relief Corps committee. The town voted to raise the \$300 and elected Frank Damon, Flavel Thomas and Barker Baker to serve on the Monument Committee.

For months this committee held meetings, consulted with monument men, examined plans, designs and estimates. The list of names was done by Flavel Thomas assisted by Mercer Tillson and Otis Bonney.

After nine years of hard work the goal was reached and the Civil War Soldiers Monument was finally erected costing \$1500. Dedication ceremonies took place October 20, 1906. The occasion was impressive. There was a parade from the Town Hall to the cemetery, music by the Regal Band and several speakers.

Between 1930 and 1940 there was a movement on foot to have the Town of Hanson deed the Fern Hill Cemetery to an independent Fern Hill Cemetery Association. Hansonians felt that the Soldiers Monument, located on the Unreturned Lot in Fern Hill Cemetery should not be left standing on property owned by a private association, so in 1937 it was moved to its present location on the Town Hall grounds.

The transfer of the cemetery property was never carried out because the town had no authority to do so and the motion that had passed in Town Meeting was rescinded but not before our lasting tribute to the Boys in Blue had been moved from the Unreturned Lot.

Breaking Up of the Moonshine Still

There was a large illegal alcohol distilling plant or "Moonshine Still" located off Hudson Street in 1923.

It was situated about half a mile back from the street near a clear crystal spring close by Poor Meadow River. The only means of transportation from the highway to this cleverly hidden plant was by ox cart.

Sugar, grain etc. used by the operators was hauled from South Hanson by motor truck. The continuous hauling of heavy supplies on Elm Street aroused the interest of Police Chief John H. Ibbitson. He decided to investigate the destination of this apparently large supply of material and it was not long before he discovered the eventual use to which it was being put.

He contacted the Internal Revenue Bureau, the Chief of Police of Whitman and East Bridgewater and together they conducted a very successful raid. The operators were prosecuted by the officers of the Federal Government.

The following winter some of the alcohol found its way into the radiators of quite a few of our Hanson natives and the rumor went that it also helped check a few head colds. The breaking up of the "Moonshine Still" is pictured in the 1962 edition of "Hanson's Pictorial History".

Hanson at the Marshfield's Tercentenary

Hanson's Selectmen thought that in as much as Hanson was at one time part of Marshfield it was only fitting that we assist them by participating in their Three Hundredth Anniversary.

A committee made up of one member from each organization in town was appointed to make arrangements for a float to be entered in the parade scheduled for July 24, 1940.

Members of the committee were Urban Boulanger of the American Legion; Thomas Chamberlain of the Sons of Veterans; Lillian Ellis of the Relief Corps; Abial Hammond of the Grange; George Ellis of the Red Men; Maybelle Loud of the Congregational Church and Robert Andrews of the Selectmen.

The float was entirely of a historical nature. The story it represented dated back to 1695 when our town was called "Tunk" a name given it by the Indians meaning "The Land Beyond".

In the center of the float there was an old mill of cedar, a replica of that first mill which was erected by Nathaniel Thomas after he moved to Hanson from Marshfield.

In the foreground Stephen Hiatt placed a painting of a dam and water wheel representing the first to be erected in Plymouth Colony. At the far end of the float two early settlers were cooking in primitive fashion at an outdoor fireplace.

Antiques used were loaned by Thomas Drake, an older resident; cedar was donated by Marcus Urann, printing was the work of Daniel Lauten.

While the float was not a prize winner, it was greatly admired and of much credit to the town and the committee members who put many hours into its building.

A Salute to the Hanson Grange

The Hanson Grange, Patrons of Husbandry No. 209 was organized in the Town Hall on October 1, 1909 with Flavel Thomas Master, Maud Estes Secretary and Duncan McIntosh Treasurer.

Over the years, nearly every family in town has had a Grange member in the household. These members have sponsored 4-H Garden Clubs, distributed holiday baskets to needy families, conducted Red Cross Sewing Groups, made donations to the Visiting Nurse Association and the Plymouth County Hospital. In the Spring of 1913 they set out twenty maple trees on the south side of Gordon Rest Hill and in 1914, seven more making a row from Wampatuck Pond to Gordon Rest. Dues for all Hanson members in the military services were paid. Fifteen Grange members served in World War I and two made the supreme sacrifice on foreign soil.

Members are housed in the former South Grammar School which was built in 1909 on the corner of Main and Robinson Streets and deeded to the Grange on May 12, 1941 for the sum of one dollar. A sign has been erected on the front of the building, screens installed, a kitchen built downstairs and a new heating system put in. The list of events held at the Grange is long and varied. There have been auctions, food sales, whist parties, mystery rides and flea markets. Their float depicting a miniature true-to-life harvest scene was a third prize winner at our Sequicentennial Parade on July 19, 1970.

Hanson Grange has certainly been one of the most influential organizations in town. Few Granges can equal it.

Hanson Mail Service

Around 1820 Hanson's first post office was located in the store of Cornelius Cobb with Captain Nathaniel Collamore serving as Postmaster.

Mail was delivered four times a week and was received from Hanover and East Bridgewater which were served by stage coaches.

Ephraim Cox was the mail carrier in the Hanson area for fourteen years. He was paid \$80.00 a year for his services and for six of the fourteen years he carried the mail on horseback.

When the Old Colony Railroad opened in 1845 another post office was granted the town and located in the South Hanson railroad station with Barak Osborne as Postmaster.

During the years other offices were established. The Hanson Center office was in Harding's store at Washington and Spring Streets; the North Hanson office was located at the North Hanson railroad station; the Bryantville office was in a building on the southwest corner of Main and Union Streets; the Monponsett office was in the A.J. DeSorcie store on Monponsett Street.

One by one the offices have been discontinued leaving only the South Hanson and Monponsett offices. The Bryantville office was moved to Pembroke. In 1940, the Post Office Department discontinued use of the name "South Hanson" in favor of "Hanson".

Hanson's Early Quartets

Hanson is as musical a town as can be found in Plymouth County.

The "Hanson Male Quartette" had as its members Walter Calder, Walter Munroe, Thaddeus Howard and Walter Everson. They rendered their voices in singing the old hymns that every one loved to hear and pleased at many occasions.. They were often called upon to render a few hymns at the funerals of friends and neighbors. There were very few houses between the Bryantville line and Elm Street that they have not sung in at a funeral. The hymn most requested was "The Vacant Chair".

The "Harmony Quartette" was composed of Mary Foster, Susie Bourne, Walter Calder and George Langill. Their services were in demand on Memorial Day. People enjoyed hearing them sing "To Thee O Country".

The "Jolly Boys Quartette" made up of Walter Calder, Luke and Ernest Hemmenway and George Langill were very popular at Thomas Hall entertainments and encores were encored when they sang "They Go Wild Simply Wild Over Me".

Annie Gorham, Nannie Holmes, Walter Calder and Stephen Wiatt were a "Mixed Quartette" that made audiences feel heartily the sentiment voiced in the first verse of a hymn written by Grace Bonney for Hanson's Old Home Week in 1902:

"Oh God, we thank thee who didst lead
Our Sires, in early days
To Choose a spot of earth so fair
And there their hearth stone raise."

A Gypsy Wedding

The unusual event of a Gypsy wedding in Hanson caused much excitement and curiosity among the people in the north end of town.

On July 12, 1915 the two tribes of the negotiating parties began to gather at the home of the Johnson tribe on Glenwood Avenue.

The bride, Princess Amelia Thomas Johnson, and the groom Prince Miller Stevenson had seen each other only twice; once when they were children and once when the paths of the two tribes crossed on a summer journey.

July 18th feasts were prepared by the two tribes. The American guests were served a dinner prepared by a cook secured especially for them. Outside visitors were asked to leave at 5 o'clock when certain rites were performed by the two Kings. The Kings of the different tribes were also Priests of their respective tribes.

In the evening visitors were again welcomed and the festivities continued. Dancing constituted a large part of the bridal ceremony and was led by King and Queen Johnson and King and Queen Stevenson. Music was furnished by an eight piece orchestra of which Horace Cushman was the cornetist.

Festivities were to have been kept up through the day on Sunday but a license could not be obtained for the music on that day, so they were discontinued and opened again on Monday.

Saturday evening Mr. LePoint in behalf of the neighbors presented the bride in the parlor of her parents a beautiful bouquet of roses and pinks. Tuesday was observed as a day of rest and after that the tribe of Stevenson took its departure.

Origin of the New England Thanksgiving

This time honored custom began with the earliest settlement in New England. The Pilgrim Fathers set apart a day for Thanksgiving and prayer to God for his watchful care over them in preserving their lives through the year and for giving them an abundant harvest.

In the fall of 1621 the first harvest of the colonists was gathered. The corn yielded well, the barley was tolerably good. Satisfied with the abundance of their yield, four huntsmen were sent out for fowl. On their return the Pilgrims rejoiced together.

Massasoit, chief of a neighboring tribe, and ninety of his men participated in the festivities. They brought oysters, the first the Pilgrims had ever seen.

In 1623 no rain fell from early May until the middle of July. Corn withered under the scorching sun. A public fast was ordered, the first ever kept on these western shores. The day was cloudless and intensely hot but as evening approached rain descended continuing for fourteen days. Crops revived and a bountiful harvest succeeded.

In token of the gratitude a second day of public Thanksgiving was ordered. Although originally confined to the sons of the Pilgrims and the state of Massachusetts, it has now become almost a national festival as an expression of gratitude to God for his bounties.

It is also productive of many pleasing reminiscences connected with the joys of our own childhood and the delights of our own hearthsides as we exchange greetings and relive recollections of the past.

Hanson Firsts

The first woman to brave a smoke filled room to cast a vote for school committee was Mary Jane Howland. It took courage to cross that spittoon covered floor but she made an impression. Gradually the feet came down from the backs of the settees in front and eventually the spittoons disappeared.

Patricia Stearns became Hanson's first woman Selectman in 1970. She introduced the first coffeepot to the Selectmen's Tuesday night meetings.

In 1894, Joseph White Jr. of North Hanson was the first to install a telephone. A group of men from the telephone company came to his place of business putting the system into both his home and office. People for miles around would ask Mr. White if they might talk over the telephone. It seemed incredible that a voice could be heard over a wire.

Elias Poole, Hanson's "Village Blacksmith" was also Hanson's first passenger on the "Old Colony Railroad". He walked from his blacksmith shop to the North Hanson railroad tracks to wave as the "Comet" puffed through on its way to Plymouth. He was delighted when the train stopped and the engineer invited him to ride down to Plymouth and back.

The first automobile was owned by Marcus Urann. It was an open affair with bucket seats. Mr. Urann and Wallace Mann, the plumber of Bryantville, were the town's first speeders they were said to "rev it up" to 60 miles an hour.

An Old Time Country Store

During the Revolutionary War, Alexander Soper had a store and kept a tavern at the junction of Bonney Hill and Main Street, a little to the west of where Walter Calder had his first store.

In 1874 William Herbert Keene came from East Bridgewater to the house now known as Zero High Street and set up a grocery business on the site of the Soper Tavern. His son Herbert, who inherited the business continued with "Keene's Store" until 1921.

The store was a two room building. In front were counters on both sides with an iron stove on the center of a board floor. A long bench was drawn up near the stove where the men of the community sat talking politics and settling the town affairs as they smoked their pipes and chewed tobacco.

There were no packaged goods in those days. Everything came in wooden boxes, crates and barrels. A bunch of

bananas always hung from the ceiling. In the medicine cabinet we found Sloan's Liniment and Scott's Emulsion. In the candy counter were trays of licorice, horehound drops and peppermint patties.

In the back room was the vinegar and the New Orleans molasses, each in a barrel with a spigot for reaching the contents. Customers brought their own quart jugs to be filled. Butter was in a tub and was very apt to crumble when a customer requested a quarter of a pound. Grain bags were piled one on top of another and in summer the sticky sheet of fly paper were spread about the place.

Eggs were often exchanged for flour, sugar and coffee. Kerosine was ten cents a gallon; bread four cents a loaf; coffee twelve cents per pound and the best creamery butter thirty-four cents per pound.

"Keene's Store" became the social center for miles around and the people who frequented it certainly made it interesting.

Ivy Stone Farm

This unique house with its gambrel roof and pinkish stone exterior walls is located at 622 Main Street and is the oldest standing in that historic location of the Benjamin Hanks farm.

The first known to have lived in it was Jonathan Reed Gurney mentioned in the Bryantville News by Alfred Reed who wrote the history of the Baptist Church.

Mr. Gurney was a resident of South Abington (now East Whitman) and became interested in the work of the Hanson Baptist Church five miles away.

Each Sunday he drove from his home to attend the meetings and give encouragement to the people here, often bringing a carriage load of friends.

At length he moved to the Ivy Stone Farm to be more closely in touch with the Church work. He was not only Deacon of the South Hanson Baptist Church but was interested in the Baptist movement as early as 1814 when there were only eleven churches in the County.

The following is a family tradition told by his grand-daughter Emma Gurney Look. Jonathan was placed in a tomb at Mount Zion Cemetery, Whitman after his death. Later when preparing to inter his remains the heavy weight of the casket seemed strange and upon investigation his body was found to have turned to stone. Therefore, in stead of burying him his body was left in the tomb.

Hanson's Grammar School Graduation

In the early 1900's Hanson's North Grammar School graduations were held in Wampatuck Hall.

September 1908 the North Grammar School ninth graders were placed with the South Grammar School ninth graders. Their graduation was at the Hanson Town Hall on June 18, 1909.

In June 1959 the School Committee reported that a gradual change to a less formal type of graduation exercises had been started and in June 1960 the following statement was sent to parents:

"For many years past, graduation exercises for pupils of Grade Eight have been held in June. This custom came from the past when people considered their public school education ended at the completion of Grammar School. Today it is customary to regard public education as extending through twelve grades of the public

High School. Graduation exercises bring joy and elation to some, sorrow and disappointment to others. Preparation for such exercises takes much time from regular school work. We feel that the time should be spent teaching the boys and girls more valuable things therefore this year we are changing from a formal eighth grade graduation to a closing school assembly."

The change from a formal eighth grade graduation to a closing school assembly brought many favorable comments.

Walter "Pope" Atwood

Many of the younger generation never heard of "Pope" Atwood but you can wager that to the older folks he was a personal friend.

He was never sure just how he got his nickname but thought that because his first bicycle was a "Pope" model that his pals named him after his first bike.

In 1917, at the age of seventeen, "Pope" started a bakery delivery driving through the towns of Whitman, Hanson, Pembroke, Halifax, Plympton by horse and wagon. He was as welcome and watched for as the mail man.

To his customers he was more than a bakery driver, he was a confidant. People who were going to be away from home would tell him where they kept the key so he could leave their goods. Store keepers on his 4 A.M. route gave him keys so he could leave their products inside.

"Pope's" career was not just as a bakery man. In the early 40's he became friendly with a member of a vocal and instrumental act known as "Jimmy and Dick". They played guitars and sang Western songs. He joined their act as a lovable cowboy character known as "Two Gun Atwood". Complete in full cowboy regalia with guns on his hip he "wowed" audiences all over New England.

This fellow who had never studied a note of music became a sensation deluged with fan mail.

Our Tri-Town Superintendency Dissolved

The school committees of Hanover, Hanson and Norwell unanimously voted on August 8, 1961 to dissolve their 67 year superintendency union.

The union of the three towns had been approved by town meetings in the respective communities in March 1894 with A.J. Curtis hired as the first Superintendent. Others who served in that post were: Christopher A. Record, Charles A. Harris, James B. Hayes, Steven Beane, Leon Farren, Willard B. Spaulding and Clifton E. Bradley.

Growth in the three towns in recent years had made the tri-town union impractical. Hanover had built a new High School and Hanson had joined with Whitman for a Regional High School. The Superintendency had become more than a one-man job and it now seemed desirable for each town to have its own Superintendent.

Albert E. Kiernan became Hanson's Superintendent and the town is indeed lucky to have a man of his calibre in its midst. It was he who introduced Home Tutoring for the handicapped. Prior to this they were simply names in the filing cabinet. He visited each home, talked with each child and set up a schedule for home tutoring; then followed through with time visits to see how each was progressing. I found Mr. Kiernan to be a most dedicated and caring teacher who has made effective contributions to the educational well being of our Hanson schools.

Benjamin Hanks

Benjamin Hanks was born in England in 1665. He came from London in 1699, landed in Plymouth and settled in the western part of Duxbury which in 1712 was established as the town of Pembroke.

It has been well established and proved that Benjamin Hanks was the first of the Hanks family to arrive in New England. Soon after his arrival he married Abigail Heiford. Twelve children were born of this couple. With the exception of Jacob, the youngest, all are recorded in Pembroke. In Edgar Freeman's book entitled "Ancestors of Mine" one chapter is devoted to each of the children.

Early records were well researched and prove that the Hanks family of Pembroke was not connected with the Hanks family of Virginia who were maternally connected with Abraham Lincoln.

Benjamin Hanks owned the southern half of Lot 35 of the Major's Purchase on what is now the northerly side of Main Street, opposite Reed Street. It is on this lot that he built his home, and it is here his family lived unaware that almost beneath their door slept an Indian of long ago. The house was demolished September 1, 1982.

A Civil War Letter

Ebenezer Henry Gurney, always referred to as "Henry", and three other Hanson boys ran away together in 1861 to enlist in Boston for service in the Civil War.

Henry's first enlistment was for three months but it was not until 1863 that he came home. He was a musician and his second enlistment found him "Chief Bugler" in the "First Rhode Island Cavalry".

The following letter was written by him on May 11, 1861 from Fort Monroe

My Dear Brother;

I received your letter of the 28th of April today, so you see it was a long time on the way. I would like to have you here today just to see our style of living and how we work.

All the other boys have been hauled up with something or other. Edwin Thayer has been in the hospital four days for a swelling in his neck. William is sick with boils,

Otis Bonney is far from well. It is all from our mode of living. Our victuals are just right to create humors, nothing but pork and bread for breakfast and bread and coffee for supper, and this is to serve one's Country!!!

I never worked harder; get up at 4:45, shake my blanket and go out for Company Drill until breakfast. After breakfast it is Regimental Drill for three hours. Roll Call is at 9:00 P.M. but we do not get much sleep as there are 150 of us in the same room.

The harbor is full of sails. We do not know if the Rebels will be bold enough to attack us or not but every place is being strengthened and guns put in order.

I wish you to write as often as you can and tell me all the Hansor news. My love to all.

Your brother
Henry

Fort Monroe was near Hamptor Roads, Virginia. It stayed in Union hands all through the war and was a prison for Jefferson Davis afterwards.

Four West Washington Street Hanson

The ell of this house at the corner of Spring Street and West Washington Street was dragged from Bonney Hill in 1810 by sixteen pair of oxen for a widow Taylor who occupied it until her death.

Reverend Mr. Wales, the next occupant, not finding the ministry especially remunerative took up cabinet making. After his death, his widow married Martin Beal who continued the cabinet making. He made all the coffins used in this section at that time charging ten dollars for the best ones and eight dollars for the others.

The house afterwards became the property of Joseph B. White who gave it to his daughter Josephine. She became Mrs. Edward Churchill and had a son Harold Churchill.

In the 1960's Harold's wife, Nan, had a gift shop near the house and he assisted there collecting important pieces of Americana. One antique, which was not for sale, was a bannister taken from the stairs leading to the belfry platform of the Old North Church where the lanterns were hung to signal Paul Revere --- "One if by land and two if by sea".

Today this house is the Leighton Funeral Home.

Hanson's Early Cranberry Business

In the late 1800's Cape Cod's sailing days were over because the steamship had supplanted sailing vessels. One time sea captains returning home looked around for something to do and one by one many turned to cranberry growing.. making useless cedar swamps into velvety green bogs producing ruby red berries.

Ephraim Gordon Gorham, pioneer of the cranberry business in Hanson, was one of those sea captains. He was born in Harwich Massachusetts on November 7, 1847 and commenced growing cranberries in 1880 out on the Cape. Later he moved to Pembroke where he continued the cranberry business. Still later he came to Hanson where, at first, he built bogs for other people. John Foster and Richard Everson were the first growers here.

Marcus Urann, a Boston lawyer, had several cranberry growers for clients. From them he learned that the cranberry

industry offered security and a reasonable return on one's investment. Richard Everson told him that a swamp in Halifax, near the end of Elm Street was for sale. Mr. Urann immediately bought it and in 1897 began building what he called "Bog No. 3".

Convinced that there was a big market for cranberries he now began to think of "canning" and in 1912 put up a 60 by 90 foot building on Main Street. Thirty-six years later that original building had grown into a sprawling plant that produced 22 million cans of "Ocean Spray" each year.

Hanson's Two Gad Hitchcocks

Reverend Gad Hitchcock, the son of Ebenezer Hitchcock, was born in Springfield Massachusetts on February 22, 1719. He graduated at Harvard College in 1743 and was ordained as Hanson's first pastor.

The dwelling in which he lived (known today as the Walkey house) was sold to him by Daniel Hayforn on December 13, 1749 for twelve hundred pounds. It was built on land formerly owned by Isaac Thomas, son of Nathaniel Thomas, Secretary of the Proprietors of the Major's Purchase.

Reverend Hitchcock gave an historic "election sermon" at Boston on May 23, 1774 from the text Proverbs 29:2: "When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice but when the wicked rule the people mourn." When it was learned that the new Governor, General Gage, would be present; Gad was

advised to be cautious in the words that he used. He replied: "My sermon is written and will not be altered."

The sermon filled General Gage with rage but pleased Samuel Adams and others so much that a suit of clothes was presented to Hitchcock as a mark of appreciation.

Reverend Hitchcock had one child, a son born in 1749, named Gad for his father. He also graduated from Harvard. He was a surgeon in the Revolutionary War and later became the first physician in Hanson, practicing medicine from his childhood home.

Both Hitchcock men were widely known. The Reverend Gad Hitchcock was a man of exceptional ability. The Doctor Gad Hitchcock was certainly a chip from the old block inheriting all of his father's excellent qualities.

Highlights of Earlier Times

1886 The expenses of the poor have been uncommonly large the past year. There has been the largest number in the Alms House of any year since 1880 and the expense was caused by sickness.

1898 It was voted that the Highway Surveyor have discretionary power and pay what he sees fit for labor on the highway and removing snow but not to exceed twenty cents an hour for a man fifteen cents an hour for a horse and cart.

1925 On account of the suspension of trolley service, bus transportation was adopted for the High School pupils.

1928 Voted to raise and appropriate \$2000 for the purchase of the so called "Burrage Field" on Main Street near Pleasant Street as a school site.

1940 Our Finance Committee recommended the following sums as salaries: Selectmen, each member \$225; Tax Collector \$900; Town Clerk \$225; Treasurer \$600.

1956 By its vote the Town has committed itself to a Regional High School with Whitman. This will be continuing a relationship that has gone on for many years but will change the basis of that relationship. In stead of tuition, we will now pay our share of the total cost; both for the educational program and for the building. In return we will have representation on the Committee. It will be "our" High School.

Seth Miller Briggs

"Miller" Briggs was born in 1835, attended Hanson's District Schools until he was 16, after which he engaged in farming with his father.

At 20 he went on the road with a musical comedy traveling all over the United States and Canada. He was an excellent violinist, gave concerts, music lessons, made and repaired violins and wrote music.

He was a leader of the Hanson Brass Band and conducted a musical group known as the Briggs Orchestra which was in great demand both in the town and out.

His musical ability was appreciated by his comrades in the Union service 1862. The following is from the "History of the 3rd Regiment":

"Mr. Briggs was the knight of the bow and could make the old campaign fiddle talk, sing or weep as occasion required or his fancy dictated."

In November 1913 he celebrated his 78th birthday with Comrades at G.A.R. Hall and was honored by Lydia A Sampson with these words:

"Comrade Briggs: you fought years ago 'neath the stars and stripes of our dear Old Flag with its colors bright. But since that time you have lived in peace, and year by year your age has increased. They have swiftly passed until this date until the milestone you have reached is 78."

At the close of the celebration Mrs. Sampson said, "Dear Comrade you have heartfelt thanks from both the Post and the Corps for entertaining us so grandly as you have many times before."

Christmas Memories

In December 1951 many gave much time and thought to the outdoor decorations of their homes and in recognition of that fact the Hanson Chamber of Commerce asked a panel of three qualified judges to select the three most attractive and artistic. The Chamber then acknowledged the first, second and third choices of the judges with an informal certificate and a small cash prize for each.

The three winners were: First, William A. Stillman 482 Elm Street; Second, William G. Crossman 271 High Street; Third, C.T. Gaudette 188 Spring Street. Honorable Mention went to the homes of Alexander Brennan, John Dolan, William Fardie, Ralph Harley, Henry Leighton, George McLaughlin, George Mullen, Richard Sayce, and Robert Walkey.

Marcus Urann's fourteenth Christmas party for the pupils in Grades 1 and 2 was held December 22 at the Ocean Spray plant. School busses brought the children to the plant by 2:00 P.M. when Santa Claus with his bag of toys welcomed them. Watching the youngsters approach Santa with awe--with timidity-- and with wide eyed wonder, and hearing them sing at the top of their lungs "Rudolph the red nosed reindeer" in a half dozen different keys was one of the high spots of the year.

Hanson's G.A.R. Post Makes History

The Theodore L. Bonney Post 127 G.A.R. was one of the most active G.A.R. posts in the South Shore area. It was instituted June 11, 1870 with Bradley S. Bryant as Commander. Twenty-six charter members unanimously declared the post be named for Theodore L. Bonney.

At first, meetings were held at Soper's Hall in North Hanson then at Crocker's Hall in South Hanson. In 1874 meetings were at the Town Hall. The generosity of the town toward those who went to fight for their country during the Rebellion is illustrated by a vote passed at Town meeting giving the use of the lower hall for monthly meeting provided that the members of the Post would furnish their own light and fuel and pay for taking care of the hall. The total cost per night was ten cents less than it would cost to hire the entire hall. A newspaper article appearing the day after the meeting was headlined "False Generosity on the Part of the Town". The town's gift was considered at a meeting of the Post and

refused, thus planting the seed to obtain a hall of their own. April 11, 1903 Comrade Calder introduced his friend Mr. John Foster who said that, if they would accept, he would build them a hall on his land on High Street and make them a present of the whole. It was voted by a rising vote of everyone in the hall to accept his kind offer.

The first meeting in the new hall was on August 12, 1904 with John Scates Commander, an office he held continuously for nineteen years.

John Scates was made Grand Marshall of the parade celebrating Hanson's 100th anniversary. He insisted on driving his own Model T Ford roadster. He headed the parade, starting from Town Hall over High Street then Main Street and up Indian Head Street back to Town Hall all at thirty miles per hour. All the floats had to tear along just to keep up with him. People riding on them had to hang on like grim death to keep from falling off. Decorations peeled off in the blowing wind all along the way so that

many truck/floats arrived back at the Town Hall bare. Workers who had spent weeks decorating the floats were irate and disgusted but John Scates twinkled.

Years later, having outlived most of the others, he would open the meeting, take up the business of each chair and close the meeting; all by himself..... to keep alive the spirit of the Grand Army in Hanson. In 1925 the original forty six members had faded to an invalid, Joseph W. Clemons, and The Commander. He decided to give up the Charter. At the final parting, the eighty-four year old Commander made the rounds of the hall alone, gathering up the rituals, the tokens and memorials. The rituals were turned over to the State G.A.R Head- quarters and Hanson's Theodore L. Bonney Post fell into oblivion.

The Seventh Son

John Foster was born in March 1842 to David Foster and his wife who lived in Pembroke. He was their seventh son. Mr. Foster worked as a carpenter in the Quincy Ship yard and no doubt because of that association John became interested in the timber and lumber business. When quite a young man, he built a water powered mill on a brook in Pembroke, started cutting timber then sawing it in the mill. Later he built two more water powered mills and set up a box factory at one of them.

After a failure in 1878 of his Fosterville grocery store he moved to the second floor apartment in a building owned by William Keene near the corner of High Street in South Hanson. This was the turning point in his career. A few years later he built a home for himself opposite the Keene building and bought the "Barney Everson Lumber Mill". This mill was only a "long board" saw mill but John Foster wanted it because it was close to the railroad and the great cedar swamp which held a great deal of hemlock as well as cedar.

In the early 90's John added to and rebuilt the Everson mill including a box shop which was kept busy supplying boxes to the Walter Baker Chocolate Company. When things were at their peak the Foster Company was employing one hundred fifty people. His stables located in back of his home (now known as the Marcus Urann home) housed twenty-five horses and several yoke of oxen. It was then a two family home and Alvin Reid lived with his parents in the other half.

John Foster was busy with many things. He owned several of the first cranberry bogs in this area and acquired a great deal of real estate in this town. He built the G.A.R. Hall on High Street (using his land, his lumber and his foreman) and donated it to the veterans.

John Foster was friendly, generous and jovial but like all of us had a few idiosyncrasies. He was very fond of raisins and was seldom without a handful in his pocket while at the same time he carried in another pocket bits of "Bakers Chocolate" which he never ate but handed to children as they passed his office door. Death came to this seventh son in December 1909.

Edward Young Perry

E.Y. Perry, the son of Elijah and Chloe Perry was born on November 4, 1812. His mother died when he was seven weeks old and his father before he was two years of age. He was raised by Grandparents Seth and Hannah Perry at their family home on State Street.

Seth was a farmer and as a boy Edward helped his grandfather on the farm. As he grew, he went into business for himself. In 1845 after the "Old Colony Railroad" was built, a movement began in Hanover to build a branch road. A charter was obtained but it expired before the railroad could be located. Twenty years later came a man with the energy in carrying to completion a plan once conceived. That man was Edward Y. Perry of Hanson.

He became the first President of the Hanover Branch Railroad which was graded and built under the direction of Joseph Smith of Hanson and completed in 1865. So economically did E.Y. Perry operate that he often acted as conductor to relieve some employee who was off duty and whenever he rode as a passenger on the road, he paid his own fare.

Mr. Perry was a Justice of the Peace for a number of years and a member of the state legislature in 1867. He was so strongly opposed to usury in all of its forms that on July 1, 1880 he stopped taking interest on his loans and from then on collected no interest on mortgages he held.

It was the E.Y. Perry Fund which made it possible for many young Hanson students to continue their education.

Hanson Electric Line

When first put in operation the electric line entered Hanson on Perry Avenue and went to Whitman Street which it followed to Spring Street, then to Washington Street, to Liberty then High Streets, it turned left on Main Street and ran to the Pembroke line. The first trip over the line was made in July of 1900 and all that day the rides were free.

By the end of 1900 the electric line rails had been extended from Whitman to Brockton and from Kingston to the Hanson-Pembroke line. The whole became part of the Brockton and Plymouth Street Railway Company.

There were only three official stops on the line within the bounds of Hanson; Hardings Corner, Cushing Corner and the Town Hall Corner. Each had a waiting shelter. There were many unofficial stops indicated by "white poles" at which the waiting passenger could flag the car to stop or at which

the riding passenger could alight on a signal to the motorman.

Being a single track line it was necessary to have a number of "turnouts" along the route to allow the passage of cars coming from the other direction. There were six "turnouts" within Hanson: 1100 Whitman Street, 50 Spring Street, 165 Liberty Street, opposite the Congregational Church, opposite the G.A.R. Hall, and 460 Main Street.

A zone fare system was used on the line. Six cents carried a passenger from the Pembroke line to Cushings Corner. Another six cents to him to Winter Street in Whitman where by changing cars on a "transfer" he could ride to Whitman Center.

Growth of the automobile worked against the interests of the railroad company and shortly before Christmas in 1925 the line was discontinued permanently. The little old brick "power house" still stands on the south side of Route 27, at the Hanson-Pembroke line.

A Visit from the Sky

A novel sight was the descent of a balloon opposite Arthur C. Sampson's house at 902 Main Street on an otherwise quiet July evening in 1904.

The balloon was gaily decorated with brilliant flags and its basket was draped with the national colors.

As the balloon neared the ground, it almost became entangled in the telephone and trolley wires. Anxious but willing hands caught hold of the trailing ropes and pulled the balloon safely down.

Mr. L.K. Allen and his daughters were the occupants of the balloon. They were excited by their trip... only one and one half hours from Roger Williams park in Providence Rhode Island to Hanson.

The balloon was deflated and sent back by freight. Mr. Allen and his daughters took the trolley to Brockton and there they boarded a bus for their return to Providence.

Mayflower Grove

This was a beautiful grove on the shores of Little Sandy Pond near where the Brockton and Plymouth Street Railway passed.

A stroll around the Grove presented many comforts and amusements. There were rustic seats, swings, bath houses. a merry-go-round, slides, a dance hall and an open air theater. The seating capacity in the theater was so arranged that one could see the show free or for a nickel obtain a good seat. Reserved seats cost twenty-five cents. Actors lived in a summer hotel that was especially for them.

For six cents you could take a spin around the lake in Wells Elliot's Excursion Launch. He said that "no where could be found a more beautiful sheet of water".

Labor Day was always the most eventful in the season. There was a free-for-all bicycle race from Whitman Village to the Grove and a Baby Show where the hosts of fine babies made the judges task most difficult.

Thomas Hall Becomes Town Property

The Hanson Temperance Library Association was formed in 1882. Then in 1884 the word "Temperance" was dropped and the Association incorporated as the "Hanson Library Association".

Thomas Hall was the property of the Hanson Library Association. It had been erected in 1884 by George Bonney and Benjamin Josselyn, the contracting builders, at a cost of \$3500.

Mary J. Drew was the first and only librarian. January 30, 1921 the Association voted, as a Memorial to her, a delivery desk. with Jesse and Lillian Lewis adding a chair to match. A suitable marker was placed on each piece of furniture.

Later on in November of that year, the members were told that the Association was in debt and that the prospects of renting the hall were poor. Renting had been the only means of keeping the building in repair. The list of members was growing shorter

each year and the time was coming when it could become necessary to assess each member for the upkeep of the building. Therefore, they were asked to give assent to turning the building, lot, books and book fund to the Town of Hanson for a public library. Seventy members agreed, three did not and one took no action.

At a special meeting on December 10, 1921 members were told that the Town had voted to accept the property of the Association; so all bills were paid. The deed for the building and property, all books, personal property and the book fund were placed in the hands of the Board of Selectmen.

During the 1980's the town became unable to maintain the Hall and it was condemned as "unsafe for use".

Deaths in the 1928 Fireworks Explosion

Cecil J. Pierce, 16, of Hanson was employed in the mixing room of the National Fireworks Company in West Hanover. At 7:00 A.M. on the morning of January 30th he started work as usual mixing the powder used for the manufacture of sparklers. Everything went along well until 7:30 when, without an instant of warning, there was an explosion. Pierce was hurled from his bench and died instantly.

His pal, Eldon Chase of Abington, was thrown from the building with his clothing in flames. Retaining presence of mind, he jumped to his feet, raced to the river a short distance away and cast himself into the cold water. Frightfully burned, he was rushed to the Brockton Hospital and placed on the "danger list". The surgeons did all they could but were unable to save him. He passed away at two o'clock.

The work of tearing down the partly burned mixing house started at once enabling the Sparkler Department to rebuild and resume operations.

Hanson's Ponds

We have a number of ponds in our town. They not only add a great deal to the beauty of the town but also provide much in the way of recreational opportunities.

Indian Head is the largest and is located entirely within the town boundaries, north of Main Street between Indian Head and Mattakeesett Streets. Flowing out of it in a northerly direction is the Indian Head Brook which empties into the southern end of Wampatuck Pond.

Wampatuck Pond is bounded on the north by Liberty Street at the side of the Town Hall. In 1694 or 1695, Nathaniel Thomas bought 250 acres from the Indian Chief Wampatuck and according to tradition he also received the "right" to use water from Maquan and Indian Head Ponds and Indian Head Brook by building a dam (thought to have been the first dam in the

country). For generations this was known as Mill Pond but now it is called Wampatuck after the Indian Chief.

Maquan Pond lies due east of Wampatuck Pond and almost midway between it and Oldham Pond. It is connected with Indian Head Pond by a small brook but the quality of water is quite different. Indian Head has a muddy bottom with a tinge of color to the water caused by underlying iron ore. Maquan Pond has a sandy gravel for its bed so the water is clean and sparkling.

Only a small portion of Oldham Pond lies within the town boundaries and this is similarly true of Monponsett Pond which lies south of the railroad, mostly in Halifax.

Silver Lake

Silver Lake was once called Jones River Pond after the Captain Jones that brought the pilgrims over on the Mayflower.

In 1854 a Fourth of July Celebration was being prepared on the shores of the pond and the daughter of Isaac Reed was making sodas. She thought that the pond ought to have a better name and asked her brother for a suggestion. He said, "Call it Silver Lake" and from that time on, everyone has.

Some people say that the name change was promoted by ice merchants who thought that ice from "Silver Lake" would taste fresher and cleaner to consumers.

In 1874 from Memorial Day until mid October the "Lady of the Lake" a 52 foot steamer was a popular attraction. Hundreds of city folk would pile out of trains at Plympton to tour the three mile long lake. On June 28, 1877 disaster struck. The boiler tore loose and burst through the deck releasing a terrific blast of steam. Nineteen people were injured. Dozens of small boats hurried to the drifting steamer and removed the terrified passengers. Local residents rallied, providing first aid and shelter.

The steam gage from the boiler is preserved at the Edaville Museum in Carver. The old steamer also survived as a number of picture frames that Hanson's Leonard Washburn made from the ship's mahogany trim.

Lament from India

This poem was sent to his mother by Russell Howard while he was stationed in India, and goes to show how he longed to come home:

We're somewhere in India,
 where the sun is like a curse
And each long day is followed
 by another slightly worse
Where red brick dust blows thicker
 than the deserts sifting sands
And all that a man dreams and wishes for
 is a fair and greener land.

We're somewhere in India
 where a woman is never seen
Where the sky is never cloudy
 and the grass is never green
Where the jackal's nightly howling
 robs a man of blessed sleep
And there isn't any pleasure
 and you're bored until you weep.

Somewhere in India
 where the nights were made for love
Where the moon is light a searchlight
 up in the sky above
And the Southern Cross sparkles
 like a diamond in the night
It's a shameful waste of beauty
 and there's not a girl in sight.

We're somewhere in India
 where the mail is always late
And Christmas packages in April
 are considered up to date
Where we never have a pay day
 and we never have a cent
But we never miss the money
 'cause we never get it spent..

We're somewhere in India
 where the ants and lizards play
And a hundred fresh mosquitoes
 replace every one you slay
So take me back to Hanson
 to hear the mission bell
For this God forsaken outpost
 is a substitute for hell.

RUSS

Legion Hall

The "Floette Tea Room", at the corner of Crooker Place and Main Streets was sold by The Rockland Savings Bank to the Legion on August 3rd 1935.

October 16, 1935, Mr. Benson of East Bridgewater was paid \$178 for moving the building on rollers with horses to the present location: Robinson Street opposite Legion Field.

The land was given by the Cape Cod Cranberry Company through the courtesy of Marcus Urann. Digging and cellar work was done by William Kelly and Marshall Lane.

A \$300 building fund loan was received on September 14, 1936 from the MacDonalld Coal Company. By March 20, 1939, that loan was fully repaid.

Moore's Saw Mill

This mill on Poor Meadow River dates from 1887. Originally it was a forge, built and conducted by Theodosius Moore, soon after he bought the land (in 1704) from the Indian Chieftain Jeremiah Momontang and Abigail, his wife. The land had belonged to Abigail's recently deceased brother Josiah Wampatuck.

The mill was owned and operated at various times by several people. In my Mother's younger days the owner was Ethan Monroe.

When Abbott Keane worked at the mill, he cut one of his fingers nearly off while using an edging machine. He grabbed a hammer and chisel and finished the job-- then took a piece of tobacco and went back to work. There was no sick leave in those days.

The pond bore the name Moore's Pond but more recently it has been called Forge Pond.

**W.W. Copeland Grain and Coal
Company**

This company was situated on West Washington Street near the railroad tracks. Hanson Grain is close by now.

A building on the south side of the tracks housed a post office, general store, waiting room and freight office. The Copelands lived on the second floor. Across the tracks were the grain, hay and coal sheds

A small signal flag had to be lowered to order a train to stop. One day Mr. Copeland forgot about the flag until he heard the 9:36 A.M. express. He hurried to it but the flag apparatus jammed half-way, forcing him to run upstairs so he could force the signal flag down by hand. In his rush to lower the flag he leaned out too far and fell across the tracks.

Claus Johnson pulled him to safety but he was laid up for many weeks.

The Onslow W. Maglathlin shoe tack business was started in 1886 in a building half-way between Moore's Mill and the railroad track. There was a whistle on the factory that used to blow at 7 AM noon and 5 PM every day adding its bit to a very busy center.

Barker Baker was Maglathlin's brother-in-law and he was a part owner in the tack business. Together they sold the mill to Will Copeland in 1906 but he didn't keep it long.

On October 18, 1906, the 6:36 morning train started a fire that burned the entire business to the ground. Grain business, coal sheds and the tack factory, all were destroyed.

Tolling the Bells

In the olden days, the town of Hanson paid the Congregational Church and the Baptist Societies each year for the tolling of the bells.

It was the custom to toll the church bells at 6:00 A.M. the day following the death of one of the residents of the town. The bells would be tolled the number of times that equalled the age of the deceased....

In those days, everyone was up and about with chores by 6:00 so it was an appropriate time to remember for whom the bell tolls.

Hanson's Cooper Shop

John Foster erected a cooper shop where cranberry barrels were made to cater to the cranberry trade.

The building stood to the east of Mr. Foster's residence near to the railroad tracks. It was run by Malcolm MacDonald.

The only barrel wagon in town was owned by "Gib" Brewster. It was a very high affair, requiring four steps to reach the seat. It took one hundred and fifty barrels to the load. The barrels were loaded from a second story window.

The horses were one of four pair owned by Gilbert Brewster, Steven Collins drove the wagon. There is a picture of a load of empties headed for the Sandy Bottom bog (owned by the Ephraim Gorham Company) in the Hanson Pictorial History book.

A Dearth of Food At The Church

Women of the Congregational Church, noted for their delicious meals, planned a covered dish luncheon at the church.

Amy Bourne, who had a Model T Ford sedan picked up Mrs. Kinsbury and drove all over town picking up baked beans, salads, cakes etc. for the meal.

As they were driving up High Street toward the church, Amy lost control of the car. It went off the road and the front wheels straddled a guy wire bracing a telephone pole. They were right opposite Walter Kingsbury's house.

The car went right up the wire, sat on its back, with the front wheels high in the air, the motor still running and the back wheels spinning away.

Mrs. Kingsbury, who had been sitting in back, was flat on her back completely covered with beans salads and everything else they had collected.

A good Samaritan came along, reached in and turned off the motor. Then he managed to get both women out of the car with no damage to either (except for their dignity).

But their certainly was a dearth of food that day at the church.