A BENTON HERITAGE

Benton Family Reunion—Concord, Massachusetts 1962

L. to R. backrow: John Benton, Peter Benton, Marilyn Moore Benton, Jeffrey Benton, David P. Benton, Leslie Benton, David Benton, Jeanne Proctor Benton and Nicholas Benton. Sitting: Frances Hill Benton, Patricia Jameson, Frances Hill Benton holding Kate Benton, Kate Bigelow Benton holding Emily Weld Benton, Mary Benton Jameson, and Winthrop S. Jameson, Jr. On the ground: Douglas Chamberlin Benton, Andrew Jay Benton and Tracy Benton.

A BENTON HERITAGE

Brief histories of some Bentons and other
connecting family lines in New England

by

Nicholas Benton

Member of the New England Historic Genealogical Society
and the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society

1964

Library of Congress catalog card number: 63-20092

COVER: Civil War drum of the Ninth Regiment, Vermont Volunteers. George C. Chamberlin, son of Mary Haseltine and Abner Chamberlin, was a first lieutenant in this regiment which defended Harpers Ferry in September, 1862.

Privately printed in the United States of America

For Kitty, who knows how to keep you from taking yourself (or your ancestors) too seriously.
With all my love.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This is a book solidly built on family pride. The pilings of the Benton heritage are firmly implanted in 333 years of our nation's history.

The selection of ancestors who are accounted for here is my own. There are, of course, many others who are equally interesting and worthy of inclusion. However, by necessity of time and cost, I have purposely limited myself to the men and women who have come to touch on some of the most notable events in U. S. history. Although their roles were perhaps small, their lives were honorable, colorful, and in certain instances significant. You will find here men who were dedicated to law, religion, politics, art, farming, and business. And, there is a full complement of patriots who fought to secure our country's independence and later to help keep it.

My interest in family history first began in 1957 when my wife's great grandmother, Anna Reed Parsons, called upon me to assist in the publication of a small ancestoral account she had written. As I became more deeply involved I thought a similar effort on the Benton family would prove not only enlightening to myself but, eventually, to my children. To my delight I soon discovered that my father, Jay Rogers Benton, had compiled over a period of thirty years genealogical and historical data on the Benton family in two private volumes. Much of the material and many of the photographs were original; to the best of my knowledge, the only copies extant. If these two volumes were somehow lost or destroyed, my father's work might well be lost forever. The need for a new Benton history in which to print and share much of this material took on new importance.

Although my father had few peers as a compiler, it was his sister, Dorothy Benton Wood, who undertook the exacting and exhausting task of family research for many years. Having spent countless hours in the genealogical room of the New York Public Library as well as in the reading rooms of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, I have a precise idea of the extraordinary "detective" work of Aunt Dorothy. Without her original probings I seriously doubt if I would have discovered some of the interesting ancestors, other than Benton, who flow into our family stream. In the fullest sense she shares in the realization of this book and I am forever grateful to her.

Books which require so many names, places, and dates also require patience and considerable help from others before they are completed. This one is no exception. Of particular help to me were Hannah Benton Graham and Blanche Benton Lonegren who supplied many facts, dates, and pictures relating to their father and the Benton estate, "Bellmont". The late Karl Hayes of Guildhall, Vermont was particularly generous with his time to fill in several important details about the Benton family and its contribution to that Vermont town. My father-in-law, Albert Smith Bigelow, has kindly illustrated a number of chapters with pen and ink drawings. A close friend and a writer of considerable experience, Stanley Flink has patiently pored over my manuscript, and if any of the chapters move along briskly, it is entirely due his objectivity and a heavy red pencil.

There were many people who contributed, importantly, to my research. Among them were Carl Haverlin of the Civil War Centennial Association; Lt. Col. James R. Hillard, Office of Chief of U.S. Military; Kenneth Boyer, librarian of Bowdoin College, Maine; the late Thomas Temple Pond, former president and Pauline King, librarian, of the New England Historic and Genealogical Society; Thompson Harlow, director of the Connecticut Historical Society; William S. Fairbanks, town clerk of Charlestown, New Hampshire; Mrs. Harold C. Henderson of Walter R. Benjamin, Autographs; and Mrs. Donald W. Fowler of the Stratford (Conn.) Historical Society. To all of them my appreciation.

After the research and the writing were completed, several willing and helpful hands assisted me in the physical production of the book. John Martinez, promotion art director of Architectural Forum, helped design the book and he specified the type (Garamond #3). He layed-out the first chapter for style which I subsequently followed while pasting up the "mechanicals" in preparation for the printer. Frank Miller, president of Huxley House, kindly arranged for the setting of type. Mrs. Suzanne Dunn Hanson, Miss Sarah Polk Wilson and Mrs. Nancy Williams of Time Inc. uncomplainingly handled prodigious amounts of typing, proofreading, and the assembly of the index. This book finally reached the printed page through the efforts of Oscar Lofmark and Robert Swit of the Central Printing Department of Time, Inc. My warmest gratitude extends to each of them.

In an introductory preface to one of the volumes he compiled, my father prophetically wrote in 1931: "Nearly ten years ago, I commenced to gather material for a genealogical history of the Benton Family, intending to put it in print. A busy life, however, has delayed the consummation and rather than wait longer, I have deemed it advisable to put such facts, as I have collected so far into two personal volumes.

"Among the sentiments most firmly imbedded in the human heart is that of veneration for our forefathers. The subject of one's ancestory should be of absorbing interest to all who are possessed of family pride. A person, therefore, may be pardoned if he takes the time to trace his lineage and record the actions of those without whom he could never have been. Our forefathers command our veneration and respect and have left a record worthy of perpetuation...It is hoped that during my children's lifetime, they will take interest in the record, and in their turn pass it on to their children. And if it should so happen that those who come after me should feel an interest to do so and continue the history, as shall be most agreeable to them, from the point where I have left off, then my efforts will be well repaid."

This, then, is the first and loving payment on my father's efforts.

N. B.

New York, N. Y.
April, 1964

A BENTON HERITAGE

RUINS OF BENTON CASTLE, WALES

THE NAME BENTON

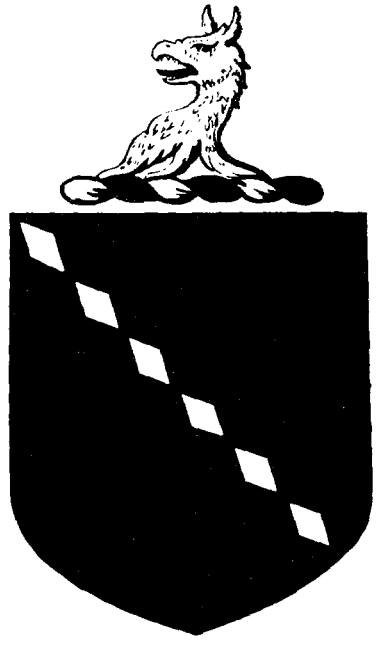
THE name Benton is of Norman-French origin. It is derived from the Saxon word, bent—often used in early English poetry meaning a plain, a field, or a moor.

England's 12th Century produced the first traceable records of the name Benton. At that time there were not only Benton families but also a parish named Benton in the county of Northumberland. Little Benton and Long Benton are still well known towns in Northumberland. The name of Benton was equally prominent in the southeastern part of Wiltshire, near Surrey, where a number of Bentons had also settled.

In the early parish records (1539-1700) of Epping, County of Essex, England, the following curious reference is made to a Benton Castle: "There is an old engraving 'Benton Castle' which shows the ruins of an ancient fortress on Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, on a small promontory three miles N. N. E. of Pembroke, which is in the extreme southwestern position of Wales. The engraving was made more than a century ago."

Scotland, too, had a Benton Hall, a place of some renown. History shows that in the time of Henry VII, the Bentons were knights of St. John of Jerusalem.

These, at best, are just random bits and pieces of the early Benton history. To trace each one to its original source would be impossible today. However, there seems to be no question that these fragments of names and places called Benton can be added justifiably to the history and the origin of our name—a name which, historians say, is a variation of the ancient names Boynton, Bentun, Bayntun and Baynton.



THE BENTON COAT OF ARMS

There are six coats of arms that were carried by the early Benton families in England. Although most of these ancient arms closely resemble one another, the one most generally associated with the Benton family today can be found in Burke's Peerage and described thusly: Sable; six fusils in bend, argent.

The crest depicts a white and silver griffin's head "erased" (i. e. torn off). The six fusils (diamond shapes) against a shield of sable symbolize travel and labor, and the white color, or "argent," denotes truth, loyalty, and sincerity.

As attractive as any coat-of-arms may be to adopt, one Benton historian put forth this warning more than 50 years ago: "As it is not possible to ascertain from which (early) branch of the English family the Bentons of New England came, any of their descendants who covet a coat of arms must suit themselves at the risk of choosing a coat which they may have no right to wear."

THE BENTONS OF EPPING, ENGLAND

(1539-1700)

THE first records which bear the names of the Benton ancestors can be found in Epping, County of Essex, England. Epping today is a small town, about 18 miles northeast of London, composed for the most part of small low red brick houses, which line a single long street. The town is bordered on the south by the famous Epping Forest, which, according to legend, was the place where Henry VIII waited until he heard the tower gun announce Anne Boleyn's death, before he went hunting.

The Epping registers that include Benton names were first kept in the Old Parish Church*, which is two and one-half miles outside the town in Epping Upland. The name of this old church dates from the 13th century. The church registers, however, were begun in 1539, and so far as the Bentons are concerned ended with the register dated 1700—at which time the name Benton disappeared from the parish records.

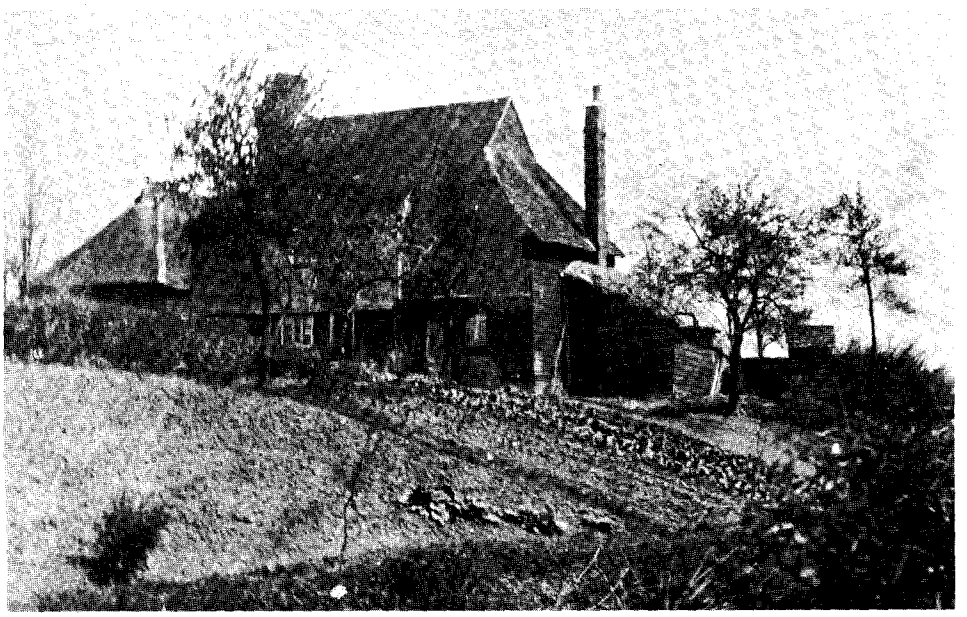
The registers, according to one observer, are like "very long slim account books—only on parchment, bound in white vellum; and were entirely informal records of births, deaths and marriages." These registers carry 172 entries under the name Benton—80 being baptisms, 66 burials and 26 marriages.

The first entry in these parish records under Benton is the marriage of Edward Benton to Joane Holloway on 10 May 1563. Edward and Joane's second child was Andrew Benton, baptized 2 December 1565. Andrew married Mary (records do not reveal her last name or their marriage date). Their first child, John, was baptized in 1595. At the age of 23 John married Mary Southernwood in May, 1618.

**These same records were transferred in 1888 to the church of St. John the Baptist—the current parish church located in the center of Epping.*

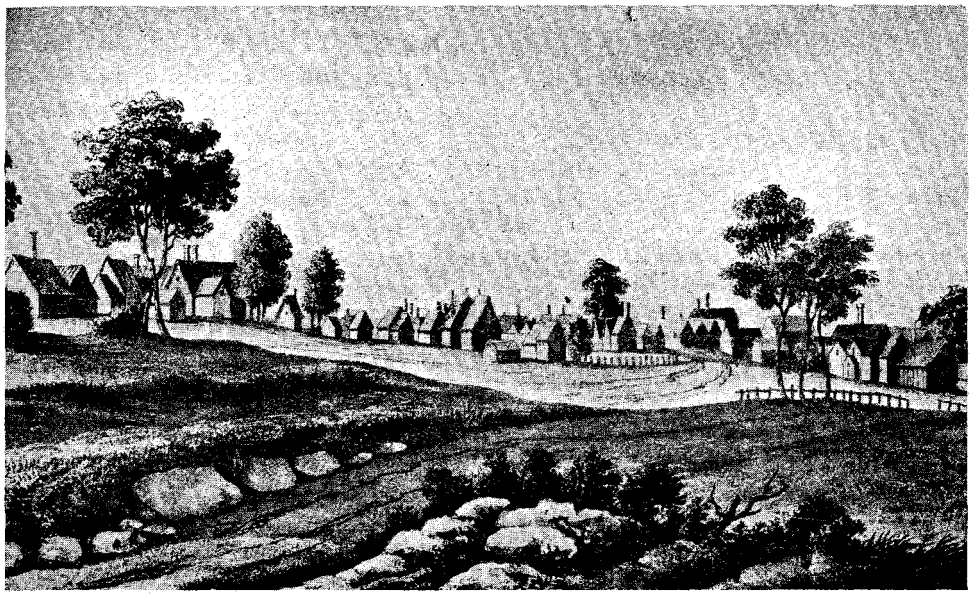
Very little is known about these three generations with the exception of their birth, wedding, and death dates. They were honorable people, God-fearing, and earned their daily living from the soil.

In addition to Edward, Andrew and John Benton, records also show that there was still another John Benton who acquired a large manor farm, called "Shingle Hall", in Epping in 1562. This date suggests that John would have been either a brother, or an uncle, of Edward Benton.

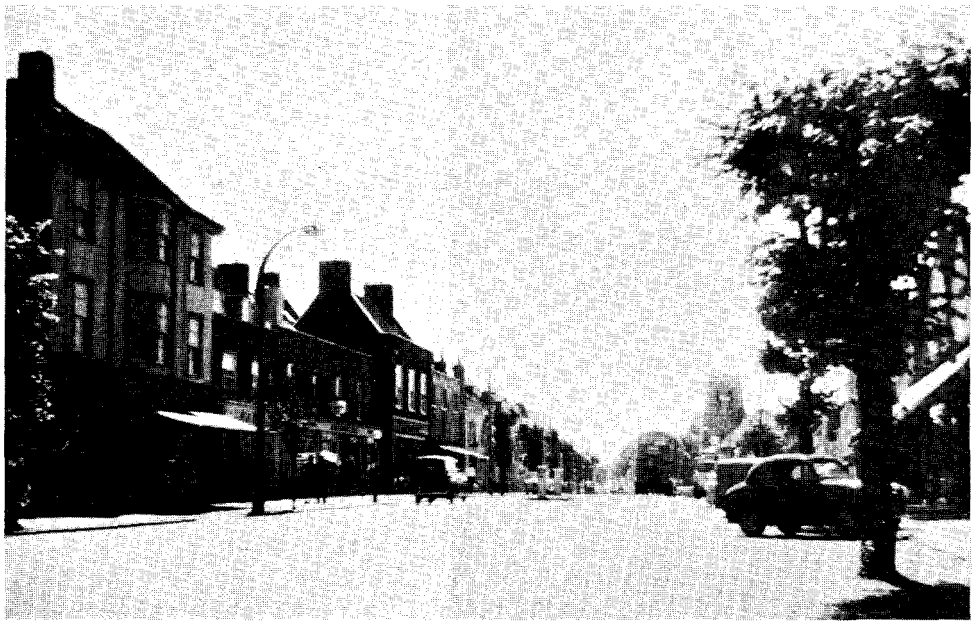


SHINGLE HALL IN EPPING UPLAND, CIRCA 1900.

"Shingle Hall" (presumably so called because shingles were a great novelty in the sixteenth century) was the third largest manor in Epping—comprising 150 to 250 acres, much of it farm land. It remained in the Benton family for four generations—well over a century. The main building no longer exists today, but the farm, still called "Shingle Hall", is well known in Epping and a few of the original small cottages can still be found there.



EPPING, ENGLAND IN 1669



EPPING, ENGLAND IN JULY 1963

ANDREW BENTON

ANDREW BENTON

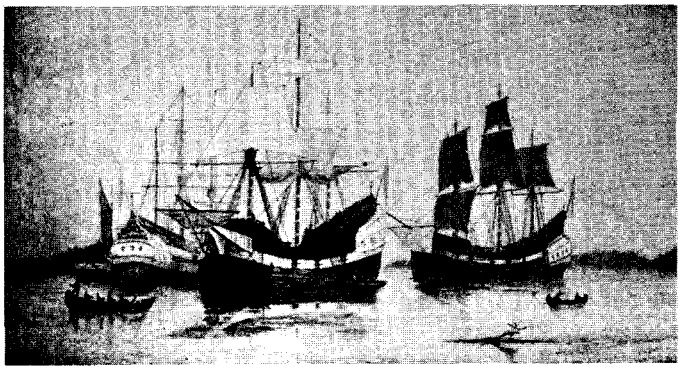
(1620-1683)

The First Benton in America

ANDREW BENTON was the first son of John and Mary Southernwood Benton. He was baptized in Epping, England, on October 15, 1620, the year in which the Mayflower brought the Pilgrims to New England.

When young Andrew was only 10 years old, he joined Sir Richard Saltonstall's company of emigrants from Epping and set sail on the Arabella for the New World. He and his uncle, Edward, who may have accompanied him on the same voyage, were the first Bentons to settle in New England. It is from Andrew, however, that the Bentons of New England, described in this book, are directly descended.

Upon landing in Salem on the 12th of June 1630, Saltonstall's company, including young Benton, first settled in Watertown, Massachusetts. Several years later,

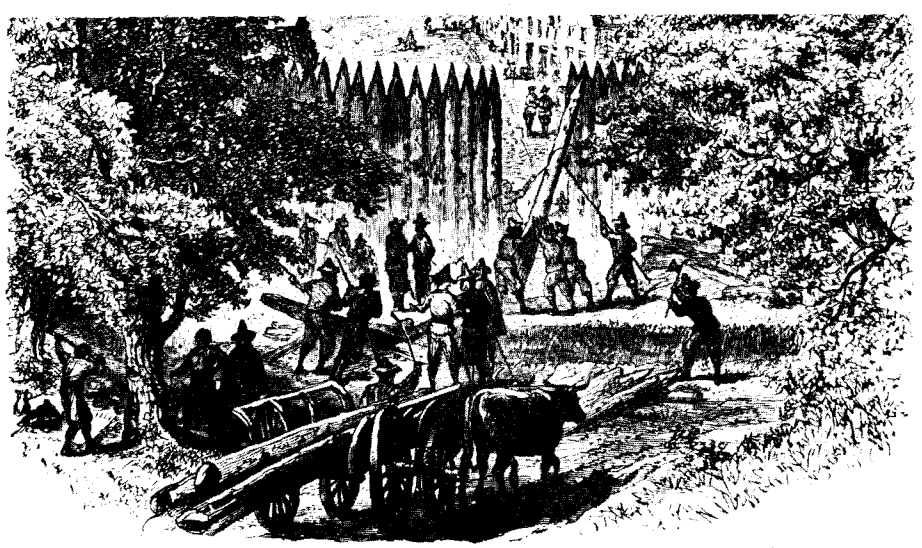


THE ARABELLA (CENTER) ARRIVES IN NEW ENGLAND WITH SIR RICHARD SALTONSTALL'S COMPANY.

the company moved on to Connecticut, a portion going to Wethersfield and Hartford, the rest to Milford. The first record of Andrew Benton in America is in the list of Milford's original settlers in 1639. At that time he was given three acres, known as lot 64. In the original land agreement each owner of a lot was required to build a good house within three years or the lot went back to the town. This condition, however, was not strictly enforced, because young Benton probably did not get around to building his house until some six or seven years after the agreement. The houses of the settlers were built in a low lean-to style and covered with split oak shingles.

Among the first of the settler's chores was the establishment of a church, which they erected in nearby New Haven, and the setting up of a military unit to protect themselves from Indian attack.

Although not every settler was a member of the church—(a necessary qualification, incidentally, to vote in the election of public officers) every male above the age of 16 had to perform military service.



ERECTING THE PALISADES AT MILFORD, CONNECTICUT.

Undoubtedly because of his youth, Benton had yet to join the Milford church. Being 19, he was, however, able to serve in the forces protecting the community. His military service entailed day and night sentinel duty along the "Palisades" —a series of closely planted tree trunks that surrounded the town and served as a

barricade. Each man was supplied with a gun, a pound of powder, and two pounds of bullets.

Six years after they had founded Milford, the settlers finally met in combat with the Indians. The Indians set the countryside around Milford ablaze. However, by strenuous fire-fighting efforts, the towns people were able to keep the fire from reaching the "palisades."

By 1648, Benton was admitted to the First Church in Milford. The following year he went to Hartford to marry Hannah Stocking, daughter of George Stocking, one of Hartford's first settlers. They had first met when Andrew lived in Watertown. After Andrew had settled in Milford and built his house, he went up to Hartford to marry the girl whom it is assumed he had not seen for many years. He brought Hannah back to his Milford house. They had eight children, and it was their sixth, Samuel, who is our direct ancestor.

About 1660 Andrew moved his family to Hartford where he was elected "viewer of fences," (a town official who arbitrated and settled boundary disputes whenever one man put up his fences on another man's property). Later at the General Assembly of the Colony of Connecticut, Benton was admitted and sworn as a Freemason.

ANDREW BENTON HOUSE IN HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT.

Andrew and Hannah Benton believed strongly in the principles of religious freedom—especially in the fundamental doctrines of the Congregational Church which separates the church from the state—the very same principles which drove the Puritans from England. It was the strength of Andrew and Hannah's beliefs, coupled with those of a sturdy minority, that saved New England Congregationalists from destruction. This particular event was known in early religious annals as the "Hartford Controversy."

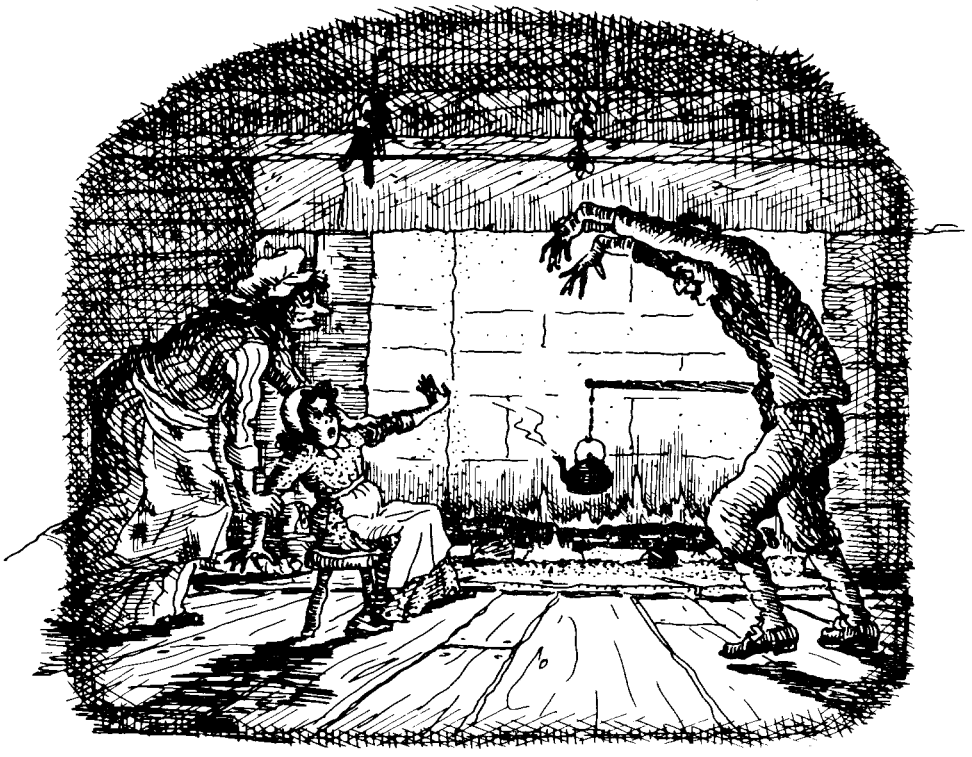
When Andrew and Hannah Benton moved to Hartford, they joined the First Church, which had been originally organized in Watertown, Mass. After a few years, the General Court of Connecticut passed an extraordinary law, with the approval of the church's minister, whereby anyone who did not attend public worship would be fined five shillings for each absence. This law compelled Andrew Benton and all who shared his views to worship with men of different religious principles. The law was an obvious encroachment on religious freedom.

The "Hartford Controversy" was simply a contest between those who sought to bring all churches under one Presbyterian order, and those who stood for the fundamental doctrine which Congregationalism rests upon: the absolute independence and freedom of the members in each separate church.

Andrew Benton, along with a handful of other members of the First Church, stood for the vital principles of Congregationalism. So strong were their beliefs that a Second Church was organized in 1669, and Andrew and Hannah Benton were among the original members who signed the covenant. It was only by their unflinching opposition to the majority that pure Congregationalism, free from government regulation, survived in New England.

In 1670, a year after the Second Church was founded, Hannah Benton died. After a proper period of mourning, Andrew married Anne Cole. She was the daughter of John Cole, a man who had shared the same religious beliefs as Andrew and had helped to found the Second Church.

By an extraordinary coincidence, Andrew's path must have crossed Anne Cole's long before they were married. Among the properties that Andrew Benton owned in Hartford was a house he bought from a Nathaniel Greensmith. Andrew made this his final home. It was this same Nathaniel Greensmith who was accused of bewitching Anne Cole when she was a young girl, causing her to suffer "strange fits" and mutter unintelligibly in a Dutch pronunciation. Due primarily to Anne



ANNE COLE IS BEWITCHED BY NATHANIEL GREENSMITH AND HIS WIFE.

Cole's account, Greensmith and his wife were later convicted and hanged for witchcraft, January 25, 1663. One month later, the executioner, Goffe, wrote in his diary that "the maid was well." In Cotton Mather's work on religious life in New England, he wrote of Anne Cole: "She is restored to health, united with the church, and living in good repute."

In the available documents, it is recorded that,"Andrew Benton was a man strong in body and in mind, tenacious about his beliefs, industrious, thrifty, and honest. He began life as a poor emigrant in the rugged wilderness of New England. He reared a large family, performed well his duties in town and church, and left his children a moderate but comfortable estate and the heritage of a good name." He died July 31, 1683 in Hartford. His humble tombstone still stands in the "Old Center Burying Ground" near the rear wall of the First Church in Hartford.

THE RESTING PLACE OF ANDREW BENTON IN THE "OLD CENTER BURYING GROUND" NEAR THE REAR WALL OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN HARTFORD.

BENTON

Andrew Benton (*1620-1683*) - *Hannah Stocking* (*d.1670*)
Samuel Benton (*1658-1746*) - *Sarah Chatterton* (*b.1661*)
Jacob Benton (*1698-1761*) - *Elizabeth Hinsdale* (*b.1702*)
Jacob Benton, Jr. (*1728-1807*) - *Hannah Slade* (*1735-1805*)
Samuel Slade Benton (*1777-1857*) - *Esther Prouty* (*1782-1860*)
Charles Emerson Benton (*1825-1892*) - *Adda Chamberlin* (*1835-1901*)
Everett Chamberlin Benton (*1862-1924*) - *Willena Blanche Rogers* (*1865-1947*)
Jay Rogers Benton (*1885-1953*) - *Frances Hill* (*1894-*)
Nicholas Benton (*1926-*) - *Kate Lenthall Bigelow* (*1935-*)

ROBERT HINSDALE

(d. 1675)

Deacon of First Church, Deerfield, Mass.
Killed at *Bloody Brook* Massacre

ABOUT the same time young Andrew Benton was establishing himself in Milford, Connecticut, another young emigrant, Robert Hinsdale had arrived from England and settled in Dedham, Massachusetts. The year was 1637. Almost 100 years later Benton's grandson married Hinsdale's granddaughter.

The Hinsdale family, starting with Robert himself, has produced great men in U. S. history. One direct descendant of Robert Hinsdale is Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The town of Hinsdale, New Hampshire derives its name from Colonel Ebenezer Hinsdale, Robert's great grandson.

Making his home in Dedham with his wife, Ann Woodward, Hinsdale became a member of the board of selectmen and a surveyor of highways. He also joined the Ancient and Honorable Artillary Company, a military association formed voluntarily by seven separate towns for the express purpose of advancing their mutual safety by exchanging ideas on discipline and tactics.

Hinsdale was among the prominent Dedham citizens who signed a petition for a free school to be subsidized by annual taxes, the first school believed to be supported in this manner.

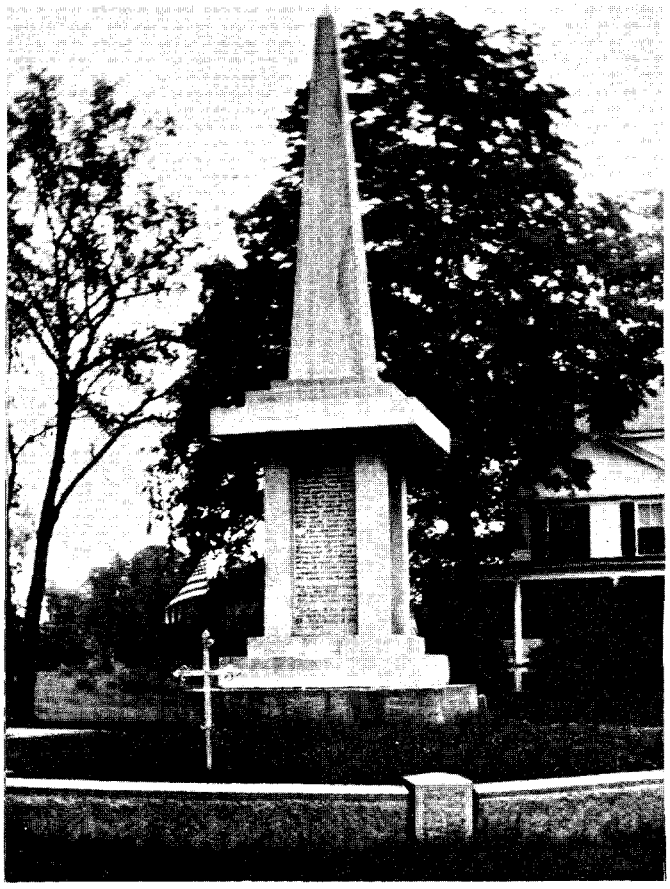
In 1649 Hinsdale was appointed to a Dedham citizens' committee to organize a new town, which eventually was named Medfield, Mass. Elected to the board of selectmen, he served for six years. Later, after his wife's death in 1666, he moved with his sons to the Connecticut Valley, first to Hadley, finally to Deerfield (then known as Pocumtuck). In Deerfield, he served as Deacon of the First Church.

Hinsdale's death, like that of many of the early settlers, was tragic. In 1675, Metacom, better known in history as King Philip, second son of the late Indian Chief, Messasoit, led the Wampanoags and members of the Narraganset Tribe into harassing frontier towns. These ambushes and attacks, known as King Philip's War lasted for two years. One of the most disastrous attacks occured just outside of Deerfield on September 18, 1675.

THE BLOODY BROOK MASSACRE IN 1675.

On that day eighty men including Hinsdale and his three sons had gone to gather up the fall corn. On the way home the men marched under Captain Thomas Lathrop. No scouts had been sent ahead to give warning of a possible Indian attack. Six miles south of Deerfield, some 700 Indians had massed near the spot where the road dipped to cross a tiny brook. As the heavy wagons were struggling through the marshy ground, a volley burst from the forest. Dazed with fear Lathrops' men were struck down, though some fled for brief moments of safety to the shelter of the wagons. One man clubbed his way through with his musket, another hid in the bushes and escaped. But the rest, including Hinsdale and his sons were wiped out. Although reinforcements forced the Indians to retire, the death of these men was the severest blow New England had yet suffered.

As a result of the *Bloody. Brook Massacre,* many women were made widows and Deerfield was abandoned. All the men were buried "in one dreadful grave." One hundred and sixty years later, a large marble monument was erected to their memory in an impressive ceremony at which The Hon. Edward Everett gave the key address.



MONUMENT IN SOUTH DEERFIELD MARKS THE BATTLESITE OF THE BLOODY BROOK MASSACRE.

HINSDALE

Robert Hinsdale (d.1675) - Ann Woodward (d.1666)
Barnabas Hinsdale (1639-1675) - Sarah White (d.1702)
Barnabas Hinsdale (1668-1725) - Martha Smith (1670-1738)
Elizabeth Hinsdale (b.1702) - Jacob Benton (1698-1761)
Jacob Benton, Jr. (1728-1807) - Hannah Slade (1735-1805)
Samuel Slade Benton (1777-1857) - Esther Prouty (1782-1860)
Charles Emerson Benton (1825-1892) - Adda Chamberlin (1835-1901)
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Nicholas Benton (1926-) - Kate Lenthall Bigelow (1935-)

ROGER CONANT

(1592-1679)

Was He Massachusetts Bay Colony's First Governor?

LTHOUGH most historians generally recognize John Endicott as being the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, there are those to this day who contend that Roger Conant rightly deserves the title. Which man actually held the office first remains a fascinating historical puzzle.

Born in East Budleigh, Devonshire, England in 1592, Roger Conant was the youngest of eight children of Richard and Agnes Clarke Conant. His father was a church warden and instilled his son with the principles for which he and his wife were noted—strict integrity and devotion to principle.

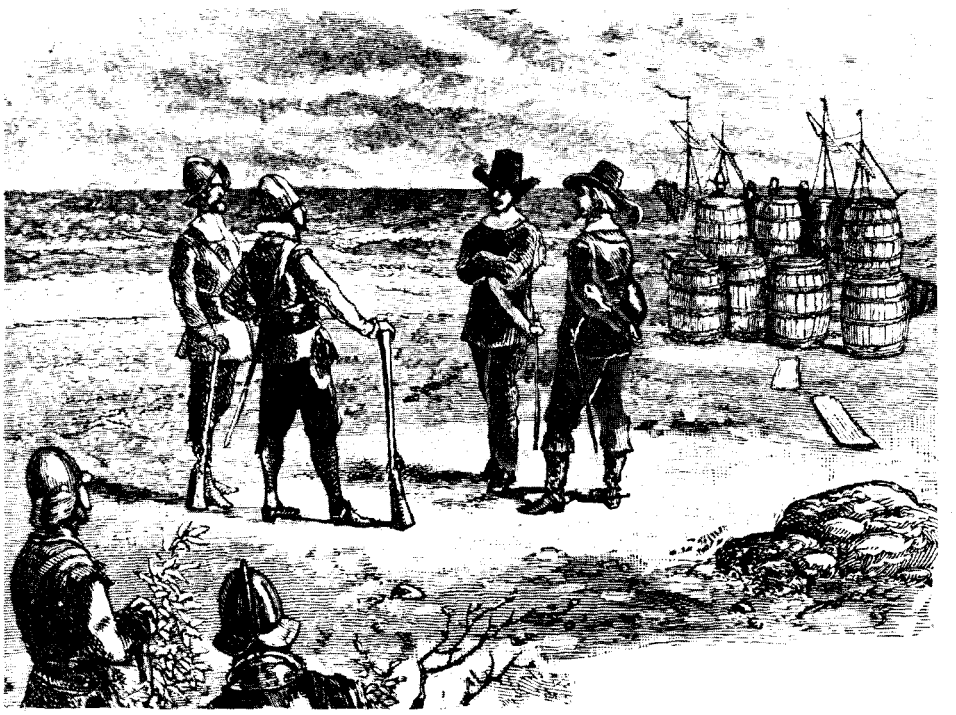
Conant must have received a good education for the times, for he was frequently called upon to survey lands, lay out boundaries, and transact public business.

In November 1618, he married Sarah Horton in London, where he was then employed. Four years later he, his wife, and young son, Caleb, embarked for America at their own expense and they arrived in Plymouth about July, 1623. They did not remain in Plymouth long, due to religious differences with the Separatists who were established there. Instead Conant took his family to the Puritan settlement at Nantasket. While there Conant frequently made use of an island in Boston Harbor, now called Governor's Island, but originally known as Conant's Island.

As the Conants were settling their household in Nantasket, a Reverend John White of Dorchester, England, and his affluent friends sent over fourteen hardy men to set up a new colony at Cape Ann. Operating under the name of "The Dorchester Company" these men were able to withstand the cold New England

winter, and in the following year more settlers with supplies and cattle were sent over. However, the settlement was badly managed and the planting and fishing operations did not come up to the expectations of The Dorchester Company.

In an effort to save this hopeless enterprise, the Reverend White, who had been told about "a pious, sober, and prudent gentleman living in Nantasket by the name of Conant", wrote to Conant and requested that he manage or "govern" the Dorchester Company's affairs at Cape Ann. Conant accepted the offer, and in the fall of 1625 he moved his family, which now included a second son, Lot, (our direct ancestor), to Cape Ann.

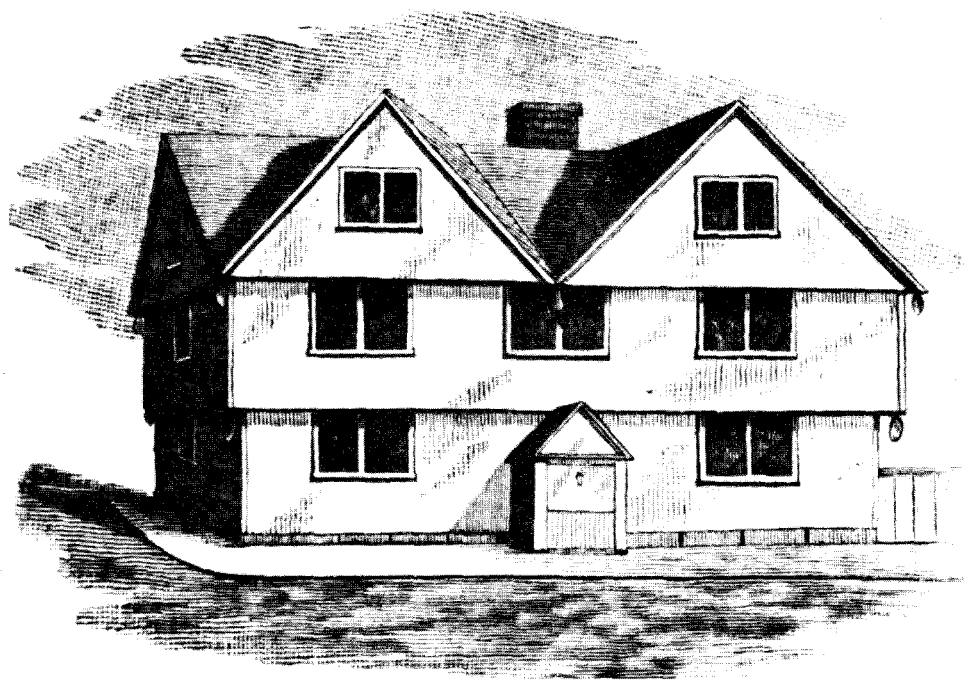


ROGER CONANT AND CAPTAIN WILLIAM PIERCE PREVENT AN ILL-TEMPERED MILES STANDISH FROM ATTACKING CAPTAIN HEWES AND COMPANY.

After a few months, Conant, as "governor", was instrumental in settling a celebrated dispute between the "hot-headed" Miles Standish and a Captain Hewes who had recently arrived from England with a new set of colonists. Upon his arrival Hewes took possession of a fishing stage built by the Plymouth settlement. Captain Standish was sent to recapture it, but found that Hewes had

fortified his position behind a barricade of hogshead barrels. The dispute between Standish and Hewes grew warm and might have ended in bloodshed, had it not been for the friendly advice of Roger Conant and Captain William Pierce whose vessel lay nearby. The argument was settled when Conant convinced Hewes that he must build a new stage for the Plymouth people. He also invited Hewes and his crew to join the Cape Ann colony.

With a population of some 200, Cape Ann gave the appearance of being busy and prosperous. It was soon found, however, that the cargoes sent to England brought less than cost, and Cape Ann's location was proving to be too difficult for planting.



THE ROGER CONANT HOUSE IN CAPE ANN.

After surveying the situation, Conant wrote White that Cape Ann was not and could never be, a sound business venture. Conant went on to suggest that the plantation be moved to a more fertile territory called Naumkeag (Salem), just west of Cape Ann. Since the Dorchester Company had already lost some 3,000 pounds on the venture, and since many of the more discouraged settlers had already headed back to England, White was most receptive to Conant's idea for relocating the company's site.

White asked Conant to remain as "governor" of the new colony, although the company had now dwindled down to about forty or fifty members. White also promised to secure a patent from the Great Council of New England for the new colony, and to send sufficient men and provisions until Salem was settled and running smoothly.

Salem was settled in the fall of 1626, and was almost immediately in danger of being abandoned. The company's minister had decided to move to Virginia and invited the other members to join him. Conant remained firm, for, "he had taken his position and pledged his faith unconditionally that in Salem he would stand, though perils from savage and hardship of a new settlement clustered around him."

In a test of his authority as governor, Conant convinced the company that the establishment of Salem was too important to give up so easily. All, except the minister, remained.

In the meantime, White was rallying together supporters for the new Salem enterprise, and in March 1628 a patent was granted by the Great Council of New England for "some lands in the Massachusetts Bay." Among the backers for the new colony was John Endicott.

News of the patent as well as satisfactory promises for the future support of Salem brought great cheer to the little struggling colony. But the joy was short lived. A new English syndicate acquired control of the patent, and one of its first acts was to send over John Endicott with fifty men to take charge of the venture.

The arrival of the new-comers greatly displeased the old settlers. As a result for several months they would not associate themselves with the new but rightful owners of the colony. Eventually, however, all claims to the land were amicably settled and the original settlers became members of the new corporation.

Conant undoubtedly expected to continue at the head of the colony under the new patent. However, Endicott was sent to supercede him. At such a trying time, when Conant had just cause for complaint, his self-denial and upright character were clearly shown. He could have led his colony away to another location, but he preferred to give up his own interest, for the public good. In fact his influence preserved harmony among the disgruntled settlers.

Conant remained the rest of his long life in Salem—directing his energies to-

wards improving the colony. He died in his 88th year on November 19, 1679. The place of his burial is unknown.

Was Conant the first governor of the colony? The facts seem to tilt the scales in his favor. Wrote one historian: "Roger Conant is fairly entitled to the honor; for the colony, of which he was head, made the first permanent settlement in the Massachusetts territory, and was the genus from which the Massachusetts Bay Colony sprung... But for him the colony would have been abandoned."

CONANT

Roger Conant (bapt. 1592-1679) - Sarah Horton (d. circa 1667)
Lot Conant (1623-1680) - Elizabeth Walton (bapt. 1629)
Rebecca Conant (1671-1760) - Nathaniel Raymond (1670-1750)
Mary Raymond (1710-m. 1728) - William Preston (1704-1766)
Ruth Preston (1745-1831) - Joseph Chamberlin (1738-1815)
Joseph Chamberlin (1777-1845) - Nancy McAllister (1776-1838)
Abner Chamberlin (1804-1884) - Mary Haseltine (1808-1877)
Adda Chamberlin (1835-1901) - Charles Emerson Benton (1825-1892)
Everett Chamberlin Benton (1862-1924) - Willena Blanche Rogers (1865-1947)
Jay Rogers Benton (1885-1953) - Frances Hill (1894-)
Nicholas Benton (1926-) - Kate Lenthall Bigelow (1935-)

JOSEPH CHAMBERLIN

(bapt. 1655-1721)

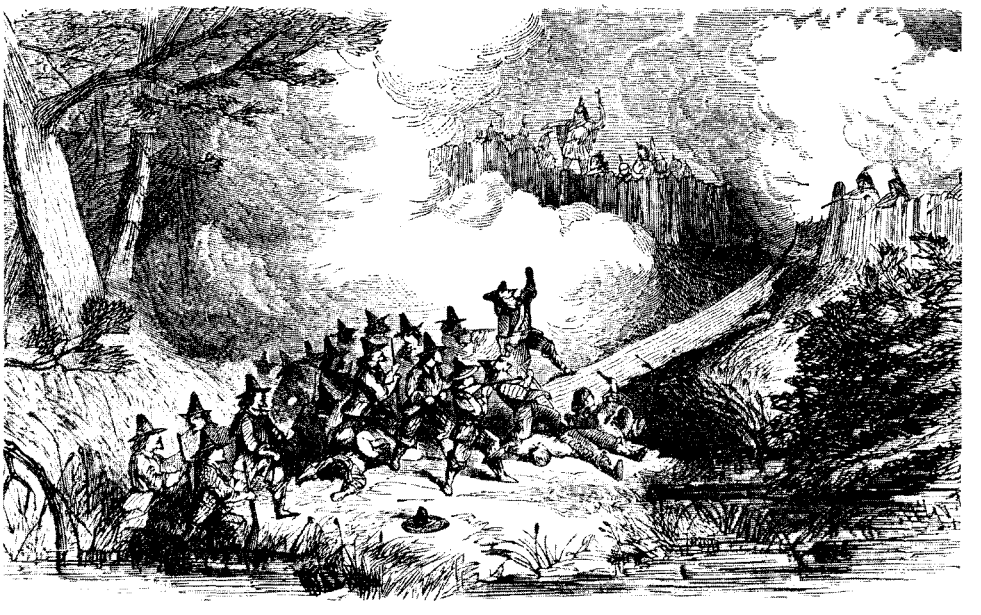
Fought in The Great Swamp Fight

 HENEVER a Benton from Boston journeys to New York, he can see for himself the wild marshy terrain where an early American ancestor took part in one of the most famous Indian combats in American history. A crude old sign marks the area in Kingston, Rhode Island, where the Great Swamp Fight of 1675 took place.

One thousand men from Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut were mobilized in November 1675 to attack the Narraganset Tribe who were situated in a stockade at Kingston. Among these men was Joseph Chamberlin, son of Richard Chamberlin of Roxbury, Massachusetts. Joined by some friendly Mohegans, they made the difficult passage to the Indian stockade over ice and snow. When they arrived they found that the stockade stood on a raised plot of ground, protected by a rude abatis of trees and by rough blockhouses. But there was an opening on one side. Through this vulnerable spot, the New Englanders made their attack on December 19, exactly three months after Robert Hinsdale was killed at Bloody Brook.

The Narragansets, some 3,500 in number, laid down a deadly fire. Only a part of them, however, had arms and ammunition. When that was exhausted, the New Englanders, including Chamberlin, attacked the palisade enclosure within the stockade and set fire to the wigwams as the Indians fled in terror. Hundreds of the braves with their women and children were slain in retaliation for the brutal Indian killings in the New England settlements. The success of the Great Swamp Fight did not break the power of the Narraganset Tribe, but they were forced north into alliance with the Nipmucs.

Born in Roxbury and baptized in 1655, Joseph Chamberlin later moved to Sudbury, Massachusetts with his parents. There he met and married Hannah Gilbert in 1682. After spending their early married life in Sudbury, they moved to help found a new town, Oxford, Massachusetts. Chamberlin was a member of Oxford's first board of selectmen.



THE GREAT SWAMP FIGHT IN KINGSTON, RHODE ISLAND IN 1675.

Joseph and Hannah Chamberlin had eight children. Their son, Nathaniel, is the direct ancestor to the Bentons of New England in this book. Like his father, Nathaniel also became an Indian fighter. While on a sentry expedition in September 1725, he was captured by Indians but later miraculously escaped.

Joseph Chamberlin died a widower in Oxford, Massachusetts, in 1721, leaving his property, money, and animals to his eight children in an elaborately detailed will. He even went so far as to designate which future grandchildren would get the baby colts to be foaled by his gray mare. Ten years later his children relinquished all their rights in his estate in order to help the less fortunate veterans who had fought side-by-side with him at the Great Swamp Fight.

CHAMBERLIN

Joseph Chamberlin (1655-1721) - Hannah Gilbert (m. 1682)
Nathaniel Chamberlin (1689-1780) - Elizabeth Hunkins (b. 1706)
Richard Chamberlin (1714-1784) - Abigail (m. 1735)
Joseph Chamberlin (1738-1815) - Ruth Preston (1745-1831)
Joseph Chamberlin (1777-1845) - Nancy McAllister (1776-1838)
Abner Chamberlin (1804-1884) - Mary Haseltine (1808-1877)
Adda Chamberlin (1835-1901) - Charles Emerson Benton (1825-1892)
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Jay Rogers Benton (1885-1953) - Frances Hill (1894-)
Nicholas Benton (1926-) - Kate Lenthall Bigelow (1935-)

RICHARD CHAMBERLIN

(1714-1784)

Defended Fort Number Four, Charlestown, N. H.
in French and Indian War

IN the early history of America, many families produced generation after generation of military men. The Chamberlins were just such a family.

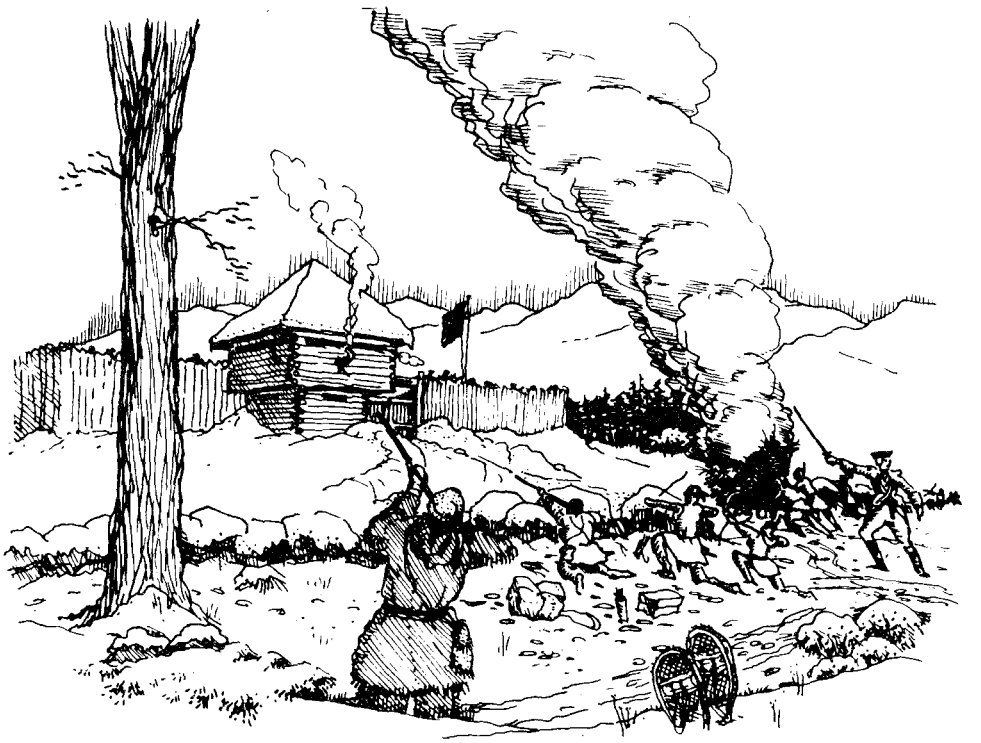
Nathaniel Chamberlin's eldest son, Richard, was born in Oxford, Massachusetts in 1714. By the time he reached his early thirties, he had married, had six of his thirteen children, and was a member of Captain Phineas Stevens' famous company of soldiers who were in winter garrison at Fort Number Four in Charlestown, New Hampshire. This was the fort which withstood one of the memorable seiges of the French and Indian War. The date was March, 1747.

Fifty years after the event, the Reverend Dr. Timothy Dwight, president of Yale College, gave the following account of the defense of Fort Number Four by Captain Stevens and his brave company which included Richard Chamberlin:

"In March 1747, Fort Number Four was commanded by Captain Phineas Stevens, a partisan of great gallantry. With a company of thirty rangers, finding the fort deserted but entire, he determined to occupy it. Soon after it was attacked by a large body of Canadians and savages under the command of Monsieur DeBelin, who attempted to set it on fire by kindling the fences and outworks and shooting into it a great number of burning arrows. This mode of assault the enemy continued through two days; but they were completely defeated in their design by the activity and prudence of Stevens.

"The next morning the French officer demanded a parley and sent an officer into the fort, with a proposition that the garrison should lay down their arms and be conveyed to Montreal as prisoners of war; or, as an alternative, that the two

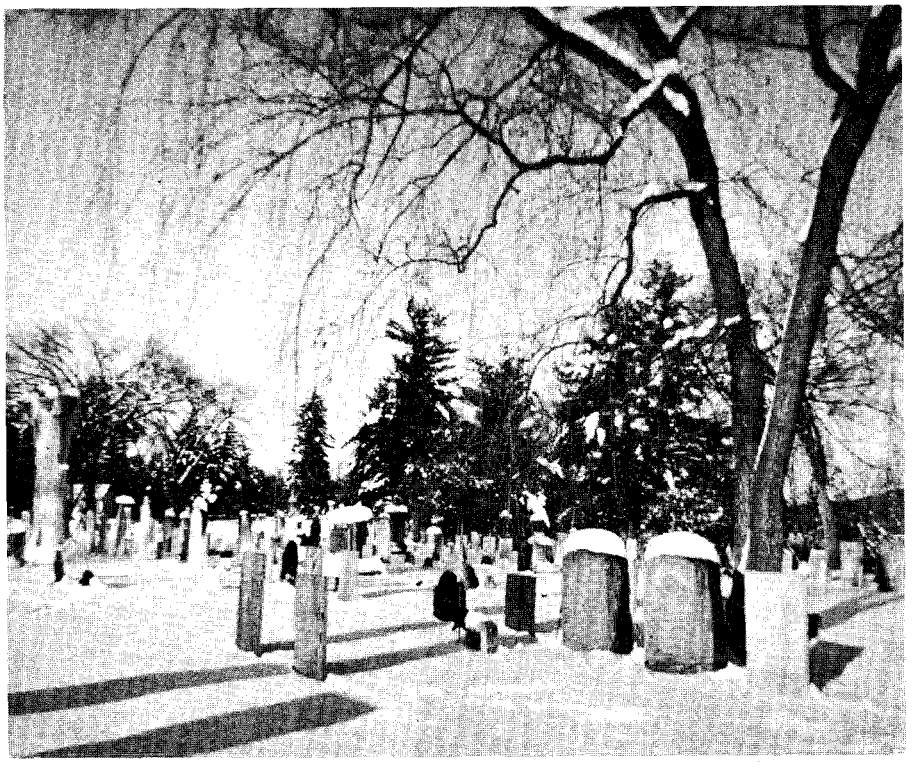
commanders should meet and confer on the subject. To the latter proposal Stevens agreed. The French commander opened the meeting by declaring that if his proposition was rejected, or one of his men killed, he would storm the fort and put the whole garrison to death. To this formidable declaration, Stevens replied that it was his duty and his determination to defend the fort until he found the Frenchman able to execute his threatenings. The French commander then told him to go and see whether his men would dare to second him. Stevens went back to the fort and put the question to his men, who answered with a single voice that they would fight to the last. This answer he immediately announced to the French commander, who had already prepared a wheel carriage loaded with dry faggots, with which he intended to set fire to the fort. Upon receiving this answer, therefore, he ordered some of his men to kindle the faggots and push the machine up to the fort, while the rest renewed the attack; but he found himself unable either to burn the fort or to terrify the garrison. The assault, however, was continued all that day.



FRENCH AND INDIANS LAUNCH AN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACK ON THE SOUTH GATE OF FORT NUMBER FOUR IN CHARLESTOWN, NEW HAMPSHIRE IN 1747.

"Sorely mortified with his ill success, the Frenchman next morning proposed a cessation of arms. It was granted. He then sent in two Indians with a flag and offered to withdraw if Stevens would sell him provisions. This Stevens refused to do, but offered him five bushels of corn for every captive he would promise to send him from Canada, leaving hostages for the performance of his promise. The Frenchman in a rage ordered his men to fire a few muskets at the fort and marched off. In this gallant defense not one of Stevens' men was killed and only two were wounded."

For several years after this event, Chamberlin continued his career as a soldier in the French and Indian War, most notably as a member of Colonel William William's Regiment during the invasion of Canada in 1758. Finally in 1762, he brought his wife, Abigail, and 13 children to Newbury, Vermont, where he became one of the original grantees of the town. He earned his living by running a ferry boat across the Connecticut River between Newbury and Haverhill, New Hampshire.



CHAMBERLIN FAMILY TOMBSTONES (FOREGROUND) IN NEWBURY, VERMONT.

At the age of 61, he became a member of the first company of Minute Men organized by Captain Thomas Johnson in Newbury for service in the Revolutionary War. Because of his age, he probably did not see actual service. However, seven of his nine sons served in the Revolution. The eldest son, Joseph, is our direct ancestor and his participation in the War of Independence is taken up in a later chapter.

Richard Chamberlin died in 1784, and was buried in Newbury's cemetery where his gravestone may be seen today.

CHAMBERLIN

Richard Chamberlin (1714-1784) - Abigail (m. 1735)
Joseph Chamberlin (1738-1815) - Ruth Preston (1745-1831)
Joseph Chamberlin (1777-1845) - Nancy McAllister (1776-1838)
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DAVID HASELTINE

(1759-1824)

Revolutionary Soldier – At Battle of Saratoga in 1777

HORTLY after the French and Indian War (1760) a young soldier, his wife and young children passed through Coös County of Northern New Hampshire, and later settled in Newbury, Vermont. The soldier, John Haseltine, came originally from Hampstead, New Hampshire. Historians surmise that the French and Indian War was chiefly responsible for bringing the Haseltine family so far north. Surely no one would have gone so far into the wilderness on the mere hazard of finding a suitable place to build a home.

One of the very first settlers of Newbury, John Haseltine and his wife, Sarah Beadle, raised a large family, but only five of the births are recorded.

Age finally removed Haseltine from military duty as a scout, and he retired to his son's farm in West Newbury, where he died about 1796.

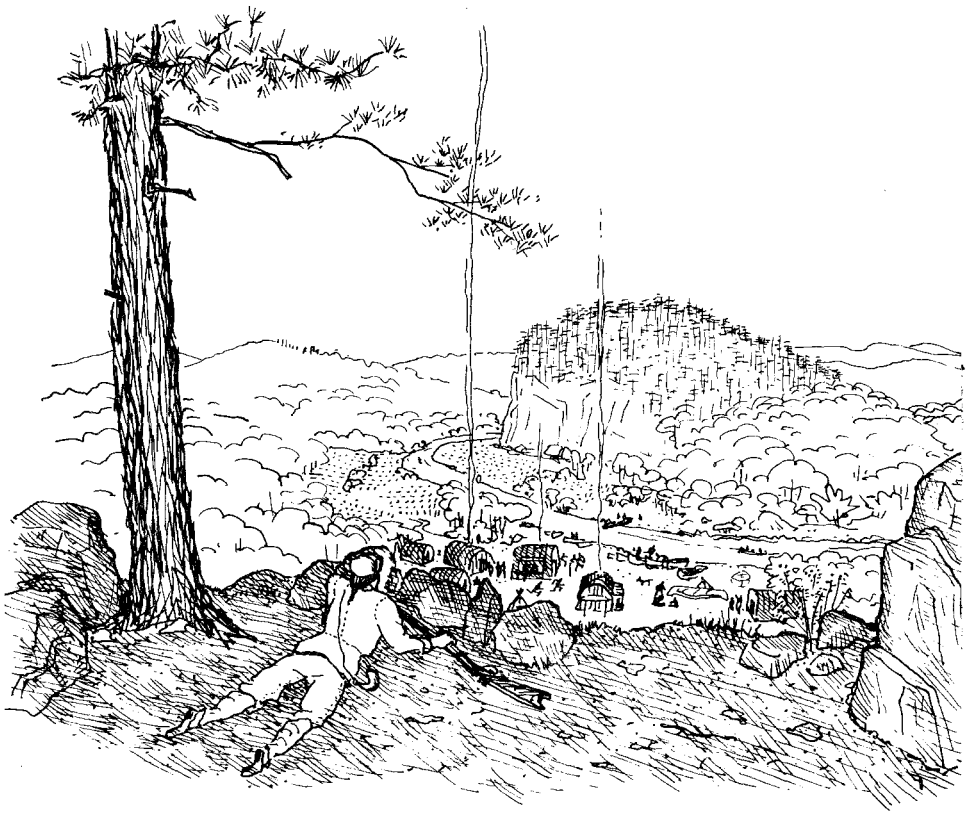
In the records the only son of John and Sarah Haseltine was David, born in Hampstead, New Hampshire, April 17, 1759. While still in his teens, David Haseltine emulated his father, and joined the local militia as a guard and scout. In this capacity he served briefly in Captain John G. Bayley's Company.

During the revolutionary War, Newbury, like other towns in the Coös country, was vulnerable to attack—both a tempting prey to the rapacity of the British in Canada, as well as the Indians and Tories. When an alarm was given in the town, the captain would call his men out from the farms to guard the block-house, to protect the homes of prominent citizens, or to watch a strategic road or river ford. It was arranged that each man would have an equal share of work.

Prisoners of war were often sent to Newbury for safe keeping or to await an

exchange. In the latter case, scouts would be detailed to escort prisoners to the Canadian lines. The men were also used to guard military stores deposited in Newbury.

The settlements owed much to men like Haseltine. The danger incurred by these rangers and guards was very great. They were often sent, two or three at a time, through the wilderness to scout along the St. Lawrence, to observe the Indians on the Richelieu River, or to inspect the fortifications at Isle Aux Noix.

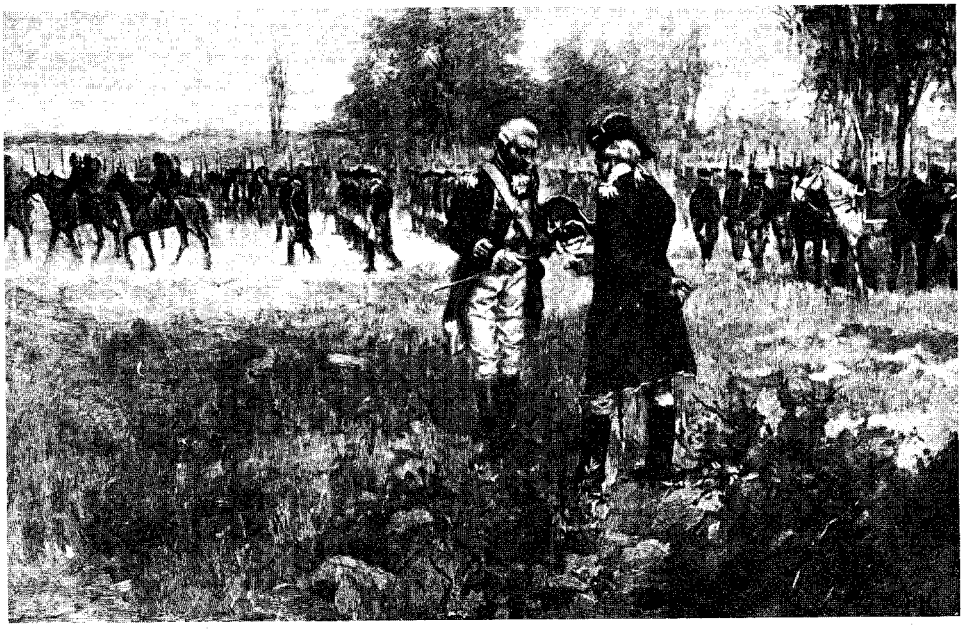


DAVID HASELTINE SPIES ON THE INDIAN ENCAMPMENT
ALONG THE RICHELIEU RIVER, CANADA.

Despite their hazardous service, it is believed that not more than two or three Newbury men were killed, nor more than one house (General Bayley's) attacked.

By 1777 Haseltine had joined Captain Frye Bayley's Company. While serving in this company, he was called to the field to help fight the Battle of Saratoga. This was the only specific battle for which the men of Newbury were called.

Saratoga was to be the decisive victory of the Revolutionary War. The British Army, led by General John Burgoyne, had swept all in its path on its famous march down from Quebec. Burgoyne's lengthy advance towards Albany began with his capture of Fort Ticonderoga without firing a single shot on July 6th, 1777. Instead of transporting his troops via Lake George and the upper Hudson, Burgoyne made the fatal mistake of marching his men south through treacherous wilderness. His supplies ran low. As a result, he lost practically his entire left wing in Bennington, Vermont, in an abortive attempt to seize much need-



THE SURRENDER OF BURGOYNE AT SARATOGA IN 1777.

ed stores. Burgoyne had to take one of two courses: retreat, or fight his way through Saratoga to Albany, his original destination. His descision was made with the immortal words: "This army must not retreat."

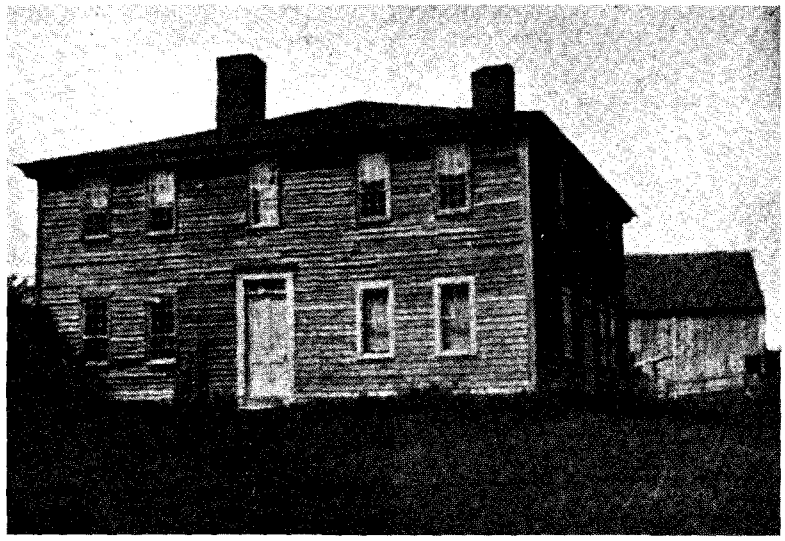
On September 19th Burgoyne and his troops finally clashed with the American Army at Freeman's Farm, just outside of Saratoga. He was soundly defeated. Two weeks later Burgoyne attacked again. In this final engagement, the Americans, led by Benedict Arnold in a classic charge, stormed over the British, forcing Burgoyne to fall back. In these two battles Burgoyne had lost 1200 men. He was virtually surrounded on all sides except the northern route. But this escape was quickly sealed off by a force of 1100 men from Hampshire

Grants (Vermont) on October 11th. This band of Vermonters included David Haseltine.

For Burgoyne there was no escape and on October 14th he surrendered to General Horatio Gates, leader of the American Army at Saratoga.

Haseltine, along with the rest of his company was present at Burgoyne's formal surrender to General Gates.

A year later Haseltine joined Simeon Steven's Company of Colonel Timothy Bedell's regiment and remained in service for eleven months. He then retired from active military duty and built a farm in West Newbury. For generations it was referred to as "the Old Haseltine Place." While the major part of his life



THE "OLD HASELTINE PLACE" IN WEST NEWBURY, VERMONT.

was devoted to his farm, he did continue to serve in the local militia, finally being elevated to Captain.

In 1786 he married Anna Carter (1765-1821) and together they raised ten children. Their last child was Mary, who later married Abner Chamberlin.

A successful farmer, Haseltine was said to have been a wealthy man for his times. He died in 1824, leaving his ten children a prominent and solid heritage. His old gravestone in the burying ground on a lonely hillside in West Newbury bears this inscription: "He braved the forest in service of his country."

TOMBSTONE OF DAVID HASELTINE IN WEST NEWBURY, VERMONT.

HASELTINE

***David** Haseltine* (*1759-1824*) - *Anna Carter* (*1765-1821*)
*Mary **Haseltine*** (*1808-1877*) - *Abner Chamberlin* (*1804-1884*)
Adda Chamberlin (*1835-1901*) - *Charles Emerson Benton* (*1825-1892*)
Everett Chamberlin Benton (*1862-1924*) - *Willena Blanche Rogers* (*1865-1947*)
Jay Rogers Benton (*1885-1953*) - *Frances Hill* (*1894-*)
Nicholas Benton (*1926-*) - *Kate Lenthall Bigelow* (*1935-*)

Lt. JOSEPH CHAMBERLIN

(1738-1815)

A "Green Mountain Boy" with Ethan Allen

AMED after his great grandfather who had fought in the Great Swamp Fight, Joseph Chamberlin was born in Northfield, Massachusetts, on March 18th, 1738. Having inherited the rich military mantle of his forefathers, he began his army apprenticeship under Captain John Catlin during the later stages of the French and Indian Wars. He ranged up and down the Connecticut and Passumpsic rivers, and finally settled in Newbury, Vermont, where he became one of the original grantees of the town along with his father. He married Ruth Preston and they produced a large family of nine. Their third child, Joseph, Jr., was our direct ancestor.

By 1775 Joseph Chamberlin had joined that historic band of soldiers known as "The Green Mountain Boys." With this unit, about 350 strong, he was present, but did not actually participate in, the capture of Fort Ticonderoga by Ethan Allen. In a very literal sense Chamberlin "missed the boat" on this illustrious occasion. Here from all accountable records is exactly what hapened to him during that event: In the spring of 1775, Ethan Allen joined with Benedict Arnold to capture Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain—a British fortification serving primarily as a depot for ammunition and military supplies. The Green Mountain Boys, including Chamberlin, refused to serve under anyone except Allen. A rendezvous was agreed upon, however, with Allen and his men to meet Arnold in Hand's Cove on the east side of Lake Champlain about two miles north of the Fort.

On the night of May 9th, Allen brought his 350 Green Mountain Boys to Hand's Cove. There was a scarcity of boats, however, in which to transport the men

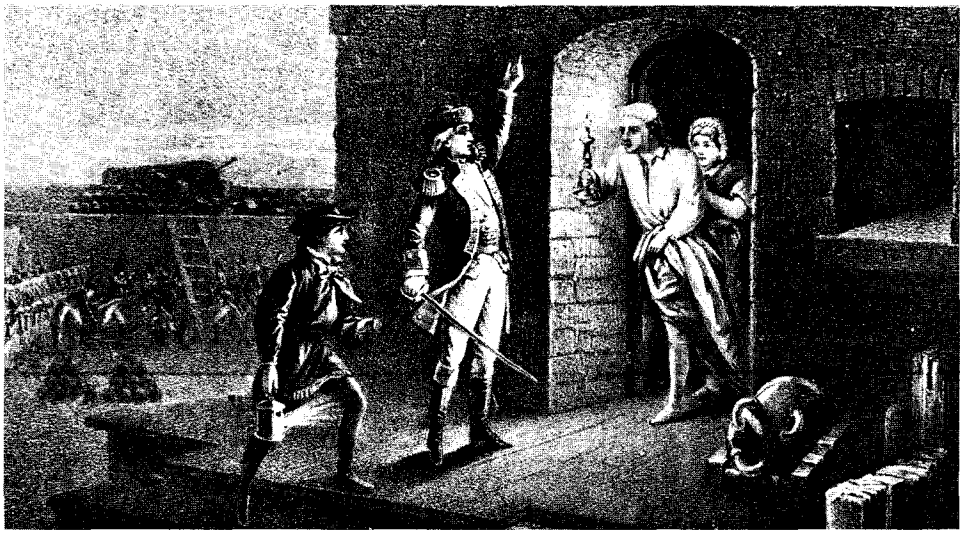
across the lake to the fort. The few obtainable boats were rowed back and forth all night.

Shortly before daylight on May 10th, only 83 men and a few officers had reached the west shore. Not wanting to eliminate the surprise element from his attack, Allen decided to proceed without his entire force. Chamberlin along with the majority of Green Mountain Boys had yet to cross the lake, but remained in the rear guard commanded by Colonel Seth Warner.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN BOY–STATUE IN RUTLAND, VERMONT.

Allen's capture of Fort Ticonderoga was swift and bloodless, since most of the garrison was still asleep. (The fort's commanding officer, Captain Delaplace, still in his nightshirt, immediately surrendered to Allen.)

After the fort's capture, Allen sent the boats back to get his rear guard. Chamberlin and the others were then used for the fort's occupation, and later for transporting the British arms to the American forces. Not long after Chamberlin returned to his home in Newbury, but military circumstances would bring



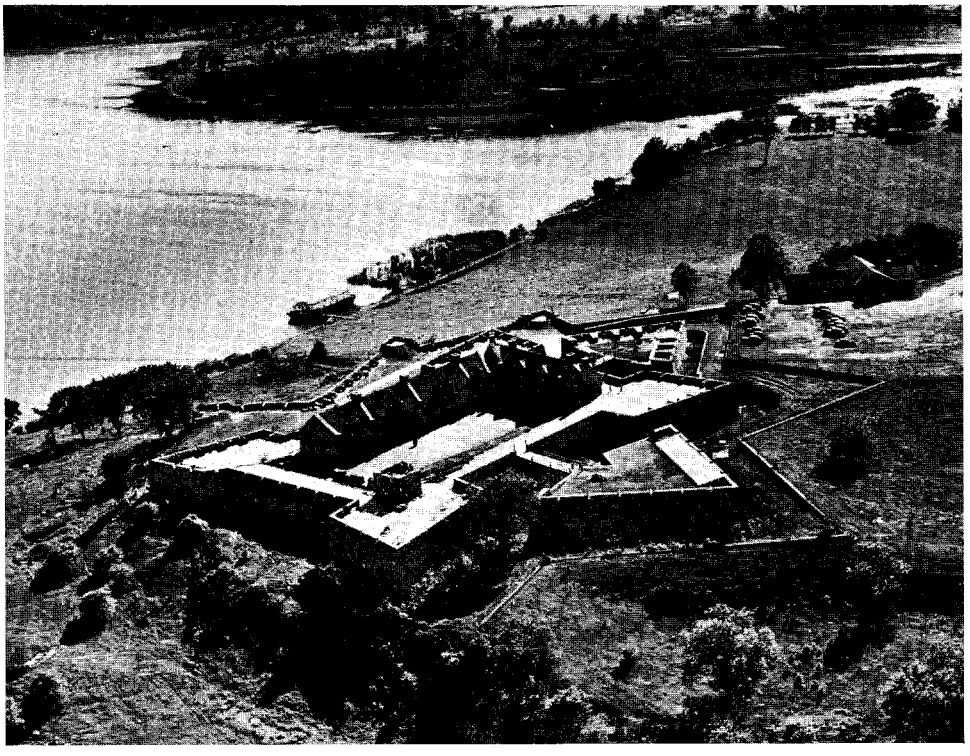
CAPTAIN DELAPLACE IN NIGHTSHIRT SURRENDERS
FORT TICONDEROGA TO ETHAN ALLEN.

him back once again to help recapture the fort.

In 1777 Fort Ticonderoga fell into the British hands as General John Burgoyne proceeded on his ill-fated march to Saratoga, New York. (Described in the previous chapter on David Haseltine.)

General Benjamin Lincoln, operating from the Hampshire Grants (Vermont) sent his American detachments totaling some 1,500 men against Burgoyne's lines of communication, such as they were. Five hundred of these American men came from Pawlet, Vermont, where they had been stationed. Lt. Chamberlin was among the soldiers serving in Captain John Gideon Bayley's company, also stationed in Pawlet. On September 18th, one day before Burgoyne's first defeat at Saratoga, these 500 Vermonters under Colonel John Brown rushed Mt. Defiance, Mt. Hope, and Fort Ticonderoga. Although the Americans were able to capture 300 of the enemy and gain release for some 100 American prisoners, the British forces were too strong within their garrisons and there was no English surrender on that day. The news of this "limited" American success considerably helped the morale of the men preparing to fight at Saratoga. To Burgoyne the news obviously brought an adverse effect. Following Burgoyne's defeat at Saratoga in October, General Lincoln was put in charge of Fort Ticonderoga.

With this northern engagement over, Chamberlin once again returned home



FORT TICONDEROGA ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN.

to Newbury, where he served intermittently in local companies, including Captain Simeon Steven's company of Colonel Peter Olcott's regiment.

When he was not serving in the army, Chamberlin earned his living as a carpenter and blacksmith. He died in 1815 in his 77th year. His grave is still well marked at the Old Burying Ground in Newbury, Vermont.

CHAMBERLIN

Joseph Chamberlin (1738-1815) - Ruth Preston (1745-1831)
Joseph Chamberlin (1777-1845) - Nancy McAllister (1776-1838)
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THE HEIR WHO WASN'T THERE

FOR more than 100 years an important historical document allegedly written by George Washington at Valley Forge has been handed down from one Benton generation to the next.

Addressed to a Captain Jacob Benton, Washington's order read as follows:

Headquarters
Valley Forge
Feb'ry 16th, 1778

Sir/

Extend your picket line across the bridge and on the Norristown Road as far as the King of Prussia Tavern. Arrest all strangers unable to give a satisfactory account of themselves, and every suspicious person found loitering near the lines, such arrest report immediately to Genl. Varnum.

To Captain Jacob Benton,

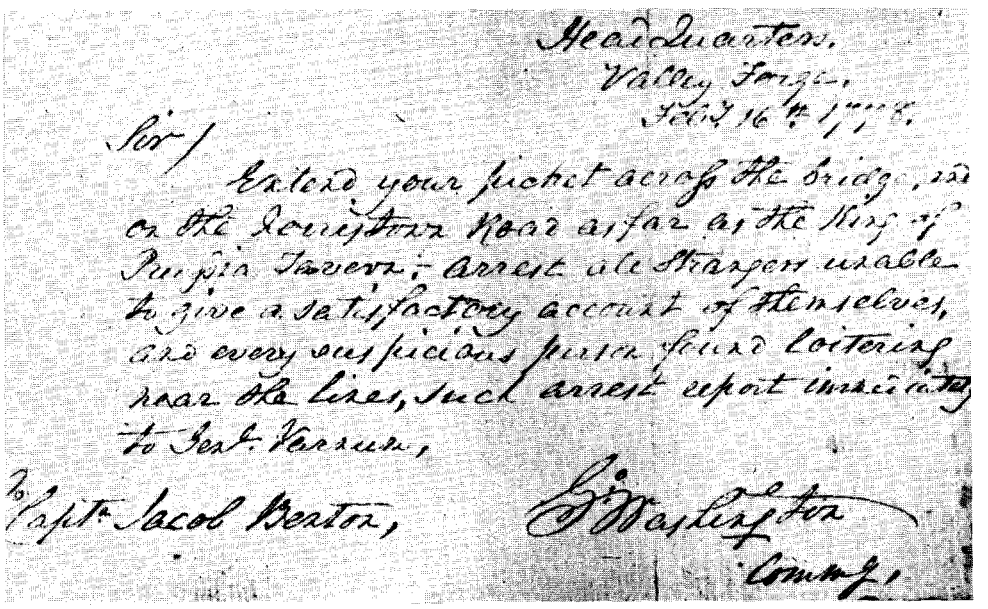
G. Washington
Commg.

Documents such as these add their special color to a family history, and some Benton about a century ago was ready and willing to accept Captain Jacob Benton as a genuine part of our inheritance. Flush from the excitement of his purchase, he never bothered to check the document's authenticity.

Over the years as the Washington order changed hands, the new owner tried to obtain proof that one of two possible Jacob Bentons, alive during the Revolution, was the original recipient of the order. All research efforts—and there were many—proved to be in vain, however. A quick summary of their lives reveals that neither Benton could have logically received the order.

1. Jacob Benton, Jr. (1728-1807) a great-grandson of Andrew Benton, the emigrant, lived in Harwinton, Connecticut, during the Revolution. Later when his business went bankrupt, he moved his family to New Hampshire. At the time the Washington order was written, this Benton would have been 50 years old. Although he served as a lieutenant in the Harwinton militia, all the records on his life indicate that he never actively served in the Revolution.

2. Jacob Benton (1754-1843) of Tolland, Connecticut was a great-great-grandson of Andrew Benton. This man served in the Continental army as a dragoon in the Battle of Saratoga. He was not, however, at Valley Forge. Moreover, pension records at the Department of Interior in Washington prove conclusively that this Jacob Benton was retired from military service with the rank of Private.


Head Quarters.
Valley Forge.
Feb.y 16th 1778.

Sir/

Extend your picket across the bridg, on the Lancaster Road as far as the Sign of Turpin Tavern: arrest all Strangers unable to give a satisfactory account of themselves, and every suspicious person found loitering near the Lines, such arrest report immediately to Genl. Varnum,

Capt.n Jacob Benton, G. Washington for Comm.d.r

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S *ORDER* TO CAPTAIN JACOB BENTON.

The mystery of who was *the* Captain Jacob Benton at Valley Forge finally drew to an inglorious but colorful close. All authoritative sources, including "The Writings of George Washington" (Washington wrote some 20,000 documents in his lifetime) were poured over once again. Nowhere is the Benton order to be found; a definite oversight, if the document were genuine.

To substantiate its authenticity, the document was sent to the dean of historical handwriting experts, Mary A. Benjamin (Mrs. Harold C. Henderson) of

New York City. (In a New Yorker Magazine *Profile,* Miss Benjamin is described as the nation's foremost autograph dealer, whose word on the authenticity of documents is the very next thing to law.) Miss Benjamin quickly recognized the Washington order to Benton as a forgery. In her opinion, it was a "good Robert Spring," one of the best and most crafty American forgers of the nineteenth century.

Today, as incredible as it may seem, there is a ready market for Robert Spring forgeries, and the Benton order would be worth, according to Miss Benjamin, some twenty-five dollars.

A word is in order about Robert Spring, who long ago must have duped a Benton into buying the fake document. The following excerpt is taken from Miss Benjamin's definitive book on the subject of historical papers, "Autographs: A Key To Collecting":

> "Robert Spring, one of the better known American forgers... employed great care with his frauds, which included spurious letters of Washington—one of which actually hung in Philadelphia's Independence Hall. Only experts are able to distinguish them from the originals. For all his pains, Spring, who had a list of aliases, was uncovered, served a jail term and, penniless, ended his days in 1876 in a Philadelphia hospital.
>
> "Spring did not confine himself to one victim but instead used the mails to approach his prey, choosing for his purpose mostly those who were known to have very fine private libraries. He most frequently represented himself as a 'widow' seriously reduced in circumstances and forced to market letters which otherwise 'she' would not consent to part. In advance he would have obtained, by some unrevealed means, genuine letters and then traced these on sheets of paper which he had stained with coffee grounds to simulate the appearance of age. One of the duplications would always go forward with his pity-appealing letter, which bore the implication 'Give what you think it is worth.' To cover his trail, particularly after he had been arrested and had jumped bail in Philadelphia, Spring mailed his offers far and wide and from many different post offices. Remittances were sent to the 'widow' in care of the many aliases he assumed.
>
> "Letters forged by Spring do not often appear on the market today...

Spring forgeries, including his letters of Washington written from Valley Forge and Mount Vernon, have a value of their own.

"Spring obviously realized no extravagant sum for any one of his forgeries, but it would have been impossible, by the time he was apprehended, to trace what inflationary values may have been obtained from them subsequently. Unfortunately, once autograph forgeries have entered into the stream, it is not always possible to determine precisely where they will be washed ashore."

The Washington order to "the Benton heir who was never there" has finally washed ashore for the last time. A copy of the fraudulent document is now in the historical archives of the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company in Boston, Massachusetts.

SAMUEL SLADE BENTON

(1777-1857)

Early Life in Vermont

AMUEL SLADE BENTON, His Ancestors and His Descendants" is the lengthy title of the most important genealogy on the Benton family now in existence. Many of the facts in this book stem from that work. Published in 1901, it was written by a prominent Boston lawyer, Josiah Henry Benton, Jr. (1843-1917) who amassed a considerable fortune as general counsel for the Old Colony, New Haven and Northern Railroads. As a trustee of the Boston Public Library he bequested $2,500,000 to that institution—the largest gift ever left to the city.

By contrast, Josiah's grandfather, Samuel Slade Benton—for whom the book was named—led a humble, yet fully rewarding life. Josiah's personal account of his grandfather who lived over a century ago in Vermont bears repeating in today's harried times.

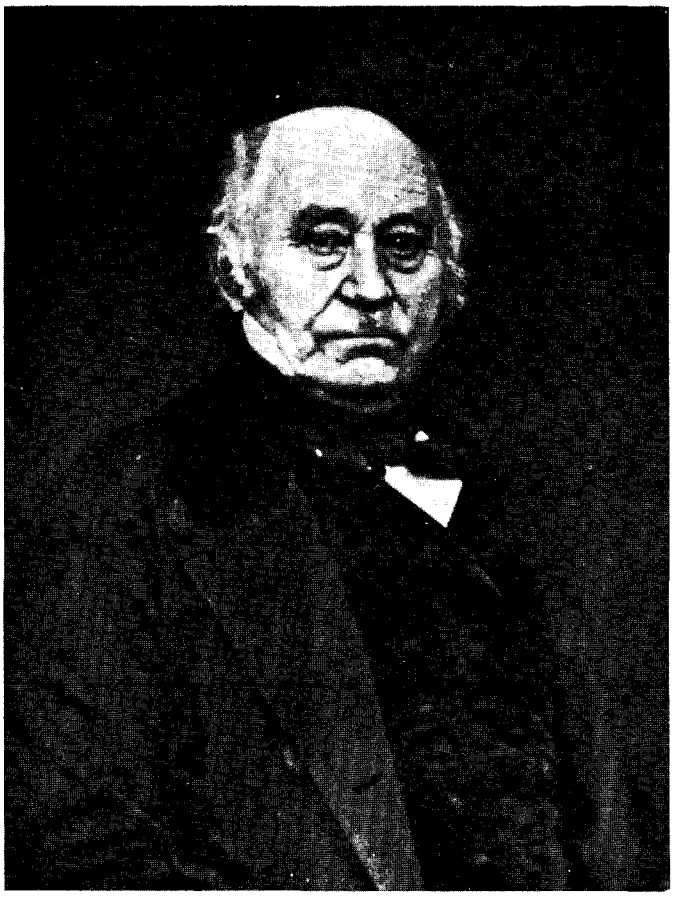
Samuel Slade Benton was the youngest son of Jacob Benton, Jr. and Hannah Slade Benton. He was born in Harwinton, Conn., in 1777, the same year Haseltine went to Saratoga and Chamberlin went to Fort Ticonderoga. Because of his father's insolvency, Samuel had little schooling; instead he went to work at age 12 on his brother's farm.

In the spring of 1801 Samuel set out on his own for Waterford, Vermont, where he bought 50 acres of land for two hundred dollars. His purchase was high wooded land, requiring much labor to clear and subdue for cultivation. Waterford at this time was a frontier settlement with a population of 565. The conditions of life in Waterford were primitive and its citizens were poor—monetarily.

The following winter Samuel built with his own hands a small log cabin to which

he brought his nineteen year old bride, Esther Prouty of Charlestown, New Hampshire.

The log cabin had but one room and when his first child was born, Samuel took an ax to smooth the rough logs in one corner, and hung up blankets about the corner to shield his wife and baby from the cold. After five years Samuel was able



SAMUEL SLADE BENTON

to build a more substantial frame house for his growing family. Ten of his twelve children were born in this house. The youngest child was Charles Emerson Benton, our direct ancestor.

By 1822, Samuel had added 150 more acres to his original 50, making him a substantial property owner for the time. He and his wife, Esther, worked diligently to raise sufficient sums to buy this property—he, by carrying produce over the long

roads and trails to Boston and Portland, Maine, and returning with much needed wares for Waterford; she, by carding and spinning wool for yarn and blanket weaving. Later they sold the property and the buildings on it to their oldest son.

Through the years Samuel and Esther Benton moved about—first to St. Johnsbury, then to Lancaster, New Hampshire, finally settling in Newbury, Vermont.

The following portrait of Samuel and Esther Benton was written by Josiah H. Benton:

"Samuel was about six feet in height, strong and sturdy in body, with a round solid head and keen gray eyes. He was rather phlegmatic, not easily moved, deliberate and determined in all his ways and methods. He loved dogs, horses, the fields and the open air and though somewhat inclined to be easy-going, was industrious and thrifty. He was not a man of many words, but had a keen sense of humor, and had a dry way of putting things in their true light by a concise caustic sentence. He had sound common sense and excellent judgement. He had no illusions but saw things as they were.

"He liked reading, but few books were to be had in Waterford then, and there was little time to be spared from the toil required to keep a roof over the heads and bread in the mouths of his increasing family. He was a constant reader of the Bible. Not withstanding his lack of education, he spoke and wrote excellent English, and always expressed himself concisely and clearly.

"In politics he was conservative, and was a "Henry Clay Whig." He took an interest in national affairs and had in his old age very decided political views.

"He was always in excellent health, and was about attending to his affairs until shortly before his death, when he was thrown out of his carriage while driving and received an injury which probably caused his death at the age of eighty.

"Esther Prouty Benton was a notable woman...enduring all the toils and privations of a rude frontier life from an early age. She was a strong handsome woman, straight, resolute, and active, with bright black eyes. She was very industrious, economical and thrifty, but kind-hearted, affectionate and generous. She had practically no education and cared nothing for books. I doubt whether she read anything but the Bible and the hymn book. She was always at work even in her old age, and I well remember how she used to complain of what seemed to her the indolence and indifference of my grandfather, who when an old man would read and smoke at his ease without much regard to her complaints.

"She was helpful and hospitable, a most excellent wife, mother, and neighbor. Her constant care for her children and her grandchildren continued while she lived. She was most unselfish and always doing something for others. She was a great manager and a remarkable housekeeper, keeping all in the house and about it, in the garden and grounds, in the best condition. I remember her saying that the way for farmers to get on was always to have something growing—as she expressed it, to "keep putting in seeds."

ESTHER PROUTY BENTON

"She was a woman who controlled others, and I think the desire of her children to be educated and get on in life came more from her than from Samuel. I doubt if he would have accomplished what he did without the constant influence of her ceaseless activity and ambition.

"After her husband's death in 1857, she went to live with her eldest daughter, Mrs. Hannah Stoddard, at Lower Waterford, Vermont, where she died March 14th, 1860, at the age of seventy-eight.

"Fully to appreciate their characters, it is necessary to know the conditions in which they lived and labored. They were of the early settlers of Northern Vermont, who were poor in money but rich in courage and in strength. These people were strong, sturdy, earnest men and women. They were sufficient unto themselves, and by severe and constant toil they took from the soil on which they settled nearly all that was necessary for a plain, simple, healthful life. They had clay for bricks and lime for mortar, and the woods gave them logs and lumber, from which they made their rude but comfortable dwellings and furniture. From the sap of the maple they made delicious sugar, and the hemlock gave the bark with which to tan the hides of the cattle into excellent leather. From the flax they made durable linen for household use and for summer clothing, and from the wool of their sheep, warm blankets and excellent "frocking" and other clothing for wear in winter. The lye leached from the ashes of the clearings made "potash" and "pearl-ash," not only for their own necessities, but for sale in the distant markets of Portland and Boston, where they obtained salt, almost the only necessity of life which Vermont does not produce. Wheat, rye, oats, barley, Indian corn, and nearly all other cereals of the temperate zone grew on the hillsides and in the valleys, while the blackberry, raspberry, blueberry, strawberry, and other healthful and delicious fruits grew wild in the woods and glades. They raised apples, currants, cherries, plums, pears, and other cultivated fruits. Coffee beans made a fair substitute for imported coffee, and they even had from the leaves of various shrubs a substitute for tea. Tobacco, less fragrant but equally as wholesome as that from beyond the sea, was raised with care in sheltered places.

The lakes, rivers, and brooks were filled with bass, pickerel, muskalonge, trout, and other fish, while in the woods bear, deer, raccoon, partridge, and other game were found in abundance. They trapped the otter and the beaver in the streams and the fox on the hillside. They had geese, turkeys, fowls, and pigeons, while the horses, sheep, and cattle which grazed in their pastures and fed on the hay from their meadows were not excelled elsewhere. They built their own carding and fulling mills and looms, and their own tanneries. The women spun the yarn, wove the cloth, and made the sheets, blankets, and garments, and the soap for washing and the candles for light, in their homes. The men tanned the leather, and once a year the travelling shoemaker set up his bench in the great kitchen

with its capacious fireplace, and made the boots and shoes for the family. They had cider from the apple, and wine from the rhubarb, the elderberry, and the wild grape. They needed no butcher or baker, for they baked in their brick ovens and had their beef, mutton, and pork from their own flocks and herds and yards.

"They put school-houses and meeting-houses on the hillsides, and the teachers taught for small pay and "boarded around" by the scholar, while the ministers were paid mainly in the produce of the farms. They had none of the appliances of modern husbandry. The mowing-machine, the horse-rake, the reaper, the threshing-machine, the improved plough, and the cultivator were unknown. The ax and the crowbar, the beetle and the wedge, the sickle and the scythe, the shovel and the hoe, the flail and the fan, were the simple implements with which they subdued the wilderness, cultivated the soil, and gathered its harvest. They had no eight-hour day, but labored "from sun to sun." With the exception of the Fourth of July, when they assembled to hear the Declaration of Independence read, and usually to hear an "oration" by the minister, and Thanksgiving, when they worshipped and fed on the good things they raised, they had no holidays; labor was so constant and unremitting that it became a habit of their lives. They were orderly, industrious, frugal, God-fearing and independent people. They owned the land they tilled, and were the most perfect democracy in America. My grandparents lived this life and sustained its privations, endured its toils, and reared their family under its severe conditions. Considering the disadvantages of their childhood and the hardships of their early years, they seem to me to have been a very remarkable couple. I trust this imperfect sketch may give to their descendants some slight knowledge of their long and useful lives and of their many virtues."

BENTON

Samuel Slade Benton (1777-1857) - Esther Prouty (1782-1860)
Charles Emerson Benton (1825-1892) - Adda Chamberlin (1835-1901)
Everett Chamberlin Benton (1862-1924) - Willena Blanche Rogers (1865-1947)
Jay Rogers Benton (1885-1953) - Frances Hill (1894-)
Nicholas Benton (1926-) - Kate Lenthall Bigelow (1935-)

MARY HASELTINE

(1808-1877)

and

ABNER CHAMBERLIN

(1804-1884)

Their sons in the Civil War

WHEN Mary Haseltine, daughter of David and Anna Carter Haseltine, was but a girl of four, she bid her oldest brother, David, Jr., good-bye as he departed with his Vermont neighbors to the War of 1812.

Although this war had little meaning to Mary, she was to experience later through her sons' and nephews' service in the Civil War, the true sorrow and tragedy that war inflicts.

When Mary Haseltine married Abner Chamberlin in 1825, she was only 17. They both had grown up together in Newbury, Vermont. After they were married Chamberlin served for several years as a Captain of the Militia Cavalry, and held various local offices. Abner and Mary had eleven children. Their sixth child, Adda, married Charles Emerson Benton.

FIVE CHAMBERLIN DAUGHTERS.
Adda, Helen, Martha, Julia Eliza and Mary Jane

In 1857 Chamberlin moved his wife and his younger children to Spring Prairie, Wisconsin, where he became Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and Justice of the Peace.

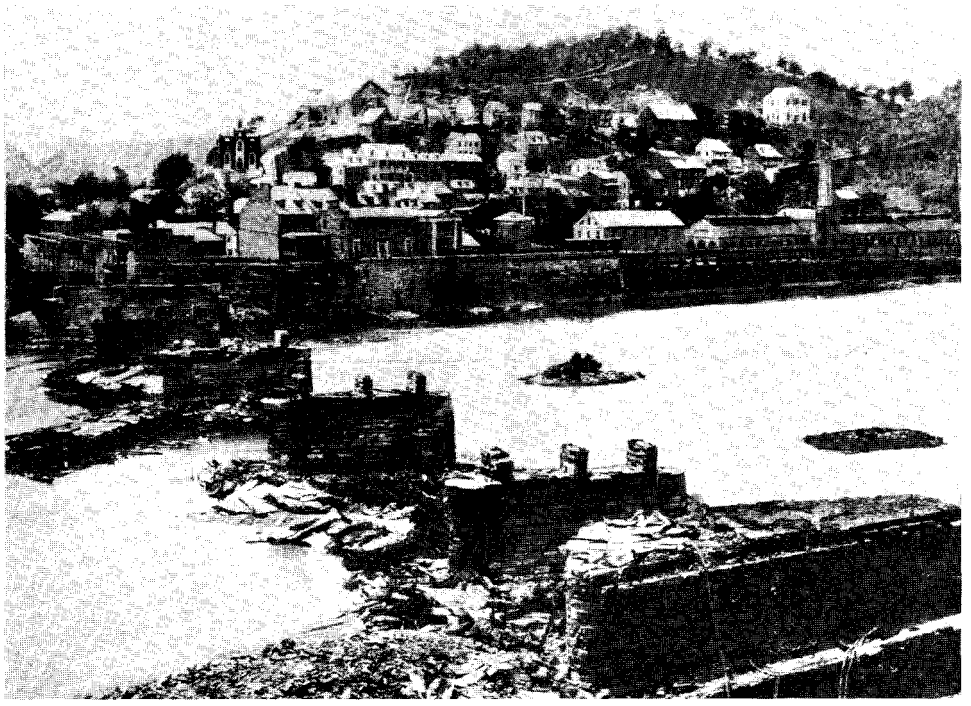
When the war between the states started, Abner Chamberlin enrolled at his house Spring Prairie's quota of volunteers to fight for the Union.

Back in Vermont, three of the older Chamberlin sons enlisted and became officers in the Union Army. Preston Chamberlin was a sergeant with the 1st Vermont Volunteers who fought in the Battle of Big Bethel, Virginia, June 10th, 1861.

BATTLE OF BIG BETHEL FROM A SKETCH IN *HARPER'S WEEKLY*.

Scene of one of the earliest battles of the Civil War, Big Bethel saw the Union troops repulsed by a much smaller Confederate force. Later Preston was promoted to Captain of Company H, 12th Vermont Volunteers. With this unit he helped defend the Fairfax, Virginia, Courthouse from attack by the illustrious Jeb Stuart and his cavalry on December 29th, 1862.

Another son, George Campbell Chamberlin, enlisted as a private in the 9th Regiment, Vermont Volunteers. With this regiment he served with the Federal garrison at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, when it tried to defend that town and bridge from a Confederate attack on September 13, 1862. The capture of Harper's Ferry, renowned as the place where John Brown led the slaves to revolt, was important to Confederate General Robert E. Lee who was invading Maryland at the time. In a swift bold stroke Lee sent Stonewall Jackson to destroy Harper's Ferry. The Federal garrison of 12,500 men, out-numbered and out-maneuvered by Jackson, surrendered on September 15th after a two-day defense. Shortly



AFTERMATH OF THE ATTACK ON HARPER'S FERRY IN 1862.

thereafter, Jackson rejoined Lee in Maryland just in time to stem the tide at Antietam.

In defeat, as in victory, George C. Chamberlin continued to serve in his regiment with distinction. As a first lieutenant and adjutant of the 9th Vermont Regiment, he fought at the Battle of Chaffin's Farm and Fort Harrison, Virginia, in late September, 1864.

The third Chamberlin son, Everett, was with his brother, Preston, while defending the Fairfax Courthouse, Virginia, as a first sergeant in Company H, 12th Vermont Volunteers. Later he received the commission of Captain with the 39th Wisconsin Volunteers, Company I. This unit, including Chamberlin, was used to put down the Confederate attack on Memphis, Tennessee, August 21st, 1864.

All three Chamberlin sons returned from the war without mishap.

The war, however, did sadly touch Mary Haseltine Chamberlin. Her youngest brother, Ebenezer, sent two sons off to war. One of them, William, was killed at the Battle of Maryes Heights in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on May 3rd, 1863. The other son, Hiram, served as a sergeant of the color guard and was wounded

CAPT. EVERETT CHAMBERLIN.

LT. GEORGE C. CHAMBERLIN

at the Battle of Fair Oaks, Virginia, May 31st, 1862.

Mary Chamberlin died in 1877, and her husband, Abner, returned to Vermont, where at Bradford he died on the 4th of October, 1884.

HASELTINE

Mary Haseltine (1808-1877) - Abner Chamberlin (1804-1884)
Adda Chamberlin (1835-1901) - Charles Emerson Benton (1825-1892)
Everett Chamberlin Benton (1862-1924) - Willena Blanche Rogers (1865-1947)
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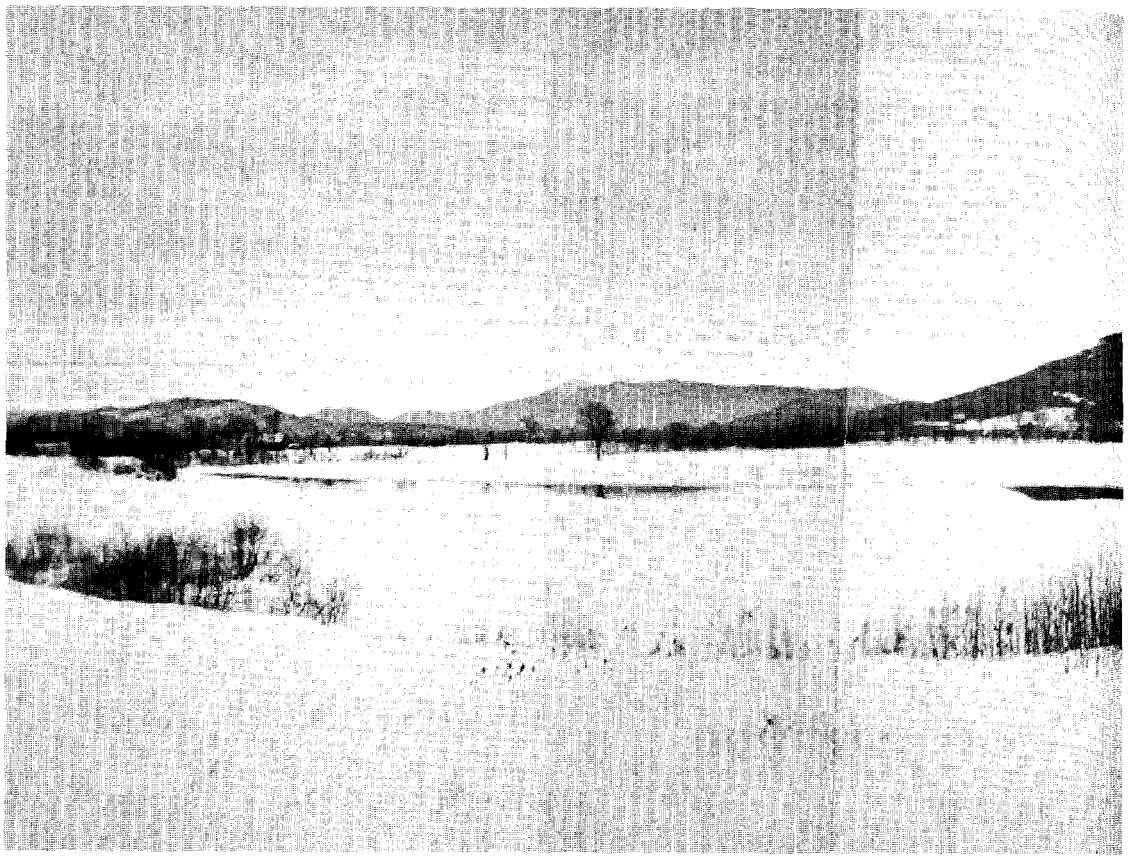


THE TOWN OF GUILDHALL, VERMONT

GENTLY couched in the green mountains of Vermont, the town of Guildhall proudly and simply ennobles the great traditions of all small New England towns.

With true Yankee pride, Guildhall, Vermont, today lays claim to being "the only town in the world of that name."

Hugging the lazy winding Connecticut River, Guildhall shares its watery boundary with Northumberland and Lancaster, New Hampshire. And, together these towns enrich each other with their seasonally hued mountains—Cape Horn, Percy Peaks, Table, Cow, Burnside—and in the distance the breathtaking summits of the Presidential Range in the White Mountains. As Everett C. Benton wrote in his book, *The History of Guildhall, Vermont,* "So lovely a scene will scarcely be observed anywhere else in the world, and on a pleasant day, with the river

VIEW FROM GUILDHALL, VT., ACROSS THE CONNECTICUT RIVER
TO PERCY PEEKS AND CAPE HORN IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.

smooth, which furnishes the observer a large and perfect mirror, the landscape and its reflection are beyond describing."

Like a small green gem under a jeweler's glass, Guildhall today can be seen as a completely self-contained democracy in the old white wooden buildings that surround its village green. Here one finds in a glance the courthouse, the old one-room school (no longer used as such, since the town constructed a new modern building), the Congregational Church, the jail, the Guild-Hall (public meeting place), the library, the general store and post office. Not far from this scene one finds a simple cemetery hemmed by spruces and pines. Further down the road, a museum constructed from an old barn by Fred Crawford, Jr. gives sanctuary to many unusual pieces connected with the town's long and colorful history.

Although Guildhall is small in size, every earthly need is fulfilled—whether it

VIEW ACROSS THE VILLAGE GREEN TO THE COUNTY JAIL, THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND THE ESSEX COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

be educational or judicial, material or spiritual.

The Guildhall countryside is dotted with farms and comfortable homes. The main room of these houses remains, as it has for generations, the kitchen. The majority of Guildhall citizens earn their living from the land or nearby lumber and paper-making enterprises in Northumberland and Groveton, N.H.

THE BENTON LIBRARY.

Buildings and mountains are, of course, only the shell of the town. Its heartbeat comes from the men and women who live out their purposeful lives there. Some of the family names include Hayes, Hall, Beattie, Hubbard, Stevens, Crawford, Fogg, Hodge, Clark, Peaslee and Wentworth. For, to know them and the generations that will follow them, is to know and love the Guildhall that was, is now, and will be.

DEDICATION OF MONUMENT PRESENTED BY EVERETT C. BENTON IN 1899 TO MARK THE SITE OF GUILDHALL'S FIRST CHURCH ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY.

*L. to R. Abby Willey, Fred Robinson, Harry Ridgewell, Joseph Pendrigh, Jules Munn, Carrie Hendrick Cotton, Alice Poole MacLean, Ezra Deering, Frank Chessman, Carrie Ritchie, George Colt, Jay Rogers Benton at age 14, Delia Drew, Deacon Robert Chase, man unidentified, Mrs. Jonathan Philbrick, Scott Hendrick, Deacon Burton, Seldon Freeman, Nellie Hodge, Moses Hodge, Charles Hodge, Everett Chamberlin Benton holding top hat, woman unidentified, Louis Webb, Amasa Carlton, and Samuel S. Benton of Maidstone, Vt. (E. C. Benton's cousin).

*Identified by Mrs. John Hodge, Mrs. Grace Hodge Grondin and Mrs. Gladys Fogg

CHARLES EMERSON BENTON

(1825-1892)

Public Life in Vermont

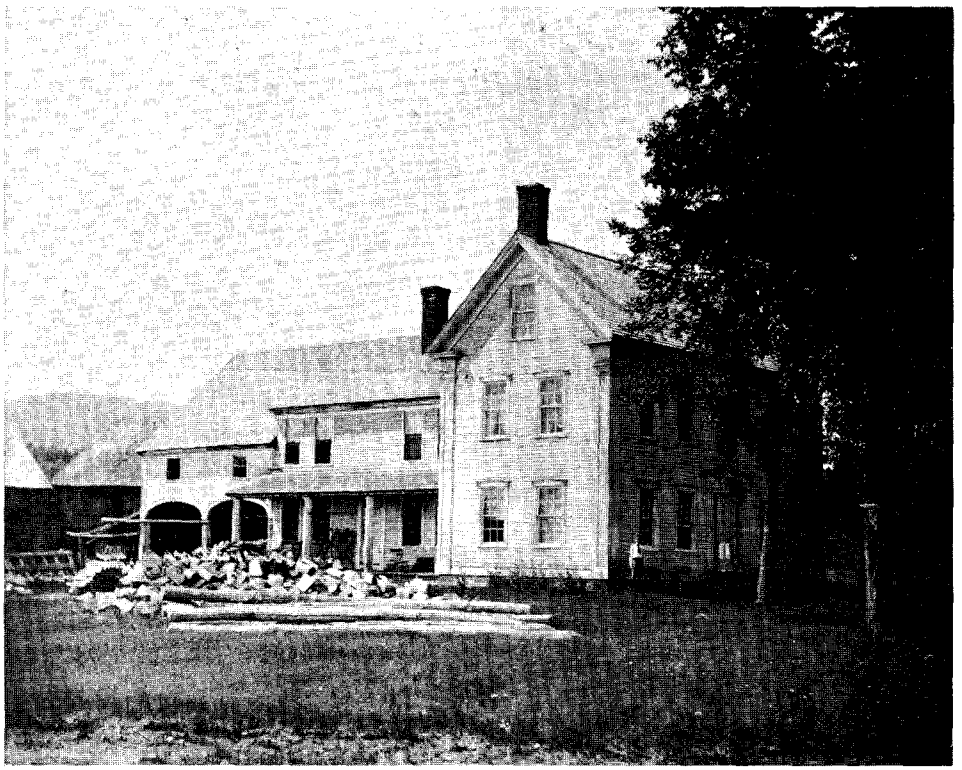
THE town of Guildhall, Vermont, is held dearly in the hearts of all present day Bentons—regardless of where they have come to make their homes. To an extraordinary degree Guildhall has become symbolic of all the New England towns that have produced Bentons and their ancestors.

Although no Benton presently lives in Guildhall, with the exception of summer visits, the next three Benton biographies will reveal why the Benton roots are so deeply entrenched in that town.

The first Benton to come to Guildhall was Charles Emerson Benton, the twelfth child of Samuel Slade and Esther Prouty Benton. Born at Waterford, Vermont, December 11, 1825, Charles was educated in the public schools of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and Lancaster, New Hampshire. These schools gave him the rudiments of education upon which he improved during his long life in public service.

On October 21, 1856, he married Adda Chamberlin, daughter of Abner and Mary Haseltine Chamberlin of Newbury, Vermont. They lived in Newbury until the outbreak of the Civil War at which time they moved to Guildhall where they lived and worked for the remainder of their lives. Their first home was a farm on the Connecticut River Road north of the Lancaster covered bridge. (The bridge, unfortunately, was replaced a few years ago by a steel structure, but the Benton house still stands.)

In this house on September 25, 1862, Charles' and Adda's second son, Everett Chamberlin, was born. A tablet mounted on a stone in front of the house now marks this birthplace. The Bentons remained at this farm for six years and then moved to another in the village of Guildhall near Essex County Courthouse.



BENTON HOUSE IN GUILDHALL.
Birthplace of Everett C. Benton

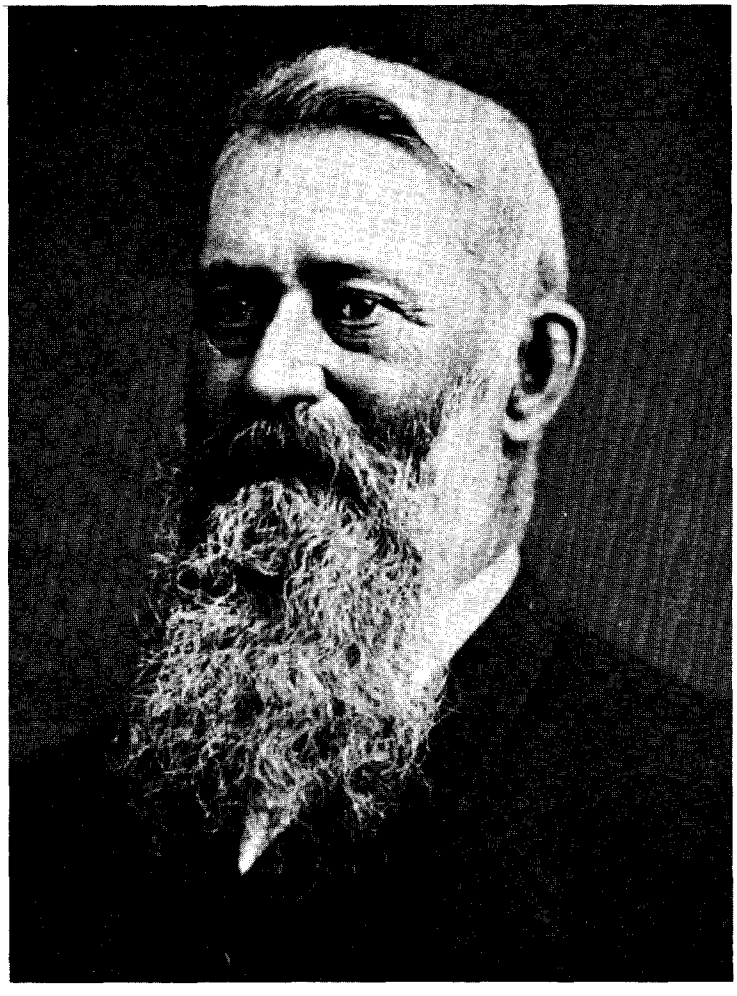
It was Charles' activity in this very courthouse that would come to fill his life and to some degree leave his mark on the town and state. Although he never went to law school, he was admitted to the Vermont bar. Many legal questions in the Essex County Courthouse rested upon his able leadership and judgement.

Charles eventually came to hold nearly all the town offices in Guildhall. Some of these included: Town Moderator, Selectman, Viewer of Fences, Town Auditor, Town Agent, Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Overseer of the Poor, and Superintendent of Schools.

He was an ardent and consistent Republican, serving on the Republican State Committee for ten years. When he was a candidate for office himself, he always ran ahead of his ticket and was never defeated. Two such offices were state representative in 1866 and state senator eight years later.

As a representative he voted for the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution—the amendment which, following the Civil

War, established the basis of U.S. citizenship, forbidding any state to abridge privileges and immunities or depriving anyone of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. Amendments to the Constitution can not be adopted without the approval of two-thirds of each house of Congress and three-fourths of all the states. The temper of the state of Vermont on the Fourteenth Amendment is



CHARLES EMERSON BENTON.

shown by the fact that 196, including Benton, voted to adopt it, and 11 were opposed.

Later Charles voted for a joint resolution declaring it to be "the exclusive right of Congress to prescribe the terms whereby the rebellious states may resume their

former relation with the government," and commended the course of Congress in its controversy upon the matter with President Andrew Johnson.

Charles and Adda Benton had three sons. The first, Charles Abner (1857-1877), died suddenly of typhoid fever at only twenty years of age as he was about to enter

ADDA CHAMBERLIN BENTON.

law school. The second son, Everett Chamberlin (1862-1924) led an extraordinary full life which is described in detail in the next chapter.

The third Benton son, Jay Bayard, never married; nevertheless his 48 years were filled with colorful pursuits. As a child he had shown remarkable precocity (he

composed a piano concerto at the age of ten) and was fully prepared to enter Dartmouth at fourteen. Since this college refused all applications under sixteen, Jay bided his time as a librarian and musical leader in New York's Young Men's Institute.

After he graduated from Dartmouth with a Phi Beta Kappa Key dangling from his vest, he joined the Boston Transcript as a reporter. This job quickly led to the old Boston Journal where he was made assistant managing editor. He eventually returned to the Transcript, becoming one of its most illustrious and popular city editors.

JAY BAYARD BENTON.

In addition to his newspaper work, Jay Bayard Benton had three major areas of interest that occupied a good deal of his time—the theatre, the Masons, and aeronautics.

In the theatre he was the Boston correspondent for the New York Dramatic Mirror. For many years he was the press representative for the Hollis Street, Colonial, Tremont, and Park Theatres.

In Masonry he joined many orders in Boston and Winchester, Mass., and served as an officer in all branches of the fraternity.

A consuming amateur interest in aeronautics—emanating from numerous balloon ascentions he had made—reserved a place for him among the pioneers of air flight. He was the 33rd man in America to receive a license as an international pilot.

Upon Charles Emerson Benton's death in June 1892, a fellow lawyer wrote: "Coming from a hardy ancestry, he inherited a strong and somewhat rugged physique; but beneath a vigorous and masculine exterior played the most genial, companionable and tender sentiments... Being called upon by his situation and office to be concerned in more of the business, social, and political concerns of the county than any other man of his day, Benton was more than any other exposed to criticism, but it was of that kind that passed away with the occasion, and I don't believe a single bitter memory will live after him.

A plain, practical, hearty, unassuming man, and a man of rugged and deep sentiments and sympathies has gone."

Benton's wife, Adda, a deeply religious and introspective person, spent many of her spare hours writing verses. She was particularly obsessed in her writing with life after death after she lost her own son, Charles. She died in 1901 at the age of sixty-six and was buried beside her husband in the Lancaster, New Hampshire, Cemetery.

BENTON

Charles Emerson Benton (1825-1892) - Adda Chamberlin (1835-1901)
Everett Chamberlin Benton (1862-1924) - Willena Blanche Rogers (1865-1947)
Jay Rogers Benton (1885-1953) - Frances Hill (1894-)
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EVERETT CHAMBERLIN BENTON

(1862-1924)

Boston Business Leader
Member of the Governor's Council

 HERE is, perhaps, nothing more fascinating in a family history than a good "Horatio Alger" story in which a young lad of humble origin goes forth to seek his fortune and eventually attains it. Everett Chamberlin Benton, second son of Charles and Adda Benton, is just such a story. He was named after his mother's brother, Everett Chamberlin, who had fought in the Civil War and later became a renowned newspaper journalist in Chicago.

Born in Guildhall, Vermont, on September 25, 1862, Everett Benton's youth was much like that of other country boys. He attended Guildhall's one room school in the primary grades. Later, when he was not helping out with the neighbor's farming, he continued his studies at the St. Johnsbury (Vt.) and Colebrook (N.H.) Academies.

Running through his nature was a streak of independence which resulted in his determination at the age of 16 to go into business. He sought employment on the old Essex County Herald, a local newspaper. The experience he gained there as a printer later spurred him on to write an entertaining and informative book, "The History of Guildhall, Vermont." Not only did Benton research and write this 270 page book, but he also set into type every word, letter for letter, in his own home. He sold advertisements in the back of the book to help defray some of his publishing costs.

When he was 19, he alighted from a train in Boston—a young man with no friends in a strange big city. His youth made it difficult for him to get a job as a printer since the field at the time was overcrowded. With his meager finances running low, he was forced to take *any* job. This need led him by chance to the

prominent Boston insurance company of John C. Paige. There Benton was hired as a messenger-clerk. His diligence and application to his job were soon noticed and quickly rewarded by Paige himself, and in a short time Benton started his meteoric climb in the insurance field.

With the death of John C. Paige, the company was re-organized. Benton, who was then a department head, was invited to be a partner. Within a few years the new partnership had turned the firm into one of the largest general insurance offices in the country.

EVERETT CHAMBERLIN BENTON.

Although Benton remained a partner of John C. Paige for the rest of his life, he actively sought and took part in many other projects. In 1910 he organized the Massachusetts Fire and Marine Insurance Company. He secured the capital for his new company in small blocks so that each investor would act as a potential influence in contributing business. It was not long before the company got underway with an investment of $500,000 and assets of more than $1,000,000.

Ten years later the company became a subsidiary of the Great American Insurance

Company. By 1958, almost fifty years after its founding, Massachusetts Fire and Marine was absorbed into its parent company, having built its assets to more than $12,200,000.

In addition to insurance, Benton's financial interests extended to banking and real estate. He was for many years on the board of trustees of the Belmont, Mass. Savings Bank, and he was also one of the original directors of the Waverly, Mass. Co-operative Bank. At one time he was vice president of the Massachusetts Real Estate Exchange.

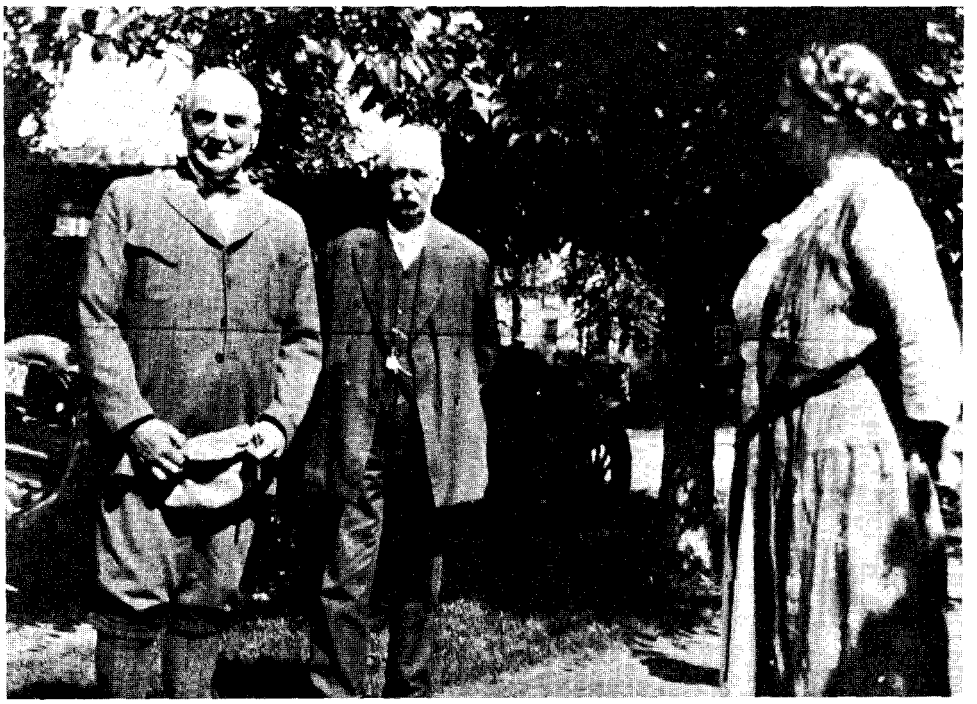
Benton's success in business enabled him to share his rewards with others, especially with his native town of Guildhall, Vermont. There in 1901 he had erected a fine public library and Masonic Hall. He also presented to the town a memorial obelisk on the site of Guildhall's first church in 1899, the occasion marking the church's 100th anniversary.

Politics, like business, held equal fascination for Benton. His debut on the political scene was in 1891 when he was elected to the Republican State Committee, later becoming its vice chairman. In 1894 Governor Frederic T. Greenhalge appointed him to his staff for a three year term, with the honorary rank of colonel. Two later governors also put him in their service. Governor Curtis Guild made Benton a member of the Metropolitan Park Commission and Governor Samuel W. McCall chose him for the State Public Safety Committee.

Benton, like most good politicians, always enjoyed a healthy scrap. In 1904 he took on Eugene N. Foss, a high power in Republican circles, for the privilege of representing the Republican Party as a delegate to the national convention in Chicago. As their verbal fight waged throughout the state, Benton wasted no time, went at Foss with all the energy at his command. Loyally supported by all his friends, Benton soundly defeated Foss, and went on to the convention which nominated Theodore Roosevelt for president.

The final blow, however, was delivered by Foss. Eight years after the intramural fight, Foss defeated Benton for the Republican candidacy for governor. He could not dislodge Foss who was governor at that time. Foss held the office for four years, 1911 through 1914.

This political defeat for Benton was only a small setback in a life abounding with activity. More and more he had come to devote his time and energy to many activities and organizations which invariably honored him with their top post. Unquestionably the most prominent of all his varied memberships was the



EVERETT AND WILLENA BENTON WELCOME PRESIDENT
WARREN G. HARDING TO THEIR GUILDHALL HOME.

Masons, an organization in which he steadily rose, finally becoming a 33rd degree Mason. In 1911 he was elected Grand Master of the Grand Council of Masons of Massachusetts. He also served as the Commander-in-Chief of the Massachusetts Consistory, Scottish Rite Masons.

He was a loyal supporter of the historic Massachusetts corps, the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. Although he had never participated in a war, his popularity and personal achievement brought about his election and eventually he was made its commander.

Benton was a "joiner" in the fullest sense of the word. Of all his clubs and organizations,* Benton particularly enjoyed the Beacon Society, which elected him president.

Probably the first organization he joined when he arrived in Boston was the

**A few of the clubs: Boston Yacht Club, Boston Athletic Assoc., Algonquin Club, Oakley Country Club, Boston Vermont Assoc., Boston Chamber of Commerce.*

choir of the Tremont Temple. It was a fortuitous membership, for it was there that he met the young girl he would marry, Willena Blanche Rogers, daughter of Samuel Thomas Rogers (1838-1915) and Harriet Hull Willis (1838-1925) of Pugwash, Nova Scotia. He was in his early twenties when he courted Willena Rogers, who was living at the time with an aunt in Somerville, Mass. Before the

EVERETT CHAMBERLIN BENTON, AGE 52.

wedding, Benton must have considered his appearance too youthful. Presumably, with the approval of his bride-to-be, he grew a mustache which added "years" to his face.

On January 24, 1885, he married Willena Rogers in a modest ceremony in

Charlestown, Mass. For the first year of their marriage they lived in Somerville, Mass., where their first son, Jay Rogers, was born.

In April, 1886, they moved to Waverley, Mass. Eighteen years later as befitted the successful business man that he was, Benton bought an enormous home for

WILLENA ROGERS BENTON, AGE 70.

his family. His purchase was the Cushing estate in Belmont, Massachusetts, then one of the great showplaces in New England. The estate, which included a 50-room mansion, a fieldstone chapel, and a gymnasium, was called "Bellmont", a name bestowed upon the town itself when it was incorporated in 1859. (A brief sketch of the estate follows this chapter.)

"Bellmont" was, above all else, a happy home in which six Benton children were raised. As the children grew up, Everett and Willena Benton endowed each one with a keen sense of individualism and responsibility characteristic of the sturdy and enduring traditions of New England families.

* * * * * *

The Children of Everett and Willena Benton

1. Jay Rogers Benton was born in Somerville, Mass. on October 18, 1885. He became Attorney General of Massachusetts (1922-1926) and a leading insurance figure. He married Frances Hill, daughter of Warren May Hill (1863-1915) and Mary E. Carney (1865-1918) of Boston, on June 16, 1913. They have five children, John Hill, Mary, David, Peter, and Nicholas. He died at his home in Belmont, Mass. on November 3, 1953. A complete biographical sketch appears in a later chapter.

2. Charles Everett Benton was born in Belmont, Mass., on May 7, 1887. He attended Dartmouth College and later became a partner in the John C. Paige Insurance Company, Boston. On September 22, 1926, he married Grace Millicent Chappelle, daughter of Edward H. Cappelle and Blanche Riley of Boston. They had no children. He died of a heart attack in Natick, Mass., on August 4, 1933. His wife, Grace, later married Joseph H. Hunneman of Brookline, Mass. She died on April 16, 1946.

3. Blanche Avola Benton was born in Belmont, Mass., on March 14, 1889. She married Carl Enewald Lonegren, son of Carl Oscar Lonegren and Augusta Persson of Minneapolis, Minnesota, on September 15, 1911 in the family chapel. They have one daughter, Harriet Rogers, and one adopted daughter, Janice Eugenia. Lonegren, an accountant, died in Pittsfield, Mass., on March 1, 1939. Blanche Benton Lonegren now lives in Northampton, Mass.

4. Ruth Chamberlin Benton was born in Belmont, Mass., on April 23, 1893. She died in her infancy on June 16, 1894.

5. Dorothy Draper Benton was born in Belmont, Mass., on August 19, 1894. She married Edward Emerson Wood, Jr., son of Edward Emerson Wood and Helen May Crane of Brookline, Mass., on July 18, 1914 in Windsor, Vt. A second lieutenant in the tank corps during World War I, Wood served in the battles of St. Mihiel and Argonne Forest. He was wounded (gassed) at Varennes, France.

THE BENTON FAMILY IN THE "BELLMONT" GARDEN, 1905.
Front row: Josiah Henry Benton, Everett Chamberlin Benton, Dorothy Draper Benton, Willena Rogers Benton and Hannah Slade Benton. Standing: Jay Rogers Benton, Blanche Avola Benton, and Charles Emerson Benton

They have six children: Phyllis, Ruth, Edward Emerson II, Nancy, Benton, and Thomas. Formerly Industrial Products Manager for American Rock Wool Company, Wood now lives in retirement with his wife in St. Petersburg, Florida.

6. Hannah Slade Benton, named for her great-great grandmother, was born in Belmont, Mass., on February 5, 1899. She married Collins Graham, son of John Hector Graham and Carolyn Collins of Montreal, Canada and Old Roxbury, Mass., on September 20, 1924, in the family chapel. Graham is a partner in the

Boston insurance firm Boit, Dalton and Church. They have one daughter, Joae, who is a doctor of medicine (psychiatry) and presently on the staff of the Harvard Medical School. The Grahams lived in Belmont, Mass., for many years, but now reside in Boston.

7. Josiah Henry Benton was born in Belmont, Mass., on December 23, 1901. He is an assistant vice president of the First National Bank of Boston and a selectman of the town of Belmont. He married Eleanore Katherine Hall, daughter of Harold T. Hall and Effie Patterson of Belmont, Mass., on April 28, 1924. They had one son, Josiah, Jr., who died in his eighth year. The Bentons live in Belmont, Mass.

* * * * * *

After a lengthy illness, Everett Chamberlin Benton died of a heart attack in his Belmont home on February 4, 1924. More than a thousand friends and business associates attended the funeral services in his honor. During the hour long ceremony, all Boston insurance offices suspended business out of respect to him. Benton was buried in the Belmont cemetery.

Three years after his death, the Benton Estate was sadly destroyed by fire. Since all the Benton children had married and established homes of their own, the old estate had outlived its usefulness. The mansion was razed and the property sold. Thus, with the death of Benton and the dismantling of his magnificent estate, an impressive era in the Benton family had drawn to a close.

In the years that followed, Willena Rogers Benton spent her time primarily in traveling around the world. She resided for many summers in a large home at Eastern Point overlooking Gloucester Harbor. On June 22, 1947, Willena R. Benton died at the beginning of an annual visit to the New Ocean House in Swampscott, Mass. She is buried beside her husband in Belmont.

BENTON

Everett Chamberlin Benton (1862-1924) - Willena Blanche Rogers (1865-1947)
Jay Rogers Benton (1885-1953) - Frances Hill (1894-)
Nicholas Benton (1926-) - Kate Lenthall Bigelow (1935-)

THE BENTON ESTATE—"BELLMONT"

IN 1904 Everett Chamberlin Benton bought one of the last great New England estates for his family. Called *"Bellmont"*, the 50-room mansion eventually was gutted by fire, and finally torn down to make way for a housing development.

In today's era of "split-level" and prefabricated houses, one can only reflect with some wonder upon an estate such as *Bellmont* and for what it stood—a standard of living which eventually gave way to the times.

Behind the building of every great mansion there is a fascinating story. *Bellmont* is no exception. In fact *Bellmont* would never have been built except for the perseverance and the business acumen of a 16 year-old boy.

The story of the building of *Bellmont* began in 1798 when the Messrs. Perkins and Company, the largest export-import firm in Boston, dispatched one of its new ships jammed with merchandise to Canton, China. Aboard ship was the company agent sent to open up his company's far eastern trade, and the Perkins'

nephew, John Perkins Cushing, 16-year-old boy who acted as the agent's assistant. The ship arrived safely at its destination, but soon thereafter the agent became seriously ill and died.

This turn of events meant that the sole representative for the ship's cargo was young John Cushing. Upon him fell the financial and business problems of the ship's vast consignment. Because of the geographical distance and slow means of transportation, the Perkinses had no recourse but to put the boy in charge of their far eastern trade. The lad did not disappoint them, however, and for the next 30 years, Cushing built up an enormous business. So successful were his efforts that by the time he returned to Boston 32 years later, he had accrued a personal fortune estimated at more than $7,000,000, a gigantic fortune for that time.

Cushing was now ready to settle down and enjoy his justly earned rewards. His main desire was to build an enormously lavish home for himself and his wife. In achieving this, he first looked around for the most desirable property he could find, finally selecting some 150 acres in Watertown.

Cushing's plans for his mansion were so ambitious, he engaged one of the country's leading architects, Asher Benjamin, an early contemporary of Charles Bulfinch, to design it.

Expense and distance did not keep him from procuring the building materials he wanted. From the famed quarries of Carrara in northern Italy came fluted marble columns. The pillars were so heavy that a single schooner was required to bring each to this country.

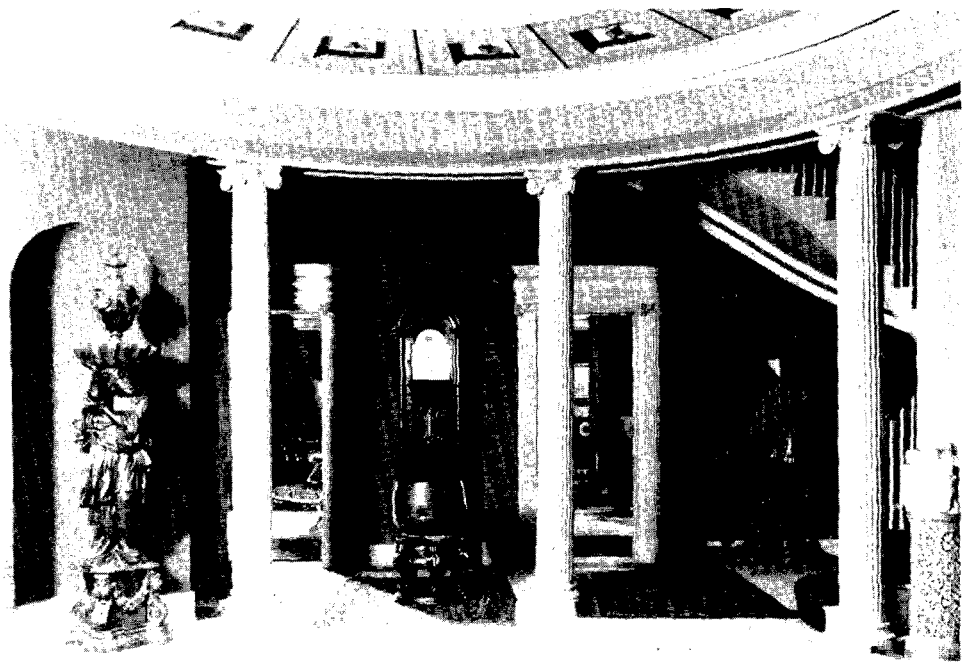
The forests of Africa produced the mahogany and ebony for the doors and mouldings. Cedar was imported from Spain for the floors and camphor wood for the closets. The house had fifty fireplaces, all of different colored marble. The lengthy driveways were surfaced entirely with thousands of crushed oyster shells. The house made of brick was painted yellow, and the five great chimneys white with black crowns.

The entrance hall (rotunda) opened into an oval music room, a circular library, a breakfast room, and a living room sixty feet long. The music room and library were walled on one side by French windows which opened onto a porch overlooking the rolling lawns of the estate. By the time the house was completed, it is estimated that Cushing had spent $115,000.

Cushing lavished equal care and expenditure upon landscaping. He lined the

driveways with oak, walnut and tulip trees. Magnolia trees, copper beeches, Camperdown-elms, rhododendrons, and Japanese maples were artfully arranged over the 150 acres. Cushing's horticultural interests were so keen that he built an enormous conservatory and 14 greenhouses to cultivate orchids, palms, azaleas, fruits and vegetables. Cushing also kept livestock and reserved a special park for deer.

At the height of its fame, *Bellmont* was generally conceded to be the "most beautiful estate in New England if not all the United States. Its fame was sung every-

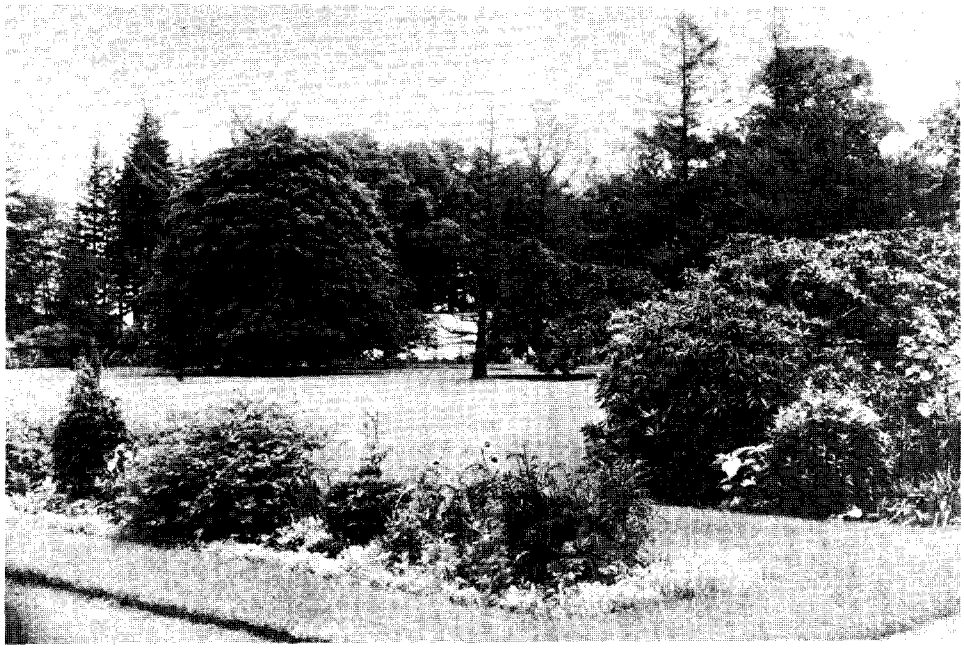


THE RECEPTION HALL TO "BELLMONT".

where and for many years few, if any, estates equalled it architecturally or horticulturally."*

In 1850, 10 years after the house was completed, there arose considerable interest by some prominent citizens of Watertown, Waltham, and Cambridge to start a new town. Since Cushing was Watertown's heaviest taxpayer, his support was enlisted. Cushing gave liberally to the incorporation expenses with the condition that the new town be named after his estate. When the town of Belmont became a reality in 1859, the new community took as its legal name the name of the estate, but dropped one of the L's.

**Boston Transcript, September 6, 1924*



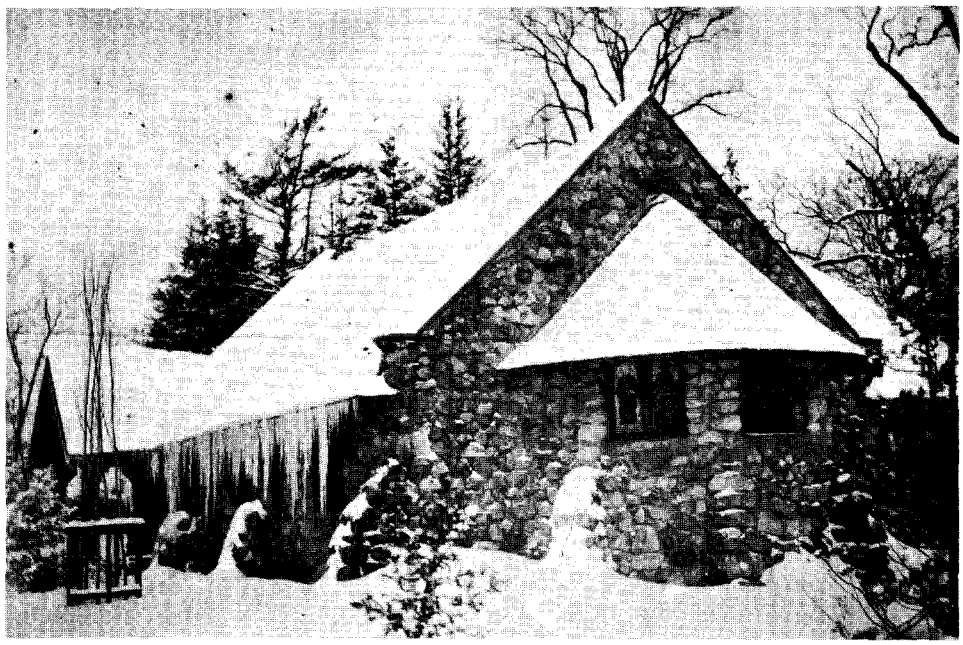
A VIEW OF THE GARDENS.

Cushing lived in his mansion for some 20 years, and its three successive owners, by coincidence, were each to occupy it for approximately 20 years.

When Cushing died in 1862, *Bellmont* was bought and occupied by Samuel R. Payson, another name of prominence in Belmont. A large tract of land, formerly a section of the estate, is still known today as Payson Park.

In the nineties the mansion was used as a private school (Episcopal) for boys. A large dormitory was erected near the main house which was used for classrooms. A fieldstone chapel was later donated to the school. Among its contributors were Bishops Phillips Brooks and William Lawrence.

With this kind of religious backing for the school, it is ironic that one of its students, perhaps symbolic of the student body as a whole, later became a dominant figure in what the tabloids called the "Crime of Passion of the Century." (The wealthy student-playboy was Harry K. Thaw who married a nightclub singer, Evelyn Nesbit—"The Girl In The Red Velvet Swing". Thaw obtained evidence that his wife had been previously seduced by Stanford White, a prominent architect, designer of New York's Pennsylvania Station and Washington Arch. Seeking revenge one June night in 1906, Thaw went to the roof cabaret of the old Madison Square Garden, shot and killed White in front of many witnesses. Thaw was



THE CHAPEL, NOW THE BENTON LIBRARY, A BRANCH OF THE BELMONT PUBLIC LIBRARY.

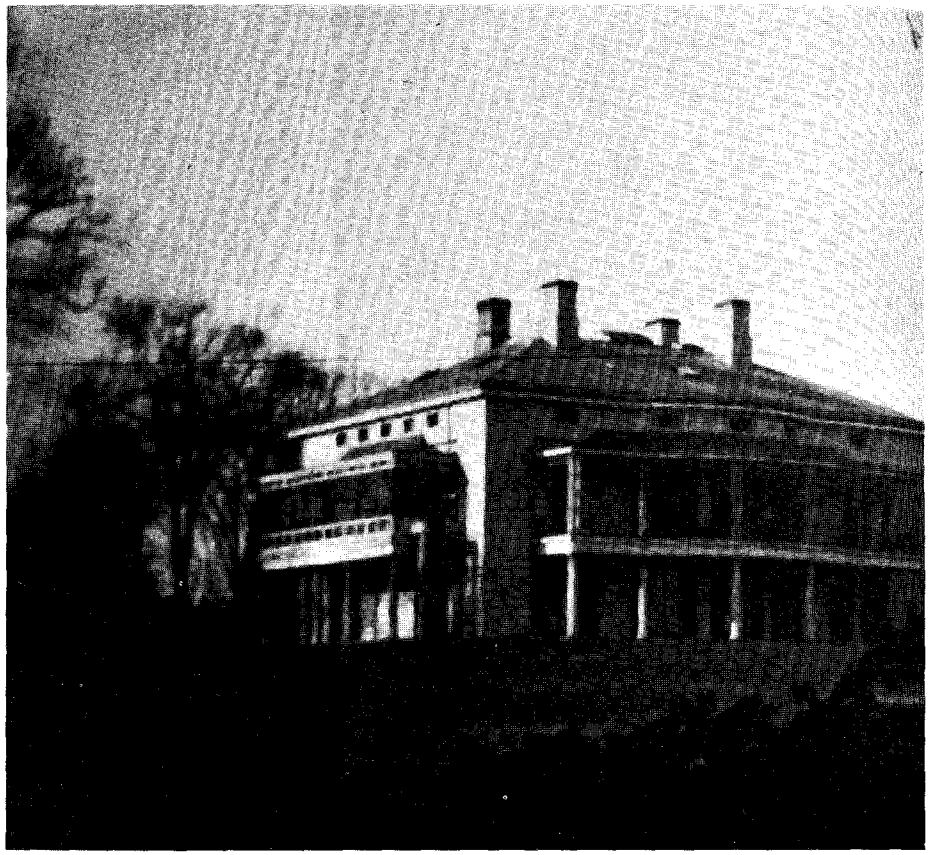
later acquitted after a second trial on grounds of insanity.)

The Belmont School finally closed its doors and the estate then fell under the control of a land syndicate, which proceeded to sell much of the desirable acreage for building lots. *Bellmont* was reduced to a mere 17 acres. The syndicate then seriously considered turning the remainder of the estate into an amusement park. *Bellmont* was spared this indignity, however, when in 1904 Everett Benton stepped in and bought the mansion for his family.

Benton and his wife were known far and wide for their generous hospitality at *Bellmont.* On many occasions they opened their estate to the public for lawn parties, pageants, and other social affairs to help raise funds for various Boston charities.

In September 1911 the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company camped for a week on the vast lawn of the estate. When the Company held its dress parade, the governor and other dignitaries came to *Bellmont* to watch the proceedings.

Before World War I the Harvard University regiment of more than 1,000 student-soldiers held maneuvers on the estate. Among the participants was Theodore Roosevelt's son, Archibald, who headed the medical corps. Some 2,000 spectators



came to *Bellmont* to watch the students parade.

The chapel was used for religious services by the Payson Park Congregational and the Belmont Methodist Churches before their own buildings were completed. The chapel was also the scene of two Benton weddings, Hannah to Collins Graham and Blanche to Carl E. Lonegren. Later the chapel was presented to the town as a memorial to Everett Benton by his wife and children. Located at Oakley and Old Middlesex Roads, it is now known as the Benton Library, a branch of the Belmont Public Library. The old "grandfather's" clock which greeted everyone who entered the reception hall of the mansion now stands in the Benton Library.

Everett Benton died in the winter of 1924. The following fall, with all the Benton children married and departed, the mansion was closed for the last time and a caretaker was placed in charge.

On an early Thursday morning, September 8, 1927, fire broke out in the east and

west parlors on the first floor. For four hours the fire departments of Belmont and Watertown battled the blaze. Because of the extraordinary thickness of the mansion's original brick walls, the great house was not badly damaged. However, it had outlived its usefulness, and in the following year the house was torn down.

Fortunately several parts of the mansion were spared from demolition. The first floor library was taken by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities to be used in some future home. The 10 great marble columns were bought by William Crowninshield Endicott for a pergola on his Glen Magna Farm in Danvers, Mass. The sturdy slate roof was used to reshingle the famed Otis Gray House near Bowdoin Square in Boston.

Bellmont, a distinguished home, and a symbol of achievement for its former owners, was now gone. But places, like people, remain forever alive in the hearts of those who have known and loved them.

JAY ROGERS BENTON

(1885-1953)

Attorney General of Massachusetts
Insurance Leader
His Sons In World War II

 HERE was nothing my father, Jay Rogers Benton, enjoyed more in life than a good practical joke. In fact, he played his first one on his mother, Willena Benton, the day he was born. Shortly after he arrived, his mother turned to the doctor: "Isn't it too bad he was born prematurely?" "What do you mean *prematurely?*" "Well, doctor, I have not been married nine months—not until next Wednesday." The old doctor's long beard shook furiously as he roared with laughter.

Thus, my father was born in a somber-looking old house in Somerville, Massachusetts, on October 18, 1885. Shortly thereafter his parents, Everett and Willena Benton, moved to Waverley, Massachusetts, where my father spent his boyhood years. When he was fourteen he received his first long pants and a derby hat which was appropriate for a young lad who had just been enrolled in the fashionable Hopkinson School in Boston. The derby did not last long. During a spirited game of tag he ran head first into the side of a house. With a loud explosion, the derby split into two pieces.

At Hopkinson he developed his enthusiasm for baseball and football. (For some forty years he was among Harvard's most loyal season ticket holders. So devoted was he to Harvard football that even in his final weeks, when his health was failing, he clung to the hope that he would be well enough to get to the Harvard Stadium each Saturday.)

In 1903—the year before his father bought "Bellmont"—he entered Phillips Exeter Academy for his senior year of high school. Although he was there but a

year, Exeter took an unusually firm hold on him, and the school, in time, returned his affection. He sent two of his sons there; in 1934 he was made president of the New England Alumni Association; and finally, in 1942, he was elected president of the National Alumni Association, a position which enabled him to serve as trustee of the school.

JAY ROGERS BENTON

In the fall of 1904, my father enrolled at Harvard College where he earned an AB degree. His major extra curricular interests at Harvard included baseball, in which he won his varsity "H", and the Pi Eta Club. He participated actively in this club's annual shows, and in one production he starred as the "leading lady". (Some forty years later he was made graduate president of the Pi Eta Associates.) For

many years he was a major driving force behind the class of 1908, particularly in the preparation and the execution of outlandish stunts at several class reunions over the years. As entertainment chairman for his 25th class reunion, he produced a musical show, "The Follies of 1908", with a large cast of his classmates and their wives.

JAY ROGERS BENTON AND FRANCES HILL, 1909.

After graduation from Harvard he moved over to the Harvard Law School for one year. He completed his final two years of law training at Boston University where he became secretary of his class. (He subsequently became president of the Boston University Law School Alumni Association and for several years served on its Advisory Council.)

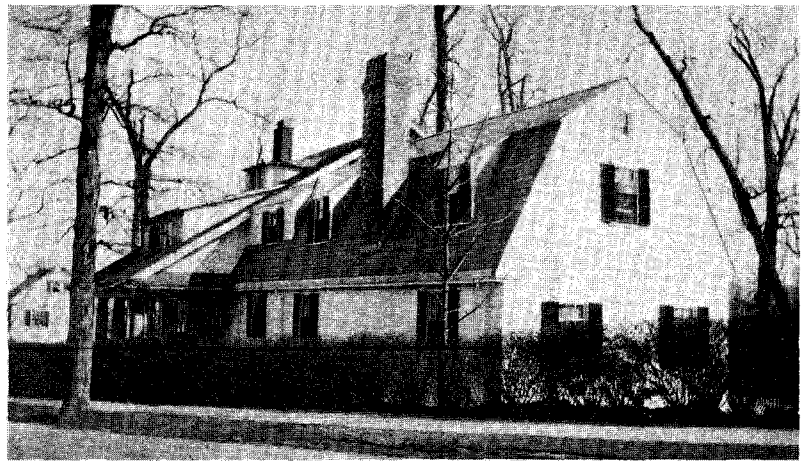
The summer of 1909, before entering Boston Law School, proved to be an eventful one for him. It was during this time when he first met my mother, Frances Hill, daughter of Warren May Hill (1863-1915) and Mary E. Carney (1865-1918) of Boston, Mass. As a young girl of 15, Frances Hill was dancing in the Floradora Sextette for a benefit show in North Scituate. After the performance, a mutual friend introduced them. The following day he bicycled over to visit her—pursued in a Stanley Steamer by his college friends who kept yelling "Cradle Robber".

Warren Hill fortunately knew Everett Benton; as a consequence, my father was invited to visit the following week-end. He arrived with nine suits, a fact which caused considerable laughter among the Hill family.

By 1913 Frances Hill had passed her 19th birthday and Jay Rogers Benton had passed his bar exams. He was now working in his first job as a junior member of the law firm of Johnson and North in Boston. And so, Jay Rogers Benton and Frances Hill were married June 16, 1913. After a honeymoon to Niagara Falls, they arrived back in Belmont, Mass. at their new house which had just been built on his father's estate. They named it "Middlesex House", but over the years it became more familiarly known as "3-P"—an affectionate abbreviation for 3 Pequossette Road, the house's street address in Belmont.

A year later, John Hill, the first of five children, was born. Within the next twelve years, he was followed by my sister, Mary, my brothers David and Peter and then myself. By that time "3-P" was overflowing and a large wing had to be built on the house in order to accommodate all of us as well as our "maids", Kathleen and Jane Feeley, who became a loving and helpful arm to our family in 1925.

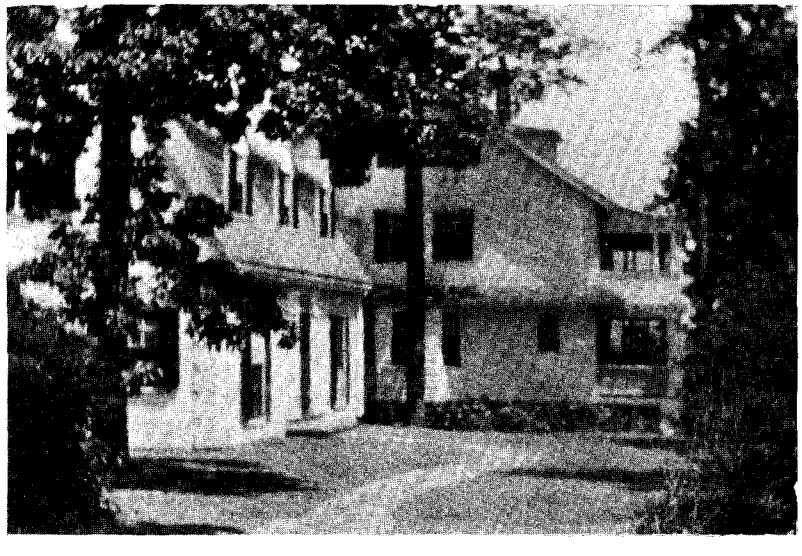
The new wing of the house included a large handsome living room with floor to ceiling windows and a wide fireplace. Memories of its black floors, white walls and red carpets echo the untold number of festive occasions which occurred there. Who can forget the kindergarten parties out the french doors into the garden; the 21st birthday dinners; Christmas eve with father and mother bustling back and forth behind closed doors to decorate the tree and assemble the presents; the Christmas morning parades when we would line up according to age on the stairs and march into the big living room to the mechanical playing of the pianola; the silver punch bowl; Father's "three regular cheers" at the slightest provocation; Mother's bridge lunches for the Florence Crittenden League; Mary's rehearsals for the Belmontian Club; Peter's deafening drums; the 25th and 40th wedding anniversaries; the family movies; my marionette shows; birthday presents piled



BENTON HOUSE AT 3 PEQUOSSETTE ROAD, BELMONT.

high on one of the two couches; the Hill and Carney portraits on the walls; Kathleen and Jane Feeley passing hot hors d'oeuvres; and, of course, Mary's wedding reception the day after the heavy snow fall of November 1940. These are but a few of the scattered "shots" of the big living room, which, in its unique way, was a reflection of the activity which pervaded the entire 14-room house.

In 1914 Jay Rogers Benton went to work in his father's company, The Massachusetts Fire and Marine Insurance Company, as associate counsel. Here he had his first exposure to the insurance field which would be beneficial to him some twenty years later.



1916 marked the year when he entered the political arena in earnest. A dyed-in-the-wool Republican, he had previously served on the Belmont Republican Town Committee. (In fact, he willingly served on it for 42 years.) It was in 1916, however, when he was made an alternate representative to the Republican National Convention which nominated Charles Evans Hughes for the Presidency.

The following year my father was elected to the Massachusetts legislature as a representative from the twenty-eighth Middlesex District comprising the towns of Belmont and Lexington. As a legislator, he was chairman of the Committee on Engrossed Bills and clerk of Metropolitan Affairs. From the legislature he was appointed assistant to Attorney General Henry C. Atwill and he served in this capacity for four and a half years.

This, then, was his preparation for the final political prize he wanted for himself —namely, the attorney generalship. In 1922 he ran for the Republican nomination for this office and he topped a field of six candidates. He then went on to win the election. He ran again in 1924 and was returned to office for a second term. During his service as attorney general, more than 38,000 cases were handled.

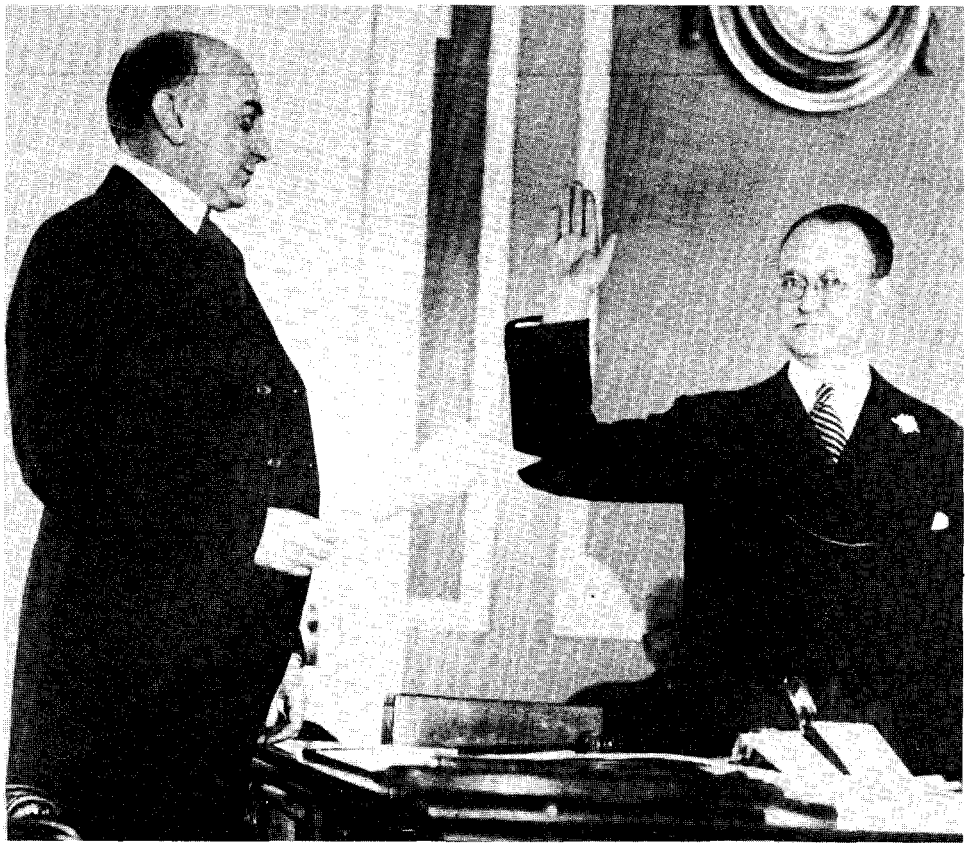
Upon leaving office to take up his law practice with the firm of Sherburne, Powers and Needham, a Boston newspaper ran the following editorial:

> "Ten years of clean, constructive service Jay R. Benton has given the State on Beacon Hill. The diligence of his apprenticeship undoubtedly does much to explain the competence of his years of direction. But more important is the grasp he has shown of the essential principles of executive administration. He has sought thoughtful counsel in his counsellorship for the State, and he has made stable judgement prevail, instead of riding the see-saw of sensationalism, now teetering up and now teetering down. The wisdom of such an executive policy was never more manifest than it becomes in Benton's final report. There, for the first time, the rights, duties and powers of the Attorney General are tabulated and it takes six closely set pages to list them all. To have attended with such competence to such obligations as these through two terms, is indeed a record of merit."

Although my father never ran for public office again—with the exception of Belmont Town Moderator from 1938 to 1948—he never got too far away from the political arena. For example in 1928 he became head of the Republican Luncheon Club known as the "Knockers." In 1931 he was elected president of the pres-

tigious Middlesex Club for five years. The following year he was elected chairman of the Platform Committee at the Republican State Convention.

1936 was a major turning point in his business career. Having served for four years on the board of directors of the Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company, he was elected executive vice president. The following year he was made president and he remained in this capacity until his death in 1953. During his seventeen



JAY R. BENTON TAKES THE OATH OF OFFICE AS ATTORNEY GENERAL BEFORE GOVERNOR CHANNING H. COX.

years as president, the company did an impressive amount of business: its insurance-in-force increased from about $75 million to $200 million.

Even while he was president of the Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company, his eye was always seeking still another opportunity for public service. And it came in 1944. While the country was at war, he and several prominent business asso-

ciates in Boston founded the Greater Boston Development Committee—an organization of private business interests banded together to spur the future industrial and commercial growth of Boston. My father was drafted as the first general chairman of the new organization and he held that office for four years at which time he retired because of poor health. During his tenure of office, the legislation for the New Boston Port Authority was drafted, its passage by the Legislature secured with an appropriation of $5 million for waterfront construction; also the authorization by the legislature for off-street parking facilities in Boston with an initial appropriation of $5 million so that sites could be secured and garages erected; and the creation of the Mystic River Bridge Authority with power to borrow money and build the new "high level" bridge, a link in the Northeast Expressway.

Although he himself had never actively participated in a war beyond national guard service in World War I, he saw four sons and a son-in-law off to World War II. And in a curious, yet wonderful, way, he was by their side throughout their military service. This was accomplished by the incredible deluge of mail he would send to each one almost every day. The newspapers, packages, magazines and letters which arrived at "mail calls" throughout the world were the result of a man who willingly set aside a few hours of each day to help combat an enemy known to every soldier as boredom.

If on a less personal level, my mother's efforts during World War II were even more impressive. Each day for a period of some seven years, she worked at the Boston Red Cross, directing volunteers in the making of surgical dressings. She eventually served as chairman of this particular Red Cross unit.

Woven through the fabric of an active business life was Jay Rogers Benton's participation as a director or as a member in many organizations and various civic committees. It staggers the mind to understand how he had time for them all. For example, in the first World War he was chairman for five Liberty Loan Committees in Belmont which raised over $2 million. From 1914 to 1918 he edited and published a weekly newspaper, the Belmont Courier. In 1930 he was chairman of the Belmont Tercentenary Committee. Six years later he was District Chairman for the Boston Community Fund Campaign. He was also general chairman for two Salvation Army Campaigns in Boston in 1936-37, and a member of its advisory committee for many years. He gave considerable time and help to the South End Boys Club as vice-president of its administration committee. He was a director of the Boston Chamber of Commerce for three years and in 1941 was the

general chairman of the State Banquet for the governors of the 48 states then meeting in Boston. From 1940 until his death, he was a trustee of the Belmont Public Library.

Governors of Massachusetts and Mayors of Boston often called upon him to serve on one committee or another. He was a member of the Committee on Federal Taxation and Expenditures as well as the Federal Building Committee. He also served as vice-chairman of the Massachusetts Committee for Port Developments. After the war he was on the mayor's committee for Veterans' Housing.

In addition to all these activities he was vice-president of the Waverley (Mass.) Co-operative Bank and incorporator of the Belmont Savings Bank. He was also a director of the Arlington Gas Light Company.

Because his life touched upon so many activities and he was known by so many people, he was often called upon to make speeches or act as toastmaster at civic, social, and business functions. His inimitable capacity for this role was, perhaps, best demonstrated when he was president of the Beacon Society in 1940-41.

Summer was an especially important time to him because it enabled him to return with his family to his summer home in Guildhall, Vermont. He loved Guildhall for its tranquility, its beauty and its inhabitants. But rarely did he ever indulge in

THE BENTON COTTAGE ON THE CONNECTICUT RIVER IN GUILDHALL, VERMONT.

PICNIC LUNCH BY LAKE CHOCORUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE, 1934.
Left to right: David Benton, Nicholas Benton, Mary Benton, Bimbo, Jane and Kathleen Feeley, Frances Hill Benton, Peter Benton, John Hill Benton

a complete rest. He simply could not "loaf", but filled his hours with various activities which gave him great pleasure. During the summer, for example, he was a director of the Lancaster Fair. Year after year he would set out on each of the four Fair days with his movie and still cameras entwined around his neck to take countless shots of the mid-way, vaudeville show, daredevil drivers, horse pulling contests, and 4-H exhibits. For several years he sponsored a milkmaid contest and a horseshoe pitching contest at the Fair.

He had a singular talent for organizing "group happiness". For his beloved Guildhall, he sponsored in 1936 and 1937 a special town holiday known as "Guildhall Day". Here the natives of the town participated in various contests such as mountain climbing, horseshoe pitching and pie-eating. There was a colorful parade (including "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs") in the afternoon, followed by speeches on the library steps, a baked bean supper, fireworks on the banks of the Connecticut River and square dancing in the Guild Hall. On the second of these two occasions, he presented a tower clock to the Library in memory of his father, Everett C. Benton.

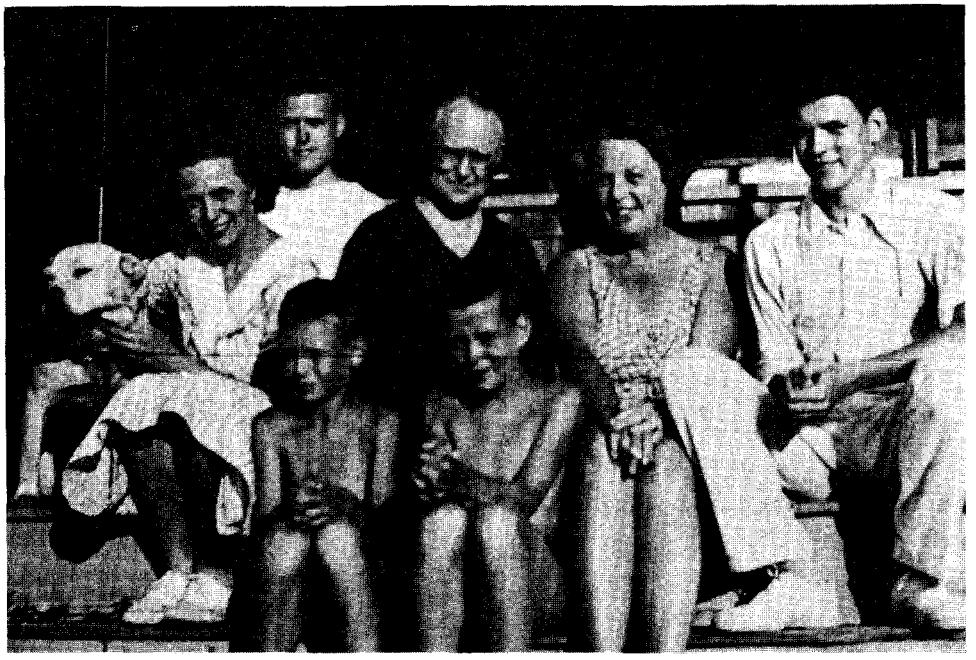
Summer in Guildhall conjures up so many happy memories and usually my father was the motivating force: the daily shopping trips to Lancaster, New Hampshire; the "Treasure Island" picnics up the Connecticut River in John's outboard motorboat, "Rancid Bass"; movies at the Rialto Theatre; annual junkets to Bear Mountain or Pinkham Notch; getting the mail at "Steve's Store"; fishing for perch on the banks of the Connecticut River, or flying kites in the meadow below the house.

Remembered family joys are endless. If one were to single out the one event which best typified my father and his almost insatiable interests it would be his daily ritual of compiling and writing his personal diaries. Every day before retiring he would peruse some nine newspapers, clipping out articles of pertinence to him. These would be pasted on to individual 8½" x 11" sheets along with photographs, menus, programs, etc., to illustrate his daily activities. To these he would add several hand written pages, outlining virtually every step of his day, including *what* he had for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. After each month the pages were bound together between red covers and another thick volume of "Jay Benton's Illustrated Diary" went up on the sagging book shelf in his bedroom. When he died, my mother arranged to have his scissors and his reading glasses placed beside him in his coffin—his two earthly possessions that so beautifully symbolized everything that he was and everything that he did.

In late September 1953, he was felled by a third severe heart attack and rushed to Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. This time he was beyond further medical help and he was returned under a nurse's care to his house, "3-P", in Belmont. There in the early morning of Tuesday, November 3, 1953, after a peaceful evening in which he fondly recalled the "old days" to the nurse, he closed his eyes and died. Two days later he was buried near the Benton family plot in Belmont (Mass.) Cemetery. Among his twenty-seven honorary pall bearers were Governor Christian A. Herter, Ambassador to the U. N. Henry Cabot Lodge, U. S. Senator Leverett Saltonstall, and other men whom he had personally known, loved and worked with at Exeter, Harvard and in the fields of law, insurance, and politics.

Two years after his death, "3-P" proved to be too large for my mother's needs, and she built a small house in Concord, Mass., where she now lives with my brother, John. She has travelled extensively to Europe, South America and more recently has been going annually to Bermuda. In addition to maintaining her own household she does volunteer work at the Emerson Hospital in Concord.

Brief histories of the five children of Jay Rogers Benton and Frances Hill Benton:



THE BENTON FAMILY AT NORTH SCITUATE, MASS. IN 1933.
Foreground: Nicholas Benton and Peter Benton. Bimbo held by Mary Benton, John Hill Benton, Jay Rogers Benton, Frances Hill Benton and David Benton

John Hill Benton was born April 2, 1914 in the Benton house in Belmont, Mass. He attended Browne and Nichols School in Cambridge and went to Harvard, graduating with the class of 1937. In 1940 he volunteered for military service and later was graduated as second lieutenant in the field artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. After several years of selling insurance at O'Brion, Russell & Co., Boston, he joined the Paper Goods Company of Cambridge, Mass. He never married and now lives with his mother in Concord, Mass.

Mary Benton Jameson was born May 4, 1916 in the Benton house in Belmont, Mass. She graduated from the Buckingham School in Cambridge, Mass. On November 27, 1940 she was married to Winthrop Strickland Jameson, Jr., son of Winthrop S. Jameson (1884-1944) and Helen Sutherland (born 1889). He was born July 8, 1916 in Cambridge, Mass. After graduating from Phillips Exeter Academy (1935) and Harvard (1939), where he was on the varsity football and hockey teams, he volunteered for military service and later served overseas with distinction. As a captain in the 212th Field Artillery of the 6th Armored Division, he served in the battles at Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, and

Central Europe. As a result he received two Purple Hearts, one Bronze Star with cluster, and five Battle Stars.

After the war, he entered the paper industry and he is currently New England Senior Sales Representative with the Gilman Paper Company. He is chairman of the Permanent Harvard Class of '39 Committee, and vice-president of the Belmont Harvard Club. Mary and Winthrop Jameson have one child, Patricia, born in Cambridge, Mass. on January 18, 1954. Over the years, Mary Benton Jameson has served on a number of local civic committees and she recently received public commendation for her volunteer activities on behalf of the McLean Hospital in Waverley, Mass. The Jamesons live in Belmont, Mass. at 175 Somerset Street.

David Benton was born on April 2, 1912 in Boston, Mass. He graduated from the Belmont Senior High School (1938), Phillips Exeter Academy (1940) and Harvard College (1947). During World War II he was a first lieutenant in the 401st Heavy Bombardment Group, with the 8th Air Force based at Deenethorpe, England. From July through December 1944 he flew as bombardier in 35 missions over Germany. As a result he received the Air Medal with silver cluster, two Bronze Battle Stars and a Presidential Unit Citation. Shortly before being sent overseas he was based in Sioux City, Iowa where he was married April 1, 1944 to Jeanne Frances Proctor, daughter of Edgar Leslie Proctor (1893-1951) and Bertha Pauline Levy (born 1898) of Arlington, New Jersey. The David Bentons have three children: Leslie Frances, born in Jersey City, New Jersey on March 1, 1945; David Proctor, born in Orange, New Jersey September 18, 1948; and Tracy Ellen, born in Morristown, New Jersey on October 16, 1953.

After graduating from Harvard, David Benton joined the Bell Telephone Company and he is now head of the Traffic Engineering Department of the Northwestern Bell Telephone Company in Omaha, Nebraska. In this city, where he and his family live at 3308 Bridgeford Road, he has actively worked for the United Fund Campaign and Civil Defense (Communications). He is also currently serving as president of the Harvard Club of Nebraska. From his youth he has had a keen interest in amateur radio activities and he has operated his own station over the years.

Peter Benton was born in Boston, Mass. on July 4th, 1925. He withdrew from the Browne and Nichols School in 1943 to join the U. S. Marines. As a sergeant he was assigned to the aircraft carrier, Rendoza, in the Pacific. He then returned to Browne and Nichols to complete his studies. He joined the John Hancock

ERRATUM

Page 92: David Benton was born on April 2, 1921 and not 1912 as shown.

Mutual Life Insurance Company on a summer assignment in 1950 and has been there ever since. Today he is director of the public relations department for the Midwest Region. He attended Boston University, until he got his B.S. degree in 1956. On September 11, 1948 he married Marilyn Maude Moore, daughter of Claude Moore (born 1899) and Dorothy Willard (born 1905) of Brattleboro, Vermont. Peter and Marilyn Benton have four children: Jeffrey Willard born in Cambridge, Mass. on October 24, 1952; Douglas Chamberlin born in Concord, Mass. on January 1, 1956; Andrew Jay born in Concord, Mass. on February 23, 1958; and Sarah Warren born in Concord, Mass. on September 9, 1963. Because of his steady interest and loyalty to Browne and Nichols, he was made one of its trustees in 1959. In addition to several activities in conjunction with his job, he has also brought his drive and enthusiasm to the presidency of the New England Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America in 1961. The following year he was general chairman of the 15th Annual Conference of this society meeting in Boston. He is a former president of the Acton (Mass.) Historical Society and at present is a member of the Chicago Press Club, the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry and the Chicago Athletic Association. The Peter Bentons now live at 1036 Forest Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois.

Nicholas Benton, the writer of this book, was born in Boston, Mass. on his father's 41st birthday, October 18, 1926. He graduated from the Phillips Exeter Academy with the class of 1945. He was drafted into the U. S. Infantry on his 18th birthday. He served as a private first class with the I. & R. Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, 7th Division. He joined this company as a scout at the end of the Okinawa campaign in June 1945 and he was on that island when the Japanese surrendered in August 1945. On September 9th, 1945, he went with the first wave into Korea to occupy the capital, Seoul. After his discharge in August 1946, he attended Sampson College in Geneva, New York prior to entering Harvard College as a sophomore. While at Harvard he was president of the Hasty Pudding Show and a member of the Spee Club. After graduating in 1951, he joined Time Incorporated in New York, where he has written articles for TIME magazine and served on the promotion staffs of LIFE and FORTUNE. He is currently Advertising Promotion Manager of Architectural FORUM. On June 5, 1954 he married Kate Lenthall Bigelow, daughter of Albert Smith Bigelow (born 1906) and Sylvia Weld (born 1909) of Cos Cob, Connecticut. They were married in her grandparents' (Mr. and Mrs. Albert Francis Bigelow) garden in Chestnut Hill, Mass. They have four children: Frances Hill born in

New York on September 12, 1955; Kate born in New York on October 14, 1958; Emily Weld born in New York on February 18, 1962; and Louisa Barclay born in New York on April 12, 1964.

Nicholas Benton originated the musical revue, "Phoenix '55", starring Nancy Walker in 1955. He produced with Stanley Flink the British musical, "Salad Days", in New York in November 1958. He is currently first vice-president of the Society of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and also president of the East 69th Street Association. His club memberships include the Players and the Harvard Club of New York. He and his family spend their summers at "Bourne Cottage" in Indian Neck in Wareham, Mass. In the winter they live at 336 East 69th Street in New York City.

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DAVID HASELTINE

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LT. JOSEPH CHAMBERLIN

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BENTON GENEALOGY

1862 - 1964

Everett Chamberlin Benton — **Willeen Blanche Rogers**
b - Guildhall, Vermont — b - Pugwash, Nova Scotia
September 25, 1862 — August 5, 1865
d - Belmont, Mass. — d - Swansconi, Mass.
February 4, 1954 — June 22, 1947
m - Charlestown, Mass.
January 24, 1885

Charles Everett Benton — **Grace Millicent Chappelle**
b - Belmont, Mass. — b - St. John, New Brunswick
May 7, 1887 — February 19, 1897
d - Natick, Mass. — d - Brookline, Mass
August 4, 1933 — April 16, 1946
m - Boston, Mass.
September 22, 1926

Blanche Avola Benton — **Carl Emewald Lanegren**
b - Belmont, Mass. — b - St. Paul, Minn.
March 14, 1889 — January 1, 1885
d - Pittsfield, Mass.
March 1, 1939
m - Belmont, Mass.
September 15, 1911

Harriet Rogers
b - Minneapolis, Minn.
October 18, 1915

Janice Eugenia Langdon *(adopted)*
b - Phoenix, Arizona
March 12, 1927

Ruth Chamberlin Benton
b - Belmont, Mass.
April 23, 1893
d - Belmont, Mass.
June 16, 1894

Dorothy Draper Benton — **Edward Emerson Wood, Jr.**
b - Belmont, Mass. — b - Cambridge, Mass.
August 19, 1894 — January 23, 1892
m - Windsor, Vt.
July 18, 1914

Hannah Slade Benton — **Collins Graham**
b - Belmont, Mass. — b - Montreal, Canada
February 5, 1899 — July 26, 1889
m - Belmont, Mass.
September 20, 1924

Josiah Henry Benton — **Eleanore Katherine Hall**
b - Belmont, Mass. — b - Boston, Mass.
December 23, 1901 — December 4, 1903
m - Belmont, Mass.
April 28, 1924

Josiah Henry, Jr.
b - Boston, Mass.
March 9, 1925
d - Boston, Mass.
March 7, 1933

Joy Roger Benton — **Frances Hill**
b - Somerville, Mass. — b - Boston, Mass.
October 18, 1887 — January 31, 1894
d - Belmont, Mass.
November 3, 1953
m - Boston, Mass.
June 16, 1913

John Hill
b - Belmont, Mass.
April 2, 1914

Mary — **Winthrop Strickland Jameson, Jr.**
b - Belmont, Mass. — b - Cambridge, Mass.
May 4, 1916 — July 8, 1916
m - Belmont, Mass.
November 21, 1940

Patricia
b - Cambridge, Mass.
January 18, 1954

David — **Jeanne Frances Proctor**
b - Boston, Mass. — b - Arlington, N.J.
April 2, 1921 — October 27, 1921
m - Sioux City, Iowa
April 2, 1944

Leslie Frances
b - Jersey City, N.J.
March 1, 1945

David Proctor
b - Orange, N.J.
September 18, 1948

Tracy Elise
b - Morristown, N.J.
October 16, 1953

Peter — **Marilyn Maude Moore**
b - Boston, Mass. — b - Brattleboro, Vt.
July 2, 1925 — March 26, 1927
m - Brattleboro, Vt.
September 22, 1948

Jeffrey Willard
b - Cambridge, Mass.
October 24, 1952

Douglas Chamberlin
b - Concord, Mass.
January 1 1956

Andrew Jay
b - Concord, Mass.
February 23, 1958

Sarah Warren
b - Concord, Mass.
September 9, 1963

Nicholas — **Kate Lanthall Bigelow**
b - Boston, Mass. — b - Cambridge, Mass.
October 18, 1926 — March 29, 1935
m - Chestnut Hill, Mass.
June 5, 1954

Frances Hill
b - New York, N.Y.
September 22, 1955

Kate
b - New York, N.Y.
October 14, 1958

Emily Weld
b - New York, N.Y.
February 18, 1962

Louisa Barclay
b - New York, N.Y.
April 12, 1964

Jane — **Norman Seymour Seltzer**
b - Boston, Mass. — b - Portsmouth, N.H.
June 14, 1926 — June 22, 1925
m - Belmont, Mass.
December 11, 1955

Anne
b - Boston, Mass.
April 28, 1960

Jane
b - Boston, Mass.
November 22, 1963

Ruth — **John Robert Hodgson**
b - Boston, Mass. — b - Muskegon Heights, Mich.
September 22, 1916 — November 14, 1914
m - Kalamazoo, Mich.
September 20, 1941

Ann
b - Rochester, Minn.
November 15, 1943

Ellen
b - Rochester, Minn.
June 15, 1946

John Edward
b - Rochester, Minn.
September 19, 1947

Thomas Alan
b - Rochester, Minn.
November 21, 1949

Amy
b - Rochester, Minn.
January 7, 1951

Laurie
b - Rochester, Minn.
September 3, 1953

Phyllis — **Irving Russell Valentine, Jr.**
b - Muskegon, Mich. — b - Woodbridge, N.J.
March 6, 1915 — May 27, 1909
m - Gull Lake, Mich.
September 8, 1934

Edward Emerson , 11 — **Gene DeVere Romig**
b - Boston, Mass. — b - Marcellus, Mich.
September 19, 1918 — September 30, 1919
m - St. Clair Shores, Mich.
September 13, 1942

Edward Manning
b - Wabash, Ind.
April 21, 1948

Thomas Benton
b - Chicago, Ill.
December 1, 1950

Nancy — **William Thomas Goerney**
b - Medford, Mass. — b - Evanston, Ill.
July 6, 1923 — May 28, 1926
m - Evanston, Ill.
February 14, 1948

Elizabeth
b - Evanston, Ill.
July 1, 1949

Carol Janet
b - Evanston, Ill.
June 17, 1951

Benton — **Joan Alice Spodnyak**
b - Arlington, Mass. — b - Chicago, Ill.
August 14, 1927 — June 27, 1932
m - Wilmette, Ill.
September 4, 1954

John Benton
b - Lake Placid, N.Y.
April 14, 1956

Thomas — **Ann Jeannette Wuestnoff**
b - Kalamazoo, Mich. — b - Fitchburg, Mass.
July 28, 1934 — June 3, 1939
m - Rochester, N.H.
June 10, 1961

Thomas, Jr.
b - Hanover, N.H.
July 13, 1962

Daniel Patrick
b - Hanover, N.H.
August 27, 1963

Dorothy — **Carl Edwin Garrigus**
b - Appleton, Wisc. — b - Chattanooga, Tenn.
March 24, 1936 — September 2, 1932
m - Evanston, Ill.
June 10, 1955

Linda
b - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
April 26, 1956

Pam
b - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
April 28, 1959

Susan
b - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
March 15, 1962

Irving Russell, 11 — **Judith Marie Siddall**
b - Appleton, Wisc. — b - Detroit, Mich.
July 30, 1937 — December 6, 1943
m - Detroit, Mich.
September 22, 1962

Michael Scott
b - Park Ridge, Ill.
June 17, 1964

James Edward — **Carol Marie Butler**
b - Appleton, Wisc. — b - Detroit, Mich.
October 24, 1938 — July 15, 1943
m - Detroit, Mich.
November 21, 1962

Kimberly K.
b - Indianapolis, Ind.
May 3, 1964

William Charles — **Barbara Lee Koppelman**
b - Appleton, Wisc. — b - Philadelphia, Pa.
August 18, 1941 — October 23, 1942
m - Edison, Ga.
November 21, 1959

Laura
b - Evanston, Ill.
October 25, 1960

David
b - Evanston, Ill.
December 4, 1961

Dorothy
b - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
March 11, 1963

Deborah
b - Chicago, Ill.
March 18, 1964

Barbara
b - Evanston, Ill.
June 13, 1930

John Morton
b - Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
April 19, 1960