

# HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS.

BY

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MERCHANT.

*IN TWO VOLUMES.*

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## AQUEDUCT COMPANIES.

The first aqueduct company in Southbridge was organized in the year 1825. The principal object which induced this company was the introduction of water to the new hotel, built that year on the site where the Edwards house now stands.

The proprietors were Luther, Larkin, Oliver, and Holmes Ammidown, owners of the hotel, and Elisha Cole. The spring from which the water is taken is situated in the low ground a short distance south of the house, now owned by and the residence of Chester A. Dresser. The water is conducted by lead pipes across the ground in a north-easterly direction, near the brick house of the late Joseph Marcy; and thence near the residence of Larkin Ammidown; and by the south side of the road to the hotel, passing under the stream of water now covered by the the stone culvert near said hotel.

Elisha Cole had a right to take the water to his house, and also Larkin Ammidown, for his house and barn, and these parties laid pipes and took the water to their premises.

Also Luther and Holmes Ammidown had the right to lay a pipe connecting with the main pipe, near the aforesaid culvert, and take the water to their store-lot on the north side of Main street. The deed of this spring was signed by Jedediah Marcy, Jacob Edwards, and Ruth Healey, August 4, 1825—consideration ten dollars—granting the right of way to lay pipes.

## HOTEL.

The aforesaid hotel, to which the water was conducted by the first aqueduct company, was located on the south side of Main street, at the south-west corner of Elm street, and erected on a plot of ground deeded by Larkin Ammidown to Captain Luther Ammidown, April 1, 1825, consideration \$486; and subsequently by Luther Ammidown to the proprietors of the

hotel. William Bradford, for a time, while the hotel was in process of erection, had an interest in the company, but he soon sold to Luther and Holmes Ammidown; when the ownership of this house was as follows :

Captain Luther Ammidown owned,	- - - -	38½ shares.
Holmes Ammidown,	“ - - - -	26½ “
Larkin Ammidown,	“ - - - -	19 “
Oliver Ammidown,	“ - - - -	16 “
		—
Total,	- - - -	100 shares.

The whole cost—land, aqueduct, and buildings, was \$8,000.

The plot of ground on which the hotel was erected is described as follows: Beginning at the north-west corner, at the corner of Calvin Ammidown's land, thence S. 32° E. by the road 6 rods; thence S. 36° W. 8 rods and three links to Luther Ammidown's land, beside the road leading south; thence W. 33° N. 5 rods, by Luther Ammidown's land afore-said, to land of Calvin Ammidown; thence N. 33° E. 10 rods and 15 links, by the said Calvin's land, to the bound first mentioned.

#### SECOND AQUEDUCT COMPANY.

This company took the name of the Southbridge Aqueduct Company. It was organized, June 22, 1831, under a general act of the Legislature of Massachusetts, approved, February 21, 1799. It was originated by Holmes Ammidown, for the purpose of introducing water to his dwelling-house, erected in the year 1830, and with that view the water was conducted to a reservoir which he had built on his house-lot near the rear of said dwelling-house.

The location of this reservoir being on an elevated point of land, it afforded a convenient facility to supply most of the dwellings at that time in the center village; and as the supply of water was equal to a much larger demand than was at first

designed, it was proposed to form a company, and admit others to partake of the advantages of the same.

A subscription paper was drawn to receive the names of those who desired to be parties in the company, and to enjoy the privilege of introducing their pipes to receive water from the reservoir aforesaid. Date, June 14, 1831.

The subscribers to this stock were as follows:

Holmes Ammidown, - 5½ shares.	Stillman Plimpton, - 1 shares
Samuel Hartwell, - - 3 “	Nicholas Jenks, - - 1½ “
Ebenezer D. Ammidown, 2½ “	Linus Child, - - 1 “
Harvey Dresser, - 4 “	Henry Haynes, - - 1 “
Bela Tiffany, - - 2 “	Samuel C. Fiske, - 1 “
Daniel A. Hawks, - 1 “	Bradford Baylies - 1 “
Moses Plimpton, - - 1 “	Perley Simpson, - 1 “
Total 25 shares and 3 half shares, or barn rights.	25 “

The spring from which this water is taken is located in the low grounds on the south side of the road leading to Westville, a short distance southerly of the present residence of Mr. J. J. Oaks. This spring was deeded to the aqueduct company by Jedediah Marcy, with the right of way through his land, November 11, 1831.

The deed by Holmes Ammidown, granting ground for reservoir, and right of way for pipes through his house lot, is dated “July 11, 1831.” There are grants and conditions in this deed that are important to the owner of this house-lot and dwelling-house, now owned by C. A. Paige, Esq.

This house standing so near the level of the reservoir, it was deemed a necessity by Mr. Ammidown, to secure his supply, to elevate the pipe that conducts the water to the reservoir, and bring it near the east wall of said house, at a convenient height to draw water from the main pipe into a sink in the house, opposite said elevated pipe.

The organization of this company was on June 22, 1831, as follows :

“Harvey Dresser was chosen moderator; Moses Plimpton, clerk; and Nicholas Jenks, treasurer; with the following as directors: Ebenezer D. Ammidown, Holmes Ammidown, Linus Child, Harvey Dresser, Samuel Hartwell, and Nicholas Jenks.

“A committee was then chosen to draft by-laws, to wit: Linus Child, Holmes Ammidown, and Moses Plimpton.”

It was, at the commencement of this undertaking, supposed that four hundred dollars would meet the expense of conducting the water from the spring to the reservoir, and the constructing of the same, and thus the shares were fixed at twenty dollars each; but when this work was completed, it was found that the cost was five hundred dollars, when the capital stock was voted to be this amount, and the price of shares advanced to equal this expenditure.

At a meeting of the company held on July 2, 1831, the committee for drafting by-laws made their report, which was accepted, and the management of its affairs were subsequently conducted under the same, upon the basis of the aforesaid capital, up to the 10th of July, 1865, a period of thirty-four years, when it was voted to transfer the property from this organization to a new company, embracing the same shareholders, but subject to new regulations.

The changes effected by the new company were of little consequence, excepting the cutting away a part of the wall of the reservoir, and substituting for the same, which had a capacity of 100 barrels of water as a reserve, a trough of the capacity of only a few barrels, and the placing the pipes upon an exact level upon the edge of said trough, to equalize the draft of water into each supply pipe. This mode of distributing the water would have been a judicious operation, and an advantage in protecting the rights of shareholders, if the reserve supply had been maintained by preserving the reservoir in its original condition; which could have been done by a side structure, and the same effect produced without injury to the reservoir or loss of reserve.