Autobiography of Erastus Johnson
A Chronicle of Pioneer Life in New England And on the Pacific Coast

Foreword

Erastus Johnson was a member of a family whose first representative, John Johnson of Hern Hill, Kent County, England, landed on the Massachusetts coast around 1665.

As to the history of the Family during the two centuries following their arrival little is known aside from the list of births, marriages and deaths.

Here and there an item appears laden with significance to one of imagination and a knowledge of the life and habits of the period.

Such as the fact that John, the first arrival, became constable of Andover and his wife was one of that devoted band of martyr's accused of witchcraft. John's son Timothy carried double honors, first as Captain in the French and Indian Wars and later as selectman for nine years. Another Timothy lost his life in the expedition against Louisburg in 1746 under Sir William Pepperell.

Meager as is the family history it is evident the Johnsons were of a sturdy, God fearing, hard working pioneer race – fair examples of the colonist farmers and craftsmen of that primitive period when self reliance was the price of survival.

As the family grew its branches spread through all the New England states but the particular branch from which Erastus sprang migrated to Maine, and it is there this chronicle begins.

C.E.J.
[Charles Everett Johnson]

Done into Its Present Form
By the Students of Printing
In the Frank Wiggins Trade School
Los Angeles
1937

Introduction

Although we at one time had the typed manuscript of Erastus Johnson's Autobiography, this edition is taken from the one done by Students of Printing in the Frank Wiggins Trade School and Edited by Charles E. Johnson, its principal. I tried without success to get in touch with him. He is a grandson, I believe, of Erastus by his first wife. I am also a grandson. My father was the baby left in Maine, as he went west with Joe to homestead in Washington. He also had to leave school early to support the family. Erastus died in Waltham shortly before I was born. My father told some stories about him, but Erastus no doubt had many more, and with congenial companions was willing to talk.

Notes by Erastus Johnson differed somewhat with Charles Johnson's Foreword. He said Captain Timothy Johnson was the first to settle in this country, bringing his company of horse to Buxton, then called Narraganset, a wilderness of Massachusetts to scout for Indians in 1677, with whom there was war at the time. His father, Thomas Johnson had been knighted by Charles II in 1660 for distinguished bravery and loyalty. Thomas's grandfather was James Johnson, Bailiff and Alderman of Great Yarmouth, County of Norfolk, England.

Erastus Johnson produced many inventions – some impractical, few ever marketed. A game board in the attic could serve for innumerable games. His poems, Recollections of Childhood are included in this volume as appropriate to the time of his early life.

Fremont Johnson
Biography Press
Aransas Pass, Texas
1974

Autobiography of Erastus Johnson

Written 1903

I infer that my advent into the world was not looked upon at the time as a matter of very much importance. I draw this inference from the fact that my father's diary makes no mention of it; he merely wrote down two things, as follows: "April 20th, 1826 – Junkins – Hayes went p.m. after lumber." Whether the first had any-thing to do with this event I leave to the antiquarian skilled in obsolete forms of speech. It seems to me a better name for such an occasion would be "junketing."

(Speaking of that diary, how much would I not give to possess it in its entirety, faithfully kept as it was, through all the 33 years of his married life-something noted down for every day's doings until his life's work ended in Vernon, Ct., in 1853. It was also the habit of his father (Boardman Johnson) before him, through all his business life up to the time of his death, if I mistake not, at the age of 90 years. What a pile of volumes would these two lives have left, and of what intense interest to posterity had they been preserved! running through the history of our country from Washington to Buchanan, and in the family history, all those little things that are of intimate interest as giving glimpses into the inner domestic life of those to whom we owe so much. Heroes, both men and women, who bushed the path before us through all those years of privation and toil and self-sacrifice.)

I confess I felt a little piqued when I discovered (last Spring in Windham, Vt., at my Sister Hannah's, who is the fortunate possessor of that part of said diary) that no mention of my birth was made in it. So, I thought I would trace it back a year and see whether he had recorded the birth of my predecessor, Samuel. I was somewhat reconciled to the omission in my case on finding that he had made a like omission in his. Noting down under the date of Feb 8th, 1825, what he was doing that day on his farm in Atkinson, Me., finishing the record of his day's work with the incidental remark, "In the evening carried the women home." Still there remained a little feeling of jealousy that in his case even a hint had been dropped of something unusual, and nothing in mine. And then it occurred to me that away up there in the pine forest of Township No. 2, Penobscot Co., to which place they had moved during the year, there may have been no women to carry home after my advent, as fortunately there were after his. And such was my humble entrance upon these earthly scenes. Apart from the kind offices of some god-mother, whoever she was, there was no neighborly help, in all probability; for neighbors we had not at this, my infant home. It was a wild "howling wilderness," such as we read of in romantic literature, among bears and wolves and half civilized Indians who roamed at pleasure through those forests of towering pines.

It was to harvest these trees and send them floating down the Penobscot to the water power mills at the old Indian settlement of Old Town, that my father had brought a gang of woodsmen and teams of oxen, and with him his young wife (Hepzibah Hunt Page), a willing help-meet and companion in his wilderness home; also my two elder brothers, Asa the Oracle, and Samuel, the aforesaid, who came so very near being my twin brother. I call the former "the Oracle" because such he was to us younger ones, who had an idea that he knew about all that was worth knowing, and he was perfectly willing we should think so. He being very ready in picking up passages of scriptures from the twice daily reading of them in the family, he was as ready to make use of them in controlling our superstitious minds to further his own ends and make us his obedient servants. One of these was, "The elder shall serve the younger," so, he, being the elder, had the right to command us just as he pleased. If we demurred at anything he saw fit to lay upon us, such as hauling him on bare ground with the hand-sled, he would tell us we were in danger of hell-fire if we didn't, because he was the elder and had the right, according to the bible, to serve us as he pleased. If we doubted any of his statements, he quoted the passage, "He that believeth not shall be damned." When we were eight, seven and six, he sent forth from his throne, which was a large stump, the imperial edict that Samuel must take to himself a help-meet, and to that end a house must be built in which he and his consort might live; and when the house was ready he would announce from his throne who the bride should be. His royal highness condescended to accompany us to the woods to superintend the work of getting out the frame for a house six feet square, and for covering we cut down small hemlocks which we peeled in four 100 foot lengths for sides and roof, hauling them on the hand-sled on bare ground – Samuel and myself the horses, he of course the driver. A stone fire-place, a bed wide enough for two children bordered with stones and lined with moss, and two stones for seats, made up the furnishings ready for the bride. All things were ready, and seated on his throne the potentate gave forth his edict that it was to be Sally Rounds, and that I must go along with Samuel to help haul her home on the handsled. Fortunately, we found her down at the spring before reaching the house. Samuel made known his errand in true business style. She, being some two years his senior, looked upon the matter from a more rational standpoint and sent us home crestfallen, with empty sled. This was after our removal from No. 2 (near Bangor) to No. 3, our forest home 4 miles from Lincoln.

Of this (No. 2) my birthplace, some additional items may be of interest which, though a month less than four when we left there, I distinctly remember. There was the rakish looking bateau with long pointed stern, the stern high above the water, moored among the bushes at the river shore. And whenever I see, on any shore, a boat among bushes, there runs to my very soul-depths a thrill of emotion that brings tears into my eyes, not of sorrow for I have no regrets that those childhood experiences are past forever. "Far higher joys, My soul for thee do wait"

(Scenes of Youth – pg. 89 E.J.). Then there was the fright I got as a big shaggy dog came rushing into the house close by me as I sat in my father's lap while he told me "lockum" stories and sang "Fly like a youthful hart or roe, over the hills where spices grow." And for more than 70 years those stories and songs have been with me in sweetest memory. And that fireplace built of stone; and the immense shaft above it built of cattens (split lath used on the frontier for building chimneys, after getting above any danger of fire. The inside is plastered with clay) through which the sparks flew and the stars shone; and the two rows of stones on which were piled logs that required the strength of two men to carry; and the baking kettle in the corner setting among coals with a heap on the cover. For such bread as came out of that baker, I could almost be tempted back to childhood. And then there was that wonderful labyrinth of ox-legs, and beautiful rows of ox-tails, and magnificent display of wide spreading ox-horns, brandishing in fearful activity as the hungry oxen, just in from the pine hauling, eagerly pulled the hay from well-filled hovel racks; and those no less wonderful pines, full length, one end on the bob-sled drawn by six oxen – "Buck and Broad," "Star and Bright", "Duke and Golding", through the winding logging roads and out upon the ice-bound river, to be sawn into shorter lengths, marked with some uncouth device and left to wait in snow covered graves for the Spring rains and river driving.

Our highway was the river, in the Winter on the ice, in Summer by bateau. Provisions for the loggers and family were brought from above the falls of Old Town 30 miles or more by river, and half a day's journey down, but two of hard poling with a ton's weight to return, unloading the bateau and turning it over for a shelter under which to camp for the night. On one occasion my father, with a hired man, started up with a load in a rain storm. Clearing uptowards night, the temperature rapidly fell, forming ice. Unloading, they prepared for the night under the overturned boat. Their comfort and perhaps their lives depended on the question of fire, and with everything wet, it was a serious question. They chopped some wood, prepared some whittlings, but on geting out the punk found it so damp from being in the packet that the sparks from flint and steel would not ignite it. Patience exhausted, chilled by the rapidly increasing cold, first one and then the other trying his skill with the flint and steel, they were reduced finally to one last piece of punk. A few blows were struck, it lighted! they were saved. On another occasion my Uncle Charles Johnson and another man were less successful. Failing to get a fire, with the temperature low and snow on the ground, their only alternative was to walk all night or freeze. So they took up their line of march in a circle around a tree. His companion finally became overpowered with a desire to sleep and sank down in the snow. My uncle, knowing he would freeze to death if he allowed him to sleep, cut a stick and began beating him, resulting in the man becoming enraged and attempting to give my uncle a thrashing. This had the good effect of thoroughly waking and warming them both, and after a good laugh over it they again took up their march through what seemed to them almost an interminable night, chewing hard bread to relieve hunger and the monotony of their tedious tramp. Such were some of the perils and hard-ships of these pioneers of early days.

I had almost forgotten three bear cubs that for sev-eral months afforded us untold amusement by their playful tricks, finally being sent away to Bangor and sold because of their mischievousness.

Only once since moving from this, the place of my birth, has it been my privilege to see it; that was in 1849, and then only a very hasty inspection, as we flew past it on a down-river steamer in the rapid current of Spring time. The Captain pointed out to me the only remaining land-mark of the Cyrus Johnson place, a monument of stones, the remains of the old stone chimney rising a few feet above the bushes.

> "And there in silence deep
> It stands, a sentinel, sad watch to keep
> O'er the old hearth stone."
> (Recollections of Childhood, pg. 39, E.J.)

Before leaving this part of my life history I would record a few impressions on my youthful mind concerning him whom, in the providence of God, I came to know and revere as my father; and her whom I came to know and revere and love as my mother. And why do I make this distinction? Probably for two reasons: First, that there is in woman's nature more of the quality of affection than in man's nature; Second, that in those of the same sex there is a great difference in that quality. I revered my father, not only because he was my father, but because he came up in my youthful mind to my highest ideal of what a man should be in sterling morality and unbending rectitude. He seemed to me in this respect different from most men I knew. They swore, which I knew was wrong – He didn't; they indulged in low and foolish talk – His words seemed to be with grace, seasoned with salt. More than this, he seemed to me far above those around about us, in that he knew God, was on speaking terms with Him, and morning and evening talked with Him as to a friend; and no consideration of circumstances nor business could turn him aside from his fixed rule as regarded morning and evening worship. We sometimes thought him unnecessarily severe, and from the present day stand-point he was, but it must be remembered that the prevailing ideas of those days were far different from those of the present day. And if strict discipline is desirable in a rising generation, I think it must be admitted that their success, in that, was greater than ours, in this. But is there not a possibility of maintaining that discipline without sacrificing that sympathetic nearness to childhood which begets love? Children must have love or the best part of their nature is nipped at its budding. So our loving Heavenly Father has mercifully provided a supply for that need in the Mother's love. This was our refuge. What might have been her ability in the line of discipline, if that necessity has been laid upon her, I hardly know. There seemed to be no occasion for its exercise in her ever loving presence. Yet there was never a shadow of anything like sympathy as opposed to the paternal discipline. And that

was as it always should be except in cases of brutality. Whether from nature or grace, probably both, her patience under her load of care with thirteen children and the limited means for their maintenance, was most wonderful. I can truthfully say that in all her life I never saw her lose self-possession and show anger or even impatience. A lady who knew her well said to me not long ago, "Your mother was the most perfect lady in the truest sense of the word that I ever knew." That she possessed a good degree of firmness and courage as well as gentleness of character, the following incident will show:

Soon after our removal to our new forest home across the river, about a dozen Indians came trailing into our house one day when Father was absent and ordered Mother to get dinner for them. This they were in the habit of doing, as she well knew, when they had reason to suppose the man of the house was not at home, and she resolved that she would not be made a victim of such imposition, and refused. They repeated the demand, threatening to kill us all if she refused, and unsheathing their knives, began feeling of their edges. Though but four years of age, I remember that scene as distinctly as though it were but yesterday. They took possession of all the chairs on entering, some seating themselves on the floor, filling one side and more of the room, so she could do nothing but stand; and there she stood waiting and waiting, while we children stood behind her clinging to her skirt, the babe Nathan in her arms. At length after a long series of grunts in their unknown tongue, they arose, filed out and across the opening into the woods, and never troubled us afterwards. Another instance of her bravery was the chasing of three bears out of the cornfield with a loaded musket, Father being away. Three bears, probably the same, entered the cornfield again in the late afternoon after his return, two of which he succeeded in shooting, they having foolishly climbed a tree in the edge of the woods.

I must not omit an incident of somewhat laughable nature connected with our moving from No. 2 to our new home. It was in March 1830. Deep snows were still on land and river; our journey lay down and across the river and some six miles beyond. The weather being very cold, the children were rolled up in bed clothes and laid on the ox-sled, except the babe which was in its mother's arms, while she cast occasional glances back to see if the precious bundles were safe. Presently she discovered that one was missing. It required the tramp of a mile or so back to find it, safe and sound and still fast asleep, half buried in the snow.

That first year in our new home was, of all the years, our year of trial. The buying of the land and necessary outfit for farming, even on a limited scale, together with building a cheap frame house and furnishing it as cheaply as was consistent with decency, even according to the frugal ideas of those days, had absorbed all there was left of past earnings, with a rapidly increasing family now numbering five boys, the oldest being seven. Ten acres of forest had been felled the year before and burned. Corn, beans, and potatoes were planted among the logs, according to the usual custom, and grew luxuriantly, promising an abundant harvest. But alas! for our flattered hopes! The terrible destruction by frost that year in all that forest portion of the state, sent, as some argued, as God's judgment on the terrible profanity of those rough backwoodsmen, fell alike on saint and sinner. The stock of provisions brought in with us was lengthened out as far as possible by the use of wild meat, deer, bear meat, partridges, gray squirrels, rabbits, etc., all which, as well as fish were plentiful in that new land, to make the old last till the incoming of the new; but the new came not, with the exception of some half ripened potatoes and corn used freely while they lasted, which was only till that frost, long to be remembered when our hopes were blasted in a single night. One single back load of corn saved by drying the ripest of the wasting ears, and a few bushels of unripened potatoes, with the wild meat, made up the sum total of our visible supply for the coming year, seven of us all told and a stranger knocking at the door. Moreover the wild meat was already having the same effect upon us as it had 35 centuries ago on that rebellious host of children just out of Egyptian slavery. If we could have had the guarantee of bread, even if it were nothing but the "Angel's food" which they grumbled at, we might perhaps have been satisfied, but it is hard telling. Human nature doesn't vary much in the lapse of ages, judging from surface indications. I well knew the condition of things and that the precious cornmeal was getting low in the barrel, with no earthly prospect of replenishing it. As to work by which to earn something for our relief, there was none to be had in that part of the state, for nearly all were in as hard a strait as ourselves. If there was a day's work wanted there were ten men after it. We boys talked among ourselves about it. Father had talked with God about it several times in morning and evening worship, and our Oracle decided, sitting upon his throne (the big stump) that as Father was well acquainted with God, He would attend to our case just as soon as He could get around to it. But listen! what sound is that coming from the opening marking the entrance of the rough wagon road? It sounds like the jolting of a loaded wagon. Yes it is! We see it now away in among the trees, first the two horses pulling heavily, a driver above and beyond them with his whip, and now we see the wagon, the first that ever came here. He had come 50 miles over a rough road from Bangor with that load, for God had sent it. "Does Mr. Johnson live here?" he asks, addressing Father who, with the mother and babes and wondering boys, had been watching his coming. "Yes, my name is Johnson," he answers. "Then this load of provisions is for you," says the driver. "There must be some mistake about it, I haven't ordered any provisions," he replies. "Isn't your name Cyrus Johnson?" asks the driver. "Yes, that's my name." "Then this load is for you certainly," he insists. "Mr. ____ of Bangor sent it. He knew all the crops were killed by frost and that yours must be, and he sent me up with this load, and I can tell you I have had a hard time getting here." "God sent it!" replies Father. "Lay your whip down and come into the house; we will thank Him for it." The driver did as he was told, taking with him a large cheese which was on the seat by his side, which he laid upon the table, and kneeling with us, joined in the prayer of thanksgiving.

The part that a boy just my age played in this interesting drama was not much to his credit. His place of kneeling happened to be by the table on which the driver had laid the precious cheese; and while thanksgiving was offered, he was busily gnawing. Mother soon discovered the hole made in the cheese and with that half-reproving, loving look of hers as she looked at him said, "Why, who has been gnawing that cheese?" She answered with the same forgiving, beautiful look. For in her heart of hearts she couldn't blame him. For did not Solomon say "Men do not despise a thief if he steal to satisfy his hunger," and surely the poor child was hungry. I have heard him say that it was not the gnawing of the cheese, but the telling of the lie that ever smote his conscience in that matter, for the smell of that cheese was a temptation too strong for resistance. And so it was that our loving Heavenly Father used a man who knew Him not and blasphemed His name in almost every breath, to furnish food for His ravens when they cried, and a lesson for us all that never should be forgotten.

It was about this time that I took a job, memorable in my boyhood life – that of bringing in wood and chips and rocking the cradle for my board. It was for our nearest neighbor, Mrs. Catherine Mann Edwards, writer of temperance and Sunday School books, one of which was about me. I never saw the book, though I wrote to her some 25 or 30 years ago to get one if possible. She answered that none were to be had as they were out of print, and she had none. She was a sister of Horace Mann. It was that she might have more time to write that she entered into this rocking contract with me. That the boy baby didn't live to be old, didn't surprise me, for a greater amount of rocking never a baby got, in my boyish, humble opinion. But I was by no means the saint of a boy that she supposed when she wrote the Sunday School book, with me for her hero. She didn't suspect me as being the sole cause of many a waking and crying of little Daniel, that I might get temporary relief from that everlasting rocking. I was proud of the honor of being the first to earn my own living. I think it was about this time also that our illustrious Oracle encountered a bear in the path on his way home from Mr. Edwards', and got rid of his unwelcome presence in a manner characteristic of his originality. After getting home he was asked what he did. He said he stood still and said the Lord's Prayer, and before he had said "Amen," the bear ran off into the woods.

On Sunday the order of exercises, when the weather permitted, was to walk to Lincoln village to church, four miles, almost a superfluity of exercise, either for pleasure or physical benefit. But we boys made what we considered a valuable discovery connected with the matter of church-going by which we thought we could "get there" much more easily than by the ordinary random method, and I give it for the benefit of all coming generations of boys similarly situated. Which of us was the inventor of the improvement I don't remember. Most likely, the Oracle. The improvement was simply this: One boy, the aforesaid Oracle, for example, being the oldest and our natural leader, would walk behind Father in his tracks, myself in the rear, or in Mother's tracks, being more suited in length of step to my sort legged capacity. Children too large to be carried and too small to walk were left sometimes with kind neighbors along the road who didn't shut up house to go to church for "meeting," as it was called in those days. Those Sunday experiences stand out in bold relief on the tablets of my memory. Notwithstanding the eight mile walk, the three-fold services, and sleepiness, and hunger, and weariness of sitting on backless benches, our feet dangling several inches above the floor, these weekly pilgrimages were looked forward to with pleasure, for in addition to the luxury of being thoroughly cleansed from the smut and grime of our work-day conflict with smutty logs and brushwood (for we all worked) there was the gratification of wearing our "meeting clothes," too precious for home use. There was also relief from the irksome discipline of Sunday restraint, carried to the utmost extreme of Puritanic strictness; relief from the catechetical ordeal, and relief from the no less tiresome ordeal of keeping quiet too long; even the eight mile walk had less weariness. And then there were the squirrels impudently bold because they knew it was the day when guns were left at home; and clucking partridges hurrying their broods to the covert; and the flashing of salmon bellies in the shadowed brook; and to offset the tediousness of the many headed sermon that took up "foreordination, Adam's fall, God's sovereignty, and the Effectual Call" (Our Worship Days, pg. 42 E.J.) there were the grand old tunes led by Father's fine tenor voice which I always loved to hear, whether at home or at church. And for the longing of empty stomachs of sleepy urchins on hard benches, there was the sweet repast between sermons under the trees, out of that blessed dinner basket, and the hardly restrained race with children less accustomed to Sunday restraint. Or, invitation being given the Sunday before, dinner at the pleasant home of Deacon Heald, whose daughter Mrs. Nute, was the fellow passenger on the "Gold Hunter" 20 years later, of whose death and burial at St. Catharine, Brazil, I have told in "Voyage Around Cape Horn" (Chap. 4).

I think it was in the first year at this second home that the following incident occurred. Father and Mother had gone to make an evening visit to some neighbor. Presently, getting sleepy, we all went to bed, Asa, Samuel, and myself upstairs, Henry and Nathan downstairs in the trundle bed, the new comer, Kezia (the first girl that had the courage to invade our masculine community, but a welcome guest) having been taken along with its mother. Soon we heard a terrible crying in the downstairs part. Asa had got up in his sleep, gone into a back chamber which had at that time no floor, and fallen below. Samuel and I went down, lighted a candle and found him with a terrible gash in his head. When our parents came home they found two youthful surgeons, six and five years old, performing the surgical operation of binding up a severe scalp wound with long strips of cloth, which became saturated with blood as fast as they were applied, blood also covering his nightgown, our nightgowns also being well sprinkled. Mother added a few pins to give additional se-

curity against slipping off and left our work intact till morning.

Our second was a year of success after many forebodings, unspoken except occasionally by us children, for the language of our parents was always that of trust. And how could it be otherwise while eating of the God-sent manna, not sent daily as to the children in the desert, but in one grand out-pouring of His bounty for the supply of our wants through all the year. How our crops grew! The corn in the new burning mixed with beans, the wheat and potatoes in the old, now cleared up and harrowed with a borrowed team and harrow, to be paid for in work. How we enthusiastic boys loved to watch and talk of and measure the daily increasing height of corn and tell it to smiling parents, adding "if only the frost will keep off." With such fluttering prospects we cheerfully helped Father at weeding in the cornfield among the black logs, and when night came it might have been difficult for a stranger to determine positively what race we belonged to. And what appetites!

The corn spindled out, and the ears set and silked, as corn has spindled and set and silked time immemorial in American history, but never more closely watched while doing it. And finally comes the welcome announcement that it is fit for roasting ears. And thrice daily the beautiful ears of our beautiful corn are lovingly pulled and boiled or roasted to suit the eater, and along with stewed partridge or gray squirrel, which was more delicate, or steak of venison for a change, and biscuit from the flour of manna that God sent us, or corn cake out of that bake kettle buried in the chimney corner.

"No prince or king
To health and hunger better cheer
could bring."

September's "frost moon" (Recollections of Childhood, pg. 55, 56 E.J.) is awaited suspiciously. Past that our corn will be safe. Meanwhile the marauders of the forest are embracing their opportunity; bears, porcupines and raccoons by night, and gray squirrels by day.

Wheat has ripened and Father lays beautiful straight rowed gavels while the willing boys either help at the reaping with an extra sickle, one and another until fingers are cut, or glean the precious heads the reapers have let fall. Some of those sickle scars I see on my left hand now as I write, after more than 70 years. After dinner there is an hour's rest to allow the juvenile stomach to get into bending condition while the "Christian Mirror" is read by the resting father, generally aloud, or some volume from his little library of Calvinistic theology. Gavels are brought together into bunches for parental binding, then the bundles for stooking with striding cap sheaf. Stooks are counted, each representing a bushel of precious wheat, and we turn house-ward, the father singing a psalm. He was nearly always singing when not working or reading. The supper over and worship, came the tedious night of watching, for the tired father, sometimes partially relieved by the company of some neighbor who had no corn to watch and was willing to share in possible bear meat.

Through those years of frontier life the old flint lock musket (I think the one carried by Grandfather Page during his term of service in the war of Revolution) did good service, carrying bullets for bear and deer and shot for smaller game; and afterwards at musters in Brooks, Me. of State militia. What finally became of it I know not. My latest recollection of it was when I shot a squirrel with it at my third boyhood home when about nine years of age. We moved to my fourth and final home when I was ten. About that time percussion caps came in and flint locks were consigned to oblivion.

Night after night, till the corn was safely housed, Father sat nodding with one ear open to catch the first sound of cracking fallen twigs in the edge of the forest close beside him, his heavy "surtout" around him, and faithful musket by his side, until two or three in the morning, after which time the wild marauders seldom put in an appearance. I had some experience in the same kind of watching some ten years later at my fourth home in Jackson with Asa, killing however no bigger game than porcupines and coons, but in that experience became thoroughly convinced there was no pleasure in it.

The corn ripens, is cut and shocked; roads cut for hauling, -- oxen and cart hired for it to be paid in work; beans stacked, pumpkins crimson, green and gold rolled into hollows, beginning, interspersed, and ending with psalms of praise.

CORN HUSKING

Ho for husking! Old and young invited,
From the scattered clearings come at fall of night,
With their torches, knots of pine trees, lighted,
Forest trees aglow with ever changing light,
Now they gather round the log pile blazing,
Merry song and peal of laughter raising,
Throwing into heaps the golden ears of corn
Till old evening wakes and younger hours of morn.
Brown loaf, bear meat, mashes, ready-waiting
Come ye husking lasses and admiring boys,
Two and two as fancy prompts the mating,
Hungry from your husking, come to well earned joys.
There is silence now. Heaven's throne addressing,
Reverently the father asks a blessing.
Sober thought with wit around the table blends,
And with generous pumpkin pie, the supper ends.
Low declines the moon and homeward turning
Through the forest paths they take their various ways;
Torches borne aloft the brightly burning,
Some their pathway tracing by the hatchet-blaze,
Nought shall e'er be told of many a token
In those forest paths, and sweet words spoken.
Swains cut short your wooing, swiftly wanes the night,
Sleep, for dreams of love must break with breaking light.

Here I had my first two terms of schooling, taught by Father in an abandoned shanty with huge fireplace and writing desks facing the other three walls, only two openings for the entrance of daylight, one of which served also as the outlet for smoke, the other having six panes of 7x9 glass at the beginning of the term, gradually

diminishing in number and giving place to sundry substitutes as the term advanced. That the discipline of our school was of the strictest kind, goes without saying. But while the ideas in that line were far different in those days from the ideas of these days, I don't remember of ever getting a blow from any teacher, accounted for probably by my eagerness to learn and not by any superior goodness.

At this, my second home, we remained four years, when two providences seeming to point to the old home town of both parents, the farm was sold (a chance to sell being one of said "providences"), and in the Spring of 1834 we moved to Jackson, to the old homestead of my Grandfather Johnson (an offer to let it on shares being the other "providence"), completing the circle back to the starting point of my parents' married life in eleven years, not much richer than when they started. I am wrong: they had added to their assets seven immortals. How much they were worth – well, "their weight in gold" Mother often said, and she always spoke the truth. Of these, five were harum-scarums" and two of the gentler sex. Hannah's heart had been touched with pity for her sister's lonely condition among that masculine gang and so she came to keep her company.

Chapter II – My Life in Jackson

The family moved from Lincoln, my second home, to this my third, in the Spring of 1834, March I think, my age being eight, lacking a month. Just four years before this was that memorable moving from my birthplace to Lincoln, it will be remembered, when a baby was lost off the ox-sled. This time there were two more to move, but on arriving in Jackson none were found missing. There we stood, five boys and two girls, sloping down from Asa the Oracle to the quiet Hannah, toddling to her place at the foot of the row in all her native dignity. Seven visible and countable assets, and one already on his way from the "Choir Invisible," William the Singer, arriving on schedule time May 8, 1834, sent by God Himself to play the violin and sing us songs of childhood, and to us in after years, and many more throughout the land, the songs of His Kingdom.

Forestalling a little, my chum brother Samuel and I, a few years later, took it into our heads that there should be an accompaniment to that fiddle. Having heard of an ancient cello ("base viol" it was called in those days) that was offered for sale by a blacksmith in Dixmont. We went to see him, got his offer to sell it for 100 bushels of charcoal, if my memory is correct, obtained Father's consent, closed the bargain with him, and set about its fulfillment, doing the work of burning the charcoal mostly in overtime after doing our regular work. Wood in four-foot lengths was cut by twilight and star light and moonlight, stood up endwise, covered with straw and dirt, set on fire in several places – which were covered after setting, after which came the weary nights of watching for ten or twelve days lest the fire break out, and, getting past control, the kiln is lost. Finally the smoke ceases, a few days smouldering and it is ready for uncovering and raking off. The hay rack is lined with boards, 100 bushels loaded, and the steers haul it to Dixmont, bringing back the cello in its green baize covering, the reward of perseverance. But oh, the days and nights of scraping before any decent accompaniment could be drawn from it for William's longing fiddle! Whether any nerves were almost unstrung by our ceaseless scraping we never knew, for the loving mother never complained of anything. I took it finally into the choir along with two or three violins and a double bass, and we waked harmonies that have never ceased to vibrate. Last year I took a long look at it stowed away in Sister Hannah's attic, where it has been lying for almost half a century with chords unstrung, waiting for some appreciative limb of posterity to tune them again. But not to the old songs of childhood – they are past and forever, except from loving memories.

But to return to that first year in our new home. It was a pleasant transition from stumps and smutty logs to old stumpless mowing fields and orchards of apples, pears, and cherries with fruit in great abundance. And did we ever see and taste such apples as those delicious sweets that grew on that tree below the hog-house? The two terms of school in Lincoln taught by Father had made me a fair reader and speller, as could be expected for my age. My first term here was the following Winter, still under his teaching, and I was put into a class of nearly grown-up boys and girls in grammar which, considering my age (eight I think), was a mistake. Among other incentives to diligence, he offered a prize to the one who would soonest commit to memory all the rules in Murray's Grammar. I determined to win that prize, and did it, but it was by such close application and hard study as no child of that age should undertake. My father also taught singing school, so I learned, in this way, the rudiments of music. If my memory is correct, I never got any more schooling in the Summer at any district school, my help, little as it was, being necessary on the farm.

About this time I earned the first piece of money I could call my own. It was a "ninepence" for holding a gentleman's horse. I had it changed into two "fourpence ha' pennies" giving one to my chum brother, Samuel, who, like myself, had never before experienced such untold bliss. Muster day being near at hand relieved us of any anxiety as to how we could spend it. It would buy all the ginger bread and sweet cider we all would want who were big enough to go, viz: six sheets of ginger bread and six tumblers of cider, and we were the boys who could foot the bill! My next money gave me vastly more trouble and anxiety. It was a whole dollar, the proceeds of a potato patch given me to cultivate. Father suggested that I had better not be showing it to everybody, that I might lose it. I thought it a wise suggestion. I looked up a number of places in which to hide it, on successive days, changing its place often for greater security. This I found quite annoying as I would often forget which place I hid it in last. Getting thoroughly disgusted, finally, with such a burden of care, I offered it to Mother to buy dishes with, on the condition that I should have them when I went to

keeping house. This arrangement brought sweet relief from this, my first and only, financial embarrassment from too much money. My natural boyish sleep returned, undisturbed by dreams of thieves after my dollar.

When we went on to the old homestead there was a hop field and dry house, and the raising of hops was counted by my grandfather as among his chief dependencies for raising money, which, for the first year, was continued by my father. And in hop-picking-time there was the excitement and novelty of having, as hired help, all the available girls, from the age of ten upwards, in all the country about, and many extra men, to secure the crop inside the proper time. I wish I could remember the wages that were paid in those days to make comparison with the present, but think they were 50 cents to $1.00 per week, including board; am quite sure the latter was the maximum remuneration of the most capable; am quite as sure also that not so many as ten could be found now on the same territory that would have furnished forty then. With that year those annual gatherings for a week of jollification and money earning ended. And why? Nine out of ten would have answered that question with a toss of head to emphasize the answer, "All on account of Cyrus Johnson's temperance notions." I remember there was a sharp controversy on the subject between my father and Grandfather, the latter, though strictly temperate according to the ideas of those days (that is to say, never getting drunk), thought Father was extremely radical in his temperance views because he thought it wrong to cultivate and sell that which was used mostly in the manufacture of intoxicating drink, and willing to sacrifice to principle the most profitable crop on the farm. The controversy narrowed down to the question of which must go, the hop raising or Father. Grandfather finally consented, though with many protests, and the altar of Baal was thrown to the ground. The hops were plowed up and we boys threw the roots over the fence at the edge of the wood lot where they still grow, after the lapse of 68 years, a mystery to the present generation. As to Father's radicalism, there was no disputing that it was a prominent characteristic of his nature. The only thing to be determined in any controversy was "what is right?" That question settled, the heavens must fall before a place is given for wrong. That was shown a few years later in the stand he took in the anti-slavery movement. When Fred Douglass came to our town he was the only one who would "entertain a nigger." He spent days and nights carrying Douglass about the country lecturing on what was then the most unpopular of all subjects. Public opinion in any matter seemed to not have the slightest right with him, in deciding his own course of action. Another thing in which he had to bear the obloquy of being as least "eccentric" was his ever ready championship of "Thy chosen people, the Jews," as he called them in his prayers at the morning and evening family altar. By the simple study of the Bible, independent of any church teachings, he had settled down on the natural conclusion that the Jews were to be gathered in again to their won land to be the chief nation of the earth in Christ's millennial reign, and therefore a people not to be spoken against nor despised. And anyone thus speaking in his presence always found an antagonist. It must be confessed however, that he had some ways which might fittingly be called singular. For instance, when we had supper of mush and milk, as we sometimes did, he never "asked blessing," probably because he didn't like it. As for myself, on such occasions, from that day to this, I always regretted that I was not bigger that I might eat more.

I think a few words right here would not be inappropriate concerning my Grandfather Johnson. He was at that early day of the town's history looked up to as a patriarch, having been one of its oldest settlers, and having brought with him sufficient means to build a house, which, for those days, might well be called a palace in the wilderness, with outbuildings in keeping, also a potash factory which afforded a good market for all the ashes in a large extent of surrounding country. He had a large retinue in the way of relations and acquaintances who kept his beautiful homestead lively by frequent visits to enjoy the ever-ready hospitality of his open house and well-spread board, and open fires with the mug of cider kept warm in the chimney corner. By holding the office of Justice for many years he became to be generally known as "Judge Johnson." That title reminds me of an amusing incident. I went, in my early school teaching days, to Judge Thatcher of Munroe with much trepidation, supposing him to be a man of learning, and that my ordeal would be a severe one. I introduced myself, telling him my name was Johnson and that I wanted a certificate to teach in their town. "Johnson? well there are good breeds of Johnson and some that are not so good. There's old Judge Johnson of your town – you any relation to him?" he asked. "He is my grandfather," I replied. "Oh; well the breed is all right then," he said, and turning to his desk wrote me out a certificate without asking me any more questions.

Religiously, Grandfather was inclined to Unitarianism, but in the great upheaval in New England which separated the Unitarian from the Orthodox Congregationalist churches (1815-1820) he, with a majority of the church, remained as Orthodox, the pastor, Rev. Silas Warren (cousin of "The Old Cobbler, Uriah Warren; also of Gen. Jos Warren of Bunker Hill fame) with a few others, retiring and remaining outside of any organization, the old pastor to a farm life across the road from the Johnson homestead.

At the house of Rev. Silas Warren, for several months in 1834, there was a crowd almost every evening to hear spirit manifestations, such as knocking, scratchings, and whippings, a member of his family, a girl about eleven years of age being the innocent medium. This was some thirteen years before the first historically recorded manifestations through the Fox girls of Hydesville, N.Y. The manifestations were very similar to those and fully as remarkable; but strange to say, never were reported so far as I know in any public print. A committee of citizens, including several clergymen, gave it a thorough investigation to discover some natural cause, but finding none, decided it must be of the Devil, and after a season of prayer Elder Loud commanded him to come out of the youthful damsel and trouble her no more. If it was in obedience to this command that the Devil left for

parts unknown, he took his own time, for the manifestations continued for about two months afterwards. Father was one of that committee and the decision was unanimous. And in all the subsequent developments of the strange phenomenon he never changed his mind. I myself think they were right. The venerable parson and pious wife and family, as also their descendants, seemed always to shun any mention of that matter as though it were something disgraceful, but I never looked upon it in that light. Allowing that it was of the Devil; they gave him no encouragement; made no money out of his machinations; and got rid of him as soon as possible. Was it any disgrace to our Lord that He was tempted of him? Three years after this I spent a Winter in the parson's family working for my board and going to school, and any allusion to that matter was immediately hushed.

During a gale in the winter of 1834 the church lost its steeple, and there is a little piece of history connected with it. Last Summer when I was in Jackson on a visit they were trying to raise money to put a steeple on the old church, which they had been repairing. I suggested that they had been getting along very well for 65 years, since the old one was blown down, and as they were still in debt for the recent repairs, I thought they could still get along without the steeple. I found, to my surprise, that not one of them remembered that there ever was one, though several were older than I was. All agreed that it must be an imagination of mine. I found one, however, -- Alonzo Morton of Bangor and formerly of Jackson, who remembered it.

Between Grandfather and "us boys" there was not much love lost. He didn't seem to be a lover of boys like our friend "The Old Cobbler." What a difference between his stern forbidding face and the genial inviting face of our friend down at the corner on his shoe-maker's bench. Grandfather seemed to think all boys were his natural enemies, and the estimate was reciprocal. We were naughty boys, I confess it; but our naughtiness was as much his fault as ours. He seemed to be congenial among his equals and liked by his neighbors and all his acquaintances, but between him and us there yawned an abysmal chasm. His Christianity had much of the stern Calvinistic quality like my father's, but not so deep and earnest, less of conscientious self-sacrifice to principle. In the common Christian duties he was very faithful, never omitting family worship, at which all must stand, also when "grace was said" at the table. His home, with its best hospitality, welcomed every preacher. I was a member of his family off and on more than a year during my boyhood and observed this difference between his and our own. In his intercourse with family and friends there was never any reference made to religious matters, never any comments on nor explanations of the portions of scripture read in family worship, and the reading was by himself alone. In Father's family every sermon preached would be discussed and commented on at home, and the call of any neighbor, religiously inclined, would be made an occasion for a like discussion. Then the reading of the chapter in family worship, which in the morning was by all the children (Mother being excused because she always had a baby to hold) was generally accompanied by explanations and comments, many of which I never forgot. In Father's absence Mother always conducted family worship in his place, and her sweet, simple prayers I always loved to hear, though she left out the Jews, the slaves, and the victims of intemperance (which Father never failed to mention) but never forgot the poor and needy. Her simple prayers were to Father's as the invocation prayer in the Sunday services of that day to the regular prayer

The one "so short, so sweet,
It lifts the waiting soul its Good to greet"
while of the other it could be said
"from shore to shore
It soars away and roams creation o'er,
From theme to theme, at home, abroad,
from land to land
The rounded periods roll, while still we
stand
The charm of worship at the first so sweet
Has all been lost in weariness of feet."
(See "Our worshiping days, pg. 43, Book of
Poems by Erastus Johnson)

though we were not required to stand in family worship, as at Grandfather's and in public worship, but to take the more fitting posture of kneeling, in which, if the prayer was long, we poor tired children could sweetly sleep.

About this time the country was in the craze of "Mori Multi Caulis" or mulberry tree and silk worm culture, and like most well-to-do farmers throughout New England, Grandfather went into it, setting out quite a little orchard of the costly young trees and buying a stock of silkworm eggs. One chamber in his spacious house had been set apart as the silkworm room, and to watch the busy creatures was very interesting to us children, and even "children of a larger growth." Busy, not at making silk, for that is spun in the quietness of the death hour of the first stake of their existence, which is the only one allowed them if the silk is to be saved; busy eating mulberry leaves, hundreds of them on tables around the room, making such a rustling of leaves, leaving the fibrous frame-work of each leaf and passing to another till the voracious appetite is satisfied, first for growth and then for the wonderful material from which the thousands of yards of silk are spun by a little creature only an inch and a half in length, and all to build for itself a house in which to live a few days while putting off the old and putting on the new and higher nature, and in which to leave the embryo life of the next generation. I learned wonderful lessons, never to be forgotten, in that silk-worm room, but for money making it was a failure. It was too cold a climate both for tree and worm.

Another bubble that was ripe for bursting about that time was the timber-land craze. It is the common talk now-a-days that these are the days of wild schemes of speculation, but I think the days of my boyhood were fully equal to these. Speculations of these days are mostly of surplus moneys, such as can be spared without causing suffering and ruin. In those days ruin was the rule and not the exception. Many were the farmers and doctors and persons in all spheres of life, even spinsters, who risked all

in tracts of timber-land, real and fictitious, and lost. Among these was our old family physician, Dr. Roberts. It was said that he drove a very valuable horse 100 miles in one day to secure what was represented as a great bargain on a certain tract of timber-land. He secured the timber-land but ruined the horse, and what was worse, himself also. Paying some cash down, the balance was secured by a mortgage on his farm as well as the timber tract. The collapse came before he could sell again at the expected rise, and all was lost, and finally his reason itself. His first indication of insanity was said to have been a prescription of three acres of timber-land, half pine and half hemlock, every three hours. To the community, to the Quaker Church, of which he was a prominent member, to his 24 sons and daughters, and the mother of twelve of them, an irreparable loss.

For boyish sport we had coasting down those hills, and skating on that meadow by moonlight. For daylight there were other uses of greater importance. In Summer, when days were rainy so that farm work must be suspended, there was trout fishing in many brooks full of speckled beauties, and the number of them we could eat after fishing in the rain all day without dinner, I dare not say. Then there was swimming in Great brook "deep hole" one mile South after supper, then some more work in the field and milking was done. Often at noon after dinner was hastily swallowed, we three, Asa in the lead, Samuel and myself close seconds, sometimes neck and neck at John Gilpin speed, ran for the "deep hole," unbuttoning when we were near while running, ready to drop pants and shirt and plunge for a short swim, returning to our work within the hour allowed for nooning.

There was an ancient "one horse shay" hung on thowugh (?) braces, after the ancient style, drawn by an aged horse, driven gently by an aged man feeble in body, not from age, tall and straight, of military bearing, who used to come often to visit us after our removal to Jackson, with his equally feeble companion, between who there never seemed to be a jar of conflicting opinions, always greeted with a kiss for both by Mother, and a cordial hand shake by Father, while he had a good natured twinkle in his eye and hand shake for "us boys." They were Grandfather and Grandmother Page. He had swung his blacksmith hammer for two or more generations before and after the war of the Revolution, in which he had been a soldier and was enjoying its fruits in a comparatively comfortable old age on his pension, having turned over his shop and tools and business with all its good will to his sons, William the story teller, and Nathan, who would have been another but stuttered so badly that he couldn't and whose wife, becoming a lunatic soon after marriage, never recovered from it, both living to old age, he in the face of constant abuse, always treating her with all the tenderness and forbearance of love. That amiableness of disposition was characteristic of the whole family of eight children, as well as parents. It was, no doubt, this more than scholarship that made Mother the successful teacher that she was before her marriage. My first glance at Grandfather Page satisfied me, as a boy, and I always hailed the appearance of the "one horse shay". They came to live with us the few last months of his, and few last years of her declining years, welcome members while they lived, of our large family, but greatly increasing Mother's labors, for she was a helpless invalid from paralysis. He was a natural story teller and had a happy faculty of graphic description which was very interesting to us children, as he told of Revolutionary scenes and experiences in his personal history. According to his own statement, he was, in his early life, a man of remarkable athletic ability. I think they were members of the Free Will Baptist Church. I judge so from the fact that nearly all their posterity were.

Wordsworth wrote concerning children:

"Not from utter nothingness,
Not from entire forgetfulness,
But trailing clouds of glory do they come
From God who is their home."

And here comes another of these trailing clouds. It was one cold morning the 12th of February, 1836. He sent in his card and on it something was written which Mother only could read, for she only knew the language of the cloudland whence it had come. Translated, it read: "Let me come in." Yes, of course, let the little stranger come in; the cup of the mother's love is not yet full, let him come in; into the inexhaustible love of the mother's heart, into life's strange vicissitudes and the eternities beyond, let him come in. And his name was written below the other eight in the family Bible "Charles", and woe to him who dares to change it into anything not written in "the book." There came afterwards the interloper "P.," but what it stands for I never learned. "J" standing for "joker" would have been appropriate. Nicknames were never allowed in the family.

"Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest." (Micah)

"Here we have no continuing city." (Paul)

Our three years lease of the old homestead have expired, so these quotations fit our case. The eyes of dear Old Grandfather Page have been lovingly close, his warfare ended. We shall miss the twinkle of his eye and his exhaustless stories, but they will soon be forgotten.

"Unto him never more the glad days of Autumn
shall bring
Ripened fruits, nor flowers the Spring,
And mute shall the lips be that sing
Unto him evermore. While we, as before,
March on to life's harmonies sweet,
With hollow graves under our feet,
And heed not the surges that beat
On the mist-hidden shore."

(See Poem "Crepe" by E.J., pg. 66)

A 100-acre lot of forest land 2 miles Northeast of the old homestead in Jackson has been bought; advance payment made of $100.00 by building 100 rods of public road to get to it, mortgaging the lot to secure the $400, balance due, at 6 percent, never wholly cleared during Father's lifetime. A log house is built of three rooms and attic, one for living-room with stone fireplace, one room for Grandmother Page for the two years yet remaining of her

earthly life (one side being already dead and for the most part her mental faculties) and one room for parents, and babes in the trundle bed; attic for the rest of the family; a small room in one end for the young ladies, the larger part in the other end for fiddle, cello, etc., and five boys. A log hovel is built also for the two-year-old steers and heifer about to "come in," and two-year-old colt – soon broken to harness by the Oracle, who, from boyhood up, was always a horseman. And this, for the next eight years, is to be our boyhood home, yet not the final one. There must be one more before it settles down to its resting place, about 40 rods from this, where there shall arise out of the forest and the mill, slowly but surely as the years pass, a house and barn and stable and wood shed and wagon shed and work shed, shed on shed, after the style of New England concatenation, such as shall make the farmer's eyes glad as he leisurely walks rest-ward after his day's work, singing his favorite hymn:

"When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
in wonder, love and praise."

But let us take a retrospective view before deciding what number shall be placed over the front gate of this final boyhood home. As far as Father was concerned, I think we shall find it was No. 7. Let us see:

First, a tract of Government land away up on Moosehead Lake, which was then about as far "out of the world" as it was possible to get. A rude house was build, 10 acres felled and burnt; the following season's corn and other things planted, growing finely for bears and Indians to eat. Into this howling wilderness his young and beautiful wife, only 20 when they were married, never was taken, if indeed they yet married, which I think doubtful. This No. 1 was abandoned and title never obtained, so far as I know, from the government.

Second, he then hewed him out a home in the forest in the town of Atkinson, within hailing distance of civilization, where the Oracle Asa and my chum brother Samuel were born. Four years sufficed for this No. 2.

Third, four years at the logging camp (On W. bank of the Penobscot Riv. about 60 miles above Bangor, Township No. 2, Penobscot Co.) the birthplace of three – Erastus (which was myself), Henry, and Nathan, for No. 3.

Fourth, No. 4 home was 4 miles from Lincoln (East bank of Penobscot Riv. and about 10 miles, probably, from No. 3, Penobscot Co.), not seeming to be adapted to the raising of boys, was devoted entirely to girls, producing two fine ones (Kesia 1/7/1831 and Hannah 1/2/1833), and strange to say, only two children during our four years sojourn there, one becoming a preacher's wife (Kesia m. Rev. Geo. S. Kemp and Hannah's son – Rev Geo. Foster), the other a preacher's mother.

Fifth, No. 5 did better, netting two boys in three years on the old (Boardman) Johnson homestead (Jackson, Me.)

Sixth, No. 6 witnessed a decided falling off (was it "falling from grace"?), only three in eight years – George, James Brainard, and Mary Ann (2 mi. N.E. of old homestead at Jackson).

Seventh, only one was left to immortalize the final home of our childhood – Julie (12/27/1846 – 40 rods from no. 6) "And the windows of heaven were stopped" (Moses). (Six years at No. 7)

I was right. This was Father's 7th attempt to make for himself and family a home, and this proved a success, but came too late to be of the greatest good, for several of us older ones were already fledging out of it, and a few years later it went into the hands of strangers. Only six years, if my memory serves me, was he to enjoy the fruit of his labors in this pleasant house, making the final mistake of moving to Vernon, Ct., to board some of the children employed there, where he soon after died (5/4/1853) in the prime of his manhood, only 53 years of age, the immediate cause of death being a fall from slipping on some ice in the door-yard, causing a relapse after partially recovering from an attack of typhoid fever. Mother outlived him in a happy life of widowhood among her children 33 years (1853 – 1886), dying at the good old age of 85, not of old age, but of tumor in the stomach. She was beautiful in her old age as she had been in maidenhood, a luxuriant head of hair not yet gray, "her eye not dim nor natural force abated." By her request she was buried by Father's side in Vernon, Ct.

Of all the babies in our family, Mary was my favorite. Now I think I can explain the reason for it in such a way as to quench all jealousy. In the first place, she was a girl and not a boy. In the second place, the family had been, lo these many years, without a girl baby in it – in fact ever since I had been old enough to appreciate a baby that I didn't have to rock. For, starting into the rocking business when four years old, rocking the Edward's baby six months for my board, and others at home as they came down the stream of time, I came to the conclusion that rocking the baby must be the chief end of boys. Thirdly, when Mary got along I had become too big to do that kind of work, so all I had to do was to admire, while others rocked. Fourthly and lastly, though the only remaining baby to come to us from the baby-home in the cloud-land was Julia, and she was as lovely as her sister had been in her babyhood, she came into the home-spun carpet in all her glory of beautiful babyhood after I had left the pleasant home for "the world's broad field of battle" only at home for occasional "bivouac."

As an expression of sentiment with reference to the new comer, Mary, I will give some verses written from Machias, where I taught my first school at the age of 17. I think it was my first attempt, in any serious way, at writing poetry. She was about six months old. I have made a slight change from the original reading, but without making any change of thought, rhyme, or meter:

TO SISTER MARY

Sweetly rest
Mary, in thy cozy nest,
In thy babyhood, how blest!
Mother watcheth, never fear,
And thy guardian angel's near
Sweetly rest.

Calmly sleep

Though the storm without may sweep,
Chose thine eyes in slumber deep.
Ay, that smile I see it now
Rippling rosy cheek and brow
In thy sleep.

Oft in dream
Over hill and dale and stream,
Fancy bears me, and I seem
Standing at that cottage door
Listening to thy voice once more
In my dream.

Happy home,
Though afar my feet may roam,
Setting sun and twilight gloam,
Silent night and evening star
Take my thoughts to thee afar
Happy home.

Of these thirteen, eleven at this writing, Dec. 16, 1902, are still plodding on, some in much weariness of the flesh, looking for a "better country that is an heavenly" where there is no weariness of the flesh nor infirmity of age. Of the two gone on before, Henry and George, a short obituary I think is fitting here.

Henry finished his simple task ten years ago at the age of 65. I say simple, for such it was. Though physically fairly well developed, his 65 years of earthly life was only a prolonged childhood, mentally. I have heard Mother say that no mother who has not experienced it can imagine her agony of soul when, only a few weeks after his birth, the terrible truth came home to her conviction that she had given birth to an idiot. Yet he was not one of the lowest type. Gradually, as he grew up, he learned some things – how to speak some words and do some simple things, such as bringing in wood and water, turning the grindstone, getting the cattle from the pasture, and even looking after and rocking the baby; thus greatly relieving me of part of my boyhood life work, for which I hold him in grateful remembrance. And while rocking, would imitate Mother's singing of simple songs of lullaby, so far as the tune was concerned. He also picked up and sang correctly many tunes that he heard Father and others of us sing, and would sit listening attentively as long as any instruments wee played. Once I remember I was playing on the organ while he sat listening. Suddenly he started for the door. I looked out of the window and saw a neighbor reeling backward, having been hit a heavy blow by Henry's fist. He explained to the neighbor, partly by words that he could imperfectly speak, and partly by signs, that he did it because he thought his coming would stop me from playing. He was sent to school for several terms but learned only the letter "O." He seemed to be very religious, spending a good deal of time every day in private worship in the barn, praying for everybody he knew, far and near, and cattle and horses, especially "Chusis colts" that were pastured across the road, with which he was on the most intimate terms. When taken to church he would always kneel in prayer time while others stood. He was not entirely wanting in mechanical ideas and made himself a rude fiddle and bow. He always closed his daily devotions in the barn by singing "Old Hundred," accompanying the tune by going through the motions of playing on his imitation fiddle. He was uniformly harmless but jealous of any infringement on his rights, or breach of the rules of politeness, mostly with regard to occupying a vacated chair. If he left his seat to go out of the room and returned later, and if any one had been so inconsiderate as to sit down in it, he would proceed immediately to kick him or her out of it. He had a high regard for Kezia, and on a visit home at one time with her husband, Rev. George Kemp, she thoughtlessly took Henry's chair. Some one told her she had better get out of it before he returned or she might get the worst of it. She replied that he was a great friend of hers and she didn't believe he would disturb her, and thought she would see what he would do. He presently returned, looked at her with that wild look of his as he studied on the situation, then turning his black eyes on the Rev. George, "went for him!" It is not necessary to relate the sequel. She little thought that her experiment would bring George's dignity into such dire humiliation. That Henry was endowed with a human soul, I cannot doubt. That the cloud that covered it while he was in the flesh, was lifted from it when he entered the spiritual existence, I also believe. And that even he, after ten (?) years of experience in the spirit, may know more than some of the most learned of earth, I think very possible. Whether it be so or not I soon shall know.

Of my brother, George; I wish to say that he was my beau ideal. There was always an off-hand dashing go-ahead strenuousness of life about him that won my admiration. Sometimes, it is true, it seemed almost like recklessness. And so it is very liable to seem to us of different natures. Added to this, and regulating it, was his downright guileless honesty. As the saying is, "He wore his heart pinned to his sleeve;" it hid nothing. Withal, there was in his nature a great amount of tenderness for the needy and suffering, as shown in that grand work "The Children's Aid Society" of Sacramento, and then at San Francisco, originated by him was carried into successful execution, rescuing thousands of children from degradation and ruin, an institution worthy to be lassed among the grandest humanitarian enterprises of its nature, if not in its proportions. He went with his wife and boy to the, then, territory of Washington. This I think was in 1877, and then, at the close of his term of vacation, he decided to stay, sending his resignation to the trustees of the Children's Aid Society in San Francisco. And in that new country he found ample room for all his earnest life, which he closed the present year, 1902, while still in manhood's vigor, being only 63 years of age. In the Washington State Legislature he left the impress of his integrity, refusing an offer of $2,000 for his vote; in the Custom House (Coll. of Customs – Friday Harbor, Wash.), that of faithfulness to duty; in his business relations that of strict honesty; and in the church and Sunday School wherever he was located. that of an earnest Christian life. I will close this brief notice and tribute by relating an incident of his experience in the Civil War, and as nearly

as I can remember it as he related it to me not long before he left us:

CAPTURE OF GENERAL FITZHUGH LEE
(Not the one now in the U.S. Service,
but son of General R.E. Lee)

In the famous "raid around Richmond" near the close of the war, the "California Hundred" (what was left of it) in which George served, took a prominent part. It was a rule in the army that the men should take their places in the ranks in the order in which each could get his horse saddled and get into line, and none could get there ahead of him, so that he always occupied the place next to the Colonel. Another rule was to allow those occupying places at the head of the ranks to have the honor of going, if they chose, on any perilous exploit, number one being the leader and having command of the posse as Corporal. At one point in the raid the Colonel wanted three men to go on foot and set fire to the railroad bridge in the possession of the rebels. George, being at the head, with the two next, had the hazardous privilege of performing the feat. On the further end of the bridge was a small building and, thinking that the surest way of getting the bridge on fire was to fire that, they started for it on the run, but before leaving their covert, one of George's companions handed him a letter to be sent to his wife, saying that he was going to be shot, and his premonition proved true. Before they reached the further end of the bridge he was hit by a bullet and dropped through the bridge into the river. After firing the bridge the two started, each by himself, across lots for the regiment, which was then some two or three miles away. Passing near a fine mansion he saw a Negro riding a fine black horse with military trappings and asked him whose horse it was. He answered that it belonged to Mr. Fitzhugh Lee; that the house was his home. George, presenting his pistol, told him to dismount and go before him; mounting the horse he took them both to the Colonel. He immediately dispatched a posse with George to arrest the General. His wife put in a plea that he was sick and requested that she might be allowed to have the carriage made ready and that she might accompany him, to which George readily assented, and returned with them to the Colonel. The Colonel then sent a telegram to President Lincoln. Lincoln immediately telegraphed to General R.E. Lee, proposing an exchange for two colonels who were under sentence of death, to be shot that afternoon, with the assurance that if they were shot, that his son would be also. Lee was glad to make the exchange and three lives were saved. Strange as any fiction, about 25 years after this the two Colonels and their rescuer met at a G.A.R. convention in Pittsburgh, PA., for the first time after the war, and their mutual discovery was romance in real life. One of the Colonels narrated to the convention the circumstances. When he came down from the platform, George went to him and made himself known and became the hero of the hour. (Note: From a letter which I lately received from Gen. Fitz. Lee, of whom I had made inquiry, I learned that the house in which his cousin was captured was not his own home, but that of a friend, to which he had been taken in Hanover County, Va., after being wounded in a battle. The bridge burned was probably over the Pamunkey.)

I will now go back to pick up some things I have dropped along the way. One was the feat I performed "running away" which I tell with no pride. It was when I was about eleven, the first year in No. 6. At noon time one Sunday down at the old Center school house the boys all made a raid over the fence to pick up apples under trees belonging to the "great farm." Though I knew it would not be in accord with Father's ideas of propriety, I went also, and imprudently came into Meeting afterwards with several in my thin pants pockets, telling plainly the whole story. After Meeting, Father came to me and told me I must take the apples to Mr. Pillsbury and ask his forgiveness, sending Samuel along to see that I did it. Getting beyond sight of the home-going people, I said, "Samuel" (we never called him "Sam") "I am going to run away." He replied, "All right, I would if I was in your place." So, giving me his wooden pocket comb as a token of good will, as well as something very necessary in the performance of such an undertaking, I told him my plan, which was to walk to Belfast (15 miles) and find a chance as cabin boy on some vessel, and probably they would not see me again for several years. With affectionate adieus, I started. I walked as far as the Great Brook bridge, leaned over the railing awhile looking at the "deep hole" where we had taken so many happy swims and, thinking how many years might pass before I should look at that brook again, at the same time eating the apples. I climbed that mile-long hill, which doubled its length that afternoon for my meditation; nothing to eat since breakfast but a lunch and those windfall apples which sat harder on my conscience than my stomach; got to the top at last, sun almost down; sat down on a rock to do some more meditating, first on the distance yet to be traveled, 12 miles; 2nd, the condition of my stomach – not very much in it, as nearly as I could judge by the feeling of it; 3rd, the condition of my pocket – nothing there but a wooden comb with several teeth broken out; 4th, if only I hadn't started – but I had and must go on. How they would laugh at me all over town; but I must have something to eat; if I only had some supper I could sleep in somebody's barn – maybe I could get some here at Mr. Roberts' but then they would send me home. "Hello, Erastus, what are you doing here?" It was Mr. Roberts speaking. I looked around sidewise at him as I sat with my elbows on my knee, and answered, "I am running away." "But you don't seem to be running very fast just now," said he. "But what are you running away for?" Of course I had to explain the situation. He spoke some words of sympathy and ended by saying, "Now Erastus, you have a good home and you go home and stay there." If he had only offered to give me something to eat before sending me home, I would have held him in my most grateful remembrance to my dying day, for I had 5 miles to travel to get there. But home I skulked like a whipped dog. Several hailed me on my way with "Hello Erastus, getting back a-ready" and such expressions, revealing the fact that my tantrum had already spread, as such things will in country places where news is scarce. "And how did you know anything about it?" I

asked. "Why your Brother Sam called and told us. He thought it was good news, and we should know it – said you were going to sea and would be gone a year, maybe more." But I hastened home, planning to not make my appearance and take my whipping in the morning, which plan I succeeded in carrying out all but the latter. The whipping, to my great surprise, was never administered. Finding Mother's bedroom window open, as I expected, I crawled through and secreted myself under her bed behind the trundle bed, where there was just room enough to lie down. While there, Mother put the little ones to bed (Kesia and Hannah), and I heard them say, "Now I lay me down to sleep," adding a sentence or two for me, but in answer to their questions about me, Mother only said, "I guess he'll come back – lie still now and go the sleep." This they soon did, and when the rest of the family retired I silently crawled out and through the open doors, and up stairs to my place in bed, as they slept. Soon asleep myself also, dreaming of tables piled with food but not quite ready. In the morning nothing was said by anyone about me and my escapade; no questions asked, according to instructions. I had serious thoughts of challenging my chum brother to mortal combat for telling on me along the road as he went home, but finally concluded that it would be better to let the matter pass into oblivion as soon as possible. Though he was 14 months older than I, we were always about equal in size after the first few years of childhood, and victories in "rough and tumbles" were very nearly equally divided between us up to manhood.

A trial of strength and skill in one of these rooster contests was our final court of appeal in differences, though they were studiously kept from Father's knowledge. They were too violent, too liable to leave damaging lameness, as we fund by experience; besides, in our case, it required sometimes considerable ingenuity of evasion to explain rents in clothes and bruises of flesh, bordering too closely on falsehood. I remember once, we were peeling hemlock bark and a difference of opinion arose as to where it was best to aim a tree that we were to peel, each being tenacious of his own opinion in the matter; it was agreed that the case be appealed, and there among the leaves and brush was one of the hardest contests in my recollection. Which one of us won at that time has passed from memory. I think that was when I was about 13 years old.

Chapter III - Schooling and Schools

Nothwithstanding the fact that after 8 years of age my privilege of schooling was limited to 3 months in the year, at 11 years, if my memory is correct, I had completed arithmetic. The Winter before I was 12 we reviewed "Smith" and began "Colburn's Arithmetic", completing it the following Winter and beginning Algebra. That Winter I worked for my board with Grandfather Johnson, taking the whole care of about 12 head of cattle, cutting all the wood for two fires, and walking a mile and a half to school.

It was my practice to get up in the morning, stealthily, about 4 a.m. and, building a good fire, sit down on the hearth in the corner where the fire could shine on my book, and study for two or three hours by firelight. Candles were too precious to be wasted on such foolishness. I was large for my age and so was able to stand labors which, for the majority of boys, would be impossible. The Winter following, before 15 I think, I completed Algebra and Philosophy. The teachers of that day were not required to know very much and, with a few exceptions, didn't exceed the limits of the law. So, in Algebra, I had no help from teachers, though they were proud to have me put problems on the blackboard on examination days, they pronouncing the work correct as though they knew all about it. But I had one resort in time of trouble, and that was "The Old Cobbler" Uriah Warren: farmer, Postmaster, watch and gun repairer, wooden-clock maker, janitor, philosopher, astronomer self-taught, and friend of boys – especially of those who wanted to learn. With reverence I look back through the years to his ever ready kindly help. On revisiting the place of my childhood last year I took a walk into the graveyard. My grandparents and many other relatives were buried there, but I passed their tombstones by to stand with uncovered head by his.

At 15, having exhausted the good to be had from a country school, I had a great desire to go away to something better. I thought, if I could only get away from home for one solid year's study I could learn about all there was to be learned. But with such a family to be provided for, my father could not at first entertain the idea. To my great joy, my Cousin Samuel Silsbee, having completed his college course, came to make us a visit and, learning of my earnest desire, became my advocate. He was to take charge of an academy in Calais, Me. So, with Father's reluctant consent, promise being made that it should cost him nothing except my time, arrangements were made for me to go with Cousin Samuel for a year. And there I soon found myself 130 miles from home, installed as janitor of the academy building, for which service I was to get my tuition and a small remuneration besides to meet the expense of boarding myself, and I was to room with Samuel. I tried the experiment of living on graham bread and water, getting the lady in whose house we roomed to furnish me five loaves a week at 5 cents per loaf, and the loaves being of generous size, I found them amply sufficient and, with plenty of chewing, palatable, and of course wholesome. During the year I gained 15 pounds in weight and grew in height. I studied 14 hours out of the 24, slept 7 hours (9:00 – 4:00), leaving me 3 hours for janitor duties and out-door exercise, swimming in the Summer and running in the Winter with my teacher. My chief study was Latin. In addition to Algebra and Philosophy, which I had already taken, I went through, in the course of my studies, Chemistry, Natural History, Astronomy, Anatomy, Geology, "Upham's Natural Philosophy," Navigation, and Surveying, with as much of Geometry as was necessary in connection with the two latter studies. Which of these I took up that year with my cousin I cannot recall. We took up German also between us out of school, with the chimerical idea that some time, if

fortune favored, we would go together on a foot tramp through Germany. It was only a short time after the close of the year that he took his journey alone to a better country than Germany. Yet not alone – his Lord was with him.

To relieve the monotony, stave off homesickness, and get five square meals as a change of diet, once a month I took a foot tramp of 45 miles to Machias to stay over Sunday with Uncle Samuel Johnson, who was principal of the Academy there, going on Saturday and returning Monday. These tramps gave me no inconvenience of stiffness or soreness. A large part of the way was through forest where bears and wolves were said to be plentiful, but I saw none, though occasionally hearing the latter in the distance. The year ended; I worked my passage on a coaster to Belfast, walked home to Jackson, astonished the natives with Latin, etc., and settled down to the prose of farm life in the Summer, and a logging camp next Winter, which I liked better. Bringing me the following Winter, at 17, to my first experience in teaching, which was at Machias. There I had about 40 scholars, about half of them older than myself but they didn't know it – I had no trouble.

I began to wonder if I wasn't a poet – thought I would try it and see. I wrote several short poems, one of which "To Sister Mary" I had already given. Also "Scenes of Youth," beginning:

The scenes of youth, how soon they pass away;
Like morning vapors in advancing day.
Rising like bubbles on the rippling stream
Like them they vanish in their brightest gleam.
Stern manhood comes. No more that radiant brow,
That beamed with gladness, beams with gladness
now.
Those joys departed cheer the hear no more,
Only as memory recounts them o'er

as though I were already a man advanced in years, loaded with care, looking on youthful pleasures as something away back. Then going on to describe these scenes of youth passed away – the games of ball, the fishing, the rafting on the pong, the hunting, etc., it closes with some very good resolutions, as follows:
(pg. 89 Poems by E.J.)

But why repine at the decree of fate
Far higher joys, my soul, for thee do wait
These joys at best are fraught with earth's alloy;
Let nobler things thy heaven born powers employ.
Begin e'en now the everlasting life;
Gird on thine armor for the mortal strife,
With pride, with passion, every form of sin.
Thou shalt, God helping, glorious victories win.
And every victory, even here, shall be,
A foretaste sweet of heaven's own joy to thee.

Alas, "The Music of Nature," "Summer Evening," "The Night Hawk," and I think others, several of which found publication, bringing gratification but no other remuneration. Whether there was any true poetry to any of them except the titles, is a matter of doubt, as weighed in the balances of the present day higher poetic criticism, which seems to make mystification an absolute essential. When working in Marblehead in 1844 I was surprised one day at seeing my poem "The Scenes of Youth" in one of the Salem papers. On investigation I discovered that my chum brother Samuel, who was with me, had sent it in. Many since have found not only publication, but remuneration, but I think that the sprouting was better than the growth. The promise failed in its expected measure of fulfillment.

The term of school at Machias closed, with the best of promises to my friends there of everlasting remembrance and letters to be written, etc., soon forgotten, and now, after 60 years, I can recall the names of only three or four of that school of forty. To save expense and take the greatest possible amount of money home to Father, I resolved to shoulder my pack and walk that trifling matter of only 85 miles, which in the stage would cost $5. Walter, one of the preacher's large family (Rev. Stone, afterwards of Salem) a boy of about 14, wanted to go with me (we having taken a great liking for each other) to which idea the parents reluctantly consented; fitted him up with a pack including eatables for both, thus offsetting my protecting guardianship, and with buoyant spirit and lively step, we started. There was a forest about 12 miles in extent without a house, through which we must pass, some 15 miles probably from Machias, and we were cautioned before starting not to attempt to go through it unless we had sufficient time to do it by day. We were into it, however before we were aware of it. Finding ourselves beyond the last house evidently, the question arose whether to go back 2 miles or forward 10, and the vote was unanimous to go forward, although it was already getting dusk, and that forest had the reputation of being unsafe on account of wolves. Had my plucky little companion shown the least sign of fear I would myself have gladly backed out of the unpleasant undertaking, besides slipping back several inches at every step in the loose snow was getting monotonous to me. Also away in the distance could be heard sounds that were suspicious; true they might be the barking of dogs. No mention was made of them, nor much of anything else as we plodded on, munching bread and cake through that everlasting forest. About 10 o'clock (by my borrowed silver watch) we emerged into the moonlight glistening on the crusted snow of the open fields surrounding a comfortable looking farm house, thinking that surely now our weary feet would find rest, though neither suggested the idea of weariness in spoken words; but we were doomed to disappointment. From an upper window, shoved up for the occasion, came the announcement emphatic, "We don't put up strangers coming around this time of night," and down went the window. So on we trudged another half mile and tried it again, with no better success. They had no "spare bed." I argued the case with the assurance that a chance to sleep on the floor would be perfectly satisfactory, but all in vain. We started on and I said to Walter, "I am going to try a new line of argument at the next house. I will tell them that you are a preacher's son and I am a deacon's son, and see how that will work." After a walk of another slow half mile or so, up flew another chamber window and out

popped a night cap with ruffles around a face that looked sweet and motherly in the moonlight, and I rehearsed in her hearing the prearranged speech, according to the program. She broke out in the sweetest laugh I ever heard before or since; came down and let us in, wanting to get us something to eat, which we refused. She gave us her best bed of downy softness and snow white linen, went up stairs, and as she laid herself down to sleep again the angel whispered in her ear "I was a stranger and ye took me in." Such a night's sleep and such a breakfast! No charge. There appeared a man on the scene the next morning, and some children. What relation he held to her was uncertain. If husband, he only served as a figure-head; but she, God bless her, was such as we love to remember, and God also. Two days more took us to our journey's end, none the worse for our tramp. Walter worked for Grandfather on the farm through the season and I lost sight of him. If that journey was a forecast of his after life, it must have been a success. So ended my first swim.

I had not been resting long on the banks of that sweet haven No. 7 till it came into my head – our two heads rather, my chum Brother Samuel, and mine, to take a walk together to explore the regions around the center of the universe and see the Hub of it. Only 250 miles, that was nothing. With the hope of better returns for our labor, and promise of sending all home that was possible, which from past experience he had no reason to doubt, Father finally gave his consent, and we started. Our first objective point was Uncle Davis'es in Freedom; the second, Aunt Hall's in Lisbon. The Ides of March had passed, Winter seemed to be over earlier than usual. At day-break on a certain morrow we were to start; prospects seemed never more favorable, so far as we could see, for a fine day. But Father's countenance wore an ominous expression. He could read weather signs better than we. The worst storm of the Winter waked us by its howling and we looked out in the morning on a landscape of snow drifts, but it had stopped snowing; our things were in our packs and we must go. So breakfast over, chapter read once more, prayer offered, and good-byes said, trousers tied down, and ears tied up, - with our heavy packs on our backs we started on one of the most wearisome tramps of my life, getting some better toward night where the road breaker had been through; and a little after dark we had the satisfaction of hearing Uncle Davis saying, "My stars!" He carried us a few miles with his 32-year-old horse that required a double purchase to hold him, and we made Augusta with comparative ease before another night, and 35 miles with better walking the next day, which took us to Lisbon where we surprised Aunt Hall. About 30 miles, if my memory is correct, took us the next day to Portland, - traveling sloppy. At noon we had dinner at a farm house, sang the song, "The stranger's heart, Oh wound it not. A yearning anguish is its lot," etc. They charged us nothing. At Portland we came to the conclusion that a dollar apiece to Boston would be money well spent, saving enough time to more than earn that much. So the next morning found us in the confusing whirl of the great Hub. We soon were out of it, footing it towards Marblehead, inquiring along the road for a job; found it at the end of the road with Jo. Mason of Marblehead, where the waves wash kelp upon the beach, and the next morning we were set to pitching the long stringy stuff into carts to be hauled onto the grass fields, as hard work as I ever undertook. Our contract was for 8 months at $12 per month, beginning the day at 3:00 in the morning by milking 12 cows apiece and closing at sundown, the second milking being done after dinner. So our day of labor was about 15 hours. On rainy days and Sundays, Jo., as he was called (who was a class leader in the M. E. Church), had family worship at which the hired men were expected to attend, but I didn't enjoy it very much for the reason that I did not have much faith in the genuineness of his religion. I did not feel that any one who would work his men 15 hours a day could be walking in the steps of Him whom he professed to follow. My chum brother, after a few weeks trial, gave notice, to my sorrow, that he must quit, not being able to stand the work, and found an easier job at a neighboring farm driving a milk wagon. I completed my contract, but was glad when it ended. After working the following Winter in a planing mill in Salem I returned home.

I pass over the two following years in which I taught two schools in Winter, putting the balance of my time partly in mills and partly at farming, until the happy time came when I was of age. I had faithfully turned over to my Father all I could possible spare beyond the absolute requirements of personal expenses, but now how strange it seemed to have what I earned all to myself. And what now. It had been my only thought to pursue my studies as fast as I could earn money to do so, and go through college.

I met at Belfast, Me., an intelligent fisherman who had some acquaintance with Prince Edward's Island, having made several stops there on his trips to and from Grand Banks, and my conversation with him led me to the conclusion that I would make that my first objective point for the purpose of teaching. My natural propensity for adventure also had much to do in forming this conclusion. After earning a few dollars, sufficient I thought to take me there on foot, I took the steamer to St. John, New Brunswick, and started with my heavy pack on my back after my usual traveling style, on my long tramp. In those days when stage fare was never less than six cents per mile and wages were low, I could earn what was counted good wages by going on foot. Besides there was the interest of mingling with and seeing the ways of so many different kinds of people. Furthermore, it was very rare in those days to make any charge for entertainment among the common people, for a lone traveler on foot. That was before the day of tramping as a profession. This was more especially true of the provinces than in New England.

My load consisted of a folding valise of very large size, sufficient for holding all my outfit of clothing, including heavy overcoat and a few books; also a hat box for my tall hat (which was considered, in those days, of great importance for a teacher, as well as preacher, to give dignity of appearance) which served also as a lunch box. How much it all weighed I have forgotten, only remember that it was very heavy, with the "very" repeated after the manner of speech in these days. Just how far I had to foot

it to reach the gulf (Northumberland Strait) on the other side of New Brunswick, I have also forgotten. I only remember that I thought it far enough for all purposes of physical culture and the study of human conditions in that province.

The first Saturday night on the road I stayed with a family of church goers (as nearly every family seemed to be) and in the morning after breakfast they suggested that I ride to church with them, which would be about 6 miles help on my way, and they would introduce me to a brother living about the same distance the other side. It was a happy thought – there would be 12 miles on my road without any apparent breach of the decalogue, besides two sermons and another night's keeping with Brother ____. How much good I gained from the sermons I now forget. I must have taken this journey very deliberately for I was still another Sunday on the road. But the weather was hot, and remember, I had a heavy load to carry. Besides, what was the use in hurrying so long as I was getting my keeping for nothing and having a good sociable time among such nice people.

The next Saturday brought me to a still pleasanter experience. I heard a carriage coming behind me, looked around, and saw it was a fine team of two white horses and what looked like a circus advertising carriage. Coming nearer I recognized the driver as Thomas Johnson of Boston, son of my Father's cousin Abner, inventor and manufacturer of Johnson's Anodyne liniment. This was one of many teams that he had in service throughout the United States and Provinces, advertising his liniment and taking a load of it along to leave at stores. We had been acquainted before, for in driving from Boston he had been passing periodically through Maine and so kept up the family acquaintance. The meeting was mutually gratifying, but more especially on my part for very obvious reasons. I mounted the seat beside him to answer the question "What under the sun are you here for" as he drove on. He gave me an invitation to stay with him over Sunday at the farm house of a friend of his some miles ahead, which, of course, I was glad to accept. He had a shotgun with him and at the pond near the road shot two ducks, which served for our Sunday dinner. Monday I rode with him again, as he was still going my way, leaving at the country stores his hand bills and liniment. I think that brought me to Shediac where I took the boat for my destination, Prince Edward Island, only a short distance, landing at Charlottetown, the Capital.

Leaving my heavy pack and hat case, taking only a budget of underwear, I started next morning on another tramp looking for a vacancy in some country school. To find it took 130 miles more of physical culture in the way of walking which, relieved of my load and over a country of such beauty as this, and among a people so hospitable, was only pleasure. Nearly all the country over which I traveled was a rich rolling prairie with good farm buildings, showing prosperity. Finding at length a vacancy, a meeting was called and the matter discussed. There was evidently a difference of sentiment about this "Yankee". They were suspicious of Yankees, and had reason to be, for they had been swindled so many times by them on clocks, and buggies with paper tires, sold off at auction and falling to pieces with very little use, and many other things that have passed my memory, so it was no wonder. A vote was taken and the majority gave me the benefit of the doubt. A contract was drawn up for a year's term – at nine bushels of oats per quarter. If my memory serves me, oats were a legal tender by law at two shillings per bushel, or 33 1/3 cents per pound, being $3.33 1/3. The next morning at 9:00 o'clock found me in the office of Mr. Arbuckle, the Superintendent of schools for the Island, a rotund Scotchman feeling the importance of his position, smelling of something stronger than coffee, and affable. I found that the rule was to have the applicant for a diploma conduct recitations in the Normal School for two weeks in his presence, or that of one of the professors. Not a bad idea. I received my diploma, a document of immense proportions and good for a life time. I then went back to the hotel where I had left my satchel and tall hat box and packed them (as they had been packed hundreds of miles before) one day more. There was another route, so I gave the poverty-patch a wide berth on my return trip. I forgot to say that in addition to the oats for tuition, every teacher received 15 pounds from the Government. This was paid at the end of the year in Government paper notes of immense size and thickness, a half dozen being enough to fill a pocket. But that didn't matter much for very few people carried them or any other money, nearly all business being transacted through the medium of oats, or orders payable in oats.

All schools, so far as I know, were run the year round. In that respect they were ahead of New England. I found that my school consisted of about 30 very pleasant pupils, nearly half of them "Wrights," descendants of Revolutionary refugees, as were nearly all the people in that part of the island. All were well-to-do farmers, each living mostly within himself, making his own tools and leather and shoes; the women the cloth and garments.

The method of fulling their cloth was unique. In a long trough reaching across the room a yard wide and about six inches deep, the cloth was spread back and forth, warm water and soft soap put in, and it was ready for fulling. All the girls and boys of the neighborhood were invited to the "fulling party", a fiddler engaged and the thing was done; two things in fact, -- the cloth fulled and all feet washed. Four hours of dancing in warm soap suds with bare feet was sufficient for the most obstinate cases. Those who had conscientious scruples against dancing raised the trough to rest on tables, and with the hands keeping time to a song, accomplished the same result. One of this kind I attended. For food we had oat meal mush and milk for breakfast, the first I ever saw, which I became very fond of; no coffee. In the place of it, if desired, tea was furnished made from clover leaves, raspberry, blackberry, cedar, spruce, hemlock, and other things too numerous to mention. Once a day at dinner we had boughten tea. Supper was made chiefly on oat bread and buttermilk. In the place of any of these drinks we had milk if preferred.

Oysters were in great abundance, hauled up by the cartload and dumped in the yard where each one helped himself and herself at pleasure. I have never seen such

large ones since. The sound that waked me in the morning was the opening of oysters out on the oyster heap. They got up a picnic to raise oats in order to buy books for the Sunday school library. I hired a two-horse-team and wagon and carried my school. Admittance was one peck of oats for children under 15, and over that ½ bushel. I think the oats were shipped to Halifax and exchanged for the Sunday school books.

I made some changes from the established customs in my school. It was the universal custom to have all study done with a loud voice, the louder the better. They thought at first they couldn't study in any other way, but I broke them into the New England style. It was customary to do a great amount of whipping, the more the better was the public sentiment, and every teacher carried on his right big finger a heavy strap of harness leather with a hole in one end, with which, in the place of a switch to do his switching. I visited a school one half day, and I think that at least 30 boys and girls were switched, and some had two or more. It was a matter of great surprise to both parents and children that I should undertake to teach school without having any teacher's strap. But they soon became reconciled to it. Such a thing as singing in public school was a thing unheard of. I had a gospel hymn book with me; I wrote the words on the black-board and they very soon learned the tunes, and they came to the conclusion that singing was better than whipping.

There was a printed Government prayer to be read morning and evening, and I took the liberty to lay it aside and make up my own as I went along. And now came trouble. There were some, a minority, who thought that there was too much religion being taught in the hymns we sung, and they sent for the Superintendent to come and see about it. I knew nothing of it until his Highness, with his red nose, came swinging in one day. He had come 30 mines to investigate the charges. He heard the singing, looked over the book of songs, and was delighted with both. He had never heard anything so fine; he would recommend it to all the teachers of the Island. This he did in his first published quarterly report. As for the other matter, he said there was a law that the Government prayer was to be read, and to please the people I had better read it, but there was no law against putting more to it, and I could add on as much as I liked. For his part, he thought a little more praying and singing, and a little less whipping would be better for children. In his quarterly reports he gave my school the highest praise for discipline and progress in study, and recommended that the other teachers visit my school to get ideas.

The year ended, and I found I had a big crop of oats to dispose of. My board bill required but a small part of the oats. Horses were cheaper there than in New England and a horse team would take me home. So a span of horses and a wagon were bought with tandem harness; some oats made into oatmeal for horses and myself on the road; some more oats were given for setting us over to New Brunswick; everything put on board and we were ready for the start, which was to be early in the morning. The first thing I heard that morning was the sound of singing. I jumped up, looked out of the window and there were about 20 girls under it among the flowers, singing one of our school songs. I hastily dressed, went down, and we sung once more the songs they had learned and loved so well, and sent them home to their breakfast.

One incident of my journey home I will relate. As I was nearing St. John, two rough looking men accosted me when I was driving through a piece of woods, requesting me to carry them into the city, to which I consented, and one climbed up on the seat to ride with me. I told the other man he could sit on the bags of meal. He said he would rather ride on the horse I was leading and, untying him, jumped on his back and started on ahead with the horse on the gallop and was soon out of sight. I made up my mind that the horse was lost. Soon after getting into the edge of the city the other man left me and, passing several stables, I drove well through before stopping at one to put up. Going into the stable, to my surprise, I saw my horse in one of the stalls. The hostler said the man who left it told him not to let anyone have the horse but him. He did, though, the next morning when I was ready to start again. The thief had not shown up.

By stirring some of the oatmeal that I had with me into the water that I gave my horses, they stood it well to travel all day without stopping; I also. 100 miles more of good roads in New Brunswick and 150 mi. in Maine of terrible roads by way of my old home No. 4 near Lincoln, stopping one night only, which was enough; one night at Uncle Jos. Graves in Orono, and I was once more at No. 7. Driving up to the door after dark and knocking, Father came to the door, and I immediately discovered that he didn't recognize me, so I asked him, as though I was a stranger, if I could get entertainment for myself and horses. "I guess so," he replied. "I'll speak to the boys. Boys, can you put up this man's horses?" "Yes sir." It was William's voice and I could see him through the window as he started for his hat, saying "Come Charles, let us go and take care of the man's horses." He was the oldest boy at home. And there was Mother moving about, and the preacher's wife to be (Kesia) and the preacher's mother to be (Hannah) moving about also doing up the after-supper work, and five year old Mary playing "Harum-Scarum" with the little curly headed Julia. My, how they had grown! And the demure Henry sitting at the chimney corner, for it was raining, and though not yet late Autumn a bright fire was glowing, making everything look so cheerful. I took it all in as I looked into the window, waiting for William and Charles only a minute; I went with them to put up my horses. They failed to recognize me. I went in to the already prepared supper, took off my overcoat, inquired where there was a chance to wash my hands, answering questions with as few words as possible and disguising my voice. I sat down to supper and was about half finished when I saw Mother looking very suspiciously in my face as she brought me a second cup of tea. I returned the look and was forced to smile, when she exclaimed "Isn't this Erastus?"

Those horses, so far as I know, were the first brought from Prince Edward Island to the state of Maine. I sold them, also wagon and harness, at a good profit, making a good year's work and getting some interesting experience.

I returned to the Island the next Spring (after studying through the Winter with Uncle Samuel Johnson) to collect some bills, and brought back another horse and saddle, but this time I bought it on the mainland side. The horse sprained its knee and became lame, so that I could not ride him, and I sold him at Machias for $34 more than cost. That ended my jockey life which had opened so auspiciously. Ended because I wanted to carry out my life-long plan to get an education.

After returning from this second trip to Prince Edward Island I took up my studies again with Uncle Samuel, who had taken the old homestead – our home No. 5. It was a delightful place to study and he was a good teacher. That Fall I taught a term of High School at Monroe, and town school through the Winter. It was customary, and is yet, in those country towns to have those high school terms only for three months in the year, in the Fall. The next year was a repetition of the same program, with this difference, that the Fall term of High School and the Winter of Town School which I taught were in Thorndike instead of Monroe. At this last school Sister Hannah, the dignified, and Brother William, the jolly fiddler and songster (now Reverend), were two of the brightest lights. She was Editor and he (then 16) a prominent contributor of our weekly school paper, which was a source of much interest, also profit.

My next move was a term devoted exclusively to Greek at the Seminary at Bangor, under a private tutor, which gave the impression to many that I was studying Theology. Not very long ago I received a letter from some historical agent inquiring after my history as being on the list of students at Bangor Theological Seminary. Why my name should have been put there I do not know.

I had done something in the way of landscape sketching and studied perspective, but the making of anything satisfactory as a picture seemed a very tedious job. I had not enough patience for it. At Bangor I saw some crayon work done by the daughter of my landlady, and it struck me as wonderful; it was something new. I forthwith made a bargain with her to give me six lessons in the use of crayons. The ease with which a fairly good picture could be made in a short time enraptured me. I at once made up my mind that when my term ended, instead of teaching high school in the Fall, as I had been doing, I would try teaching this new and wonderful art. I knew that it would require less of mental labor and give more freedom for out-of-door exercise. I would have my scholars sketch from nature, and the occupation would be more interesting than the monotonous routine of common educational treadmill. I would try it. I had a horse and buggy, which were kept at No. 7 for their services. Just the thing. Meanwhile I made a sketch of the Seminary and campus for a sample of my prowess, framed it nicely and was ready for action. My term in Greek closed, I took my sample picture home with me and started out with my horse and buggy, taking along my masterpiece, as I esteemed it. About one day sufficed to get a class of some 25, which was as many as I wanted. The thing took like wild-fire. I had brought the necessary material along for our work to be sold to them at regular prices. I of course got a discount. We arranged to meet at the town house, which had been fitted up for high schools by the town, and I requested them to bring landscape pictures with them to select from as a copy for the first picture drawn, after which we would sketch from nature, devoting a certain length of time at each lesson to exercise on the blackboards in perspective. There were girls in their teens, married people, and spinsters on the sunset slope of life. The fad was booming; more wanted to come, and the class was divided to accommodate the different parts of the town, about 40 I think in all, occupying four days in the week. They heard of it in towns around and wanted it. I could only accommodate one more class, and started one in Dixmont, filling the week. They were intensely interested, especially in the outdoor lessons sketching from nature. They were so much pleased with their own pictures that they wanted to frame and keep them. So I went to Bangor, bought mouldings cut to the proper size and packed in boxes to be glued together as wanted, and so made a picture-frame annex to the business. In Dixmont I had a large class, making in all three classes, about 60 persons. The term was 12 lessons and lasting 6 weeks. I then went to Plymouth and Newport, where I met with equal success. I also did a little in the line of making pictures of residences for individuals at $5 each. When I came to figure it up I found I had done much better than I could have done teaching high school.

I had intended to return to my studies at Bangor, but under pressure was induced to go to Whitneyville for a term of Winter school, and when that closed, another pressure took me 50 miles further East to Lubec for a year's term in the High School. This school at Lubec had a bad reputation, no teacher having taught a term out for several years. The last one there was thrown out of the window head first into a snow drift. I knew nothing of it till after I arrived, but thought I would try it. School assembled, 130 big boys and girls, many of them as large as I was, and many of them there just for the fun of it. I called them to order and proceeded to take their names. Before I was through with the roll-call one of the largest boys in one of the back seats, taking his hat, started to go out past me. I laid down my paper as I saw him coming, and turning, struck him with my fist, laying him flat along the aisle. He went back to his seat. I taught the year out and had no further trouble with the boys. There was a clock in the room and I went to wind it up, after finishing the name taking, when a boy sitting near said, "Mister!" "What is it?" I said. "You'd better not wind up the striking part."

"Why not?" I asked him. "Coz we all keep time with our feet when it strikes," he replied. I said, "We will see whether 'we all' will keep time with our feet or not." I was almost sorry after I had wound it that I had thus thrown down the challenge; it would be so difficult to detect the offenders if there were any. But there were none. I found the management of the girls a harder proposition. I laid down the rule that there must be no whispering, and one of the largest in the school, a young lady of some 22, a daughter of a wealthy man, soon broke it. I spoke to her about it, but very soon she repeated the

offense. I then told her that if she did it again she would have to stand out on the floor, which would be the penalty. Very soon she whispered again, doing it in such a manner as signified a defiance, and I told her to get out on the floor. Not starting, I took out my watch and told her I would give her one minute to get out of her seat, or I would put her there if I was strong enough. I saw it was a rich treat for the boys. They were looking at one another with smiles, as much as to say "he's got his hands full." The minute passed and I 'went for her' as if for a desperate encounter. Just as I reached her seat she slipped out the other end and took her place on the floor. The battle was won. At noon she took her books and went home, but in a few days I received a note asking the privilege of returning. Here at Lubec I also had a large class in drawing, on Saturdays.

I had one privilege at this time in Lubec which I highly appreciated and enjoyed; that was a little sloop at my disposal in which I took a sail almost every day, when possible. The waters were not of the safest kind on account of a 40 foot tide, causing very rapid currents, and it was prophesied that I would get drowned. Usually there was no lack of boys who wanted to go with me, but I preferred going alone because of the supposed danger. I didn't want to be responsible for their safety. Girls of course wanted to go; their pleadings were in vain. There was response in my heart, but judgment forbade, and they would be too easily frightened in apparent danger. I had one experience which was the most exciting and dangerous of any in my life, not with the wind and tide but with a man-eating shark. Fortunately, I was not alone. Capt. Staples, an old sea captain, was with me, with whom I was boarding. We saw from the window a great commotion in the water of the narrows. The captain knew the meaning of it. It was a "man-eater" in a school of fish helping himself to a good meal. "Shall we go for him?" "Yes, of course." Running to the row boat, the Captain taking an axe along, we headed for him and were soon in the school of fish where he was having a "high old time" lashing the water into foam as he darted and wheeled in his frantic eagerness. Apparently angry at our interference, or thinking to satisfy his voracious maw more quickly on larger game, he came towards us with his mouth open wide enough for our size, and seemed to have his eye on me. As he approached I thrust one of my oars down his throat, when he suddenly wheeled, breaking the oar or biting it off, and as he turned, switching his long bony tail lengthwise against the gunwale of the boat, staving it in. Making a circuit as he coughed out the oar blade, he came again, as before, aiming for me, and getting the same treatment. The second oar proved tougher, and with it I held him steady while the Captain pounded his skull with the axe. Towing him to the beach where many spectators had assembled, we were the heroes of the day. I have heard of several instances of men being snatched out of boats by these dangerous terrors of the ocean. I heard of one man at Marblehead who was bitten in tow, leaving the lower part of the body part in the boat.

I wish to give a word of explanation in closing this chapter which should have been given in connection with my homecoming from Prince Edward Island with regard to the reason of my family not recognizing me after an absence of only about 13 months. I had raised a crop of whiskers only equaled by that crop of oats. At another time, after an absence of 12 years, I had some difficulty, not in hiding my identity, but in proving it. Presently Henry came along and at once held out his hand calling me by name, showing that though rational intelligence had been lacking in development, he was gifted with a greater power of instinct than the others.