

CHAPTER XXXVII

OF HUMAN INTEREST

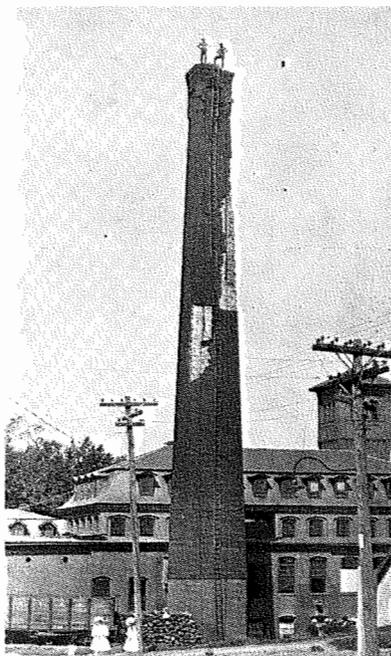
Many happenings, deserving to be recorded, have no appropriate chapter for their inclusion in a work such as this; others occur too late for their inclusion in their proper chapters; but, because of their human interest, they need to be told, lest they pass into oblivion.

LIGHTNING LEFT ITS MARK

When the mill chimney was struck by lightning in 1915, the bolt did extensive damage to sections of the sides and corner of the 125-foot chimney. The scars were still clearly visible when the chimney was taken down in 1966, without incident. White Brothers, who owned the mill property, hired brick masons from Boston, Massachusetts, to replace the broken bricks. While the work was in progress, the two workmen became inebriated and were lodged in the town jail on Blake Street for the night by Chief of Police George I. Nute. During the night they managed to escape and scaled to the top by means of ropes wrapped around the chimney. The next morning, when Chief Nute went in search of them, they yelled to him from the top:

“Hey, Chief, if you want us, come up and get us!”

The accompanying picture of the incident is loaned by Joseph Bibeau. At that time the



Bibeau family were living in an apartment in the Louis Cournoyer house on River Street, on the site of the present Texaco gasoline station. During that storm a small girl in the second floor apartment of the house was affected by a bolt of lightning and turned blue but recovered after medical treatment.

WHIP-POOR-WILLS

A sound that seems to have been stilled from the open spaces, woodlands, and farmsteads is the plaintive nocturnal call of the whip-poor-will. Locally, so far as has been learned, no one has heard one for many years. Down through history, the whip-poor-will notes were a part of the ritual of every springtime and summertime. Irma Royce recalls that several years ago one "whipped" over seventy times by actual count in an elm tree just outside her window, but none has been heard for several years. Whether these birds have become victims of pesticides is something for the ornithologists to answer.

HUNTERS BEWARE!

Some thirty or so years ago a happy Jaffrey hunter returned to the village with the "deer" he had killed and proudly displayed it around town. Chief Hubert O'Neil approached the vehicle to see the trophy, then told the hunter, "That is not a deer! That is Jason Sawyer's Jersey heifer." The owner of the heifer was then contacted.

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Twenty-five or thirty years ago Roscoe Sawyer mounted his horse and rode through field and woods to his cabin in the wilderness, when he spotted a Jaffrey hunter stealthily following his horse's tracks in the snow, mistaking them for deer tracks, until he reached the end of the trail. That day there was a chagrined hunter and Roscoe had a good laugh!

AWAY TO PETERBOROUGH

With ten railroad crossings between the W. W. Cross & Co., Inc., plant in Jaffrey and the heart of Peterborough Village, it is something of a miracle that no one was hit by two run-away box cars of the Boston & Maine Railroad freight train on the evening of October 29, 1969. George Fish of Jaffrey was one of the first to see them as he was driving home. He could hardly believe his eyes when he saw "a train" without a locomotive or caboose speeding over the Hillcrest Road crossing. But for Freight Conductor Thomas J. Walsh of Newton, Massachusetts, it was a night-marish ordeal as he hung on desperately to the hand grip and stirrup all the way over the better than six-mile stretch of railroad to the former railroad yard in Peterborough. There he jumped off, sustaining a minor leg injury. The lead car crossed Main Street and stopped in front of

the Superintendent of Schools office, cutting tracks across the street surface and demolishing a brand new automobile belonging to a member of the education board. A pick-up truck was also damaged.

Conductor Walsh was reaching for the handbrake when the box cars started rolling on their unscheduled run to Peterborough. One of the cars was loaded with bookmatches from D. D. Bean & Sons Co., Inc. Engineer John J. Kerrigan started in pursuit but was unable to overtake the cars which were speeding forty or more miles per hour.



JAFFEY VISITOR IN 1921

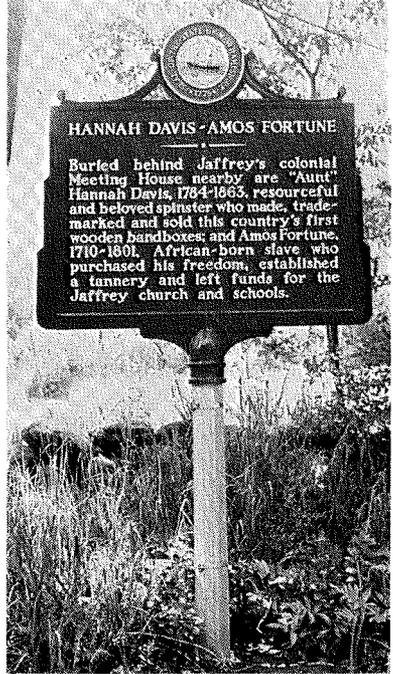
MOOSE VISITATION

Too late for inclusion in the chapter on Wildlife was Jaffrey's most recent official visit by a young bull moose on the sixth of August, 1971. About mid-afternoon George Lehtinen, working around the barn, saw what he thought was "the biggest deer" he had ever seen, feeding about three hundred feet away in the lush second crop grass and alfalfa. He called his sister, the writer, out to view the animal. A closer look revealed that "the deer" was a seven-or eight-hundred pound bull moose. He paid no attention to people but after getting his fill wandered slowly to the Monadnock Rod and Gun Club Recreation Area. After a vain attempt to con-

tact Conservation Officer Kenneth Warren, Paul St. Pierre was alerted. He found the moose at the Rod and Gun Club property. Later that evening the moose returned to the Lehtinen field for his supper after which he went on his wandering course to parts unknown. It has been surmised that he may have been the young bull moose seen swimming across a pond in Hancock, New Hampshire, recently. St. Pierre measured its footprints at the Monadnock Rod & Gun Club Recreation area and found them to be five and one half inches long.

HISTORIC DISTRICT

Jaffrey Center was legally established in 1969 as one of New Hampshire's first Historic Districts. A sign perpetuating the names of Aunt Hannah Davis, the famed maker of band boxes, and Amos Fortune, the town's first public benefactor, are inscribed on the historic marker, which was erected in the village previously.



THE ROAD THAT NEVER WAS

The short stretch of dirt road leading from Old Peterborough Road west of the present Ernest Jacoby residence (Old Jaffrey Town Farm) to the present Lehtinen Road was never laid out by the town as a public highway. The writer can recall when it was just a curvy, bumpy cart road through the Old Town Farm pine woodlot for the convenience of the families living on the former Town Farm and the George Jaquith farm (where the cellar hole now is). The original road laid out by the town is now the little used road leading westerly from the intersection of the above mentioned roads.

BREAKING ROADS IN WINTER



TOP: THE JAFFREY SNOW ROLLER WHICH WAS USED TO ROLL DOWN THE SNOW AFTER A SNOWSTORM. THE PICTURE WAS TAKEN AT THE ARK ABOUT 1912.

BOTTOM: WILL NUTTING'S OXEN HITCHED TO A SLED TO WHICH TWO PLOWS WERE ATTACHED FOR PLOWING TWO TRACKS FOR SLEIGHS ON COUNTRY ROADS UNTIL 1920. IN THE PRE-1920 WINTERS THOSE WHO HAD AUTOMOBILES USED TO "JACK THEM UP" FOR THE WINTER.

