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MADAM WOOD'S "RECOLLECTIONS"

By HILDA M. FIFE

Among the earliest novelists in American literature is Sarah Sayward Barrell Keating Wood, known in her later years as Madam Wood. Born in York, Maine, on October 1, 1759, at the home of her grandfather, Judge Jonathan Sayward, she married his clerk, Richard Keating, in 1778 and bore three children before his death in 1783. Then she began to write, publishing four novels in quick succession (Julia, or the Illuminated Baron, 1800; Dorval, or the Speculator, 1801; Amelia, or the Influence of Virtue, 1802; Ferdinand and Elmira: A Russian Story, 1804), and later two long stories laid in Maine (Tales of the Night, 1827). She married General Abiel Wool in 1804 and lived in Wiscasset until his death in 1811. The rest of her life she spent in Portland, in New York, and in Kennebunk with various descendants. She died at the age of 95, still "a delightful companion to her great-great-grandchildren, or to her nephews," according to her great-grandson, Dr. Edward Morton of Kennebunk, in whose home she spent her last years.

In American Fiction (New York, 1936, p. 20), A. H. Quinn describes Madam Wood's novels as "a mixture of the Gothic romance, the seductive story, and the moral tale." The idea seemed to be that with a good moral for the whole, anything goes—kidnapping, seduction, rape, murder, even incest. The action of all except Dorval is set in European countries; in her own words, "an aversion to introducing living characters, or those recently dead, rendered Europe a safer, though not a more agreeable theatre" (ibid). When she read Scott's Waverley novels, she recognized the inferiority of her own, and wrote no more of them. The books are now rare items, but there is a complete set in the Maine State Library at Augusta. She
also wrote in letters some "recollections" of her youth and family traditions, as well as a short narrative, probably based thereon, that was never published. The manuscript of this work, *War the Parent of Domestic Calamity: A Tale of the Revolution*, is at the Library of the Maine Historical Society in Portland. Other letters are extant in family attics, and a poem is in the Old Gaol Museum in York.

The two letters that follow, known as the "Recollections of Madam Wood," were written in the 1840s, when she was in her eighties, in answer to inquiries from younger relatives. There are several handwritten copies in existence, one in the Maine State Library at Augusta headed: "Recollections of Madam Sally Wood, relating to the early Notabilities of Kittery and the vicinity. Kindly copied for me by Mrs. J. B. Upham. C. H. Bell." A preface to this copy states that it was "copied by Mrs. Charles Cushing with the permission of Madam Wood of Kennebunk, in 1849" and that "Mrs. Wood was 82 years old when this was written." Mrs. Cushing (1781-1875) and her husband lived in the Governor Benning Wentworth house at Little Harbor, near Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Charles Henry Bell (1823-1893) was a legislator, senator, and governor of New Hampshire. In 1868 he gave up his practice of law and devoted himself to the research and writing of local history around Exeter. To date, nothing has been discovered as to the identity of Mrs. Upham.

A second copy of the manuscript is in the New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston: "Letter written by Mrs. Wood at the request of Mrs. Cayting [Keating], and copied by Mrs. M. T. Ladd. August, 1849." At the end of this copy appears the sentence: "Copied for Mrs. C. W. H. Dall by Anna Q. T. Parsons, March, 1851." The name Keating is spelled in several ways in documents of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Mrs. Ladd was a great-grandniece of Madam Whipple, as well as a fourth cousin of Madam Wood; all descended from the first Robert Cutt. Mrs. Dall is the author of *Historical Pictures Retouched*, 1860, of which some sixty pages are based upon the two letters. To date, nothing has been discovered as to the identity of Anna Q. T. Parsons.

A third copy of the "Recollections" is owned by Joseph William Pepperrell Frost of Kittery Point, Maine. It has no head-
The letters have been printed in two newspapers: the Portsmouth Journal in three installments on May 14, 21, and 28, 1859; the second in (probably) the Times, in five installments during January 1903. Only clippings of the latter are available. Parts of Letter II are included in Mary Pepperrell Sparhawk Cutts, The Life and Times of Hon. William Jarvis of Weathersfield, Vermont (Cambridge, 1869), 434-437. There are references to the second letter in Eliza Buckminster Lee, Memoirs of Rev. Joseph Buckminster, D.D., and of His Son, Rev. Joseph Stevens Buckminster (Boston, 1849, Chap. V and passim; also in Usher Parsons, The Life of Sir William Pepperrell, Bart. (Boston, 1856), 233-234, 327-328. Further details are to be found in Cecil Hampden Cutts Howard, Genealogy of the Cutts Family (Albany, 1892), 505.

A story based upon it, “A New Hampshire Governor’s Dinner,” was written by H. Maria George, a contributor to Youth’s Companion and other magazines. The second part of Mrs. Caroline H. Dall’s Historical Pictures Retouched (Boston, 1860) is a collection of tales and sketches. The first two of these are a re-telling of the events in these two letters of Madam Wood; see “Long Lane,” 267-289, and “Pepperrell House,” 290-330. Mrs. Dall changes the order of events freely and presents them as stories told to Mary Stevens by her grandmother at the parsonage in Kittery Point. The grandmother, in her version, becomes the I who visits Madam Whipple at Long Lane and who tells of the Cutts establishment as described by her grandmother. Hardly a detail of the “Recollections” is omitted, and often they are printed exactly as in the manuscript. Mrs. Dall nowhere mentions Madam Wood; she states only (in the preface) that she holds, “in the handwriting of her collateral relatives,” the “auld wives’ tale” and traditions that “cluster around the semi-historic name of Mary Stevens.”

Another author who knew the “Recollections” is Nathaniel Hawthorne. In his American Notebooks (Randall Stewart, ed., New Haven, 1932), Hawthorne abridges between January and June of 1842 the content of both letters into ten or eleven paragraphs, mostly a word-for-word rendering of the parts that interested him (94-96). He makes no reference to his
source, and Stewart says (296): "I have been unable to dis­
cover the source of the preceding nine [eleven] paragraphs." It is unlikely, however, that Hawthorne learned of Handker­
chief Moody through Madam Wood’s notes (rather than from Emerson, as suggested in footnote 18, below). He does not include in his notebook the material about Joseph Moody found in the letter. Furthermore, “The Minister’s Black Veil” appeared in 1836, earlier than the presumed date of the let­ters.

So far as is known, this is the first attempt to annotate and evaluate the material in Madam Wood’s two letters. For this publication, the copy in the Maine State Library has been used, corrected where necessary by collation with the other two available copies. The punctuation and spelling (sometimes varying among the separate copies) has been modernized. The original letters in Madam Wood’s own handwriting have not, to date, been found. Further information about other copies, especially the original of each letter, or about any of the peo­ple named in the letters, will be welcome.

For the information in these notes I am especially indebted to:

Usher Parsons. The Life of Sir William Pepperrell, Bart. (Boston, 1856).
Everett S. Stackpole. Old Kittery and Her Families (Lew­istons, 1903).
Also the Cutts and Wentworth genealogies.

I wish to express my appreciation for the financial assistance of the Coe Fund at the University of Maine in making this study.
LETTER I

It is so long since I have even thought of the persons and places you desire to be acquainted with, my dear Mary,1 that I had almost forgotten their existence. It is true that I have an old and rather large volume that contains a variety of recollections, but it is very much defaced by time, many leaves torn out, many sentences obliterated, and others in as cramped a hand as I am now writing; but to gratify you, my dear Mary, I will try to render a page of it legible, and if it will give you any pleasure, I shall be amply repaid.

[I] will ransack my memory to say something about Sir William Pepperrell,2 too great a name to be forgotten by one unused to titles, unacquainted with wealth or grandeur. This gentleman was son, and I think the only son, of respectable parents, and from them inherited a very large estate. He was well educated, but early embarked in mercantile life and obtained a thorough knowledge of business. In a few years he accumulated a fortune, which has never been exceeded in this

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1 The identification of Mary is an intriguing puzzle. In the 1859 Portsmouth Journal printing and in a quotation from this passage in William Goold, "Madam Wood, The First Maine Writer of Fiction," Collections and Proceedings of the Maine Historical Society, Second Series, I (1890), 401-408, the phrase reads "my dear friend," but in the MSL and the NEHGS copies it is "my dear Mary." A brief preface to the 1859 printing announces that the letter was written "for her relative, Mary Quincy, daughter of Hon. Josiah Quincy, the former president of Harvard College." In the next issue, however, a correspondent "well acquainted with the family" says that it was written for Miss Susan Quincy, sister of Miss Mary. Eliza Susan Quincy (1798-1867 or later) was her father's "confidential friend and advisor" and assisted him in his biography of his father. She also wrote a memoir of her mother and worked with her brother Edmund on his biography of their father. There are, however, clues in Letter I, references to Mary's relatives, and neither Miss Quincy fits into the pattern. Goold writes that Mary is Mrs. Cushing; but Mrs. Cushing's name was Ann, not Mary. The Mrs. Cating in the NEHGS copy is Mrs. Keating. The signature at the end of this copy is Sarah Hayward Barrell Cating Wood, with Keating printed above Cating; and a footnote to Mary on the first page of this manuscript adds: "Mrs. Cating of Boston—her grand-daughter." But Madam Wood's son had no daughter, and her daughters' children would bear the names of their fathers, Frost or Vaughan, not Keating.

The best possibility to date is the identification of Mary as a daughter or granddaughter of Madam Wood's brother-in-law, Oliver Keating, who married Lucy Lyman in 1785 and moved to Boston in 1799. The internal evidence seems to support this identification, as will be indicated in later notes.

2 William Pepperrell (1696-1759) led the colonial forces at the victory of Louisburg in 1745, for which achievement he was knighted by George II. He is said to have been the wealthiest man in colonial Maine. He was not, however, the only son of his parents: he had an older brother and six sisters (Byron Fairchild, Messrs. William Pepperrell: Merchants at Piscataqua [Ithaca, 1954], 21).
part of the country. At an early age he married a lady of respectable family and possessed of considerable fortune. She proved a most excellent wife. [She was] a very small woman with small intellect. Upon her marriage her father wrote her a letter, which he had printed for the benefit of young married ladies, and she presented one to my dear mother. This letter would now be a curiosity. The writer descends to all the minutiae of female employment—charges her never to work one moment after sunset on Saturday evening; never to lay aside her knitting work without its being in the middle of the needle; always to rise with the sun; to pass an hour every day with the housekeeper; to visit every apartment from garret to cellar; to attend to the brewing of her beer [and] the baking of her bread; and to instruct every member of her household in their religious duties. How strange would a lady of the present age think such instructions.

Sir William was uncommonly fortunate in business and in all his undertakings, and his spirit of enterprise was not only useful to his family, but to all around him. He was magnificent in his way of living. He had a hospitable and social disposition; [he was] vain of his prosperity; and oftentimes when the subject turned on his wealth he would boast that he could walk from Kittery Point to Saco without stepping upon an inch of land that did not belong to him.

Of a large number of children only one son and one daughter attained the age of maturity; the others found an early grave.

When the war between France and Great Britain occurred, Sir William was appointed commander of those forces that were raised in the New England provinces, and was present at the taking of Louisburg, where he displayed great personal bravery and good judgment. Upon the conclusion of the contest he was knighted by George the Second, and the City of London presented him with a service of plate and a table of solid silver. I have seen them. The table was very narrow, but long; the articles were numerous but of small dimensions;

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*Mary Hirst, daughter of a wealthy Boston merchant and granddaughter of Judge Samuel Sewall of Boston. She and William Pepperrell were married in the winter of 1723.

4 This appears in the Portsmouth Journal, 1859, as "a table and a service of plate." Several times the editor, Charles W. Brewster, changed the wording of the letters slightly in interest of smoothness or accuracy.
the tureen did not hold more than three pints. At the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, when the Pepperell and Sparhawk property was confiscated on account of the Tory principles of the family, this plate was sent to young Sir William, a grandson of the General, residing in London. It was considered so valuable that Sheriff Moulton of Old York\(^6\) with a guard of six men, well armed, accompanied it to Boston, where it was embarked for Liverpool in a ship then ready for sea.

I cannot omit to say that when Sir William went to Louisburg, he took with him as chaplain, Rev. Mr. Moody of Old York.\(^6\) An entertainment was given soon after the surrender of Louisburg, to the officers who had so bravely and so honorably directed the siege. Some of the men expressed their apprehension that dinner would be all spoiled waiting for the chaplain's blessing. When all were ready, Mr. Moody lifted his hands and eyes to heaven and said, "Lord, the mercies that thou hast bestowed and the benefits have been so wonderful, time is too short to express our sense of thy goodness. We must leave it for the work of eternity. Fill us with gratitude and bless what is set before us. Amen." So short and so comprehensive a blessing was perhaps never expressed by so pious a man.

Sir William returned crowned with titles, honor and wealth; his business was in all respects successful, and his cup overflowed with happiness. His only daughter married Colonel Sparhawk,\(^7\) a gentleman of elegant manners and imposing appearance, a scholar and a man of fine sense, but by no means a man of business; and some have assured me that he was not the best of husbands. The son, Andrew Pepperell,\(^8\) a fine,
handsome young man, was engaged to a young lady, Miss Waldron,9 a daughter of General Waldron of New Hampshire. This lady was afterwards the wife of Secretary Fluker and mother of the late Mrs. General Knox. This family—so high in the world, so talented, so honorable, and with the approbation of all concerned about to perform so important a connection—became the topic of fashionable conversation. Great preparations were made to celebrate the nuptials with a magnificence unknown in this country. But when all the preparations were completed and the guests from a distance had arrived, the bride that was to be declined giving her hand to young Pepperell, assigning as a reason that she could not trust her happiness with him, because he was addicted to low company and low pleasures. It is impossible to describe the disappointment, chagrin and regret of the happy family, the indignation of all, the sorrow of the mother and sister, and the rage of the father. The end was more distressing. The disappointed lover returned to Kittery Point in a state of mind little short of distraction, and ten days after, while walking in the streets of Portsmouth under a blazing sun in the month of August, his career was suddenly arrested by a summons from the Conqueror of all men: he fell dead upon the spot, and his lifeless remains were carried to his afflicted family. Such was the heat that it was found necessary to pay the last duties to him, who had been the idol of his parents, the succeeding day. His body was placed in a splendid coffin, adorned by escutcheons and all the paraphernalia of wealth and woe, and borne to the tomb that contained the ashes of his ancestors. Some author has said, "It is the fate of greatness to weep unpitied," but the aphorism did not hold here in this sad case. The afflicted mother mourning for an only son, a sister deprived of the companion of her childhood and the friend of her later years, snatched from them in this sudden and melancholy manner, in all the pride of talent and riches, was a shock that rendered every heart full of sympathy and filled every eye with tears.

9 Madam Wood's memory is faulty here. The young lady engaged to Andrew Pepperrell was Hannah Waldo, daughter of General Samuel Waldo, a friend and business associate of Sir William Pepperrell. Hannah married Thomas Fluker, Royal Secretary of Massachusetts, and their daughter Lucy married General Henry Knox, associate of George Washington both during and after the Revolution.
Sir William, I have been told, lost his gaiety and social qualities, and seldom mixed with his fellowmen, except in business. Death had visited him, his house was the house of mourning, and for the first time he began to prepare for an event that in time must arrive to all.

Judge Sewall of York, then a young lawyer, was sent for, to write the will that would convey his worldly possessions to his posterity, and the anxiety he displayed to secure his wealth to his grandchildren was expressed in every clause. It was entailed upon the third and fourth generations, and the name of Pepperell was an appendage which every heir was obliged to assume. Poor man, he thought it secure, but the best laid plans of mortals are often prostrated in the dust, which will eventually receive them, by the wisdom of the Most High, to whom the fall of the monarch is of no more importance than that of the beggar who asks alms at his gate.

Judge Sewall lived to see his prophetic fears fulfilled. Two of Sir William’s grandsons were to have been our town’s poor, but the good and worthy Daniel Humphreys arrested this degradation and received them as members of his own family.

Andrew Pepperell, H. C. 1743, only living son of Sir William, died in 1751, aged 26.

William Sparhawk, H. C. 1766, took the name and title of his grandfather, Sir William—Farmer’s Register.

The house in which the Baronet resided had no pretensions to elegance: a number of small, inconvenient rooms, but in

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10 David Sewall (1735-1825) was graduated from Harvard in 1755. He was only twenty-three when Sir William made his will in January 1758. Madam Wood may be mistaken here; according to Ernst in New England Miniature (Freeport, 1961), 178, he was not admitted to the bar until 1760.

11 Daniel Humphreys, Jr. (1770-1800) married Catherine, the third daughter of Nathaniel Sparhawk, Jr. (grandson of Sir William). The “grandsons” in the letter (really the great-grandsons of the baronet) were brothers of Mrs. Humphreys. Mrs. Humphreys died in Kittery in 1805, and, according to Parsons, Life of Sir William Pepperrell, 335-336, Nathaniel Sparhawk III, a semi-invalid, lived with the Jarvis family (Mrs. Jarvis was his half-sister) until his death in 1836, and was “thus . . . saved . . . from the almshouse.” His brother, William Pepperrell Sparhawk, died in York in 1817, unmarried and “very indigent and indolent.”

12 William Pepperrell Sparhawk (1746-1816), Sir William’s heir, was graduated from Harvard in 1766. He sailed for England in 1775 and died in London in 1816. His only son died unmarried, and the baronetcy came to an end.

13 This is the house in the center of Kittery Point known as the Pepperrell Mansion. Built in 1682, it is now owned by Joseph William Pepperrell Frost, whose ancestor, John Frost, married Mary Pepperrell, the sister of Sir William.
every one of them was displayed the arms of the Sparhawk and Pepperell families over the fireplaces, and the crest blazoned on every door.

The mansion of Lady Pepperell was finished after the death of her husband and combined both elegance and convenience.

The house of Colonel Sparhawk was really splendid. Built by Colonel Sparhawk's father, it contained a number of apartments, spacious in size and height. The furniture was handsome and costly. More than forty portraits, most of them whole length, ornamented the walls and shone as you ascended the noble staircase.

Sir William also built a very handsome house for his unfortunate son. It was entirely furnished and ready to receive the bridal pair. The afflicted parents never entered that dwelling that so forcibly reminded them of their bereavement. When soldiers were stationed at the Point during the war, this house was occupied as barracks. Such was the effect of party rage that the windows were demolished, the paper torn from the walls, the underpinning torn out and taken away; and a few years after the peace, the house itself was blown down by a violent tempest. When I visited Kittery Point I saw not a vestige of that noble building. The summer house and the garden with the tomb remained as the melancholy memento of the frailty of human grandeur.

I have said so much of Sir William that I must mention his death. I am not chronologist enough to say in what year that event took place, but I know that the funeral was such as has never been witnessed in this country. The body lay in state for a week. The house was hung with black, every pic-

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14 This house, erected in 1760, is known as the Lady Pepperrell House and is now in possession of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

15 Sparhawk Hall, built by Sir William Pepperrell (not by Colonel Sparhawk's father) in 1742 as a wedding gift for his daughter, is now only a shell, parts of the interior having been moved to museums and used for restoration of other houses.

16 In his letters to Samuel Waldo about the forthcoming marriage that would join the two families, Sir William makes frequent reference to this house, which he built in 1747.

17 Sir William Pepperrell died July 6, 1759. Madam Wood was of course writing from tales she had heard, not from her own observation (as stated in A Reference List of Manuscripts Relating to the History of Maine). She was not born until October 1 in 1759.
ture and mirror in the mansion of Mrs. Sparhawk was covered with crape, and everything presented a sable hue. A sermon was delivered at the meetinghouse, and the pew of Sir William and his daughter was also covered with black. The procession was the longest ever known. Two oxen were roasted (but not whole); bread, beer and spirits [were] given to all the common people, while rich wines and richer viands covered the tables in the house that had once been the dwelling place of him who should know them no more, and to whom all earthly grandeur was as nothing.

Your questions respecting Handkerchief Moody\(^{18}\) will be but poorly answered. Of him I know but little; his talents, I have heard my grandfather\(^{19}\) say, were of the first order, and in early childhood he was considered a wonder, but an unfortunate event gave a sad colour to his after life. When but ten years old, while playing with a firelock which he supposed not loaded, he shot his favorite play-fellow. Convulsions followed and a fever for a long time threatened the life of young Moody, and though time and the attention of friends restored him to health, perfect peace and serenity were forever strangers to his breast. He no longer indulged in the sports of youth or the pleasures of friendship. His studies were never interrupted by a laugh, and although he excelled all his competitors as a scholar, he avoided all social intercourse and confined himself to books and the conversation of men of learning. At an early age he became Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in the Province, but I have been told that he never ascended the bench without trembling and often declared that if justice was attended to, he should stand at the bar and atone by a violent death for the blood of the innocent which he had shed.

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\(^{18}\) Rev. Joseph Moody (1700-1753) was the son of Rev. Samuel Moody of York. His sister married Joseph Emerson, and among their grandsons was Ralph Waldo Emerson. Hawthorne might have heard from his Concord associate the tale of Handkerchief Moody and based thereon his story "The Minister's Black Veil," to which he added the footnote, "Another clergyman \ldots\ Mr. Joseph Moody, of York, Maine, \ldots\ made himself remarkable by the same eccentricity that is here related."

\(^{19}\) Judge Jonathan Sayward (1712-1797) was a prominent and wealthy citizen of York. Even though he was a Loyalist during the American Revolution, he continued to live in his house there and serve the town in various capacities.
He married a lady by the name of Sewall, and although a good man, he was by no means a desirable husband.

After a few years he relinquished his judgeship and became a minister of the Calvinistic Church, and for many years before his death he wore his face covered with a handkerchief, for he declared no man should look upon the face of a murderer.

This is all I can remember having heard of this singular man, who had ceased to live before I was born.

The Reverend Chaplain of Sir William Pepperell was brother of this unfortunate gentleman, and of him a variety of anecdotes were told, which I have not at present the time or skill to relate, but you shall have a few. He was indeed the chivalrous champion of Christianity and religion. He told all of their sins and vices, and endeavored to reclaim sinners by public exposure and ignominy. His sermons were very lengthy and his prayers equally so, so that the whole of the Sabbath was spent at the meeting house. He refused a salary and chose to live on the bounty of his people, and his family were frequently without the means or comforts of life. His lady was not always a willing partaker of the few and scanty blessings that rendered him perfectly happy. This gentleman was the uncle of your excellent grandmother. He had the honor of educating her and taught her lessons of self denial, which she has told me were of great service to her in after life. She continued under his care until she became the happy wife of your good grandfather, who for half a century was a settled minister in Old York. His preaching and practice were in conformity with the doctrines of the religion which for so many years he continued to adorn.

20 Joseph Moody married Lucy White of Gloucester. It was his father, Rev. Samuel Moody, who married Hannah Sewall, cousin of Judge Samuel Sewall of Boston.

21 The chaplain was Rev. Samuel Moody (1675-1747), father of Joseph Moody, not brother.

22 Here is a piece of the puzzle as to the identification of Mary. "Your good grandfather" is Rev. Isaac Lyman (1725-1810), who succeeded Rev. Samuel Moody at York and served from 1749 until his death, well over half a century. He married Ruth Plummer of Gloucester, "your excellent grandmother." The Plummers of Gloucester married into several York families (Moodys, Saywards, Lymans, Barrells) during at least three generations. The tracing of the exact relationship between Samuel Moody and Ruth Plummer Lyman has yet to be done. Father Moody is said to have had a Latin school for boys in York; teaching was evidently one of his many services to his parish.
Of the parsonage at Kittery Point I am only too fearful of being tiresome in answering your questions. Where is the habitation? The inhabitants of that charming abode I have always known, loved and respected. Alas, all are now gone—but you shall have my reminiscences. The house, as I have always thought, resembled the one in The Deserted Village. A small, neat and fanciful yard, or to speak in modern terms, the court in front opened upon a garden where flowers, fruits, vegetables, and box were arranged in such a charming and regular manner that it rather had the appearance of an ornamental than a useful spot. From it we had a view of New Castle, part of Kittery, Rye, and Portsmouth. The noble Piscataqua river sparkled in the sun as it passed this sacred domain, and within appeared

The white-washed wall, the nicely sanded floor
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door.

A few pots of flowers were arranged in the old fashioned window seats; in one corner books lay upon the table, while a tea set of china ornamented the center of another, placed under a mirror between the windows. Several pictures hung over the fire place and on the walls, one of which I think was a portrait of Mrs. Stevens. The hearth [was] as bright and red as paint could make it; the fire irons black except the steel tops, which were polished to the brightness of a diamond; the small bellows, brush and tassel that was attached to the bell are before me as vividly as when I first visited that sanctuary of virtue and wisdom at ten years old, when I thought it the most delightful apartment I had ever seen.

Dr. Stevens was, I think, the first clergyman in Maine that was honoured by that title. Learned, wise and honourable, his manners polished, his language pure and refined, he united in the fullest sense of the word the pious Christian, the scholar, and the finished gentleman. He was all but worshiped by the poor, sought by the rich, and respected by all. Possessed of

23 This house, built in 1729, now serves as the parish house of the Congregational Church at Kittery Point.
25 In the Frost manuscript, this is Miss Stevens.
26 Dr. Benjamin Stevens (c. 1720-1791) was graduated from Harvard in 1740. Ordained in 1761, he was the second settled minister in Kittery Point. In 1769 he was chosen president of Harvard; but, perhaps because of his Loyalist sympathies, the appointment was not confirmed by the overseers.
a respectable property from his father, his salary was a minor object in his settlement. His lady was, I think, a sister of Judge Trowbridge, with a small fortune at her own disposal, from one of the first families in Massachusetts, a small but handsome person with pleasing manners. Her health always delicate, she seldom knew a well day after she became a mother, and the doctor was left a widower in the meridian of life, with one daughter. His conduct accorded with his sentiments; he never sought a second connection, though several ladies were pointed out as well fitted to supply the place of the one he had lost. He once told my mother when the subject was forced upon him that a minister should be blameless, the husband of one wife, that the tie that bound him to his wife was not dissolved by her departure, that she had only gone before him and had left a precious pledge of her affection, a flower to be cultivated with tenderness and care, and not exposed to the rude blasts from which he could shield her. These, as far as I can remember, were his words, repeated by my mother, who always held up Miss Stevens as a pattern of every female virtue. We often heard her compared to Harriet Byron, the favorite heroine of Richardson. Without vanity, she was admired for her talents, which had been cultivated by her father, beloved for her sweetness of temper, her absence from selfishness, her candour and sincerity—a dutiful daughter as well as an affectionate friend. The doctor came to the Grove one morning, and my mother, observing a shade of sorrow upon his venerable countenance, with her usual frankness inquired the cause. He answered, "I have this day encountered a severe trial. I have refused to give my daughter to a man I think truly deserving of her, and what has added to my pain, it is a gentleman I know she prefers to any other she has ever known. My only objection is that he is an Englishman, and she must if she marries him reside in England.

27 Mrs. Stevens, referred to here as a sister of Judge Trowbridge, is called a daughter in the NEHGS manuscript. But according to the Trowbridge genealogy, Edmund Trowbridge (1709-1793), Judge of the Superior Court in Massachusetts, had no children, and his sisters married other men than Dr. Stevens.

28 Beautiful and accomplished heroine in Samuel Richardson's novel, Sir Charles Grandison.

29 Barrell Grove, the York home of Madam Wood's parents. It is still owned and occupied by descendants of her father and mother (Nathaniel Barrell and Sarah Sayward).
I cannot consent to a separation and have desired her never more to admit his visits. She is now at Judge Cutts' for the day, but will, if you will permit it, be with you early this evening and pass the morrow, as I am to attend an ordination."

Miss Stevens was received in the evening with that pleasure her visits always gave. She frankly told my mother that she had left home fearful that she might be tempted to disoblige her father. She afterwards married Dr. Buckminster, and was one of the happiest of women. He was an excellent man, one of the handsomest I ever saw. But short though brilliant was her course. In a few years she fell a victim to that insidious disease so fatal in this country,

The pale consumption gave the dreadful blow,
The event was fatal, tho the effect was slow.

She left a son, with whom you are well acquainted, and who was indeed worthy of being the son of such parents. You are not now to be told that Dr. Buckminster married your very lovely aunt Mary. I knew and loved her, but it was not that reverential love I felt for Sally Stevens.

Kittery Point has always been to me a delightful place. There some of the happiest days of my life have been passed. But those I loved and revered are gone, and few memorials of their wealth and worth remain. The old mansion house I am told is in ruins; the gardens are a waste; the summer house sunk into that beautiful river, from the windows of which fish were often taken; the parsonage is trodden by the feet of strangers; the portraits removed from the walls that were once adorned with the united family pictures of Pepperells

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30 Richard Cutts, son of Major Richard Cutts (1693-1790), lived on nearby Cutts Island. He served as Special Justice of the Court of Common Pleas (1747-1761), as did his father and grandfather before him.

31 Dr. Joseph Buckminster (1751-1812), pastor of the North Church (Congregational) in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, married Sarah Stevens in 1782. She died in 1790, having borne four children, including Joseph Stevens Buckminster (1784-1812), who also became a clergyman.

32 The source of this quotation is not known. Instead of pale, the Frost manuscript has bale, and the MSL one reads fall. Here the NEHGS version is followed.

33 After the death of his first wife, Dr. Buckminster married Mary Lyman (1765-1805), daughter of Rev. Isaac Lyman of York. "Aunt Mary" is another key to the identity of the person for whom Madam Wood wrote these reminiscences.
and Sparhawks; and even the tomb that contained the remains of the great and titled of the earth is leveled with the dust. Thus, my dear Mary, I have, so far as lies in my power, complied with your request. Had the wish been expressed a few years ago, I could have made out a tolerable narrative of my reminiscences. I could have taken Portsmouth, Kittery Point, Cape Neddick, and Old York as the scenes of my early associations and could have found enough of dramatic personae for my drama: your beloved grandfather, and two of our own family—Mrs. Plaisted would have served for a Mary Richardson in her adventures with the Indians; Mary Beane would have been as good a heroine as Jennie Deans. And old Jim Hill would have served as the father of old evil. Meg Merrilies and Madge Wildfire would have been found in New Hampshire. But when I think of the many so loved and gone and lost to me, and of the places that once knew them and can know them no more, I am tempted to exclaim with the messengers to Job, “I only am left alive to tell thee.”

If you are not tired, my dear friend, I am tempted to intrude upon you a scene or kind of tale that can never be

84 Instead of “is leveled with the dust,” the NEHGS copy reads “alone can tell that they once were.” In the MSL copy the last sentence in the paragraph is followed by the statement, “This last assertion is a mistake; the tomb remained in good condition July 1849.” According to Frost’s Colonial Village, 61, the Pepperrell Tomb was repaired by Harriet Hirst Sparhawk (1781-1872), who lived in Portsmouth and was buried there herself.

85 This sentence and the preceding one are omitted in the Frost manuscript, although they appear in both the others. “Your beloved grandfather” probably refers to Rev. Isaac Lyman. The reference to “two of our own family” seems to be explained by the mention of Mrs. Plaisted and Mary Beane. The former was Mary Richworth, widow of John Sayward (great-great-great-uncle of Madam Wood), who married James Plaisted in 1691. In 1692 she and her children were captured by the Indians and taken to Montreal. Cotton Mather has written about the episode in his Magnalia Christi Americana. She was redeemed in 1695, but two of her daughters were brought up by nuns and baptized under French names; one became a nun, and the other married a Frenchman.

The identity of Mary Beane is confusing because at the time there were two women in York named Mary Austin. One was captured by the Indians as a child, brought up a Catholic, and married to a Frenchman. The other Mary Austin married Captain Lewis Bean (Bane) of York. She was widow of an early Jonathan Sayward and is hence “of our own family,” but the adventures of the first Mary Austin sound like what Madam Wood had in mind in this passage.

Jeanie Deans, Meg Merrilies, and Madge Wildfire are characters in Scott’s novels. Jim Hill is probably a local character of questionable reputation.

86 Job 1: 15,17,19. “... and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”

87 “my dear friend” is “dear Mary” in the NEHGS copy. The sentence is omitted in the Frost manuscript.

88 This tale is an example of Madam Wood’s ability as a story-teller. It is based upon an historic event, the massacre of Ursula Cutt and three of her
erased from my memory though of so early a date. I was about twelve years old when my mother, as a reward for something she approved, proposed to take me to see an old lady to whom she was distantly related and who resided in a part of Kittery called Long Lane. The roads leading to it were execrable and the horse none of the fleetest, but in an hour or two we arrived at the place, which was a low rambling building, having the appearance of a number of small tenements put together as it suited the taste of the owner. The approach was at the back of the house, and we went entirely round before we came to the front. A large old gate admitted us to the garden, upon which the front lay. A servant girl came to the door, after we had knocked for a long time with an old iron knocker, and conducted us through a semicircular entry, very dark and narrow, to a small, low parlour. The walls were hung with a dark velvet paper and the wainscot was entirely black. At the farthest end Madam Whipple was seated in a large old-fashioned easy chair; she appeared the very picture of old age, and yet I do not believe she had counted as many years as I have. She had lost the use of her limbs and was entirely confined to her chair. Her dress was a brown brocade, with a nice lawn handkerchief and apron, with short sleeves with a ruffle just below the elbow. Black mitts, a lace cap with a rich border, and a black velvet hood upon the back of her head, tied with black ribbon under her chin, completed the dress. She must have been handsome in her day, and was then a fine looking old lady.

hired men in 1694, and the setting is an historic house in Kittery, Whipple Garrison. Ursula Cutt, however, was not the unmarried sister of the Cutt brothers (footnote 53), but the widow of John Cutt; and the tragedy occurred on the Cutt farm about two miles northwest of Portsmouth, on the southern bank of the Piscataqua River, in New Hampshire. Whipple Garrison, altered and expanded over the years but still beautiful amid its lawns and gardens, is situated at Crooked Lane, a bend near the mouth of the Piscataqua River, on the Maine side. It was originally the home of Robert Cutt (brother of John Cutt), a shipbuilder. His granddaughter Mary (the Madam Whipple of the tale) married Captain William Whipple in 1722, and their first son became General William Whipple (1730-1785), one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Madam Whipple was a first cousin of Sarah Mitchell Sayward, grandmother of Madam Wood.

39 In the Frost manuscript this is ten instead of twelve. The visit, then, took place some time between 1769 and 1771. Madam Whipple (1698-1783) would have been seventy-odd years of age.

40 Since the seventeenth century this area has been designated on maps and in documents as Crooked Lane.
She received us with a most affectionate welcome, embraced my mother and kissed me; then stifling her emotion she exclaimed, “I see the daughter of Jonathan Sayward and Sarah Mitchell, two that I have loved from their birth. I am thankful that you, my dear child, have come to see me, an old woman, the inhabitant of an older house: this has been built for more than one hundred and fifty years. The kitchen is one such as you will never see again. That table is as old as the house, and has never been removed from its place since it was built.” It reached the whole length of the apartment, and the farther end was raised two steps higher than the other. “At that table and in that chair the Lady Ursula was wont to dine, while the servants sat below. I presume they had the saltcellar between them—but cannot say. When you have seen the kitchen, look at the picture in the entry; it was the work of her hands, and though defaced by time, you will see it was intended to represent the offering up of Isaac. You may then walk into the garden and see the summer house. The Lady built it, and remember that the currant bushes, the roses and the tulips are the descendants of those she brought from old England, and the first planted in this province. Although thousands of seeds and roots have been taken from them, there is still a multitude remaining. While you are enjoying yourself in rambling where you please, your mother and I will talk over old times, for I have many questions to ask.”

I had never seen anything so beautiful as that garden: such a profusion of currants, gooseberries, fancy violets, roses and tulips were surely never collected in so small a space. The summer house was literally worn out and covered with moss. The ruins were propped up with posts, and appeared so entirely old that I felt it must be the work of an antediluvian. I could not be tired of wandering over it. The river which washed its walls and the boats passing and repassing rendered the scene so lovely and delightful that although time has obliterated many other things, this had too tenanted a hold to be effaced from the memory.

41 These are Madam Wood's grandparents, granddaughter of Robert Cutt, who built the house being described.

42 According to this, the house would have been built about 1620. John Frost, in his study of the old houses in the Kittery area (Colonial Village, 1947) suggests 1665, a more realistic date. The NEHGS manuscript reads "for more than a hundred years."

Sarah Mitchell was a great-granddaughter of Robert Cutt, who built the house being described.
After tea we set off on our return, and no sooner did I resume my seat in the chaise than I enquired of my mother who the Lady Ursula was, of whom Madam Whipple talked so much. "The Lady Ursula, whose name and doings have so much excited your curiosity, was the sister of my great-grandfather and the daughter of Lord Thomas Cutts of Grondale Abbey in England. She was betrothed at an early age to a young gentleman by the name of Fowler; her father disapproved of the connection and was glad when a war broke out which would for a time prevent the nuptials, as the lover had chosen the military profession and was obliged immediately to join his regiment. The parting was painful on both sides, but for a year the letters which she frequently received rendered his absence less distressing. At length they ceased to arrive, and a report that he had died in battle put an end to her hopes and her father’s fears, whose ambition pointed out a more wealthy alliance. From all solicitations she was released by the death of her mother, followed by that of her father. The family estate and honors descended by entail on the oldest son, but the large fortune of the mother became the portion of the younger children.

"By a grant from Sir Ferdinand Gorges, Cutts [Island], several [other] islands, with Long Lane, became the property of my great-grandfather, his brother and this sister. When the young gentlemen decided to come to this country, the Lady Ursula determined to accompany them. Of their brother I know nothing. Major Cutts took possession of both islands, one of which remains to his descendants, and his sister became the mistress of the place you have just seen. She built the

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43 See footnote 53.
44 No information about Colonel Fowler is available. He is probably a fictional character.
45 Sir Fernando Gorges (1565-1647) and Captain John Mason (1586-1635) were granted all the lands between the Merrimac and the Kennebec rivers by James I in 1622. In 1629 they divided their grant, Mason taking the area between the Merrimac and the Piscataqua, and Gorges that north of the Piscataqua. Both men established colonies along both shores of the Piscataqua.
46 Cutts Island (formerly called Champernowne’s Island), along with other land on the mainland, was granted by Sir Fernando Gorges in 1636 to his brother-in-law, Arthur Champernowne (a cousin of Sir Walter Raleigh), whose son Francis Champernowne inherited it. At his death in 1687, he left it to his wife, Mary Cutt (widow of the first Robert Cutt), whose son Richard Cutt then acquired it. It remained in possession of the Cutts descendants until 1880, when it was sold to John Thaxter (son of Celia Thaxter, the poet), whose daughter, Rosamond Thaxter, now lives there.
house and planted the fruit and flowers, rendering a wilderness quite a garden of beauty and delight. She brought from England twenty men servants and several female domestics, who delighted to follow their young lady to a new country, finding her a kind friend and protectress. Her wealth gave her ample means of displaying her taste. The house was richly furnished, the grounds beautifully cultivated, and the situation became the admiration of the few who visited her. Pity and love for the one lost to her forever were the prominent traits in her character. She instructed her family in their religious duties and read prayers every morning and evening. There was at that time no settled minister nor place of public worship. The Sabbath was devoted to religious exercises, and no labor or amusement permitted.

"One of the girls who came over with her had received a good education, and her understanding was more cultivated than usual. She became a great favorite with her lady and was her chosen companion in all her walks. The early disappointment and the fate of her lover were often the subject of conversation, and finding her mistress more despondent than usual one evening during their walk, she explained, 'Cheer up, my lady, 'tis a long lane that has no turning.' She replied smiling, 'I have been thinking what name to call my domain for some time, and you have given it one. I will call it Long Lane.' And by that name it has always been since known.

"A few days after this, letters were received from England, and Lady Ursula had the unspeakable happiness to receive a packet from her long lost lover. He had been for years a prisoner of war, removed from one place of confinement to another, and denied the pleasure of correspondence with his friends. But the war was ended, the prisoners exchanged, and he had returned home to his country in the joyful expectation of meeting his mistress. Although disappointed in that expectation, he had determined in a few days to embark for the new world, thinking he should arrive by the last of October, and claim her as his bride and to her devote the remainder of his life. You may judge of her surprise and delight at this unlooked for and welcome letter. All was bustle and preparation. 'We shall have a most joyful Thanksgiving,' she exclaimed, 'and a still more joyful Christmas. The harvest
shall be got in and no labor exacted for a month.' It was proposed that Thanksgiving should be passed at Long Lane and Christmas at Cutts Island. Joy reigned in the household, and visions of bliss filled the hopes and heart of the lady, giving brilliancy to her cheek and elasticity to her step.

"But who can tell what tomorrow may bring forth? A few days after the delightful intelligence she went, as was frequent, with an attendant in a low carriage to take refreshments to her work people, who were employed upon a distant part of the estate. The food was placed upon the grass, the men had all assembled, she blessed the viands she had brought, and while the pious effusion was upon her lips, she fell, struck to the ground by the tomahawk of an Indian, to rise no more. All that were about shared the same fate, butchered on the spot, excepting one, whose speed outstripped his pursuers. The drawbridge was not down; he swam the river and gave the alarm to the Major's family, who in haste rushed to the dreadful scene, to behold the bleeding body of his sister and those of all her attendants. The savages in the meantime had plundered her house and set fire to the outbuildings, but fled before their pursuers could come up with them. But who can describe the mournful scene? The murdered lady and her attendants were interred on the spot where the massacre took place, and a stone was erected to her memory, which I believe still remains.

"In a few days Colonel Fowler arrived, but disappointed and heartbroken, he reimbarked for his native country, lamenting the sad conclusion of all his hopes and the tragical fate of a lovely woman who had proved faithful and sincere in her attachment to him and an honor to her sex."

This was my mother's story, and I have only to add, that at the commencement47 of the war that rendered America a free and independent nation, a descendant of Colonel Fowler came to this country and visited my grandfather, who was Judge of Probate,48 and applied to him to search the records for a will made by this unfortunate lady as soon as she had

47 The Frost manuscript reads conclusion, but the word is commencement in the MSL and NEHGS copies.
48 Jonathan Sayward, Madam Wood's grandfather, was appointed Judge of Probate for York County in 1772, but he writes in 1775 of having all his offices taken from him because he was a Loyalist.
ascertained the existence of her lover, bequeathing to him all her property. Time had passed without any demand, and the estate had been purchased by Colonel Whipple, to whose widow it now belongs.\textsuperscript{49} The will could not be found, and the gentleman returned, no richer than he came.

\textbf{LETTER II}

When you favored us with a visit I felt that it would be impossible for me to give you any information that would interest you concerning your ancestors,\textsuperscript{50} and grieved that so natural and laudable a desire could not be gratified. I have since searched the long records of memory, and in one of her long-closed cells have found some details that I received at an early age from an excellent grandmother, who was cousin to your great-grandfather.\textsuperscript{51} She was an orphan grandchild of Mr. Cutts, that with his sister, Lady Ursula, emigrated from England. I only know that the family were of high standing and that several titles were added to that of Grondale Abbey.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{49} Here the mother (not Madam Wood) seems still to be speaking. So one wonders. Was the old lady confused in the family stories, as might indeed be natural? Or in this tale that follows the paragraph telling how "had the wish been expressed a few years ago, I could have made out a tolerable narrative of my reminiscences" was she once more letting her imagination create a story, this time one with a local, American setting?

\textsuperscript{50} In both manuscripts (MSL and NEHGS) this letter is prefaced with the statement: "From Madam Wood to J. Wingate Thornton." John Wingate Thornton (1818-1878) was a descendant (great-great-great-grandson) of Robert Cutt, one of the three Cutt brothers who came to the Piscataqua region from England in the seventeenth century, as were Madam Whipple (a granddaughter) and Madam Wood (a great-great-granddaughter). Mr. Thornton, a lawyer and an antiquarian, lived in Boston and spent his summers at Scarborough, Maine. He corresponded with leading antiquarians of his time and was one of the founders of the New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1844. Thornton Academy in Saco had been named for his grandfather, Thomas Gilbert Thornton, in 1822.

\textsuperscript{51} Madam Wood's "excellent grandmother" was Sarah Mitchell Sayward, a cousin of Mr. Thornton's great-grandfather, Colonel Thomas Cutts. Soon after Sarah was born, her mother died, and she was evidently brought up in the home of her grandfather, Richard Cutt, and her uncle, Richard Cutt, Jr. (the Major). Since she lived until 1775, her granddaughter Sally could have heard many family stories and traditions from her. A generation has been missed, however, for Sarah Mitchell Sayward was a great-grandchild (not a grandchild) of the Mr. (Robert) Cutt that emigrated from England.

\textsuperscript{52} In the NEHGS copy this sentence reads: "I do not know that the family were of high standing or that several titles were added to that of Grondale Abbey." There was a fairly well known Lord Cutts in England at the end of the seventeenth century: John Cutts (1661-1707), son of Richard Cuttes of a part of Essex said to be the original home of the American Cutts colonists. Richard had inherited the baronetcy from a collateral relative, Sir John Cutts. His son John was created Baron of Gowran by King Wil-
I often heard Lord Thomas and Lord William Cutts\textsuperscript{53} named by my grandmother and her kinsman, the Major,\textsuperscript{54} who sometimes visited us, and these high sounding titles excited my curiosity. The inquiries I made drew from that kind and revered lady an account of their manner of living, with many details and anecdotes, which I have now forgotten.

I think one of the sons visited London and resided in his uncle's family some time.

Cutts Island and a large tract of land in Kittery formed a domain almost lordly.\textsuperscript{55} The drawbridge was raised every evening for the safety of the inhabitants, and lowered in the morning to permit the relatives of the family, and the laborers, to attend to their several duties. They kept thirty cows, several hundred sheep, and a number of horses. The house was large and old-fashioned; one apartment was sufficiently spacious to entertain fifty or sixty guests. The arms of the family,\textsuperscript{56} with devices innumerable, covered the panels over the immense fireplace, the mantle of which was adorned with colored glass and two silver branches for candles. The floors were daily rubbed with wax till they shone like a nice mahogany table. The walls were ornamented by paintings and needle work of Mrs. Cutts, and the young ladies (the daughters) were sent to the best schools and taught not only dancing, music, and embroidery, but one day in each week was devoted to making of cake and pastry, and I have been assured that the latter was as light as a feather and as white as snow.

\textsuperscript{53} These names could refer to brothers in England. Traditionally (according to the Cutts genealogy) Richard Cutts of Grondale Abbey, an adherent of Cromwell, had a large family, of whom three brothers (John, Richard, and Robert) and a sister (Anne) settled in the Piscataqua region sometime before 1646. Four other Cutt settlers are mentioned in seventeenth-century American documents—Lawrence, William, John, Jr., and Roger—but little is known of them. The settlers all dropped the s and were called Cutt until the middle of the eighteenth century, when the name reverted to the original Cutts.

\textsuperscript{54} The Major is Richard Cutt, Jr. (1693-1790), uncle of Sarah Mitchell Sayward. He served as a major with Pepperrell's forces at Louisburg in 1745 and lived in the house on Cutts Island, as did his father (Richard, son of Robert Cutt).

\textsuperscript{55} The Cutts house was built in 1773, on the site of an earlier one erected by Captain Francis Champernowne. Madam Wood's grandmother, who died in 1775, would remember the old Champernowne house; hence "the arms of the family" probably were those of the Champernowne, rather than the Cutts, family.
One of the young ladies returning from the school with a daughter of Governor Vaughan, was detained in Portsmouth a few days by a storm. She saw tea at the governor's for the first time. "I did not know how to act," said she, "but seeing Mrs. Vaughan add sugar and cream, and then raise the cup to her lips, I followed her example." She purchased a pound of tea, for which she paid a guinea, and sent to Boston for a set of cups and saucers. This was the first tea ever used in the Province of Maine.

The young ladies assisted in spinning, attended to the dairy, and saw to the many other culinary preparations. Madam Cutts herself always skimmed the milk and instructed her maids in the quantity of rennet for the cheese. They made two every day and churned butter every morning.

A pleasure boat was kept, and each young lady had a horse and side saddle of her own.

There was a domestic chaplain who read prayers morning and evening in a small apartment which was called a chapel. Also a steward and butler. The family attended the Episcopal Church in Portsmouth at Christmas, Easter Sunday, and Good Friday. Once every year they gave a grand entertainment, to which none but persons of quality were invited. The last of this kind was just previous to the marriage of my grandmother, and she has so frequently described it that it is still fresh in my memory. The company were invited a week previous to the day appointed. It was the middle of June, the anniversary of Madam Cutts' birth. The entire week was passed in preparation. Billy G. Ball with his violin was engaged for the entire day; the grass was rendered as smooth as velvet; the walk that led from the river to the house was nicely gravelled, on each side of which box reared its humble but whole-
some head. In several places a sunflower, a rosebush and many other flowers were arranged with taste. Near the house was a bed of tulips just in bloom, taken from the garden in Long Lane; the Lady Ursula had brought them from the Abbey in England. The fiddler and drummer, close by the landing, bade welcome to the company with “God Save the King.”

The family were early astir and all dressed in their best attire, the old Major in a suit of brown velvet, laced with gold, and a wig that would have covered twenty [two empty?] heads of modern dandies. Madam Cutts wore a black damask, a lace cap and hood, white and silver stomacher, cuffs with double lace ruffles just below the elbow, velvet shoes, and blue silk stockings. The daughters and granddaughters [were] in rich brocade and yellow satin; the latter was converted into a dress for me when I was eight years old. The company arrived at eleven o’clock—the parson in his silk cassock and his helpmate in a brown damask, old General Atkinson in a scarlet velvet, and his wife and daughters in white damask tabby, the Governor in black velvet, his lady in crimson tabby, trimmed with silver. The ladies wore bell hoops, high-heeled shoes, paste buckles and silk stockings, with headdresses as high as a corn house, from whence descended lappets of Brussels lace to the bottom of the waist. “Oh!” said my grandmother. “It was a grand sight.”

Upon their entrance they were all welcomed with an abundance of ceremony, regaled with fruit, cake and sack, a liquor I am not acquainted with. After the introduction and sitting a proper time, for everything was conducted with de-

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61 See footnote 38.
62 General Theodore Atkinson (1697-1779) of Newcastle and Portsmouth served in New Hampshire as colonel in command of the First Regiment, as Judge of the Superior Court, and as Secretary of the Province. He left a legacy to Queen’s Chapel (St. John’s Church) to provide bread for the poor, and to this day a loaf of fresh bread is placed on a table in the vestibule of the church every Sunday. The adjective old is probably used here to distinguish him from his son Theodore Atkinson (1736-1769), also a prominent citizen of Portsmouth.
63 This is either John Wentworth (1672-1739), who served as lieutenant-governor from 1717 to 1728, or his son, Benning Wentworth (1696-1770), who was governor from 1741 to 1763. According to the historian Franklin B. Sanborn (New Hampshire: An Epitome of Popular Government [Boston, 1904], 160), the province “was substantially directed and governed by the Wentworths and their kinsmen, the Atkinsons” from 1717 until the last royal governor, another John Wentworth (1737-1820), was forced to leave during the American Revolution.
Corum and propriety, they walked round the island, had a little excursion upon the water, and danced upon the green. When summoned to the dining room, a barbecue appeared at one end of the table, while boiled chickens, hams, tongue and vegetables filled up the table. The second course was ducks, fish which were alive and swimming in the ocean that morning, and every delicacy that could be procured. An immense boiled plum pudding, with custards, fruits, jellies and preserves filled the board. All excepting the wine, sugar, and spirits, of which there was a great plenty and variety, were raised upon the island. The center of the table shone with the greatest beauty of all: a silver tub, that held four gallons, full of pancakes, rising from its rich and polished sides like an immense pyramid of snow, for it was entirely covered from the base to the attic with powdered sugar. A floating island, representing a ship at sea, stood just below, and an immense bowl of punch with a silver ladle was at all the guests’ command. Every lady did ample justice to the wines and cordials that were passed round in flowing goblets. I trust the heads of our ancestors were formed of stronger materials than those of their puny descendants. They sat two hours at the table, when chocolate and tea were announced on the green before the door, with all their requisites of cake and cheese. The company with many ceremonies, bows and courtesies took leave of their princely entertainers.

More than a century and a half has come and gone since that time. Every one then present has long slept in the dust. The gay clothing, the rich brocade, the spacious headdresses, the vast hoop, the full-bottomed wig, the bag and sword have not had the power to resist the universal conqueror. Cutts Island with its spacious domain, with its extensive forests, has been divided and subdivided by a numerous progeny. The hospitable dwelling has been destroyed by fire, the plate transformed into more modern articles, and the silver

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64 Again Madam Wood is inaccurate as to the time that has passed. If she wrote to Mr. Thornton even as late as 1845, this scene would have taken place about 1695. But both the host and the hostess, as well as General Atkinson, were small children in 1700. Omission of “and a half” would give a more reasonable date, the 1730s or early 1740s.
tub which was owned by your great-great-grandmother was long since converted into spoons and cream pots for her descendants.

Sallie Wood

Sallie Sayward Barrell Keating Wood

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, PRINTER-PLENIPOTENTIARY

By Richard Cary

In these days of shaken relations between the United States and France—almost unbelievable in the light of our long, uninterrupted history of political and cultural affinity—it gladdens the heart to come across evidences of a once adamantine reciprocity of faith. Such an iota is the promissory note for 800,000 livres tendered to the Trésor de Sa Majesté by Benjamin Franklin in the name of a threadbare Congress during the grim years of the American Revolutionary War. What makes this document1 doubly extraordinary is that Franklin not only filled in some thirty words in his own hand and signed it twice but also printed the official form in his ministerial home at Passy, France.

Several entrancing anecdotes about young Ben as printer’s devil, artfully perpetuated in his memoirs, are as strongly entrenched in the national consciousness as Washington’s cherry-tree and dollar-over-the-Potomac legends. The principles acquired by Franklin in his odyssey through a succession of printshops and their salutary effect upon his development as philosopher and man of the world remain green in the memory of many Americans, whether derived from the ineluctable prim-

1 Now in Colby College Library through the kindness of Mr. Perc S. Brown of Orinda, California.