

April 4, 1818 Congress passed a law returning the flag to its original design of thirteen stripes and providing that a star be added to the blue field as states joined the Union. On May 1, 1818 it is said that fifteen designs of the U. S. flag were flying around Washington, D. C.

Since 1818 to the present stars added to the blue field now total fifty.

Elizabeth L. Mullins

EARLY SCITUATE

by Josephine P. Spencer

Read to members of Moswansicut Chapter, D. A. R. at a meeting held on Constitution Day September 17, 1929.

Mrs. Spencer passed away March 22, 1969, in her 89th year. This paper was written by her in 1929 and contributed by Iva W. Shippee.

Scituate was first inhabited by Indians. The settlement of Roger Williams at Providence is the real commencement of our history. He was a real missionary among the Indians, traveling among the different tribes who were at war with each other — to pacify them and satisfy them that he and his associates had honest intentions to live peaceably with them. He found favor with the great and powerful chief Cononicus, who made Roger Williams a gift of a large and valuable tract of land which some people think included all of northern Rhode Island.

As emigrants arrived from other colonies and across the water, they took up land, had it surveyed and marked off, and in this way Scituate was first inhabited. One old deed was found among papers of Gideon Harris (a Town Clerk) dated 1661.

The first houses were made of rough hewn logs, some of them not even having a floor. They usually had one room with perhaps a loft which was reached by a ladder. There was but little furniture, this being roughly but strongly made. The chairs either had splint bottoms or the seats were of straw covered with leather. The beds consisted of dried leaves at first, then of straw. The plates were of wood.

The people in Scituate were very thrifty—letting nothing be wasted. They spun the yarn, wove the cloth and made the clothing for the family all by hand. Many a young woman was proud, as she sat in church with her husband, to think that she had made every bit of his serviceable homespun suit by hand.

There were certain plants with the leaves and roots of which they learned to dye yarn to be knitted into stockings. In those days men wore their stockings above their knees, so the wife must have spent a good deal of time knitting.

Canning with unknown then, but many fruits, berries and vegetables were dried. Many made their under pie crust part meal, to save flour.

After many years some handsome houses were built. In 1775 the noted Governor West house was built. This was said to be the largest and most showy house in the State at that time. Governor West ran a large dairy and often went to Providence with a load of cheeses to sell.

In 1742 the merchants of Boston and Providence employed farmers with ox teams to bring freight from New York, Philadelphia and in some instances from Baltimore. It was ascertained by trial that oxen could be driven on these long routes cheaper than horses. Horses could travel but little faster over the poor roads, while oxen would work more hours out of the twenty-four. It cost less to feed the oxen; they were not so liable to be stolen; they suffered less from change of

weather; and furnishing harnesses for horses would be expensive. People traveled somewhat on horseback. Later we had the stage coach for transporting people. There was a stage coach line which ran from Providence to Hartford, leaving Providence at 5 o'clock in the morning and arriving in Hartford in the evening. There were taverns stationed every eight miles, where fresh horses were obtained, and where the drivers got their meals. Some of us perhaps remember John Richards and his stage coach which ran from Providence to Danielson for fifty-five years.

The first tavern in Scituate was built about 1710 at what was Richmond Village in our day. It was built by Thomas Angell who came across from London to Boston in 1631 with Roger Williams on the ship "Lion". There were slaves kept at this tavern to do the farm work. This tavern was occupied as a public house for five successive generations. The Town meetings of the Town of Scituate were held here; real estate deals were transacted and it was a real business and amusement center.

The militia musters were held in the vicinity of this tavern; The pound for stray cattle was there; and the pole of the tavern sign was used as a post to fasten any one who was sentenced to be whipped; an operation they would probably never forget.

During the Revolution, when navigation by water was obstructed, travel on the Providence and Norwich road was greatly increased, and a great deal of business was added to the tavern. Owing to this increase in business, other taverns were built on this route. The one built by William Battey in 1785 was direct competition with the Angell Tavern.

Generals LaFayette, Washington, and Dr. Franklin, also other distinguished guests were entertained at the Angell Tavern. LaFayette and his officers and regiment camped in tents on the opposite side of the road from the tavern. One soldier died and was buried in the snow. Afterward he was buried in a nearby cemetery.

One of LaFayettes officers who was not well stayed at the house of Abel Angell, a blacksmith, who lived nearby. In 1825 when LaFayette visited this State, he traveled over the same road that he passed with his regiment. In Scituate he inquired for the land-lord and lady who used him so kindly.

The first church in Scituate was a Quaker Church, near Elmdale. When this was destroyed by fire, services were held at various homes until the other Quaker Church was built near Moswansicut Pond, December 14, 1811. William Almy and Moses Brown of Providence attended the first service in this church. Elihu Bowen, a tanner, who had his shop on Moswansicut brook, was a staunch Quaker Minister. When he died his funeral was said to be a large and solemn "occasion".

The Six Principle Baptist Church was instituted in 1725. The last building was erected in 1821. This church was the Old Battey Church at South Scituate. The Congregational Church Society was formed in 1834. A few years after some of the members formed a Free Baptist Society and built a church on the lot where Town Clerk D. H. Remington now lives. After this church burned, the present one was built. There was a church at Hope, Ashland, Rockland and Clayville.

At first there were no public schools in Scituate, but the children were taught at home to some extent. Later, school was held in a few private homes. The first appropriation made by the Town of Scituate for schools was \$300.00 in the year 1834. Sixteen years later \$900.00 was appropriated. At first the teachers received small salaries. They boarded at the different homes of their pupils. The more children a man had, the longer time he must board the teacher.

To be continued

NOFORCE'S ROCK, GREENVILLE

Submitted by Merrill Steere

Deep in the woods of Greenville, there is a ledge of rock called by some Noforce's Rock and by others Noforce Rocks. There are caves in this cliff of rock and it is located in "one of the most isolated and unspoiled wildernesses of Rhode Island." In addition to there being two names for the rock, there are also two names for Noforce the Indian after whom the ledge was named. One legend says his name was John Noforce, that he was a Narragansett Indian and that he jumped to his death from this rock-ledge. Years ago, when the owner of this land was interviewed, he said that the tale of Nofore's suicide had been handed down from father to son for generations. Now for the other story. A man by the name of Steere, the first of that name in this state, was made a foreman about 1672 and purchased a large track of land on Wionkhiege Hill. Six acres of this land John Steere deeded to Sam Noforce (not John) "for 30 years or the remainder of his life because he had been a good Indian and a good neighbor." We are told by a descendant of this John Steere that Noforce was allowed to keep whatever fruit and vegetables grew on his acres for his own use "the only restriction being that the spring be not fenced in so that all livestock might drink there." The ledge of rock, of course, was included in this six-acre grant. Indians in those days often took as a name the characteristic that was outstanding about them so Noforce was, in all probability, a peaceful Indian. According to one report he lived near the ledge of rock as a good neighbor and a good Indian. According to a newspaper report, he jumped from this ledge of rock to his death. One way or another he put his name forever on this rock formation for to this day it is called Noforce Rocks or Noforce's Rock. It is off Colwell Road, one of the streets of Greenville, Rhode Island.

EARLY SCITUATE

Continued from last Issue

It is a question as to which school house is the oldest. Some think it the Rocky Hill. We know that Ada Harris, Mother of our Town Clerk, attended school there over 100 yrs. ago.

In 1839 the Smithville seminary was built in North Scituate, by R. Warren, the architect who is said to have built the famous Arcade in Providence. The Smithville Seminary was founded by the Rhode Island Association of Free Baptists. The endowment fund was \$30,000.00. People also bought shares in the building. The school ranked high among those having a college preparatory course and students came from Florida, California and other states, although the only means of transportation from Providence was a stage coach. Professor James B. Angell of Michigan University was a graduate from this school. The name of the school was changed in 1863 to Lapham Institute. It discontinued in 1875.

There was at one time a bank, in the west end of the old farm house in Elmdale giving the name "Old Bank" to this small village. The Citizens Union Bank was organized in North Scituate in 1832. The name was changed to Scituate National Bank in 1865. Josiah Westcott was the first president of the bank. Isaac Saunders, grandfather of our Regent (Mrs. Latham) was president of the bank at one time.

Many mills were built along the various streams of the town. I can remember where there were nine mills, within a radius of four miles of the village of North Scituate. Now I

think the only mills are the Lonsdale Co. of Hope and the mill at Jackson Village. The Village of Saundersville, which had three mills, was named for Deputy Governor Isaac Saunders who at one time owned the mills there.

Scituate had several good doctors who journeyed on horse back to help the sick. Some of them going into Massachusetts.

Dr. John Wilkinson was a distinguished surgeon in the Revolutionary War. Scituate took a conspicuous part in the Revolutionary War, — although the enemy never invaded our land. Joseph Knight took command of a company of fifty-two, April, 1775. Then there was the Scituate Light Infantry Co., composed of fifty-four men, of which Benjamin Boss Was Captain.

Cannon was cast at the furnace in Hope, the ore being brought there from the ore beds in Cranston. Thirteen new cannon—cast at the Hope furnace — were fired at the Great Bridge in Providence in honor of the Declaration of Independence, July 26, 1776.

On November 5, 1775 Congress appointed Esek Hopkins first commodore of the Navy. Large supplies were sent to the relief of the people of Boston. Also, on September 23, 1779,— it was voted that the Town of Scituate raise their proportion of the \$2,000,000.00 recommended by the Continental Congress. Joseph Angel distinguished himself in the war by courage, activity and good humor. In the fight at Red Banks, on the Jersey shore, where the Hessians unsuccessfully attacked Fort Mercer, and were so cut up by the fire of the Americans, Joseph loaded and fired his gun for forty minutes, as fast as he could, until the gun became so hot he could hold it no longer. While firing he stood behind the breastworks, his head in full view of the enemy, and always picked his man when he fired. On looking around at his comrades, and seeing them crouched down holding their guns over their heads to fire, he told them to load their guns and he would fire them: so he stood and fired while a half dozen soldiers loaded their guns and handed them to him to discharge.

Scituate is noted for having a Signer of the Declaration of Independence who was born and active in the Town namely Stephen Hopkins who was brother to Esek who was in the Navy. Stephen was with Greene and Washington in the Army.

We are proud that Washington, LaFayette, and other noted men visited our Town, and that Lafayette had such pleasant memories of his first visit here; that he came again and traveled over the same territory and inquired for the lady who used him so well on his first visit.

The highest point of land in this Town is Beacon Pole Hill so called because a warning beacon was established there during the Revolutionary War. Beacon Pole Hill is also part of Chopmist Hill.

Much more could be written about Scituate and her people.