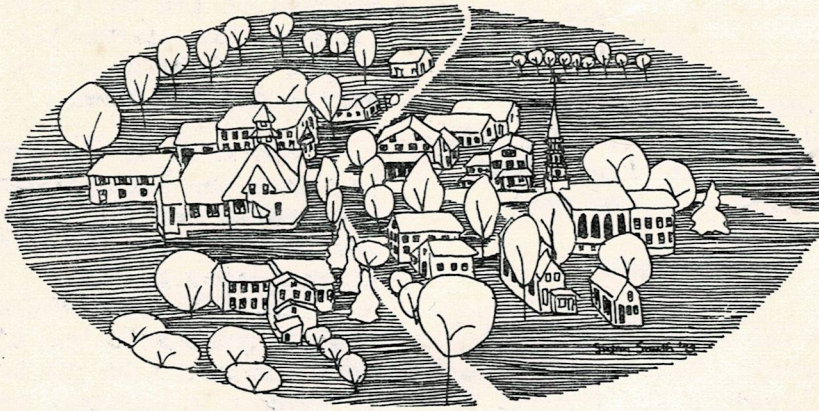


THE SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Vol. I No. 1 March 1975

YE OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP

As we enter the year 1975 and once more stand across Singletary Avenue in Sutton and look at the newly restored sign on the blacksmith shop.

M. M. SHERMAN
BLACKSMITH
and
WHEELWRIGHT

We can but run through our minds the many horses and oxen that had entered that door to have their hoofs pared and dressed also the many stories that were told by men who sat about while the "Smithy" wheeled his hammer on the hot and glowing irons that had just been hauled out of the fire.

Speaking of oxen I remember my father, Dexter A. Brigham, telling a story. This of course was many years ago. I will not mention the persons name but he was a relative of some of the people who live here now. This gentleman walking beside his heavy loaded oxen came to a small hill and after the oxen were part way up they decided to rest, however, the driver deep in thought kept on walking to the top of the hill then turning around was much surprised and probably irritated, probably with an outburst of language, found his pair of oxen resting very calmly halfway down the hill.

Throughout Sutton there were many small shoe shops and blacksmith shops and from a reliable source I found that the ox sling was purchased from Ashael Newton who had a small shop that stood on the spot where Otto F. Pearson now lives a short distance below the present Blacksmith Shop on Singletary Avenue in Sutton.

Cont page 2

APRIL 19, 1775

What was on the minds of our Sutton Forefathers on that fateful day of April 19, 1775? What was the reaction to the horseman who galloped, saddleweary, from Boston Westward onto Sutton's Great Road and then vanished on the road to Hartford, all the while shouting the message, "The Red Coats have opened battle in Lexington".

This day, this moment was only a climax. Sutton people dreaded but knew it had to come. From the Colonial underground movement of Sam Adams aided by the well hidden printing press of Isaiah Thomas in Worcester, the message had long since seeped through "Prepare".

For many months officers of our local Malitia consisting of the compulsory "16 to 60" year old males had assiduously attended the Patriots clandestine meetings in Worcester. A Sutton Horse Company, a mounted segment of the Malitia, had been formed as the result of orders dispatched out of one of these meetings—September 21, 1774. A Minute Man Company had long since been under vigorous training. Every man and youth of the Malitia had been assigned a position he would take at the time of the Alarm. The one thing no one knew was just when or where that battle would be fought.

But now Sutton knew. And so, on the day of April 19, 1775, under the sudden impact of that Lexington Alarm native horsemen was prepared to radiate out from the Great Road to spread the horrendous news. Wiry male youths, on foot and cutting crosslots, acted as runners to the isolated farms and millsites. I can even imagine girls where the boys

Con't Page 4

YE OLD BLACKSMITH SHOP (CON'T)

It might be interesting to look back into the 1800's and we find that between 1876 to 1880 a man from Upton operated a blacksmith and woodworking shop at this location. We understand that his business failed and Daniel Dudley a blacksmith and George Rich a wheelwright were the next owners.

Now we come into the Sherman ownership.

At that time Hollis N. Sherman, grandfather of Mrs Perry (Olive) and Mrs Emily Swindell, lived on the present location of Peter Zuidema which is at the corner of Mendon Road and Old Mill Road. He had a small shop on his place as most all farmers did at that time so as to be able to fix up broken parts when machinery broke down. He also operated a small stage coach that went from West Sutton, at that time there was a post office and hotel there, to Bramanville known as the first village and Millbury Center known as the second village. Probably he not only carried people but also the mail from the Millbury Post Office.

Between the Blacksmith Shop and the present Polly's Antique Shop was a barn that has been torn down recently. Here Hollis would stop to feed his horses on his daily trips to the first and second villages.

In 1893, Hollis purchased the property which included the present brick building on the corner, the barn that has been torn down and the present Blacksmith Shop. He and his family moved into the brick house.

His children lived with him. We are not informed as to what Hollis worked at during the rest of his life. However, his sons went into the shop. Milton who was at that time about thirty years old took over the shop. He was a self taught blacksmith. When Lewis was about seventeen years old he went in to help Milton.

As you look the shop over you can see that there was an addition built on that contains woodworking machinery. So when the two men got busy they not only were blacksmiths but also wheelwrights making many wheels and wagons. As you look around in the further part of the building now you find many relics of the former days, spokes, wheel rims and hubs. "Mill" as he was called died in 1951 and Lewis in 1969 but the activities of

the shop stopped sometime in the 1950's because of the more modern ways of travel. The automobile took over the wagons and the tractors drove off the horses off the farms.

Now most of the horses are riding, and when the horse needs new shoes the blacksmith has his equipment in a truck and goes to the horses instead of the horses going to him.

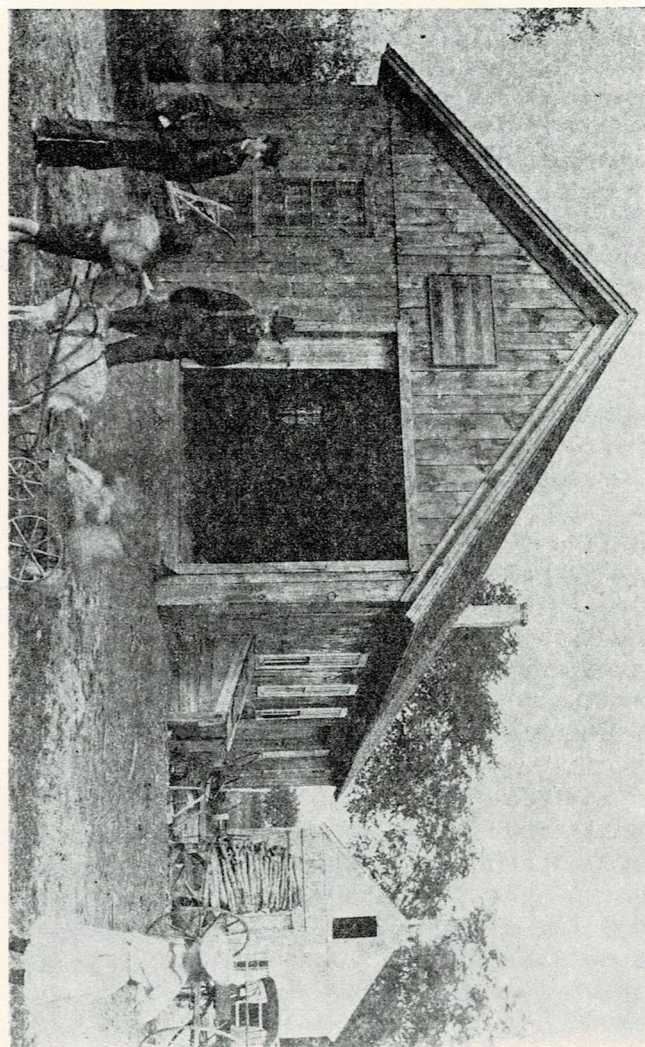
In 1971, the Sutton Historical Society purchased the Blacksmith Shop from the heirs in the hopes that it can be kept as a heritage of former days.

Where Hollis and his family lived, known as the "Old Brick Store" was purchased several years ago and is now "Polly's Antique Shop" and it contains not only the shop but several apartments.

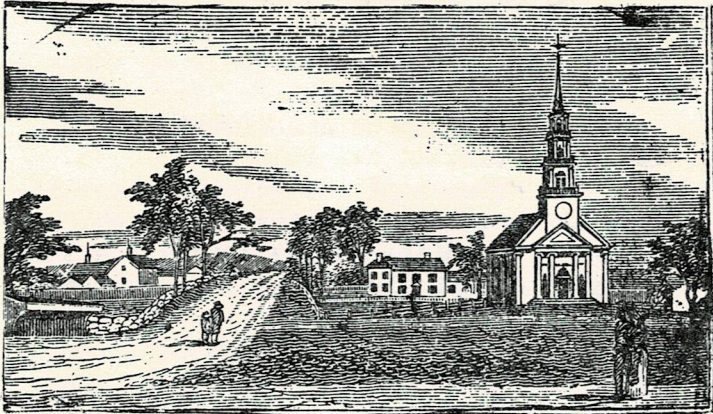
So we hope that the Sutton Historical Society will be able to keep in tack some of the old memories of the past.

by John Brigham

Ye Old Blacksmith Shop (around 1902). Lewis Patch Sherman (holding head of goat). Milton Marden Sherman (left). L. H. Sherman (right). His daughters Emily and Olive in cart. Flora Kay at right of picture.



SUTTON YESTERDAY



We hope to make this section of our Bulletin a regular feature showing enlargements of old sketches, postcards or photos of Sutton.

THIS FIRST ISSUE WE FEATURE THIS LOVELY SKETCH OF OUR TOWN COMMON DONE ABOUT 1830

THE SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN Vol. I No. I March 1975

The Sutton Historical Society Bulletin is and will be what you the members of the Historical Society make it. Rev. Arthur K. Pope, one of our Society's directors has volunteered to be the bulletin's founder and editor for at least the first year of its existence. We badly need typists and other general help. Volunteer by calling Rev. Pope 865-6914. The assistance of Mrs. Carilyn E. Philbrook in getting out this first issue has been invaluable.

Plans now call for the issuance of the Bulletin quarterly. Please submit formal papers, written memories, old photographs, letters, etc. to the editor or Mrs Philbrook.

The first few issues of the bulletin will be sent to all residents of Sutton in an effort to build up the Society. Afterwards they will be sent only to members or interested subscribers.

WHAT IS THE SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY?

The Sutton Historical Society is an organization that exists to promote research and learning in the history of the town of Sutton; to acquire, protect and preserve property, historical documents, relics, and objects; and to promote celebration of patriotic and historic anniversaries.

We own and currently are preserving and protecting a turn of the century Blacksmith Shop in Sutton Center.

We meet monthly for various programs of historical significance.

We are governed by a Board of Directors of twelve persons. Presently Mr. Rae Johnson is our president.

All persons who love the town of Sutton and who wish to see its historical character preserved are welcome to become members of our active and growing society by submitting the application below.

To: The Sutton Historical Society Inc.
Mr. Donald King, Treasurer
Whitins Road
Manchaug, Mass. 01526

I/We are interested in joining the Sutton Historical Society. (check one)

Family membership at \$5 per Year—
Single membership at \$3 per year—
Junior membership at \$1 per year—
(Under 18 years of age)

(Signature)

Name (please print)

Address

Please make checks payable to
Sutton Historical Society.

March 1975

APRIL 19, 1775

(CON'T)

were not available, taking to their heels; the less stoic among them weeping and seeing a Red Coat crouched behind every tree and boulder.

Wherever the horseman sped by and wherever there was a musket in the house, The weapon was discharged in great volleys. Wherever there was a meetinghouse bell, the sexton rang out the clarion notes of war. Drums rolled to sound the dreadful message. The people heard it all over town. Sutton's Militia heard it, they mustered in assigned places and were on their way-mounted or on foot.

Women folk had hardly emerged from the hardships of pioneer days when they were once more called upon to suffer even greater privations—their men gone off to War. Some say it was a rebel Army of miscontents spoiling for a fight. I can not buy that as I read the names of our Sutton Revolutionary War dead and those who came home maimed for life also those who by some miracle returned whole in body and mind. These were the men who were building a town. Now they were called to build a nation. Loyal? Yes. But if they had had their ruthers King George III would have died on some far-away sheals on his Majesty's foundered ship. And the Parliament be hanged. Our Colonies would come off good enough sooner or later but these men left their hearts in Sutton.

It is an historically recorded fact that out of all Worcester County towns, Sutton sent the greatest number of fighting troops to Concord and they were there for the push which sent the defeated Red Coats back to their re-doubts in Boston.

by Phyllis MacLaren

From
Sutton Historical Society
Box 127
Manchaug, Mass. 01526

DOLLS OF YESTERYEAR

Mrs Lucille Weroniecki of Thompson, Connecticut will speak and display her collection of historical dolls on March 4 at the Sutton Historical Society. Among her collection of handmade dolls is one 108 years old.

Mrs Weroniecki has shown her collection of handmade historical dolls at schools, historical societies, libraries, craft shows and Grange meetings all over New England.

Whether you are a collector or maker of dolls, you will find this evening of "Dolls of Yesteryear" entertaining and educational.

Mrs Weroniecki is concerned with the preservation of the craft of making handmade dolls.

If anyone has any old dolls they would like to display they are urged to bring them.

All meetings first Tuesday of the month 8 P.M. but place varies. Watch your newspaper for place of meetings.

Non-Profit Organization U. S. Postage PAID Manchaug, Mass. Permit No. 1
