

JASON RUSSELL HOUSE, ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
Photograph taken in 1925 following restoration.

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## Jason Russell and His House in Menotomy

By ROBERT HARRINGTON NYLANDER

IN the 1730's the part of the original Cambridge territory that is now the town of Arlington—originally known by its Indian name, Menotomy—began to take on increased importance. Lots had been granted and a road laid out as early as 1635, but the town of Cambridge reserved large areas as common lands. And when these were divided, beginning in 1689, they were used, for the most part, as pasture or just as a safe form of investment.

The area was apparently wooded in the seventeenth century. Its chief value to the early people lay in the excellent brook and the mill established on it in 1637 by Captain George Cooke, and owned subsequently by John Rolfe and his son-in-law William Cutter, who with his relatives soon monopolized almost the entire valley of the mill brook.

From the 1650's houses had been built around the mill and its brook by John Adams, John Rolfe, the Cutters, Browns, and others, but it was not until Menotomy was established as the Northwest Precinct in 1732, that the village

took on its own identity (although it was not incorporated as West Cambridge until 1807). The common and burying ground were established at the meeting of the two important roads—the Concord Road (now Massachusetts Avenue) and the road from Watertown to the mill (now Pleasant and Water Streets)—and the meetinghouse was built there in 1734.<sup>1</sup> This was an incentive for people to settle more along the Concord Road; and Jason Russell was one of these people.

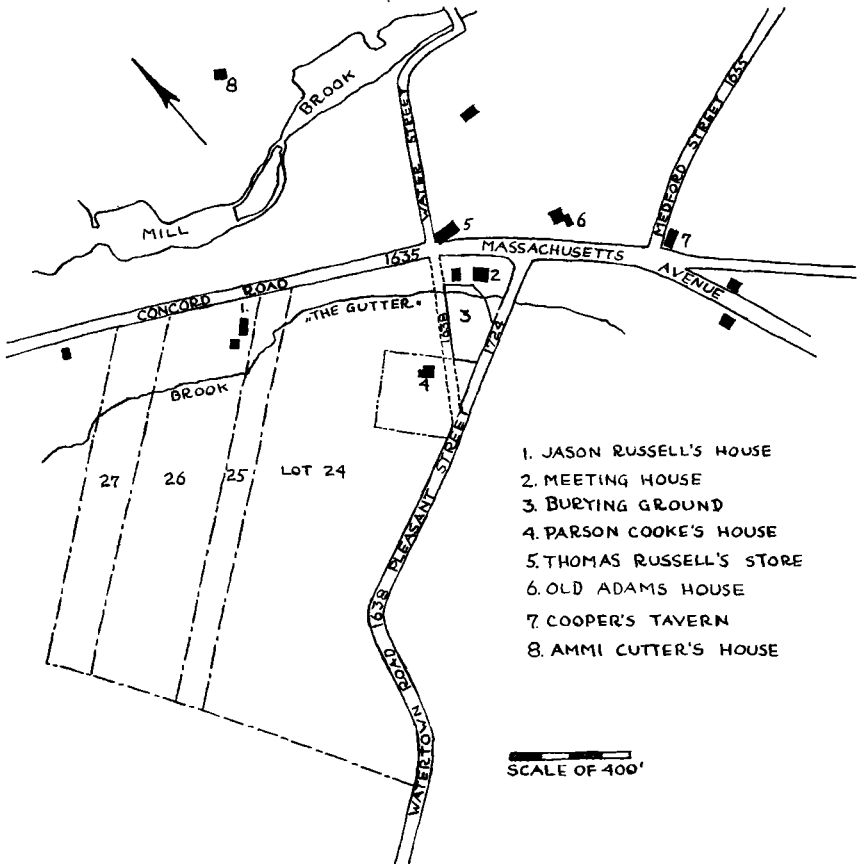
In recent years, the house that Jason Russell built has become confused with the houses of his great-grandmother, his grandfather, and his father. The date generally assigned to it is 1680, but this date is impossible, taking the ownership of the land into consideration. Occasionally 1690 is seen, the year after the land was divided. This is more logical, but is still incorrect; and I shall try to clarify the problem of dating the house and to set down its eventful history in a unified form.

William Russell, Jason Russell's great-

grandfather, came to Cambridge from England with his wife, Martha, about 1640. He was a carpenter and settled in Menotomy about 1645. He was granted land bounded on the north by the

where his son Joseph later lived.<sup>8</sup> William Russell died in 1661, and his widow remarried twice: Humphrey Bradshaw in 1665, and Thomas Hall in 1683.

Three of William and Martha's sons



MAP OF THE CENTER OF MENOTOMY ABOUT 1775

Drawn by the author.

Charlestown line in the division of that year.<sup>2</sup> (Until 1762 Charlestown included the northeasterly part of what is now Arlington.) No record exists of the bounds of his homestead, but from the wording of his will, it may have been

settled in Menotomy: Joseph, near the Menotomy River (Alewife Brook), William, and Jason. A fourth, Philip, lived there for a short time at the end of the seventeenth century, but he moved to Lexington. Jason is the son of interest

here, for he was the grandfather of the famous Jason Russell. In 1681 he and his brother William built "a house of 26 foote long with a leanto at the Ende of it," on land in which their mother relinquished her rights.<sup>4</sup> This is doubtless where William lived, for he married the following year. Jason Russell married Mary Hubbard in 1684, and their farm is described as being bounded on the west by the Concord Road and on the east by Woburn Road (Mystic Street or its predecessor). They apparently started with a small house and added to it, for the inventory of his estate distinguishes between new and old rooms.

In 1689 Cambridge divided the common land in what was called "the Rocks" (the area to the west of Pleasant Street in present-day Arlington). Jason Russell was not granted a lot in this division, but in the same year he bought lot 24 from Edward Pelham, to whom it had been granted. This lot was at the corner of the Concord and Watertown Roads and contained twenty acres.<sup>5</sup> By 1694 he had also bought lots 25, 26, and 27, and in 1699 he bought lot 23, just to the south of 24, giving him a total of about forty acres.<sup>6</sup> The land thus granted and sold had to be improved either by fencing or building. Jason Russell chose to fence his.<sup>7</sup>

Hubbard Russell, Jason's only son, married Elizabeth Dickson in 1710. His mother gave them about eight acres of land bounded on the southwest by the Concord Road for their homestead, and he built a house and barn on it.<sup>8</sup> Hubbard and Elizabeth had five children, but only three lived to grow up. Jason, the only son who lived, was born on the twenty-fifth of January, 1716/1717. Hubbard died in 1726, at the age of thirty-nine. Three years later Elizabeth married Jo-

seph Holden of Watertown, thereby relinquishing her rights in her first husband's estate, which reverted entirely to his parents.<sup>9</sup> Jason and his sisters had their grandfather appointed as guardian,<sup>10</sup> and went to live in his house.

It was probably about this time (c. 1730) that Hubbard's house was torn down. It was gone by 1737,<sup>11</sup> and it is possible that the materials may have gone toward the new rooms on Jason's house, to accommodate his suddenly increased family.

Indications are that Jason Russell (the grandfather) and his brother William were very active in the movement to get Menotomy established as a separate precinct. They were active in the location of the burying ground in 1724 and the meetinghouse in 1733, but Jason died in 1736, three years before the Second or North-west Parish was finally completely established. He left a vast estate which was divided among his widow and grandchildren.

The house was divided equally between them, Mary (the widow) having half the kitchen, the southern half of the cellar, the west lower room, and the kitchen chamber. Jason and his sisters got the west chamber and garret, in addition to the north half of the cellar and half the kitchen. The stairs and well were to be used in common.

Portions of the land were given to Mary, the widow, to Martha Dunster, their only daughter, and to Hubbard's children (specifically Jason). The "Great Pasture" of forty-one acres is of interest here, for it is the land where Jason built his house a few years later. This is the same land at the corner of Concord and Watertown Roads that the elder Jason had bought between 1689 and 1699. Fifteen acres of it were given to Mary, but

on her death in 1738 that part went to Jason. Ten acres went to Martha, but Jason must have bought it from her (although there is no record of such a transaction) for it was included in his estate in 1775. The remainder was given to Jason outright at his grandfather's death.<sup>12</sup>

This pasture figured prominently in the early laying out of the center of the precinct.

In 1724 Jason Russell (the grandfather) and others owning land in the neighborhood petitioned to have the Watertown Road moved from the northerly to the southerly side of the burying ground.<sup>13</sup> (This moved it to its present location, Pleasant Street, instead of keeping it as a continuation of Water Street.) Again, as "Jason Russell's pasture" the land was mentioned in 1733 when the meetinghouse was being located.<sup>14</sup>

It is apparent, then, that there was no house on the pasture when Jason Russell inherited it in 1738. On the twenty-eighth of January, 1740, when he was twenty-three, he married nineteen-year-old Elizabeth Winship, and it is reasonable to suppose that he built the house about the time of his marriage.

Edwin Whitefield, in his *Homes of Our Forefathers*, states that the "Teel House" (as it was known to the nineteenth century) "was built by Jason Russell about 1745." Whitefield's source for the date and history of a house was generally the person who was living in it at the time he sketched it. When he sketched this house, in 1879, it was occupied by Mrs. Lydia Teel, Jason Russell's granddaughter, a lady who is always represented as being sprightly, intelligent, and well versed in the traditions of the house and her grandfather. It is known that she told people that the "solid oak timbers" of

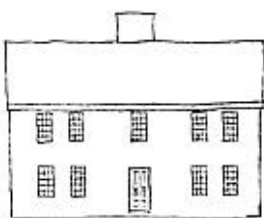
the main part of the house were cut on Jason Russell's own land, between the house and the church.<sup>15</sup>

Jason Russell was a farmer and "a thrifty man,"<sup>16</sup> but he was not as active in the precinct affairs as his grandfather had been. On the twelfth of May, 1740, about the time he was building his own house, he sold an acre of land, just to the south of the burying ground and fronting on the Watertown Road, to Samuel Cooke, the first minister in Menotomy, to build his house on. It is said that he did not hesitate to share his supplies to help Parson Cooke get his house finished and furnished.<sup>17</sup> A month later Jason Russell was admitted in full communion to the church, one of the first people to be so admitted after its organization. His wife had been one of the original members of 1739.<sup>18</sup> They doubtless would have used the half pew inherited from his grandfather.<sup>19</sup> Some years later he was one of the Precinct Committeemen (a representative from Menotomy to the Cambridge Selectmen) for four years, and the Precinct Assessor for the same period (1758; 1761-1763).<sup>20</sup> Otherwise, his prominence in the village came from the fact that he was doubtless a well-liked person and a good citizen. There is only one contemporary reference to his personality and this shows him to have disliked family discord. In 1764 he tried several times to make a conciliation between his aunt, Martha (Dunster) Lock, and his Dunster cousins. The rift appears to have been over religious matters, and Jason Russell and his cousins seem to have felt that the strong-minded lady was at fault. Parson Cooke was enlisted as "the unwelcome medium," and his letters have preserved the affair but did not resolve it.

The house that Jason Russell built had



c. 1740



1775



c. 1814



c. 1863

DEVELOPMENT OF THE JASON  
RUSSELL HOUSE FROM THE MID-  
EIGHTEENTH TO THE MID-NINE-  
TEENTH CENTURY

Drawn by the author.

two rooms, one above the other, with the chimney and stairs at the north end. In order to have at least part of the front face south, in the New England tradition, it was necessary to place the house with its end toward the Concord Road. There was a barn to the southwest of the house and an ell, probably at the back.

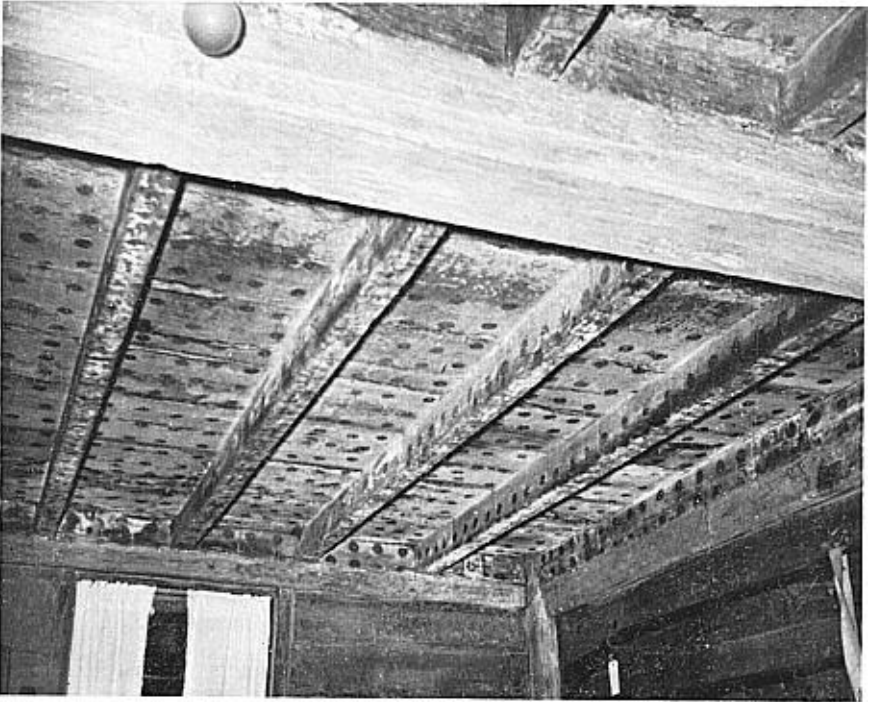
Perhaps five or ten years after the southern part was built Jason Russell doubled the house by adding two more rooms at the north side of the front door. This was doubtless as much to accommodate an increasing family as it was a sign of prosperity, although Jason Russell is also said to have been a fairly prosperous farmer. By this addition, he turned his house into a characteristic New England farmhouse: across the front are five windows, with the door in the center and the large chimney in the center of the pitched roof. Within are four rooms, and instead of the more usual rear lean-to, Jason Russell's house had the large one-story ell, although his descendants added a lean-to later.

The southern rooms were used as the kitchen and children's bedroom. The kitchen had a large fireplace on the north wall, a window and a door to the farmyard on the south wall, and the two windows on the front. The outside walls may have been plastered originally, but in 1924, when the house was restored, wood sheathing was installed. The original floor was replaced with the present one in 1863.<sup>21</sup>

The most outstanding feature of the room is the unplastered ceiling, which is whitewashed and has black sponge painting. This form of decoration is generally considered to be the earliest form of interior painting in New England, dating from before 1725. Some bills in connection with the Province House in Boston,

however, for "whitewashing and spotting kitchen" in 1737, 1738, and 1739,<sup>22</sup> show that it was still popular for such rooms when Jason Russell built his house. The "Old Adams House," which stood in Arlington center until 1855, also had a form of sponge painting in the front entry, which was brought up to date prob-

stairs rise in three wide runs with just a handrail and no balusters. There was originally a cellar door leading from the first-floor entry, but it has been closed, perhaps by Jason Russell himself, in favor of the one in the kitchen. On the second-floor level is a "secret closet" with sliding door under the attic stairs.



A CORNER OF THE KITCHEN SHOWING THE SPOTTED CEILING

Photograph by the author.

ably in the 1750's or 1760's.<sup>23</sup> The house itself was a century older.

The room above is simply sheathed, and has a whitewashed, unplastered ceiling. There is nothing else to distinguish it except the scribblings of generations of Russell children on the panels over the fireplace.

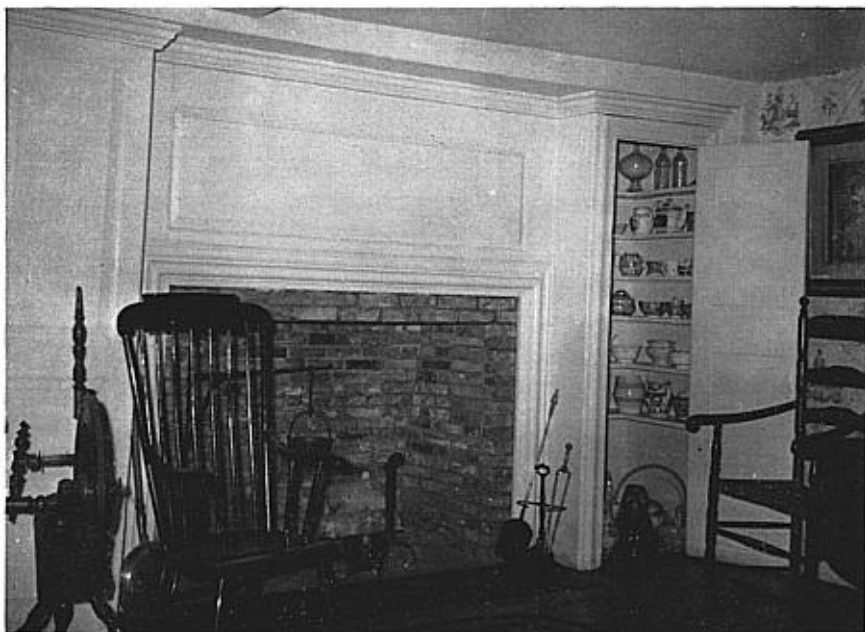
The stairs and entry are simple. The

The two north rooms, originally the best room and a bed chamber, have paneled fireplace walls with handsome bolection moldings at the fireplaces. The other walls and the ceilings are plastered, and the second-floor room has no wooden baseboard. The window embrasures are deep, and are somewhat larger than the actual window. They were plainly fin-

ished at first. Both rooms have ample closets beside the fireplaces.

Throughout the house the framing is fairly heavy and reflects earlier building trends, as did many houses in Menotomy. The kitchen summer beam has a bold chamfer, but elsewhere, when beams were finished at the corners, a crude

a single purlin between each, and a series of common rafters. When Jason Russell doubled the house, he did away with the purlins and the old common rafters and spaced the four principal rafters not quite equally across the entire house. The spaces between were then filled with new common rafters, pegged at the top (there is



**FIREPLACE WALL OF THE BEST ROOM**

Crane, andirons and kettles in the fireplace were Jason Russell's. Rocking chair at left belonged to a later generation of the family.

Photograph by the author.

bevel was used. Until well into the nineteenth century, the southern rooms were unplastered. The north rooms were plastered, and the corner posts cased in, from the start.

An interesting example of Yankee ingenuity is apparent in the roof framing. The original, two-room house had a roof which consisted of four principal rafters,

no ridgepole), and the purlins were omitted. This also made the gables the same height at each end. Most Menotomy houses that grew in this manner ended up with one gable slightly higher than the other.

The old ell is framed similarly to the main house. It has been so changed that it is impossible to determine its original



appearance, or even its original location, with any certainty. From the placement of the studs, it is apparent that it had windows about the size of the attic windows on the main house. An early photograph of the house shows a window of this size, with a heavy frame, on the later lean-to. This may have been one of the ell windows at first and then have been moved when the lean-to was added and the ell altered.

No traditions concerning Jason Russell's family living in the house have come down to the present. All that is known is what can be learned from the vital records and the inventory taken in 1775.

Jason and Elizabeth Russell had nine children, but three died in infancy. Four of them moved to the new town of Mason, New Hampshire. Jason, the eldest, married Elizabeth Lock in 1762. They moved to Mason about four years later but seem to have come back to visit occasionally, and to have their children baptized by Parson Cooke. John married Ruhamah Frost in 1769; Hubbard went to Mason in 1772 where he married, and John joined his brothers there in 1774. Thomas moved across the street to establish a grocery store in 1773. The following year he married Anna Whittemore. Elizabeth (the family called her Betsey) and Noah were the youngest.

There were also, at various times, two other members of the household. Elizabeth Johnson was one of these. She may have been a servant girl, but nothing is known of her except that she was the daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Johnson and died in the house when she was seventeen, in 1751. The other was the Negro girl Kate, who was baptized on March 17, 1754, when she was three months old.<sup>24</sup>

From the inventory of the house, it

can be seen that Jason Russell was not a wealthy man but that the family lived comfortably. His wardrobe was not extensive, consisting of only a few suits, some miscellaneous jackets, some old stockings. Among the furnishings of the house were five well-furnished beds, leading one to believe that Jason and Elizabeth's was probably in the best room. There was a clock, a desk, a case of drawers, three expensive chairs, an armchair, black and brown painted chairs, tables (one was painted white), books, pewter dishes, an array of kitchen utensils (some of which are still in the house), and a clutter of necessary household gear.

Some idea of the family's diet can also be had from the inventory. It seems to have consisted largely of corn (which was kept in the garret), potatoes, turnips, meat, and cider (kept in the cellar).<sup>25</sup>

Both Jason Russell and his house owe their fame to the fact that the bloodiest skirmish of the opening day of the American Revolution took place within the house.

The Concord Road, as it goes through Menotomy, was one of the most strategic locations of the day, since it was the main line between Boston and Concord. On the nineteenth of April, 1775, the Menotomy men who were too old or who were otherwise disabled, stayed close by the road to take full advantage of their position, and during the British retreat from Concord they were joined by parties of Minute Men. Jason Russell, being fifty-eight years old and somewhat lame, fell into their category. He was not the "aged non-combatant" that he was pictured as in the nineteenth century.

About noon, when the defeated and angry British were beginning their retreat from Concord, Jason Russell led his wife, Betsey, and Noah out over the

hill to the south of the house. After they had gone some distance, he directed his family to go on to George Prentiss' house, where many of the women and children from their neighborhood were taking refuge; and he returned "to look after things at home."<sup>26</sup>

When he got back he began to barricade the gate in the stone wall by his

ter, a friend of Russell's from across the mill brook, came over to advise Russell to go to a safer place. Jason Russell refused, saying, "An Englishman's house is his castle." Ammi Cutter barely escaped with his life, for an advance guard of the Regulars took a few pot shots at him as he ran across the hollow and left him for dead when he tripped and fell.<sup>29</sup>



JASON RUSSELL HOUSE

Sketched by Edwin Whitefield for his *Homes of Our Forefathers* (1879). House shown on original site with the gate at right, barricaded by Jason Russell in 1775, and near it the stone marker set up in 1878 to tell of the event.

house with bundles of shingles from the barn so he would have good cover to fire at the retreating British. Soon men from Beverly, Needham, Dedham, and other towns began to join him.<sup>27</sup> Some men from Danvers took cover further along toward the meetinghouse, behind trees and the stone wall that separated the pasture from the road.<sup>28</sup>

By four o'clock, when the British were about a mile up the road, at the place locally known as the Foot of the Rocks, about two dozen men had gathered in Jason Russell's little fortress. Ammi Cut-

Unfortunately, Jason Russell and the others had made one great miscalculation, and this cost them their lives. While they were safe from the main column of British, the ones they wanted to snipe at, they were completely open to the southern flank guard, which was marching along the ridge in back of the house. They did not realize this until the flank guard was descending upon them.

Driven by both main and flank guards, Russell and his friends ran to take cover in the house, but Russell could not run fast and was shot down with two bullets

on his own front doorstep. Eight of the men, the Beverly ones, reached the cellar, closed the door and trained their guns on it. One redcoat tried to go down and was shot on the stairs.<sup>30</sup>

Two men from Lynn, Daniel Townsend and Timothy Munro, had been standing in the barnyard, firing at the approaching main column. The flank guard surrounded them before they realized it and chased them through the side door into the kitchen. They found no place to hide in the kitchen, and the Regulars were coming from both directions. Townsend panicked and jumped through the south window, killing himself on the sash and glass. Munro followed him and ran for his life. Several bullets grazed him but did not kill him.<sup>31</sup>

Ten other men fled to other parts of the house looking for places to hide. They found none, and, although they put up a furious fight, in which they killed another redcoat, they were all disarmed and killed by the British.<sup>32</sup> In an unsigned letter, a British soldier told of some of the happenings of the day. He undoubtedly refers to the fight at Jason Russell's, although there is a discrepancy in numbers:

In another house which was long defended by eight resolute fellows, the grenadiers at last got possession, when after having run their bayonets into seven, the eighth continued to abuse them with all the [beastlike rage] of a true Cromwellian, and but a moment before he quitted this world applied such epithets as I must leave unmentioned. . . .

The Danvers men never reached the house. Seven of them were killed in the front yard, two were wounded, and one was taken prisoner.<sup>33</sup>

In the skirmish, the house was riddled with bullet holes, which still show in the best room, entry, and cellarway. All the

windows in the southern part were shattered, and the clock and desk in the best room were broken.<sup>34</sup>

When Elizabeth Russell came back to the house that evening, she found her husband and the eleven other men who had been killed in the house all laid side by side in the kitchen. "She said 'the blood in that room was almost ankle deep.'" <sup>35</sup>

The next morning a man with a cart came and took the dead Danvers men from the front yard back to their own town to be buried.<sup>36</sup> Someone took the bodies of Daniel Townsend and one other back to their own towns. It may have been known at the time who the other nine men were, but succeeding generations forgot their names. Most of them have now been reidentified: John Bacon, Amos Mills, Jonathan Parker, Nathan Chamberlin, of Needham; William Flint, Thomas Hadley, Abednego Ramsdell, of Lynn; Elias Haven of Dedham; and Benjamin Pierce of Salem.

Elizabeth Russell's cousin, Jason Winship, and his brother-in-law, Jabez Wyman, had died a somewhat foolish death by insisting that they finish their drinks at Cooper's Tavern, during the retreat. They and Jason Russell, and the unclaimed nine were all drawn to the burying ground on an ox cart, and were buried in a common grave "with their clothes on, just as they fell."<sup>37</sup> Captain William Adams, who lived in the "Old Adams House" in the center, brought a sheet from his house to wrap Russell's body in. He said he could not bear to have his neighbor buried without a winding sheet.<sup>38</sup>

Parson Cooke is said to have written the inscription for the gravestone,<sup>39</sup> and it reflects the feelings of the times:

MR JASON RUSSELL, was barbarously murdered, in his own House, by Gages bloody Troops, on y<sup>e</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> of April 1775, Ætat<sup>s</sup> 59.

His body is quietly resting in this Grave with Eleven of our friends, who, in Like manner, with many others, were cruelly Slain on that fatal day.

*Blessed are y<sup>e</sup> dead who die in y<sup>e</sup> Lord.*

Jason Russell's estate was settled by the end of 1775. The house and land were divided between Noah, the only son left at home, and the widow. She received the seventeen acres the house was standing on, together with

Half the Dweling House the Northardly end with Half the seller and Libberty to ues the oven when wanted and Half the well and to ues the Previledge Land Before the House to the gate. . . .<sup>40</sup>

Noah received the other half of the house, half the barn, some lands; and other children got other parts of the estate. It was doubtless for the settling of the estate that Jason and his family came back to Menotomy from Mason for a while. One of their children was baptized by Parson Cooke in October.<sup>41</sup>

The division of the house between mother and son might seem unduly formal, but the eighteenth century was a more formal age, and there were probably few changes in their earlier living arrangements. Elizabeth Russell lived in her northerly rooms until the eleventh of August, 1786, when she died, aged sixty-five years. Among her possessions was a Bible inscribed "Elizabeth Russell,"

Purchased with money given her by some unknown friend in England, in consideration of the loss of her beloved husband, on the 19th of April, 1775, who was inhumanly murdered by the British troops, under the command of Gen. Thomas Gage, to the eternal infamy of the British nation.<sup>42</sup>

In the meantime Betsey had married Jotham Webber in 1778 and had moved to Mason, and Noah married Eunice Bemis at Watertown in 1782. Noah and his wife settled in the house and raised their family of five there. He probably did little to improve the house. Nothing is known of his condition after the Revolution, but poverty was general in Menotomy, and few could afford any improvements to their houses.<sup>43</sup>

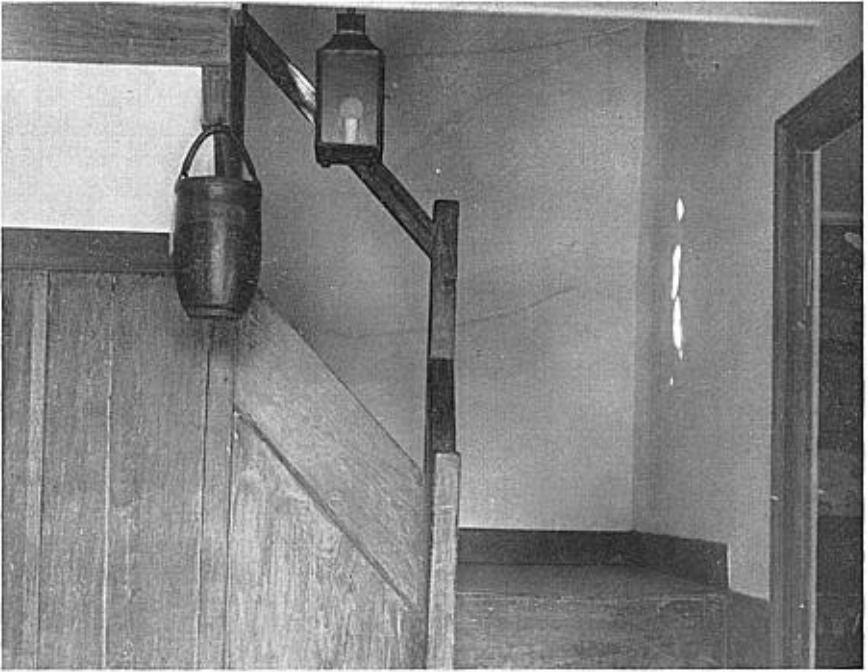
When Noah's daughter Lydia married Thomas H. Teel, a harnessmaker, in 1814, he invited them to live in his house. They also raised a large family in it, and throughout the nineteenth century the house was occupied by their numerous relatives. Most of the family furniture in the house today dates from the Teels' occupancy—their wedding presents of 1814 and other small items. The earlier furniture was sold at auction when Noah died insolvent, although there are a fire-place crane, andirons, and kettle that were Jason Russell's.

It was doubtless about 1814 that the enclosed porch was added at the front door, that the Federal-period moldings were added to the original window frames in the north rooms, and that mantelshelves were installed over the fireplaces. The woodwork in the north rooms was painted olive green at the same time. Later, perhaps after Noah died, in 1824, the kitchen was modernized. A new overmantel, with cupboards, was installed in front of the original one, new doors and door frames were put in, and the whole room was replastered, including the ceiling.

Sometime later in the nineteenth century a lean-to and a large ell, with a front door facing the main street, were added to the west of the house, the lean-to prob-

ably about 1850 and the ell about 1863. The old south door to the farmyard was sealed up in one of these alterations. Most of the present exterior finish on the original house dates from this period, although the window frames are of the eighteenth century. Federal moldings were applied

Thomas H. Teel died in 1855, and his wife and family continued to live in the house. They were always well aware of the history of their house, and it was always appropriately decorated for commemorations of the Revolution, and other important events. One of these was in



ENTRY AND STAIRCASE OF THE JASON RUSSELL HOUSE

Photograph from the Society's collections.

to these frames about 1814 and they have been resashed. There is one small patch of Jason Russell's original clapboards on the south wall. At the time of the last of these alterations the house was painted white, the only color it is known to have been painted while the Russell family was living in it (Jason Russell probably did not paint it) and green blinds were hung at the windows.<sup>44</sup>

1867, when the name of the town was changed from West Cambridge to Arlington. It was decorated with an evergreen-trimmed sign then. Another was the centennial celebration and parade in 1875.<sup>45</sup> A commemorative stone tablet, bearing in permanent form the inscription on the decorations of 1875, was set up by the gate in 1878.<sup>46</sup>

Through the settling of estates and

through sale, Jason Russell's original farm had been reduced in size. In 1883 Lydia Teel divided the remaining land, "Jason Russell's orchard" as she called it, among her children, giving the old house to her son Thomas Russell Teel. She also had a road laid out in front of the house, and this was accepted by the town as Jason Street in 1884.<sup>47</sup> Mrs. Teel died in 1886.

Russell Teel tore down the old barn and further altered Jason Russell's original ell. Part of it was used for a while as a smokehouse. At his death, in 1896, the house passed out of the family, and a subsequent owner moved it partly off its original foundations to install a furnace. The original chimney was lost in the

process of moving and part of the 1863 ell, but otherwise the house was retained intact. In 1923 this and several other houses in Arlington were endangered by demolition threats, and the Arlington Historical Society wisely chose to purchase and save Jason Russell's house over the less well preserved of the threatened houses.

The Historical Society had the house restored (somewhat inaccurately on some points) and has bought back some of the land around it. They have filled the house with their wonderful collection of furniture and relics that people in Menotomy, West Cambridge, and Arlington used and treasured from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin and William R. Cutter, *History of Arlington, Mass., 1635-1879* (Boston, 1880), chaps. I and II. To be cited as Cutter.

<sup>2</sup> *Proprietors Records of the Town of Cambridge 1633-1829* (Cambridge, 1896), p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> Middlesex County Probate Records, Estate of William Russell, 1661, no. 19716, 1st series.

<sup>4</sup> *Records of the Town and Selectmen of Cambridge, 1630-1703* (Cambridge, 1901), pp. 256-257.

<sup>5</sup> *Proprietors Records*, pp. 172, 200.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 204, and Middlesex Registry of Deeds, book 18, p. 599.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 204.

<sup>8</sup> Middlesex County Probate Records, Estate of Jason Russell, 1737, no. 19636, 1st series.

<sup>9</sup> Probate Records, Hubbard Russell, 1726, no. 19618, 1st series.

<sup>10</sup> Probate Records, Guardian Papers, Jason Russell, 1729, no. 19619, 1st series.

<sup>11</sup> See note 8.

<sup>12</sup> See note 9.

<sup>13</sup> Cutter, p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> Samuel A. Smith, *West Cambridge in 1775* (Boston, 1864), p. 37. To be cited as Smith.

<sup>16</sup> Abram E. Brown, "Menotomy Parsonage," *New England Magazine*, March, 1902, p. 82.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>18</sup> Cutter, p. 31.

<sup>19</sup> See note 8.

<sup>20</sup> Cutter, pp. 167, 168.

<sup>21</sup> Smith, p. 39.

<sup>22</sup> Nina F. Little, *American Decorative Wall Painting, 1700-1850* (Sturbridge, 1952), p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> A panel from the front door was saved when the house was destroyed, and shows, on the interior surface, a series of star-shaped designs in black, on the natural, yellowish color of the wood. The panel is in possession of the Arlington Historical Society.

<sup>24</sup> Cutter, pp. 297-298.

<sup>25</sup> Probate Records, Jason Russell, 1775, no. 19637, 1st series.

<sup>26</sup> Smith, p. 37. For my account of the happenings in and around Jason Russell's house in 1775, I have gone to the earliest sources. Smith, whose chief source was Mrs. Teel, gives a fairly complete survey. Cutter's account takes

the form of a series of items from Munro's recollections, details that came down in his own family from Ammi Cutter, a tradition in the Adams family, and perhaps details told him by Mrs. Teel. They are rather confusingly arranged. To avoid an even more awkward arrangement of quotes, I have chosen to put all these sources into a running narrative, amplified by other documents.

<sup>27</sup> Smith, pp. 37-38.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Frothingham, *History of the Siege of Boston, and the Battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill* (Boston, 1851); and Daniel P. King, *Seven Young Men from Danvers* (Salem, 1835).

<sup>29</sup> Smith, pp. 37-38.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>31</sup> Cutter, p. 71, based on Munro's recollections.

<sup>32</sup> Smith, p. 38.

<sup>33</sup> Cutter, p. 70.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71; see also note 25.

<sup>35</sup> Smith, p. 39.

<sup>36</sup> Mrs. Hannah Winthrop, Letter to Mercy Warren, 1775, *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings*, April, 1875, p. 29.

<sup>37</sup> Smith, pp. 51-52.

<sup>38</sup> Cutter, p. 70.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>40</sup> See note 25.

<sup>41</sup> Cutter, p. 298

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 297.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 123-128, 241, being the recollections of Reverend Thaddeus Fiske, the second minister in Menotomy, 1788-1828.

<sup>44</sup> Samuel A. Drake, *Historic Fields and Mansions of Middlesex* (Boston, 1873), p. 401. His revised edition (1900) says, wrongly, that the house was destroyed.

<sup>45</sup> Charles R. Parker, *Arlington Past and Present* (Arlington, 1907), pp. 129, 141.

<sup>46</sup> Cutter, p. 68. The inscription is somewhat misleading: SITE OF THE HOUSE OF JASON RUSSELL, WHERE HE AND ELEVEN OTHERS WERE CAPTURED, DISARMED, AND KILLED BY THE RETREATING BRITISH ON APRIL 19, 1775. Some writers in the 1890's and early 1900's, on the basis of this and the fact that modern houses completely hid Jason Russell's house from the street, thought the house had been destroyed. The modern houses were removed in 1960.

<sup>47</sup> Parker, p. 87.