

## MORTGAGES PAYABLE

December 31, 1949

<i>Property (Houses)</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Mortgagee</i>	<i>Interest Rate</i>	<i>Balance of Principal</i>
Samuel Fowler	166 High Street Danvers, Mass.	Danvers Savings Bank Danvers, Mass.	5½%	\$ 1,650.00
Lincoln	North Street Hingham, Mass.	Massachusetts Savings Bank Boston, Mass.	5%	5,600.00
Mawdsley	Spring Street Newport, R. I.	Savings Bank of Newport Newport, R. I.	5%	2,250.00
Harrison Gray Otis	141 Cambridge Street Boston, Mass.	Massachusetts Savings Bank Boston, Mass.	4½%	7,000.00
Josiah Quincy	20 Muirhead Street Wollaston, Mass.	Home Owners Loan Corp. New York, N. Y.	4½%	381.23
Total				\$16,881.23



## The Chimney Corner, or Fireside Companion

The significance of folklore to cultural history is being more and more studied by historians and ethnologists. The functions of The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities can be divided into two categories: that which has to do with antiquities of historical and general interest, and that which has to do with personal memories of general significance, and folklore. This section of OLD-TIME NEW ENGLAND is set aside in the hope of recording items in the second category. Contributions are welcomed.

With all articles, please give name and address, authority or source of material, and return postage.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** A reader has sent us a cookbook whose recipes are based on the use of brick and reflector ovens, and of which the following forms some introductory words of advice to the young bride. They will supplement comments on the same subject published in this section of our Spring Issue. They have the

value of being contemporary to the ovens themselves.

### OVENS—AND HOW TO HEAT THEM

A few suggestions in regard to the construction of an oven may be useful. For a family of medium size, an oven holding ten or twelve plates is large enough. There should be two or three bushels of ashes, with dead coals in them, poured over the top, after the first tier of bricks which forms the arch is laid. Then the usual brick-work should be laid over them. The advantage is this—when the oven is heated, these ashes and coals are heated also, and, being so thick, retain the heat a long time. Five successive bakings have been done in such an oven with one heating; the bread first—then the puddings—afterward pastry—then cake and gingerbread—and lastly, custards, which, if made with boiled milk and put into the oven hot, and allowed to stand a considerable time, will bake sufficiently with a very slight heat.

The first time an oven is heated, a large fire should be kept burning in it six or eight hours. Unless this is done it will never bake well.

The size and structure of ovens is so different that no precise rules for heating them can be given. A lady should attend to this herself, until she perfectly understands what is necessary, and can give minute directions to those she employs. It is easy to find out how many sticks of a given size are necessary for baking articles that require a strong heat; and so for those which are baked with less. To bake brown bread, beans, apples, and other things, all at one time, the oven should be heated with hard wood, and if rather large, so as to be two hours in burning out, it is better. To bake thin cake, and some kinds of puddings, pine wood, split small, answers very well.

After the wood is half burnt, stir the fire equally to all parts of the oven. This is necessary to an equal diffusion of heat. Do it several times before the oven is cleared. If the oven is to be very full, put in a brick, so that you can have it hot, to set upon it any pan or plate for which there may not be room on the bottom.\* Be careful that no doors or windows are open near the oven. Let the coals remain until they are no longer red. They should not look dead, but like hot embers. When you take them out, leave in the back part a few to be put near the pans that require most heat, such as beans, Indian pudding, or jars of fruit. Before putting in the things to be baked, throw in a little flour. If it browns instantly, the oven is too hot, and should stand open three or four minutes. If it browns without burning in the course of a half minute, it will

\* The pan which is set on this brick may need a paper over it to keep the top from burning, and after a while should be set on the oven bottom and another put on the brick.

be safe to set in the articles immediately. It is often best not to put in those things which require a moderate heat, till those which need a strong heat have been baking ten or fifteen minutes.

A coal scuttle of peat, with less wood, is economical, and gives an equal and very prolonged heat. Many persons use it, with pine wood, for their ordinary baking. It takes a longer time to burn out than wood.

It is well to kindle the fire as far back as possible, because all parts of the wood are much sooner on fire, than if it is kindled near the mouth of the oven; and if peat is used, it should not be thrown in until the wood is well kindled.

From *The Young Housekeeper's Friend; or, A Guide to Domestic Economy and Comfort*, by Mrs. Cornelius. Published by Charles Tappan, 114 Washington Street, Boston, 1846.

Contributed by

ELEANOR THOMAS DOUGHTY,  
Norwalk, Connecticut

#### OLD VERMONT ALMANACS (continued from Spring Issue)

Among the articles in an 1834 almanac was one under the heading "How to Cheat the Moon." It assured farmers that they might escape all inconvenience arising from the moon's influence upon crops. Advised the author: "Select some fair day, rise early in the morning and sow your seed boldly. Cover all up carefully before night, making the land appear smooth and even. When the moon comes on next evening, she will be unable to determine whether the field has been sown or not and will bestow no influence upon it, either good or bad."

*The Astronomical Diary*, published in Bennington in 1797, gave the latest postal rates. For every single sheet car-

ried four hundred fifty miles the rate was twenty-two cents. Says this almanac, "A post road is established between Burlington and Montreal, in Canada, and a British carrier arrives at Burlington every fortnight." The trip of a mail stage was described in 1806 as follows: "This line leaves Windsor on Wednesdays at four o'clock in the morning and arrives at Montpelier the next day at noon. Leaves Montpelier at twelve o'clock, same day, and arrives at Burlington on Friday at nine in the morning." The distances involved were sixty and forty-five miles respectively.

One might find a great amount of useful information in the tables furnished in one of these publications. For instance, some of the earliest published tables "Shewing the value of any number of Cents, in Shillings, Pence, and Farthings." Coins listed varied from the Eagle, a gold coin valued at ten dollars, to the Half-cent. Rules are also given for reducing the currencies of the different states into one another.

Tables of military establishments were often printed. The monthly pay of a major general in 1794 was one hundred fifty-six dollars, while a private subsisted on a salary of four dollars plus one pound of beef, one pound of bread or flour, half a gill of rum, and at the rate of one quart of salt, two quarts of vinegar, two pounds of soap and one pound of candles to every hundred rations.

Medical advice was freely dispensed. An article by Truman Abell blamed colds upon obstructed perspiration and warned that the only way to remain healthy is to "Be abroad every day, that one may not become too delicate." Says Mr. Abell, "The colic, inflammation of the breast and of the bowels, the iliac passion, cholera morbus, and so forth, are often occasioned by wet feet."

Marginal jottings in some old volumes show that they once served as diaries. On the yellowed pages of an 1820 *New England Farmer's Diary and Almanac*, Asa Tuller recorded in his fine, slightly shaking hand all events of importance from the birth of "piggs" to the birth of a child. Of special interest to Mr. Tuller seemed the line "The principal means to be employed for restoring persons dead from lightening are sprinkling with vinegar and affusion in cold water."

This omnibook of information has gone the way of so many other old Vermont institutions. The modern Vermont farmer gets weather forecasts, humor, and news from his radio, has mail delivered to his door, and relies upon methods more effective than Anderson's Cough Drops to cure his bodily ills. Modern farming methods have improved his life. Yet many may read of early country life with nostalgia. "The good old days" still furnishes a point of controversy. However, everyone agrees with the item published in 1824 which advises: "Let us profit by the lessons of the changing years and be wise."

Contributed by  
CAROL LEVARN,  
Richmond, Vermont

FOR SALE

The collection of paintings in oil, of

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Portsmouth, N. H., Doorways*

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