

word (who can blame him?), he avoided its use by referring always, except that once, to that locality as "the Bay." Jemima Howe, who was taken captive in 1755, refers to the place where she was taken (Swanton Falls) as "Messiskow." The Canadian Government is responsible for choosing "Missisquoi" as its official spelling of the name of the country in Canada next above Highgate. The United States Government, for the sake of uniformity, soon followed suit, and the spelling for more than a century has been as above stated. The people of the town in Orleans County so disliked the word that in 1803 they changed the name, which at first had been Missisco and then Missisquoi, to Troy. That change, I should say, was a wooden horse on them. The word in its final accepted form has its first syllable from the Indian tongue, and its ending "quoi" is the French interpretation of the last syllable in the French form. It is still pronounced in Vermont as if it were spelled "Missisco"—which is some satisfaction.

IV. HIGHGATE IN THE OLDEN DAYS

THE Stearns farm, according to an entry in the account book made about 1824, consisted of about forty acres. It was in the Highgate Springs section of the town. One of the entries would make it appear as if the home place were called "Blue Point Farm," but I have not been able to find anyone who knows the property by that name. A decree of 1869, when the real estate was distributed by the Probate Court, speaks of the property of Jacob Carman as being adjacent, and refers to the "Buck House" as standing on the home farm.

The locality known as "Saxe's Mills," not far from the Canadian line, is frequently mentioned in Stearns' accounts. There was a store, gristmill, carding machine, marble mill, and a potash plant in that part of Highgate. The post office was there and the first town meeting was held at the Mills. The Saxe homestead was built not only for family use but also as a sort of tavern and social center. On one side of it was a long hall where dances were held. It is recalled that Minard Teachout, who was a cordwainer, or as he was more commonly called, shoemaker, was one of the musicians for the dances. So as time went on occasionally there was some fun in Highgate.

The population of Highgate in 1820 was 1250. The town at this

period had three sawmills, two gristmills, two taverns, two distilleries, one tannery, and one furnace. It had reached this status gradually, having been 437 in population in 1800. It had gone up to 1374 in 1810, and then had dropped back, having been hurt by the embargo of 1809, the events of the War of 1812, and worst of all by the very terrible year, 1816, when there was a frost or snow in every single month of the year, and literally many starved. To use a modern term everybody was "on relief" that year and most of the following season. The Stearns family went through that year and were fortunate, for plenty succumbed and others left Vermont. So in the decade from 1810 to 1820 the town lost 124 people.

By 1830 the town recovered some of its lost ground and by 1840 its population had risen to 2292. For the next hundred years, however, it was busy sending its sons to build up western New York, Ohio, and the Northwest generally, and it still remains a small town, delightful to visit in summer, quiescent in a wholesome agricultural atmosphere, with a few moderate-sized manufacturing plants. It is more famous for being the birthplace of the poet Saxe, and for the fact that Vermont's junior United States Senator, Warren Robinson Austin, was born there, than anything else. If there were plenty in town who had no love for the new deal of 1776, when the town got its start, there are also plenty there now who have no use for the present New Deal as the political returns from that town show on election nights.

I have spoken of Highgate as an isolated town, but I do not wish to convey the idea that there was no connection whatever with outside centers. Small vessels called sloops went to Albany, N. Y., via Lake Champlain, but the draft of this type of craft was shallow, and the amount of supplies handled in a trip was limited.⁶ The real important trade connection was with Montreal, either via St. Johns, or in the winter direct with that center over the ice after the St. Lawrence River had frozen. It was in the cold season when they got

6. In the *Swanton Courier* for July 13, 1939, there is printed an extract from a typewritten pamphlet entitled "Annals of Highgate and Old Saxe Homestead," by Hannah Saxe Drury. This was written about 1906. Mrs. Drury corroborates what I have said about transportation in the early years. It gives a rosier picture of those days, as remembered from visiting the Saxe store at Saxe's Mills, a place much larger than the small plant of William Stearns. My account gives a poor man's setting, rather than that of a merchant's store. Incidentally, Mrs. Drury says that much hemlock from Franklin was shipped to Albany and New York.

their salt and other staples against the wants of a whole year. Imagine having to plan ahead for such a long period!

Fifty or sixty years ago the spring water at Highgate Springs was celebrated and that village was a small rival of Saratoga Springs, then at the height of its popularity as a health resort. The drinking of mineral water was then nothing less than a fad. These springs were not far distant from the Stearns farm, but they are not once mentioned in the account book, and at this early period probably were neglected. In my youth the product of these springs was quite generally called "rotten egg water," but people came from long distances to drink it to repletion, and some of them were "cured" of whatever ailed them. In 1885 when General Ulysses S. Grant was stricken with cancer, some of this spring water was dispatched to his bedside in the hope that it might afford him some relief. On May 24th, Queen Victoria's birthday, crowds of Canadians came to Highgate Springs on excursions to drink this water and have a good time in an extensive park. All this has long been changed—a glory that has departed.

V. STEARNS AS A CHAIR MAKER

I HAVE no doubt that Stearns began in early manhood to make chairs. The first date that appears recording a chair sale is July 14, 1821. This is carried over from a previous account book. As it took ten years to fill this account book, the previous one may have been started as early as 1814 or thereabouts. This cited entry charges David Skeels \$4.50 for six chairs. These not having been paid for in 1824, when Skeels was buying another half-dozen chairs, the original purchase was added, and eventually he paid for them and other household articles. Stearns rarely seems to have sought payment for anything. Perhaps that was the Highgate code a hundred years ago. Possibly, Stearns never went after his due because he believed the man's credit was good, and felt that eventually he would pay. Certainly some accounts went on for years and years and then finally were paid. So far as the books show, he lost relatively little from bad debts. A better average, I should say, offhand, than could be expected now in the average New England town. Who pays now?

I should like to inform the reader how Stearns happened to become a maker of chairs, but I cannot. He apparently supplied a town want. His prices to me seem low. In that era they may have seemed

large enough. Based on the fact that 50 cents was the wage for a laborer by the day, perhaps his charge for a chair was reasonable. Stearns made four kinds of chairs: an armchair which sold for 84 cents; an ordinary house chair for 75 cents; a "little chair," which doubtless was a child's chair, sold for 58 cents, although he sometimes got rash and charged 60 cents for one; rocking chairs cost \$1.25, and, you can believe it or not, I should not be surprised if he was one of the few men in the state at that period who were making rocking chairs. The rocking chair is a relatively modern institution—more so than the casual inquirer would suspect. An ordinary chair could be converted into a rocker upon the payment of 25 cents, and he "rebottomed chairs" for 25 cents. He surely was no profiteer. Although Highgate grew rapidly in the decade we are studying, Stearns never changed the price of his chairs. This is a quiet commentary on the state of living in Highgate in the fact that he never attempted to get out of the economic groove. He knew that his neighbors had little money. I have in my home two maple chairs that he made and they are in use every day.

One other article which he appears to have manufactured in a small way was rakes. These, doubtless, were for use in the hayfields, and the tariff on them was 25 cents each. Sometimes he sold three rakes at a time. It was a sideline, carried, doubtless, as an accommodation to farmers who, lacking tools, did not feel able to bother in making their own. I wonder that he did not turn out snow shovels. Knowing what a Vermont winter can be, I still am surprised that nobody bought a snow shovel from him. Perhaps somebody did, and, wonder of wonders, paid for it, in which case the item never got into the book.

The entries show that during the winter months Stearns spent considerable time shaving shingles for his neighbors. This was a laborious effort, done by hand. His charge was one dollar a day while shaving shingles. Sometimes, more as an accommodation than as a source of revenue, Stearns occasionally moved a family out of town, or moved one into Highgate. His charge for what must have been quite a fussy moving job was \$1.50, where it took the whole day. This era truly was before the moving racket was devised, and before three removes were as bad as a fire.

When I began to examine the book, I was at once struck with the frequency of the entries of 12½ cents, and 17 cents, or the multiples of those values. The explanation for these recurring figures, I found,

is that they represent the colonial values of the shilling, the smaller sum being the value of the shilling in the state of New York, and the larger representing the prevailing value of the New England shilling. When the United States placed its money upon a decimal basis, the English pound was figured at a value of \$3.33 for New England and elsewhere in the former colonies; but in the states of New York, North Carolina, and Michigan the pound was esteemed to be worth only \$2.50.⁷ Hence a New England shilling was worth $16\frac{2}{3}$ cents, while a "York shilling" was worth only $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents.

In Highgate, shut off from close contact with the rest of New England but fairly near to New York, the York shilling value died hard, and all through the decade being examined these values persist. Not a single item in the whole book is 15 cents, or 35 cents, but $12\frac{1}{2}$ abounds and 34 is very common.

Let us have a look at the book: potatoes are 34 cents a bushel; lime and apples each are 25 cents a bushel (two York shillings); Stearns bottoms a chair for 17 cents; tallow is 17 cents a pound; lots of articles are 13 cents, being the $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents marked up a half cent. Highgate evidently would have been a poor place for any aspiring early Woolworth to have started a five and ten cent store.

When Solomon Stearns began life in Highgate, the best of the land had been chosen by the firstcomers, but he found a forty-acre place in the Highgate Springs section. This either was meadow land or he cleared it, and he also either bought or leased what was called "The Hempyard," a piece of land which is now within the limits of Swanton, having been annexed to that town in 1836 when there was a readjustment of town lines. This Hempyard is believed to be an old Indian burial ground. It received its name, it is said, not from the fact that any hemp ever was grown there, but from an observation by somebody that pine trees in the tract grew as straight as hemp. This sounds to me a bit difficult as an explanation, but it is, nonetheless, a long-established tradition. There was another small tract known as the "marsh lot," from the fact, I suppose, that it was on wet ground.

This is the general setting of the Stearns home. It was not far from the property of John Averill who owned the "Springs." In the distance toward the north was Teachout Hill. Still farther away on Rock River lay the mill property of Peter Saxe, father of the poet John Godfrey Saxe, who at the time the account book opens was only

7. A discussion of those values will be found under "shilling" in Webster's dictionary.

eight years old. The Conrad Saxe place was fairly near. You had to go to Highgate Falls to get to the principal store in town, that of S. W. & S. S. Keyes. East Highgate at that time was not settled. There was almost no community life because the farms were so scattered. So far as I can discover, there was not a single man in town with a college education which was not wholly surprising.

William Stearns never had a store in the sense that we use that term, but he was so much of a Yankee that his home must have housed a goodly supply of miscellaneous commodities, all placed in log structures, and he and his family from the beginning until 1833 lived in a log house. He was a trader, taking most anything that could be turned into cash or its equivalent in exchange for chairs that he manufactured by hand. Chairs were his chief source of income, and his reputation as a maker of them was well established. These he sold, taking as pay, lumber, grain, vegetables and a large number of articles that might be wanted upon a farm. Doubtless some actual cash sales occurred that do not appear upon the books, but the regular procedure was barter—the exchange of one thing for another. Stearns, of course, was not alone in this situation, for it inevitably was the trading rule in Highgate.

A century ago there were no bank checks in northern Vermont, and in the absence of checks, notes of hand passed in their stead. These circulated quite the same as bills and were almost as serviceable. If Stearns did not like the credit of a townsman, all he had to do was to refuse to take his note and insist that that of another person be offered. Like the others Stearns' own note was in circulation, and it sometimes happened that a buyer from him gave him in payment one of Stearns' own notes that had been going the rounds.

A customary method of transacting business was to accept in payment an order upon another person—practically what we call a draft. Usually it was upon the Keyes store, previously mentioned, or upon one of three or four stores in Swanton. There seems never to have been any trouble arising from this practice. If a Swanton man came to Highgate and bought chairs from Stearns, an order on Fletcher's store, or Farrar's store, or Green's store in that town was entirely acceptable. The next time Stearns was in Swanton he went to the store in question and selected such goods as he wanted either for himself or for resale in his own so-called store. This process may seem tiresome to us, but it was a necessary trading step in those days. Barter was the established rule.

So sound is the barter system in a basic way that it is being adopted in high places at this very time when money values are hard to compute in a world that awakes with a jitter and goes to bed with a jitter. At such a juncture the barter system comes into its own once more. Is not the United States at this very moment employing barter to build up its trade with South America? Is not Germany trying to do the same thing? Are we not preparing to exchange cotton for British tin or rubber? Will we not exchange anything we have for anything that any nation in the world has that we happen to want or can use? We are doing that very thing. In theory all foreign trade is on that basis, but it is only in the very recent past that we have sharply turned our attention to this feature as a positive bit of insurance in getting our pay. Yes, Cordell Hull may think he has found a new device, but he is merely taking a page out of an old Highgate account book.

Reverting once more to the barter feature of trading, it may be interesting to note that commodities that were used as cash were corn, wheat, rye or beans. And as a sidelight on conditions at the grist-mills, it can be said that nobody paid anything to have his crop of wheat or corn ground in the mill. The miller was expected to take his pay by retaining a certain percentage of whatever went through the hopper. This is another way of calling attention to the scarcity of actual money in circulation in Highgate.

Stearns often writes in his book, after delivering chairs to a customer: "To be paid for in sheep before January 1"; "To be paid for in grain next Winter"; "To be paid for in work"; or "To be paid for in goods at his store," in the case of a Swanton merchant. Sometimes a triangular feature appears when Stearns writes in his book: "To be paid by him to Peter Sax by January 1." One of his customers was credited with \$1, which is to be paid for by "two days' work on the highway." That meant that the customer performed labor for the town, which otherwise Stearns himself would have had to do.

These situations doubtless at that period were duplicated elsewhere in Vermont in towns of the same size and same inaccessibility. As soon as banks began to function, and the railroads began to handle freight freely, this primitive system was dropped. But in 1824-1833 it was in general use. It was a case of swap, swap, swap, with a final settlement at intervals with cash, or a note for the difference. Primitive as the system may seem, it was on a perfectly safe basis, and out-

side of the inconvenience involved, and the time consumed, it was not a bad system at all—unless a man died while waiting for his pay.

This was not an era when a settler could long keep a hired man in his employ. In the ten years under examination Stearns had three. Few men with any ambition were willing to work for somebody else in a time when land was to be had at a reasonable price. So each hired man stayed long enough to accumulate a fund and then set up his own log cabin, for every Highgate pioneer started in that type of habitation. Stearns paid his farm helpers \$5 a month during the winter months and \$9 a month during the summer and fall. These figures did not include the cost of shoes or clothing. His helpers were William Kent, James Higgins, and Francis Mantle, the latter was a relative of Charles Mantle who had married a sister of Stearns, Thirza, or as they called her in the family "Tursey."

VI. MEATS CHEAP AND TINWARE HIGH

TURNING to the book again, the prices of meats, as might be expected, were very low. Beef and veal sometimes sold as low as 3 cents a pound, but usually at 4. Mutton sold for 4 cents, but sometimes at 5. Pork was the staple meat food, however, and its price in the decade covered rather a wide range. It was as low as 4 cents in 1824 and as high as 12½ cents a pound in 1830. The price, doubtless, followed the result of the corn crop. In 1824, Solomon Stearns was credited with "106 gammons of pork" at 8 cents a pound. This commodity, little known to the present householder, was salted and smoked pork, and corresponded to what we today call ham. "Gammon" is an old term. Those who remember their nursery rhymes may recall these lines: *With a Rowley, Powley, Gammon and spinach, Hi, Oh, says Anthony Rowley!*

Pop Eye, the sailor man of movie fame, has long sung the praises of spinach, but I am not aware that he ever put in a good word for gammon. Incidentally there is no mention of ham or bacon in the book.

Fish are seldom mentioned, but mackerel, salt, of course, occasionally are charged at 5 cents each. Fowl also do not often appear and then at 20 cents each. Eggs sold at a York shilling a dozen, the price never varying. Evidently cake-making was not much in vogue, and eggs on toast is a device of a much later era.

There is no mention of green corn, string beans, or green peas.

Indeed, one of the striking features of the book is the absence of vegetables—"roots" they were called in those days. Turnips are frequently mentioned, but evidently only because they were excellent fodder for the stock. No mention at all occurs of squash, beets, carrots or cabbage, and yet I have no doubt that most of those vegetables were raised somewhere in town. Onion seed is mentioned, but no onions as a food. On the other hand, there is one item of 95 bushels of turnips—quite an order. With this statement it is easy to see that our forefathers did not have what we call a "balanced ration." There was too much meat and not enough vegetables. Yet they lived, some of them, to be ninety and never knew there was such a thing as a vitamin, nor did they worry about their blood pressure. If they did a daily dozen, it was with an axe or a pitchfork.

It might be supposed that a century ago brick in Highgate would be expensive. They were not. They sold two bricks for a cent. About the time that Stearns built his house he bought 850 bricks. This was not enough to give the house a brick front, and I do not undertake to say how they actually were utilized—perhaps for a brick smoke-house. There were a number of brick houses in town at an early date. Thomas Best had one of them. The Keyes store was of brick. I venture the conjecture, because of their cheapness, that these brick were made in Swanton. Certainly they were not imported from England. "Shugar" is frequently entered in the book, and always during the whole decade at 12½ cents a pound. This was white sugar, but there also was maple sugar which was made in goodly quantities in town.

The lumber entries are numerous, showing that most of the timber was pine, hemlock or maple. Once in a while an oak tree was sold, usually for \$2. The timber sometimes was sold by the tree—so much for a tree. Maple trees sold for as low as 50 cents each. Hemlock bark was a staple commodity and varied in price from \$1.75 to \$1.25 a cord. The earlier prices were at the higher figure. Steinhour & Brown in 1827 bought 27 cords at the low price, for use in their tannery which apparently was quite an important local industry. Lath sold at a half cent each, and shingles, made by hand, were valued at \$2 a thousand. The word "clapboard" does not occur in the entire book, which fact is a surprise to me.

Various writers on Vermont have pointed out that the state has within its borders all the elements necessary to sustain life and assure comfort, except that salt is lacking. The modern householder gets

plenty of salt cheap, but it was quite otherwise a century ago. Salt usually was procured from St. Johns or Montreal, in Lower Canada, the price being 80 cents a bushel. The items show that in the autumn salt was in much demand to enable the "putting down" of salt pork and salt beef for the winter. A meat tub in which the pork and beef was corned cost \$2. These are sometimes called powdering tubs. They are so described in the inventory of the estate of Jesse Welden, the first settler of St. Albans who died in 1795, having gone to St. Johns in October to get a boatload of salt. The boat upset on the return trip, and he was drowned. The boat probably was overloaded—or else he was.

One of the articles that in 1825 sold at what we may call a notably high price was tinware. One large tin pail cost \$1.50 while others cost \$1.25, and still others sold at 92, 67, or 58 cents—prices reminiscent of the value of the New England shilling. Later, these tinware prices were knocked down and by 1831 an eight-quart pail could be bought for 50 cents. Basins holding three pints sold for 25 cents, and pint cups for 12½ cents—the familiar York shilling. Doubtless this tinware came from England via Quebec. A few earthen milk-pans, size not stated, sold for 17 cents. It is possible that this earthenware had been made in Bennington and had reached the north part of the state through the activity of peddlers. This, however, is entirely a matter of conjecture. Certainly the price was low enough to suggest that the earthenware was of New England or New York manufacture.

Highgate was one of the few Franklin County towns that produced bog ore in abundance, and furnaces at an early date were set up to convert this ore into iron. In 1825, several tons of ore were drawn from three different localities, one of which was the John Averill farm. This was drawn for the use of Benjamin Franklin Hollenbeck and Luther K. Drury who seem to have been associated in a furnace enterprise. Some of this ore is entered as "drawn from Gaits." It is possible that this refers to Philip Gates of Franklin whose forbears had lived in Worcester, Mass. The Gates family is one of the most prominent in that town. From the furnaces, above mentioned, was produced an abundance of iron, and when made into chains it sold for 17 cents a pound. Old iron sold for only a cent and a half a pound, which is an indication of the natural preference the settlers had for good quality new iron, even if it did cost a shilling a pound. These furnaces for a long time did a good business, but

later the advent of the railroad, with its supply of iron articles at a low price, caused them to fall into disuse.

Liquid refreshment is almost unrecorded in the book. Perhaps customers at the end of a good Yankee trade received a "snifter," but the pages are silent on that point. There are, however, a few entries of small quantities of rum or whisky, with an occasional entry of a glass of "sling," for which the charge was six cents. There are not a half-dozen such items in the whole ten-year period. Evidently it was expected that refreshments of that type would be procured at the village taverns at the Falls, or at the Mills. In spite of the cheapness of apples there is no mention of cider, nor of vinegar, which suggests that perhaps at that time Highgate did not boast the presence of a cidermill. Certainly no young man got his start down hill by buying strong drink from William Stearns. He sold hay, chairs, and rakes.

Naturally, I wonder how all those apples happened to be planted in Highgate, but no answer thus far has appeared. Perhaps "Johnny Appleseed" visited that distant locality. At any rate apples were surprisingly cheap in town. This suggests that the absence of shortening made the making of apple pies difficult. Only once do I find any mention of dried apples, and then they are entered at the rate of \$2 a bushel. Who would have wanted the leathery stuff at any price? This reminds me that in my Connecticut account book of 1765 before me, I find this item: "a day of shaking apels, 50 cents"—a pretty frank confession of primitive apple picking or of laziness. Perhaps there were no stepladders in that day.

VII. SHORT GAMUT OF PURCHASES

CHOSEN at random, various items are set down that may convey information, or give a better idea of how the townspeople in Highgate or vicinity actually lived or transacted business:

In April, 1827, W. F. Cooper loaned Stearns 15 lights of "American glass, valued at five cents each." This is a low price, it seems to me, but glass was being made at an early period in the Hudson River district of New York state. The loan was duly repaid.

In 1825, James Higgins, the hired man, who was working for \$9 a month that summer, took in payment for his services a cow valued at \$14, and a yearling steer at \$7. Deducted from these figures were \$2 which Stearns paid out for a pair of shoes for Higgins.

Elijah Hubbell in 1827 paid for a bill of goods by turning in a churn for \$1.25 and a washtub for \$1.

John Lodge ran up a bill for \$25 which it seems he could not conveniently pay. Having considerable land, he deeded a plot of it to Stearns and thus discharged his obligation.

David Hunt had an account that amounted to more than \$50. He paid the bill by turning in various items of value and among them were 50 sap buckets, which he delivered just at the right time—March 15, getting a credit of \$12.50, which was at the rate of 25 cents a bucket. Not a bad price.

Solomon Stearns, Junior, in 1824 paid a bill for various items by turning in a crowbar, valued at \$2.50, and 15 pounds of nails at 10 cents a pound. He also delivered a bushel of salt for which he got a credit of 80 cents.

In 1832, Orange Seward bought 10 bushels of lime and a half bushel of hayseed for \$2. He paid for this with 22 pounds of shingle nails at the rate of "nine pence" per pound. This is the only item in the book where pence is mentioned. Shillings are never mentioned as such, but the shilling value, as will be seen, is constantly figuring in the accounts.

William Proper (a Dutchman) in 1832 bought six chairs and a plowpoint, total cost \$5.25. He paid for this the following year, by agreement, by teaming. "Self and horses," says the book.

In 1833, Thomas Best, whose note was held by Stearns for an unstated amount, paid all of it except \$3. Stearns gave up the note and wrote in the book: "Note given up, but \$3 is to be paid in sheep when called for." They were duly delivered—two sheep at \$1.50 each.

In 1833 Jedediah Tuttle of Sheldon came into town, perhaps not being acquainted with the Keyes store. So Stearns gave Tuttle an order for \$7 for goods at the Keyes store. Later, Tuttle delivered to Stearns cloth (of his own manufacture I think) worth \$4 and dressed some flannel for him, thus discharging the balance of his obligation.

Francis Mantle, one of the hired hands, in 1828 paid a bill for accumulated rent of a log house by threshing oats in November, and "helping kill the hogs." This was when Stearns was getting ready for the winter.

In 1832, Jacob Brewer outfitted his house with armchairs, rocking chairs and little chairs, and paid for the whole by turning in 2500 feet of hemlock boards. Other supplies were paid for by delivering

to the seller plank and lath. These items, I believe, were for use in the house that Stearns was planning to build.

Antoine Benway in 1830 ran up a bill of about \$25. He paid this in various ways; one of them was splitting 900 rails, which probably was for fencing. All the credit he got for that work was \$2.25. But he produced tanbark worth \$8.62, and finally let Stearns have his cow for some months in order to get \$2.25 off the bill.

David Skeels in 1824 bought 62½ bushels of ashes for \$10.58. This is the only item in the book about ashes, but there was a pot-ashery at Saxe's Mills. It used to be said that the settlers in Vermont made pot and pearl ashes for export to England and sold them for cash so that they could pay their taxes. One ashes item in ten years in the Stearns' book is an indication that, so far as he was concerned, transportation difficulties hampered what otherwise might have been a lucrative side line.

Reuben Davis in September, 1830, bought six chairs for \$4.50. Below is this entry: "To be paid in a pair of thick boots by January 1." The credit page is missing, being cut out.

Silvester Perrigo ran up a bill for various articles, including "H.K. tea," which I guess may be Hong Kong tea, at 46 cents a pound. The bill kept mounting and finally had to be discharged by turning in some steers at \$15 each.

In 1825, Gilbert Van Allen, who seems to have been both a tailor and a shoemaker, paid for various supplies by making some shoes for the children, and "a grate cote" (overcoat) and a vest for Stearns himself.

David Hunt was charged (price agreed upon) \$16.25 for keeping a mare and colt through the winter. On the other hand, several people had the use of a pasture in the summer for 12½ cents. Perhaps this was a monthly charge, but it is not so entered.

The familiar phrase "boot," as a trading term, appears quite often. Close bargaining was the rule. Elisha Barr and Stearns swapped oxen, Barr giving 31 cents to boot—that must have been a grand old wrangle. On the other hand, Patrick Kirk and Stearns exchanged cows, Stearns getting \$2 boot. That sounds more like a real trade.

In December, 1833, William Flinton had run up a bill of \$43.91 for supplies and rent for one of those log cabins. He paid this off by outfitting the whole family with boots and shoes, and included a "pair of lace boots" for Mrs. Stearns, for which he got 62½ cents credit. Having balanced the bill, he did the usual thing, started an-

other bill. The first item was 40 cents for whisky. Men do not change much.

In 1825, Hiram Fountain, one of the Frenchmen, blossomed out in a pair of "gaiters with gilt buttons" and a red cap. He must have been the Beau Brummel of Highgate. The gaiters set him back only 25 cents, but the cap cost 50 cents. Several other people at this time bought red caps. Perhaps they were used at muster.

Only one pair of oxen appear in the book. They were valued at \$45. Cows constantly appear on the credit side and are listed as being valued all the way from \$13 to \$18 each, with \$15 the prevailing figure. There were many cows in Highgate, but no dairying, as the term is now understood, was undertaken. Lack of transportation is the explanation.

Various items include the payment of \$1.50 by Stearns for what he calls "two patent pitchforks." I suppose those were iron pitchforks, welded into a special shape. Probably the Fuller Brush man of a century ago put on extra pressure and landed his victim.

Stearns in 1827 loaned 20 cents to one of his neighbors so that he could get a letter out of the post office. There were no stamps at that period and letters came with the collect charge written on the outside of the letter.

Straw hats appear fairly frequently and always at the uniform price of 50 cents.

Lanterns are only occasionally mentioned, the price then being one dollar. Whale oil was available at Saxe's Mills but possibly a candle was used in the lantern.

Only once are "muskmillons" mentioned and then 22 of them came to town from St. Johns and sold for \$5.75. Some feast!

Most of the time there was only one doctor in town. He was Dr. Joseph B. Cutler who came to Highgate in 1806 and did not die until 1861, aged 81. He traded with Stearns and doubtless attended his family, although the entries do not show this, for he seems to have paid for whatever he bought. Dr. Franklin Bradley came in 1832.

William Teachout was charged 50 cents for "one bunnit" in 1831, which is the only item of that sort in the book. This may be pin money earned by Sally Stearns, wife of William, who perhaps fashioned something pretty for Mrs. Teachout's Sunday-go-to-meeting use. Items of personal finery are very scarce, as might be expected in the account book of a man who was dealing with farmers.

The inside of the back cover of the account book served as a con-