

WACCABUC

THE SETTLEMENT OF MEAD STREET

by Sarah F. Marseilles

Turning north off traffic-heavy Route 35 on to Mead Street in this year of 1981, today's fast tempo lessens and the slower pace of earlier years returns. The huge maples show their age now, but it is quite possible, with a touch of imagination, to see them as younger trees, to see the road as an unpaved narrow lane, and hear the plod and creak of a farm team or see the herds of not-so-long-gone cattle being driven to their barns for milking. The land on either side of the road has been well tended for more than two hundred years because the men who lived here had the inherited pride of possession of land and a sense of responsibility to put it to good use and to replenish the earth's resources. Until well into the twentieth century Mead Street was a farming community.

On the 17th of June 1697 Stephanus Van Cortlandt, by royal charter, became Lord of the Manor of Van Cortlandt by proceedings too involved to go into in this space. Under both Dutch and English law the patroon was obliged to make certain provisions for settling the land. Mills were to be built and the miller ensconced; carpenters, smiths, and wheelwrights were to be located in a community, and if possible, a doctor and a clergyman/school teacher. Although Mead Street was no such organized colony, the land on both sides of the road was Manor land. By the will of Stephanus, dated 1700, his surviving sons and daughters received shares equal in quality and quantity in the division of the huge estate. In Westchester alone there were 86,213 acres. By 1730 these holdings had been surveyed and divided into Great Lots which were numbered and divided again into smaller parcels or farms consisting usually of 240 acres. In a short time indentures appeared bearing signatures such as de Lancy, Bayard, Verplanck, and Schuyler, as well as Van Cortlandt, which have become familiar place names in our local geography. These heirs, as their father had, encouraged the settlement and improvement of the land. Farms were rented yearly for a very nominal sum of money, usually 40 shillings, or in some cases barter of farm products. Taxes were virtually non-existent. Although the leases were for a ninety-nine year tenancy, it was understood that "the soil rights" or fee could be bought at any time that an agreement

could be reached. By 1750 the Manor was well populated, and about twenty years later the tenants began the purchase of the land.

Thus the farming settlers filtered into our area by slow degrees. Gradually the Indian footpaths became tracks and widened into cart ways leading to those places where the streams could be safely forded. Slowly the land was cleared of trees, stumps were burned, and rocks dug and hauled aside for fence and foundation. Mills appeared along the streams, saw mills turned out boards and beams for houses, grist mills flour and meal. Bridges were built; the main-travelled roads, laid out to a width of ten rods and fenced, became stage or post roads, rocky and rough it is true, but marked by mile-stones. A few of them are still in their places and familiar to us all. Mead Street was a post road, and one of these stones is preserved on the north side of Route 35 only a few feet west of the entrance to Mead Street; another north of it, a measured mile.

On the west side of the road as one comes up the hill is a cemetery where the oldest stone is dated 1794. It is that of the second child of Enoch and Jemima Mead, Sally, who died at the age of fourteen. Many since then, neighbors, relatives, have been buried there. They were chiefly Meads or those related to them, but other names are Lawrence, Hunt, Rockwell, and Todd, Holmes, Braden, Adams, and McCaull. The cemetery has never been incorporated, but the maintenance of the grounds has been the responsibility and interest of the Mead Memorial Chapel.

North of the cemetery on the west side of the road stands the imposing home built about 1806 by Daniel Hunt. He came to Mead Street from upper Salem, bought several pieces of farmland already cleared (one can tell from the price of the transaction) and he and his wife Hannah raised their family here. His son Daniel, fifth and youngest child, was born in 1818 and served for many years as supervisor of the township. He married in 1851 Jane Amanda Howe, daughter of Jeremiah Howe, Hunt's nearest neighbor to the east. They had two daughters and a son; Miss Carrie and Miss Louise lived out their days in that house and were beloved and honored all their days. Their brother Frank married Annis Mead, daughter of William M. Mead of Oberlin, Ohio, in 1893 and built the house standing next door to his father's. Annis Hunt and their daughter both graduated from Oberlin College. Constance is still a neighbor of ours though not at present living in the township of Lewisboro.

On the east side of the road there are two houses built in the twentieth century, but that is getting ahead of the story of the settlement of Mead Street.

At the corner of Mead Street and Schoolhouse Road is the homestead built in 1820 by Alphred Mead (of whom more later), and a bit farther on, at the top of the hill and on the east stands, gable-end to the road and close behind a white picket fence, a house long known as Elmdon. The stone marker set into the chimney carries the date 1780. It was built during the Revolutionary War by Enoch Mead. Both he and his wife, Jemima, were born in Horseneck, Greenwich, in 1756, where they were married in their twentieth year. He acquired property on Mead Street about 1776, probably from his father. In 1784 he bought an additional one hundred acres, and in 1787 forty more, all parts of Van Cortlandt Great South Lot #10 and making up a single farm. This land was on the crest of the ridge on Mead Street with a wide-sweeping view to the hills beyond the Hudson. Here they settled.

Enoch built first a log house beside a good spring to the east of the site of Elmdon. To the best of our knowledge this was little more than a single room, perhaps with a sleeping loft, four walls of unhewn logs, a roof of crudely split shingles or possibly sod or thatch, a rough floor or one of dirt, the fireplace and chimney of fieldstone. Here Enoch's first son was born, and while he was building his second house nearer the road, his family continued to grow.

This was during the Revolutionary War years, and Enoch served as an enlisted man in the Westchester Militia under Col. Thaddeus Crane and later was Adjutant on the staff of his brother, General Ebenezer Mead. He was also active, after 1784 when the present township was established, in the affairs of the town as overseer of the poor and as commissioner of highways. He and his family must have gotten quite a surprise and thrill in July 1781 when two brigades of French troops under the command of General Comte Rochambeau, in their highly colorful uniforms, came marching right past the door on their way from Ridgebury to Bedford Village. They were en route to join General Washington's army in a surprise attack on the British forces at Kingsbridge, north of Manhattan. This plan was abandoned; Rochambeau joined Washington's troops near King's Ferry and began the long march to Yorktown, Virginia, to the final battle of the war.

One wonders who were Enoch's friends and neighbors in these early days. Of the latter we know with certainty of only a few, though others are probable. To the north near the corner where the post office now stands, Joseph Benedict had an extensive land holding along the south shore of Long Pond. He had built a log house we suppose similar to that of Enoch, again beside a fine spring. He cannot have

lived there *too* long, for he is recorded as having been married three times and parented twenty-three children. One of the daughters of his third marriage was Nancy.

In the summer of 1780 David Williams worked for Joseph Benedict on his farm at Long Pond. "On the afternoon of September 22nd he was talking with Nancy at the door of her home when a group of young men, including his cousin Issac Van Wart, came down from Yerkes' Tavern. An expedition to Tarrytown had been proposed, and David Williams willingly joined. According to one tradition his particular motive was to avenge the death of his friend, Pelham, who had been killed by cowboys the night before. The rest of the story is familiar. The party reached Tarrytown the next day; and an hour later they had stopped Andre'...." (Quoted from Theodore Van Norden's *South Salem Soldiers and Sailors*.) The captors were liberally compensated for their prize, and in addition Nancy became David's wife in 1782. He bought of his father-in-law 140 acres of land, and according to Mr. Van Norden, their only son was born in the log house on Mead Street. Later the family moved to western New York State.

Diagonally across Mead Street from the Benedict/Williams place, a farm house built about 1800 was occupied for a time by Absalom Holmes who died in 1823. The house is still in use though removed from its original foundations. Absalom, his wife, and others of his family are buried in the Mead Street cemetery.

There was a habitation standing near the site of the Waccabuc House that originally belonged to William Benedict and may have been built prior to 1800. It is believed that another early house stood on the site of the present Waccabuc Country Club.

South Salem men who must have been familiar to Enoch, and who settled at approximately the same time, were those who served in the militia with him. Some of these would have been Joseph Benedict, Joseph Brundige, Daniel Bouton, Ira Todd, Ebenezer Whelpley, Samuel Lawrence, David Pardee, and Jacob Gilbert.

Enoch's family grew but not all prospered. We have mentioned the oldest stone in the graveyard, that of his daughter Sally. Two of his four sons had preceded him to the grave when he died in 1807. Jemima, his wife, lived on at Elmdon with her oldest son, Solomon; she dying at the age of 81 in 1837, and Solomon surviving until 1870, to the age of 92. Solomon's son, Harvey Mead, inherited the place and lived there until his death in 1904.

In 1798 Solomon had married Eunice Gilbert. Of their eight children, their eldest son, Jacob Gilbert Mead, married in 1831 Sally Ann Todd, and they built the house that stands on the west side of Mead Street a few hundred feet north of Elmdon. Gilbert, as he was known, in addition to land given him by his father, bought in 1842 a nine acre woodlot on Long Pond Mountain. In 1846 he received three parcels equalling 200 acres more or less, being land devised to Gilbert's wife, Sally Ann, by her father Ira Todd. In 1850 he bought from his father one hundred acres west of Mead Street, known recently as the Croft Farm, together with two pieces of woodland, one on the mountain and one on the northeast side of the highway from Long Pond to Golden's Bridge, the two equalling more than twenty acres. Gilbert deeded some of these lands to his son Elbert who built the big square house that stands near the site of the log house of Joseph Benedict. Elbert, and his widow in turn, left the house and approximately fifty acres to her nephew, Frederick Studwell, who continued to live there for many years and was one of the founders of the Waccabuc Country Club.

Solomon's second son, Enoch Milan Mead, married in 1834 Elizabeth Hoe, widow of Henry Mudge and daughter of Robert Hoe, founder of R. Hoe & Co., an early and preeminent firm in the printing and tooling industry in both America and England. Elizabeth's brother, Richard March Hoe, was the inventor of the rotary printing press. In 1847 this machine, a product of the industrial era, revolutionized the printing business and made wealthy men of its producers. Enoch M. had a dry goods business in New York and set his family up in housekeeping, first at 295 Pearl Street, New York, then at 245 Jay Street, Brooklyn. Elizabeth was rather frail and come summer left the city with her children and spent the hot months with the children's grandfather, Solomon Mead, at Elmdon. Her letters to her husband, remaining in the city, give a good description of the country life of those days. Their five children, born between 1837 and 1847, were left orphaned by the death of both parents, Elizabeth in 1848 and Enoch Milan in 1850. Of these children Lucy G. was taken into her grandfather's home and brightened his and Harvey's later years at Elmdon. Young Herbert went to live with his Uncle Gilbert. In time Gilbert established Herbert on the farm (the Croft) which he had bought in 1850 across the street from Elbert's. But misfortune followed Herbert even there. He had built up a fine herd of imported cattle which he lost in one night of disastrous fire that ruined him and

left him little taste for farming. At the time Gilbert's elder son Solomon T. was a widower and an invalid, living on Gilbert's farm, in which Elbert had inherited a share. This Elbert quit-claimed to Herbert on condition that Herbert would provide a home for Solomon T. for the remainder of his life; this proved to be a short span of time, so Herbert came into possession of the farm. He married Anna Rockwell in 1879; the place in time passed to his son Herbert and daughter Alice Rockwell Mead. Alice did not marry and lived all her life here, being visited often by her brother and his family. She contributed generously in time and talent to the community. Herbert had two daughters, Clara Antoinette and Theodora Hoe; the former is still actively interested in the affairs of Mead Street.

Solomon's youngest daughter Thyrza married in 1838 Robert Hoe, second brother of Elizabeth and Richard March Hoe. Essentially city people, Thyrza and Robert came to the country with their family for the summers and visited at Elmdon until 1877 when they bought from Martin R. Mead the house and land which is the present Country Club site. They remodeled and greatly enlarged the house and named it "Indian Spring Farm". Mr. Hoe built a house for his estate manager, Henry Johns, in 1892, and another for his coachman. He also built a large carriage house, a cattle barn, a stone smoke-house, stables for his considerable string of race horses, a graded race course, and a large boat house on the lake. At the same time he acquired and cultivated some four hundred acres of land. He improved the roads, using the stone walls for fill, and replacing the walls with miles of privet hedge, and picket or board fencing. In 1880 he built the post office, much smaller than it is now, and in 1894 he "built fully equipped and furnished" a new school house, "donating also the site and grading the same. By such an act of generosity and public beneficence .. placing the district under lasting gratitude .." This gentleman's estate was held by the Hoe family until 1912 when it was bought by the then recently formed Kings & Westchester Land Company, held in joint ownership by the members of George Mead's family.

Alphred Mead, Enoch's second son, lived at the homestead. Born in 1781, he married in 1814 Mary Brundige, always known as Polly. Alphred had built first a small house just to the south of his father Enoch's place on the east side of the road. Then by 1820 he built the homestead across the way on the southwest corner of the Schoolhouse Road. The early school was situated on the northwest corner. Polly was the daughter of Joseph Brundige whose ancestors

came from Byram Neck, Rye, in 1759, having bought land from one of the heirs of Stephanus Van Cortlandt, a farm on the Great South Lot #9 lying south of the highway between Long Pond and the present Increase Miller Road.

Alphred and Polly had five boys and two girls. The boys attended the Academy in North Salem which had been incorporated in 1790 and offered a better-than-average education. In time the eldest son Alfred B. married Sarah Howe and settled in North Salem, building a big square house on Titicus Brook, the duplicate of the one of his cousin Elbert on Mead Street. He became a prosperous farmer and cattle dealer. His sister Mary married G. Charles Benédict and lived in a house only a little way down the road to the southwest of Alfred's home. The other daughter, Loretta, never married but managed very capably the affairs of the homestead farm after the death of her father in 1855. Another son of Alphred's, Joseph, never married but lived near Loretta on a small farm given him by his father, west of the homestead on Schoolhouse Road. Erastus, the youngest of the family, married in 1870 Lila Wright and went to live in the big city. Martin R. married Octavia Badeau and built the house which was later to become part of the house enlarged by Robert Hoe. Martin R., about 1857, built and managed the Waccabuc House that for some forty years stood at the corner of Mead Street and the road to Golden's Bridge. This was on the east side of the road. Across from it, where the church stands now, was a large barn to accommodate the horses used by the neighbors as well as the hotel carriage trade. Guests arriving from New York City were met by carriages at the Golden's Bridge station; and their trunks, usually numerous, were transported by wagon, along with such supplies as might have been shipped for the hotel. Members of the community were accommodated by this nearby convenience. A letter of 1878 from George W. Mead to his brother Martin tells of his need for "a large stage or some other conveyance" for himself and his family "about seven full sized and about as many smaller persons" and John was to come for the trunks. The hotel was a "resort" of that day, and is described in another part of this history. Martin R. died in 1879, but the hotel continued in operation until 1896 when it was destroyed by fire.

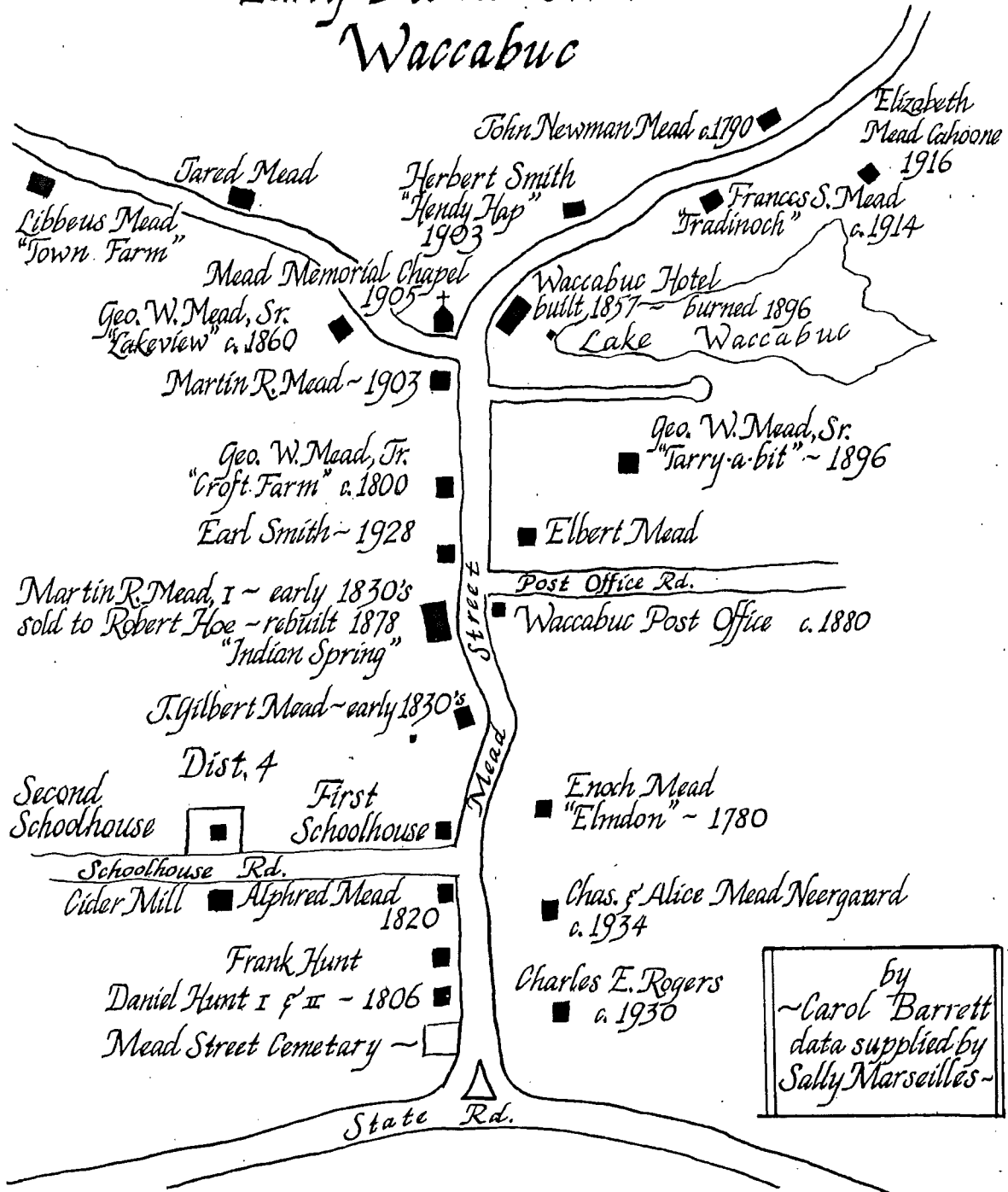
From the wide porches of the hotel and from the top of the hill just beyond there was a fine view of the lake, of Castle Rock, and the open fields coming down to the lake on the south shore, with the hills along the north edge leading the eye across the invisible boundary of the Manor line to the hills of Ridgefield and Connecticut. There is an

oil painting of this view, probably commissioned by George W. Mead, by an artist of the Hudson River School, Guenther Hartwick, which is in the Mead-Studwell Collection. It is interesting to see how much of the land was open field at the time of painting, for now trees have completely shut off the vista and covered the pasture lands with dense second growth. On the north side of the road at this spot there is a great wall of massive granite blocks, cut and fitted to such perfection that after a century there is hardly a chink out of place. This was constructed about 1865 under the direction of George Mead by Ephraim Grummond who owned land on Long Pond mountain. George had dreams of building a house on top of the hill behind the wall, but after several futile attempts to dig a well for his water supply, he abandoned the site and later turned his attention to another spot on the south shore of the lake where, later, Tarry-a-bit was built.

A bit farther on, on the left side of the road is a house originally belonging to John Newman Mead (distantly related to the other Meads) which was built about 1825 for him and his bride, Sally M. Keeler, by her father. The original part of the house, smaller than it is today, has beautiful detail of finishing and proportion, which leads to the conclusion that Sally's father was one of the talented family of craftsmen and super-carpenters, the Keelers of South Salem.

Between this point and the township line of North Salem a mile farther on, there are evidences of several more houses, perhaps a cellar-hole or fieldstone chimney or the rocks of a root cellar, but these are all gone except for one old place once called Appledore. It is on the right side of the road, a story and a half, with generous front porch now, built snugly into a huge rock ledge with only a bit of yard around it. This probably dates back to the early eighteen hundreds. The builder and early inhabitants have vanished into limbo, but in 1912 the house was very much in its original state. A single apple tree stood in the front yard, next to a dug well about twenty feet deep, the only source of water except the rain barrel at the corner of the house. The well bucket hung by a chain to the end of the long well-sweep, used as leverage to hoist the full bucket from the bottom of the well. The outhouse was a few steps from the kitchen door, slightly disguised by a thriving lilac bush. In one of the two rooms downstairs was a large shallow fireplace with a crane for the iron kettle. In 1912 this cooking element had been replaced by a kerosene stove, hardly more convenient than the fire on the hearth. Up a steep flight of stairs two small bedrooms were tucked under the slope of the roof. To us

Early Mead Street Waccabuc



by
~Carol Barrett
data supplied by
Sally Marsailles~

today it sounds primitive, but to the man who built it, it must have seemed a palace compared to the log houses of his neighbors. Many of the early houses in the vicinity were built into the side of a hill or bank, so that the stone foundation formed the first story, then a framed second story placed atop that, thus conserving both the labor of excavation and precious lumber. The oldest part of the Homestead on Mead Street shows this type of construction.

From the site of the Waccabuc House the road from Long Pond starts west toward Golden's Bridge. This road must have been in pre-history days an Indian path, for it is frequently mentioned in the earliest indentures of the proprietors of the Van Cortlandt Manor lands. The road winds along in woods between large boulders and a rocky ravine, past swampland and down a steep hill, more suitable indeed for the Indian than today's traffic. At the foot of the hill is an old house notable for the fact that it is a double house. Two front doors, side by side, two chimneys, and so on. It was built by brothers Jared and Martin Mead, still another branch of the early Meads. Across the road stood a horse barn, and on the hill behind the house was a large cattle and hay barn. Jared was born in 1787 and Martin in 1789; Jared survived his brother by twenty years and at his death owned 250 acres. They were sons of Libbeus Mead and Hannah Benedict who had built and lived across the road and down a piece, farther west. This place was later known as the town farm (map of 1867). It was situated on the then corner of the road from Cross River to Upper Salem, a few hundred feet easterly from the present road. The house across from Libbeus' is thought to be early and to have belonged to Micah Halstead or his heirs. It passed to Joseph Brundige, Jr., in 1833 on default of a mortgage of house and 90 acres of farmland.

This same Joseph Brundige and his father came originally from Rye, owning land there and across the Byram River in Greenwich. An indenture dated 1759 from William Cockcroft, one of the Van Cortlandt heirs, to Joseph Brundige is included here for its intrinsic interest.

This indenture made the sixteenth day of February anno Domini one thousand seven hundred and fifty-nine between William Cockcroft of the City of New York merchant of the one part and Joseph Brundige of the County of Westchester yeoman of the other part Witnesseth that he the said William Cockcroft in Consideration of five shillings money of New York to him in hand paid at and before the ensealing and delivery hereof by the said Joseph Brundige the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged hath bargained sold and demised --- unto the said Joseph Brundige - all that certain farm lott -- being in the Manor of Cortlandt in the county of

Westchester and province of New York and is part of South Lott no 9 -- which said farm begins at the northeast corner of farm no 1 -- lately belonging to Stephen Bayard and runs thence west one hundred and thirty four chains seventy links thence south thirty four chains thence east one hundred and thirty four chains seventy links thence north thirty four chains to the place where it first began being bounded north by the land now in the possession of Ezeiel Hallstead containing four hundred and eighty acres -- to have and to hold -- every part and parcel thereof unto him the said Joseph Brundige -- from the date hereof for and during and untill the full end and term of one whole year be complete and ended he the said Joseph Brundige yielding and paying therefore to the said William Cockcroft on the last day of said term the rent of one peppercorn if lawfully demanded and not more to the intent and purpose that by force and virtue of these presents and of the statute made for transferring uses into possession he the said Joseph Brundige may be in the actual possession of the hereby demised premises and thereby be enabled to accept and take a grant and release of the provision and inheritance thereof to him and his heirs and assigns forever.

In witness whereof the parties to these presents have interchangeably sett their hands and seals the day and year first above written

Sealed and delivered
being first duly stamped --

In the presence of

Dan'l Stiles

John Van Cortlandt

Wm Cockcroft

There are in the Mead-Studwell Collection several other deeds and mortgages indicating that four generations of Joseph Brundiges in succession owned land in the Great South Lot #9 lying between Enoch Mead's land on the east and Simeon Brady's land on the west. It was all to the south of the highway "from Long Pond to Golden's Bridge" and must have been a sizeable acreage. There were two Brundige houses beside the highway of which only one is still in existence. Joseph married in 1784 Loretta Smith, daughter of Thomas Smith of Bedford. Their daughter Mary (always called "Polly") married Alphred Mead, and their son Joseph married Thirza Mead, both children of Enoch. The Brundiges, as well as the Smiths, were Quakers by belief and were members of the Quaker Meeting in Golden's Bridge.

George W. Mead, grandson of Enoch, after graduating from Yale College in 1851 attended Yale Law School, and in 1853 became associated with Enos N. Taft in the practice of law in New York City as the firm of Mead & Taft. He was an energetic and restless man and found many outlets for his energy beyond the farm, in real estate, the law, and finance. He undertook the promotion and financing of The New York, Housatonic, and Northern Railroad which was to run through the township of Lewisboro from White Plains to Brookfield,

Connecticut, a venture doomed to failure. With more success he financed a large number of houses being built in King's County, N.Y., and was active in many civic and educational institutions in the city; but he never lost his deep and consuming interest in his farming land on Mead Street. He married in 1858 Sarah Frances Studwell, only child of John Jay Studwell of Brooklyn, and proceeded to raise a family of eleven.

John Jay Studwell was the son of Joseph Studwell, born 1777 in Greenwich, and Rebecca Mead. He was born in 1814 just over the Lewisboro township line on the road to Somers; but shortly thereafter the family moved to the Hook Road in Bedford. He had the usual village schooling and at the age of seventeen became apprenticed in the carpenter's trade. Before he was twenty he had had enough of the farm and packed his tools and clothing and went to the city in search of his fortune. He had two older brothers born in Greenwich before the family migrated to Westchester County. John Jay, with his older brother Augustus, started in business first as carpenters then in the lumber trade. He married in 1836 Elizabeth LaFarge Moore of Staten Island and was living at 127th Street, Manhattan, when his only child, Sarah Frances, was born. These were the days when New York was growing at a furious pace; the "building starts" must have been phenomenal! John J. wrote in a record that he kept for many years, of returning to the country during "the first cholera year, I think the summer of 1832". Ten years later he wrote of "being affected with the chills and fever", malaria, no doubt. Typhoid and smallpox were also greatly feared. The family moved to Brooklyn Heights where the brothers built, among many others, a row of brownstone houses on Monroe Place, of which each chose one for himself. They quickly assumed positions of distinction and importance in the rapidly-growing community.

And so it came about that the eleven children of George Mead and Sarah Frances Studwell, his wife, grew up spending half of their time at 26 Monroe Place next door to their grandparents, and half in the country at Waccabuc in a house called Lakeview. George Mead drew the plans for enlarging this house and saw to the digging of a well with a windmill and water tank for gravity-fed water piped into the kitchen. There was a stable built for his horses here, but the farm at the homestead was still of prime interest to him. His sister Loretta saw to it that milk, eggs, butter, pork, sausages, and bacon were distributed to the various families. Fruits and vegetables were shared with those in North Salem as well as along Mead Street. It was a busy

life, and as his family grew he saw to it that each of the four oldest girls (Frances, Elizabeth, Loretta, and Florence) took charge of their younger brothers as they came along, on a one-to-one basis. The boys, George, Jr.; Joseph and John, twins; Martin R.; David Irving; then Alice and Coralie. The girls as they grew attended and graduated from the Packer Collegiate Institute in Brooklyn. Coralie went to Rosemary Hall. The boys attended the Academy in North Salem as their father had, and several other schools as well, but lacking in enthusiasm for their studies, fell short of their father's expectations for them. He wrote to Yale University for information on tutors for the boys, and after engaging one for a succession of summers, he soon found himself with a prospective son-in-law. David Irving was the only one to fulfill his father's hopes, graduating from Yale in 1897 and from Columbia Law School. Long since in numbers, and now in size, his family had outgrown Lakeview, and plans went forward for building Tarry-a-bit. It was completed in 1895, a generous house with a dozen or so bedrooms (and two baths); all the space and elegance that the family had lacked at the little house, Lakeview. So at the close of the nineteenth century Mead Street was inhabited by the descendants of Daniel Hunt, of Solomon and Alphred Mead, the Hoe family, and at the northern end of the street the family of George W. Mead, which was coming of age and ready to burst into bloom.

George W. Mead died in 1899. Shortly thereafter, Sarah F. Mead, his widow, engaged an architect, Hobart Upjohn, to draw plans for a church which would be erected on the corner opposite the site of the old hotel. This was to be a memorial to her husband and all the Meads of the past generations. The corner stone was laid in 1905, and the whole family watched with interest as the building progressed. When it was completed each member presented some part of the furnishings: the altar table, the pulpit, the organ, pew chairs, the font, the stained-glass windows, the wrought-iron chandelier and sconces, the Meneely bell in the tower. The church was dedicated in 1907. Summertime vesper services were held until recently when through lack of community support they have lapsed.

All his life George Mead had dealt in real estate, and now his heirs continued to acquire land, especially where the attrition of time and death had left neighboring farms vacant. Such places as the Libbeus Mead and Jared Mead farms, the John Newman Mead property, part of the Elbert Mead farm, Enoch's land that had passed to Harvey Mead, and latest of all the homestead where Loretta Mead had been the beloved mistress for so many years. There were vacant land and wood lots for sale, land around the lake, now known

as Waccabuc, and land on the mountain. There was real estate in Brooklyn also. The Kings & Westchester Land Company was formed to manage these properties; rents, titles, mortgages and loans could all be handled more efficiently under one umbrella. In 1933, with the closing out of the Brooklyn holdings, the Kings & Westchester became the Mead Property, Inc. Earlier the Studwell Trust had been established to attend to the estate of John Jay Studwell. Because of necessary changes in its structure, Studwell Trust became Studwell Foundation, and in 1957 Mead Property, Inc., was merged with it until the final dissolution in 1970.

As George Mead's children came of age or married, each selected a new homesite from the property. Loretta, named for her aunt, was the first to marry, having been courted by Herbert A. Smith, the young man from Yale who came to tutor her brothers. They built upon the hill behind the church. Martin R., second, built for his family-to-be on the corner south of the church. Joseph and his wife moved into Lakeview. Jack, Joe's twin, was the only one of the children to move permanently from Waccabuc, becoming established in the real estate business in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Irving selected the Newman Mead house and farm; Frances built next door to him, and Elizabeth and her husband built in the woods close to the north shore of the lake, both on land originally Newman Mead's. George, Jr., started a chicken farm known as the Croft on land that had once been Herbert Mead's. Coralie chose the Harvey Mead place, once Enoch's, and Alice took the Homestead for her home. Florence and her husband Horace Brightman preferred the city but came often to visit at Tarry-a-bit. These were gradual changes, and the big house was the central scene of perpetual comings and goings and the constant activity of two, and soon three generations.

The activity was not confined to Mead Street. Constance Hunt tells of her delight in the trips she and her mother took to Oberlin. For her no pleasure exceeded that of travel on the Pullman cars. They boarded their train in New York and stepped off at Oberlin; it was another world of sights and sensations. George Mead and his bride had taken an extended tour of Europe after their wedding in 1858, and now in 1894 they led their older children on a memorable trip across Canada by rail and to Alaska by steamer. Sarah F. periodically visited her Studwell cousins who migrated to California and were engaged in mining gold. George, Jr., departed on a leisurely tour of the world and was in Ceylon when word of his father's death reached him; he returned as rapidly as possible to Waccabuc, but by the

following fall many of his family were again in Europe. Loretta and Herbert and their first baby and Coralie were in Paris where Herbert was studying for his doctorate. Another group travelled to Egypt, Palestine, Italy, and France. But by springtime they had all returned to Mead Street.

Here was a close-knit community. A common water supply had been devised by the construction of a reservoir on the hilltop, a pump installed to fill it from the lake, a gravity flow piped water to all the houses below. That great invention the water-closet had revolutionized the world by this time. The coal stove had replaced the hearth in the kitchen. Electricity had not yet reached here, but the community was supplied, as house after house was built, by an acetyline gas system for illumination. A large icehouse was built on the south shore of the lake and an ample supply of ice "put in" in January, cut with huge saws and hauled by horse power over the surface of the frozen lake to a mechanical hoist that pulled the great blocks into the cavernous interior of the ice house. There, packed in with sawdust for insulation, it lay until John Hobby the iceman arrived to deliver it the year around to the individual family ice boxes. That miracle of communication the telephone had arrived before the turn of the century, and soon the homes along Mead Street were interconnected by a local system, with signal rings of the hand-cranked 'phone on the wall, one for the operator, two for Martin, three for George, etc. The operator could, if she were at her switchboard (and that wasn't all day long), put through calls to the city.

All the needs of the community were met locally. Weekly calls at each house were made by the horse-drawn wagon of the butcher, milk and eggs came with the iceman, in summer vegetables and fruits were sent from door to door, groceries were delivered from Chapman Miller's general store in Cross River. The daily mail arrived at the Waccabuc Post Office from Katonah in a four-seated stage with its team of horses driven by Charley Ruggles, who was more than willing to carry a passenger or two on his rounds to South Salem and his return to Katonah.

Many of these services to the community were the result of the efforts and ingenuity of the Mead "boys". On his land David I. Mead maintained turkeys, a flock of sheep, and an apiary of Italian bees, all commercially profitable. Martin R., the second, operated a sizeable dairy farm on the "lower farm" which he later leased to Howland Adams, then a young man in his teens; then he devoted his time to the cultivation of gladiolus. The sight of three acres of "glads" in bloom attracted crowds of visitors. In addition to the sale of cut flowers in

the summer, he was busy all winter filling and shipping orders for his bulbs. He cultivated vegetables and fruits for sale to the neighbors too, and for years was responsible for the operation of the pump for the local water supply, a job that demanded constant watchfulness. Joseph managed the boat rental business from the old hotel boathouse, with Saint Lawrence skiffs for pleasure and flat-bottomed boats for fishing, equipped with oars not outboards! George's chicken farm was a large scale operation; his thousand or more white leghorns were not, as today, mechanically tended. The eggs were collected by hand and shipped twice a week to the city, and sold locally. He raised his own feed for the chickens, as well as hay and fodder for his oxen and work team. He had carriage horses and kept enough cows to furnish milk and cream for himself and his neighbors. The ice harvest and the acetyline gas system were his responsibility. George, Jr., also served a wider community than Mead Street. Always interested in people and politics he became supervisor of the township, holding office from 1903 to 1908, and was assemblyman at Albany, 1908 - 1909.

The woodland on the Mead property was selectively logged; the old logging trails are still an evidence of this activity. Pasture and meadowland, when not in use, were leased to neighboring farmers, so that the entire holdings of two thousand acres "more or less" were never lying idle, but self-sustaining and actively productive.

This self-contained community was in for a shock. That was the day the first Model "T" Ford came chugging up the street. Of course the skeptics said it wasn't safe; the horses reared and shied away; in springtime when the roads were mired in mud, many a farmer hooked his team to the front axle and pulled a stuck car out onto dry land. In midsummer a cloud of dust rose around the touring car filled with ladies swathed in veils and linen dusters. As sure as fate more cars followed until the novelty wore off, and fewer carriages appeared on the roads. Cars from the city drove guests to the new Inn at the Hoe place, and week-end sprees were organized, touring to the towns in northern Connecticut beyond the reach of the family buckboard and pair.

After the death of Robert Hoe, third, in 1913, the Kings & Westchester Land Company bought his extensive estate. Golf had become a very popular sport, and a newly-formed group leased part of the Hoe land for a golf course. John S. Gullen was engaged to lay out the "first nine", and the charter members pursued the game with enthusiasm. Among these were George, Jr., Martin, Joseph, Irving

Mead, Fred Studwell, and Horace Brightman. The ladies played too. They used a rustic log cabin that had been a playhouse for the Hoe children for a club house. Jock Gullen made fine golf clubs for them; he remained as golf pro for many years, assisted later by his brother George. They and their families were devoted friends and cherished neighbors. The Hoe mansion was converted into an attractive Inn, with rooms and meals, and became a very popular week-end or summer vacation spot for many friends of the local families. Closed during the years of the first World War, the Inn reopened in 1920 under the direction of Alice Mead Neergaard. But the continued growth of the membership of the club demanded better facilities than the log cabin, and in 1925 the house was rented by the Club; the second nine had been added to the course, more tennis courts were built, and the Hoe boat house arranged as dressing-rooms for swimmers. The membership continued to increase, and with it the activities and social life of the community spread far beyond the reaches of Mead Street. In 1960 by mutual agreement the Mead Property, Inc., sold to the members of the Waccabuc Country Club the house and roughly two hundred acres of land, including the waterfront and the golf course and the numerous support buildings clustered around the big house.

Was the family hearthside as a social influence beginning to disintegrate? Without a doubt it was, but with it all the hardship and uncertainties of the earlier century also disappeared.

Sarah Frances Mead died in 1919, the last survivor of her generation. She was indeed a survivor, for her grandchildren continue to give testimony to her ability to accept life and step out in time to the ever-changing tempo. Her great-grandchildren and their children are conscious of the fact that Mead Street is a very special heritage. From Enoch on horseback, to those of us who watch the transcontinental 747's fly in to pick up their reckoning from the omni tower that stands within yards of Enoch's log house, there is a bond, more than time, more than blood, but a feeling related to the desire that made Enoch and Jemina choose this land for their own.