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## Ancestors and Kindred



# Ancestors and Kindred

A Family Sketch

By Cora Berry Whitin



PRIVATELY PRINTED

January, 1929

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**Ft. Wayne, Indiana**



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*To my Grandchildren  
and  
their Grandchildren*



*“Think of your ancestors and of posterity.”*

—TACITUS.

728-8





“Grandmother Betsey” Fletcher Whitin  
(MRS. PAUL WHITIN)



## Foreword

The surname Whiting is of Anglo-Saxon origin, and is found spelled in sixteen different ways before, through our ancestor, it reached the form of Whitin. It is traced definitely back to the second decade after the Norman Conquest, where it is entered in the Domesday Book as Roger Witen.

Those who are interested in the Whiting "begats" previous to 1767, are referred to the Whiting Genealogy, compiled by Theodore S. Lazell, B.A., and published in 1903. We find there that Nathaniel, born in 1609, was the first to come to this country in 1638, and that he owned much property in the town of Dedham, where he was a prosperous miller. He and his wife, Hannah Dwight, had a family of fourteen children, and most of his descendants were equally prolific. It is this fact that makes it impractical to follow the different branches in this brief foreword—farther than to say that Paul Whiting was the fifth generation from Nathaniel above mentioned.

Further study of the Genealogy shows us that Nathaniel was the favorite family name; appearing with great frequency for nearly three hundred years.

Since the name of this branch became Whitin, Paul has been the favored Christian name, and we hope that many will bear it in the generations to come, and that its reputation for integrity and industry may ever be maintained.

December 14, 1928.

*"There be of these who left a name behind."*

—ECCLESIASTES.



## Acknowledgment

Much help has been received in compiling these family sketches from "The Whiting Genealogy," the "History of Worcester County," "Crane's History," and the unpublished Reminiscences of George L. Gibbs, as well as from friends and relatives. Miss Jane Dudley has also given valuable assistance by allowing the use of illustrations from her book "Old Friends and New."

Some of the incidents may seem trivial, but are included either for light shed upon a character, or because they pertain to the customs of "ye olden times."

I am grateful for all this assistance.

CORA BERRY WHITIN.





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# Ancestors

## PART I

### FIVE GENERATIONS

THE OLDEST SON OF THE OLDEST SON



## FIRST GENERATION

*“These names were honored in their generation, and were the glory of the times. Their bodies are buried in peace—but their name liveth forevermore.”*

ECCLESIASTES.





## PAUL WHITIN(G)

THE small son of Nathaniel and Sarah (Draper) Whiting, born in Roxbury, Mass., in 1767, is the cause of this story, written one hundred and sixty years after his birth. The boy was baptized and christened Paul in the little Church at Dedham, nearly two years later (and after the death of his father). His mother did not long remain a widow, but soon married Lieutenant James Prentice, who lived in that part of the village of Northbridge since called Prentice Corner. The fact that there were several little Prentices added to the family in rapid succession, perhaps explains why young Paul Whiting had such limited opportunity for schooling. At the age of fourteen, he was apprenticed to a blacksmith. This man, Jesse White, living at Plummer's Corner, had his forge in South Northbridge, a small hamlet, which in later years was destined to grow, prosper, bear the name of the young apprentice, and be called Whitinsville. An apprentice usually lived in the home of his master; receiving board, clothes, and instruction, but no wages. We can imagine the lad looking forward eagerly to Sunday, when he trudged up the hill to Northbridge Center to attend Church and then have dinner with his mother in the Prentice household.

There was another reason why he looked forward to these weekly visits. The pastor of the Church, Rev. John Crane, was a most exceptional man. A graduate of Harvard College, he began his pastorate (which was to last for half a century) when he was twenty-seven years of age. He not only preached impressive sermons, but had a keen sense of humor and a sympathetic nature which endeared him to the people. In addition to his pastoral duties, he received students in to his family; preparing them for college or for teaching. The slender, quiet boy, who listened so attentively, interested him, and he became a willing guide in the boy's

studies. Naturally studious and determined to have an education, young Paul spent all his leisure time with his books. Books were not easily obtainable and were expensive also, but Dr. Crane's library was at the boy's command, and he made good use of it during those formative years. "He struggled with and overcame difficulties to which most would have yielded. By perseverance, he acquired a knowledge of those branches of study necessary for the successful prosecution of business. A book for aiding him in the correct use of English was always by him, and he became as familiar with this as with the tools of his trade."\* As he grew to maturity, his manly character, honesty, prudence, and industry won the confidence of the community, which steadily increased as the years went on.

Card playing and dancing, according to the preachers, made one liable to eternal damnation, but youth will ever find some form of pleasure: if it could be combined with profit, it might sometimes be indulged in without sin! In the fall of the year the corn must be husked, and the process was speeded up by calling together the neighbors. The guests brought their own candles or lanterns, while the host furnished, after the work was well done, doughnuts and coffee, or similar refreshments. On these occasions the great barns were the scene of many frolics. If a wedding was in prospect, the bride must be fitted out with a suitable number of quilts, and the neighbors must assist in the tying. These husking parties and quilting "bees" were the social events of that generation, and it must have been through these festive occasions that young Paul met and fell in love with Betsey Fletcher. She is described as a fascinating girl of sixteen, whose father, Colonel James Fletcher, was the largest landowner and one of the most important men of the town. He lost his wife when Betsey was only twelve years old, and from that time until her marriage she had whole charge of the household, and a

\*Rev. Louis Clark, a pastor in Whitinsville for twenty-eight years.

large family of younger children. Colonel Fletcher did not approve of his daughter's marriage, or her choice of a husband! He had nothing against the young man's character, but felt he was far from robust. Paul's delicate health may have been the result of overwork, overstudy, and lack of recreation, or may have been an inheritance from his young father, who died at twenty-one. "He will never be able to support a wife," said the Colonel. "Then I will support him," was Betsey's spirited rejoinder. She never had to do this, but was always his able helpmate. They were married in 1793. Her youngest sister, to whom she had been almost a mother, married Amasa Dudley,\* and the two couples were fairly intimate; enjoying themselves after the fashion of that day—though life was much too strenuous and busy to allow much time for pleasure.

The exact date of the change of name from Whiting to Whitin is uncertain, but we place it at 1793, for though his application for his marriage license was signed "Paul Whiting," the signature on the license, some months later, was without the "g." Betsey Fletcher therefore married Paul "Whitin"—and the numerous descendants have no claim to a "g." Tradition says, a Paul Whiting, descendant of the same far-back Nathaniel, had left Dedham and was keeping a tavern in the nearby town of Sutton. He was about the same age of our Paul, but of very different character, and it may have been to avoid unpleasant complications with this distant cousin that our ancestor dropped the final "g."

The qualities which brought him success made him a useful member of society, and his influence was always on the side of industry, frugality, education, and the institutions of religion. His wife, in spite of home duties and constantly increasing family cares, aided and encouraged him in everything which calculated to develop his character, and tended to build up the community.

\*Their first boy was named after their brother-in-law, "Paul Whitin" Dudley, a name familiar in the history of Whitinsville.

When Paul Whitin reached the age of twenty-eight, 1795, he was made Town Clerk and filled that position for thirteen consecutive years. His services in town offices were often sought. He was Justice of the Peace, and his appointments to that service from 1805 to 1819, signed by Increase Sumner and Caleb Strong, successive Governors of Massachusetts, are in the possession of Paul<sup>5</sup> Whitin in Rockdale.

He was often urged to be a candidate for the General Court, but declined in order to give his whole attention to the business which was continually increasing. Whatever his outside interests, he always made up by extra hours on his routine business.

In spite of his quiet demeanor and dislike of parade, he was an excellent military officer, and rose through successive grades to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the State Militia, which title, abbreviated, was applied to him during the rest of his life. The various commissions he received—from the first one, showing his promotion to the rank of Adjutant in 1796 and signed by Samuel Adams, Governor of Massachusetts—to the last one, as Lieutenant Colonel in 1807, signed by Caleb Strong, Governor—are in the possession of Paul<sup>5</sup> Whitin in Rockdale. Another valuable document in his care is a patent for an invention of Paul<sup>1</sup> Whitin's in the manufacture of hoes, issued in 1825. This has the signatures of James Monroe, President of the United States, and of John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State.

The year after his marriage, he entered into business with his father-in-law, under the name of Fletcher & Whitin; making bar-iron from scrap-iron until the War of 1812, when the demand for agricultural implements started them on the manufacture of hoes and scythes. Business grew rapidly, and he soon had three forges, a trip hammer and a grindstone operated by power. This business, which he continued through his life, was inherited by his sons. To quote from history: "While Colonel Paul Whitin was not the pioneer in iron manufacturing in Northbridge, he was

preëminently the founder of the great industries that have made the village of Whitinsville (named in his honor) a great center of manufacturing.”

Cotton manufacturing also interested him, and it was in 1809 that he started a mill, under the name of Northbridge Cotton Co., for breaking, carding, and spinning of cotton. This was the third mill above Pawtucket built in the Blackstone Valley. The raw cotton, mixed with dirt and seeds, was put out to families to be cleaned; some families taking a whole bale at a time. For this dirty, disagreeable work, they received from four to six cents per pound. The cleaned cotton was returned to the mill and made into yarn. This was also put out to be woven in the homes of the farmers; the weavers receiving eight cents a yard. Eight years later (1822), power looms were introduced in the mills, superseding handwork.

The early years of Betsey's married life must have been very strenuous, and those capable hands of hers could have had few idle moments. Ten children came to the young couple in rapid succession: the first two, James (1794) and Mary (1798) dying in early childhood. Paul, 2nd, born in 1800; Mary, 1802; Nathaniel Draper, 1804 (notice the family name); John Crane, 1807 (named for the clergyman who had been so helpful); Charles Pinckney, 1809; Sarah Ann, 1812; James Fletcher, 1814 (again a family name); and Margaret, 1817, completed the family circle. It is difficult for us to imagine the life of the housewife of that period! In addition to preparing the food for this large family, and keeping the house and children clean (no small task without running water or set tubs in the house), all clothing for adults, as well as for children, must be made by hand. The day began with the rising of the sun, and was lengthened by the light of tallow candles, the dipping and molding of which was one of the necessary tasks for the running of the household machinery. Stoves had recently been invented, but doubtless the brick oven beside the fireplace was still

used for Saturday's baking. That baking was a serious undertaking! Pie was the favorite article of diet, and was in requisition at every meal. The forehanded housewife must bake enough of those "delectables" to last the entire week. The baked beans and brown bread must also receive attention. After this strenuous day's work, Betsey must attend to the weekly baths of her children. Enough water must be heated to bathe each child in the wooden washtub, brought in before the kitchen fire.

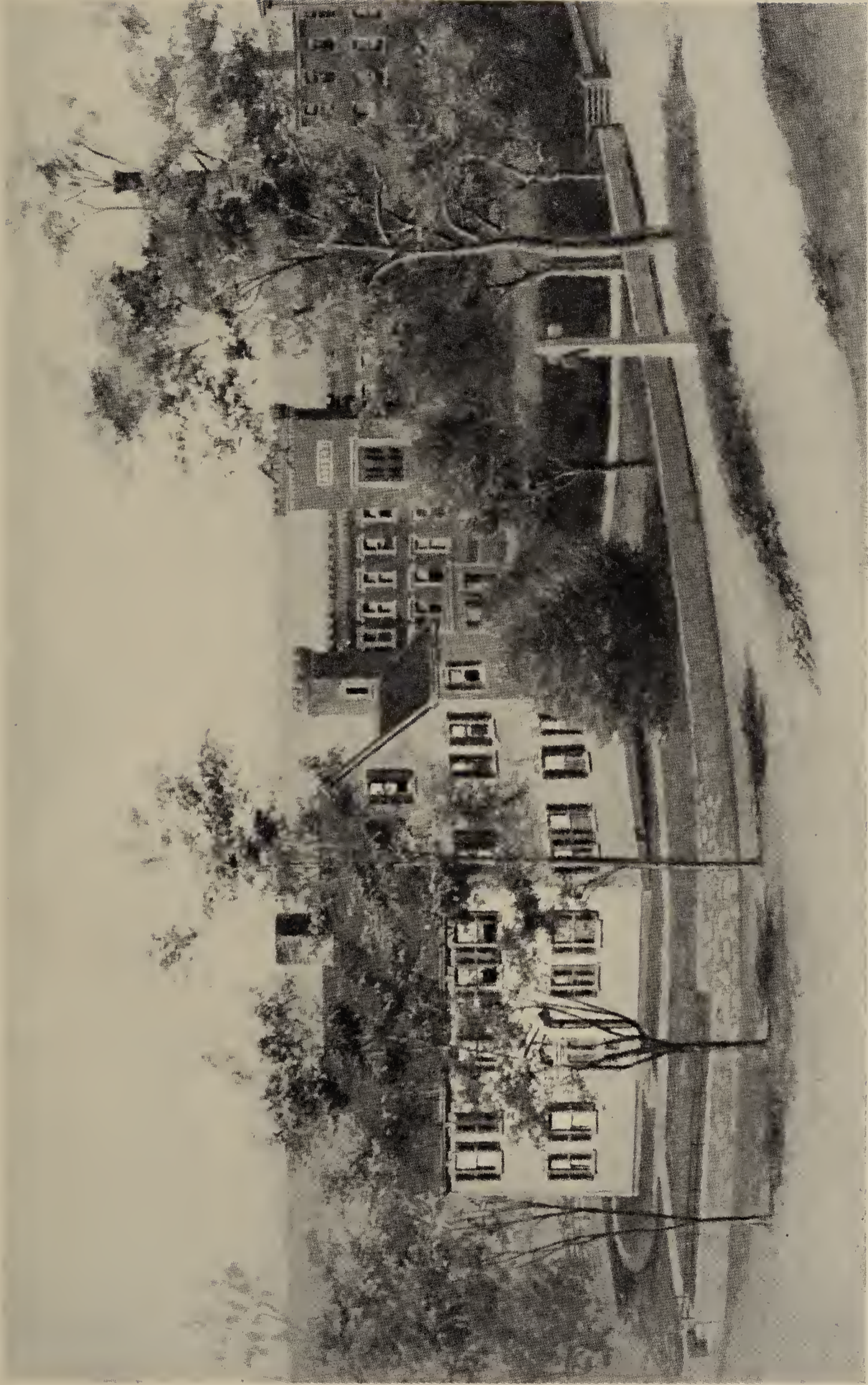
The minimum of cooking, or work of any kind, must be done on the Sabbath, a custom which the weary mother must have been quite ready to observe.

During her long life, Betsey must have appreciated many inventions to lessen the labors of women, and seen many changes in customs. In those early days, there were itinerant shoemakers, who, bringing their "kit" to the house, remained until each member of the family was properly shod, then traveled on. We can imagine the Whitin boys had to take good care of those shoes; going barefoot whenever the weather permitted.\*

When the older boys were very small, the schools were kept in private houses in different parts of the town. The terms were only a few weeks each, and the teacher "boarded round." In 1796, the first schoolhouse was built in the Center. Great emphasis was laid on arithmetic: the boy who did not know enough to keep accounts and compute interest was not fit to "earn his salt." Penmanship was a real art; many flourishes and embellishments indicating a good education.

While Betsey was doing her share in the home, Paul was steadily improving his business, and in 1815 enlarged it under the name of Whitin & Fletcher; which firm continued until 1826, when Colonel Paul bought out his partners and founded a new firm; taking in two sons, Paul<sup>2</sup> and John C.<sup>2</sup>

\*In 1827, Joel Batchellor began the manufacture of shoes in Northbridge Center; in 1867 building a large factory there, and "custom-mades" were no longer a necessity.



PAUL<sup>1</sup> WHITIN HOMESTEAD. ERECTED 1800

under the name of "P. Whitin & Sons." From this time dates the increasing prosperity and reputation of the town. The prosperous career of Colonel Paul<sup>1</sup>—the reward of industry and intelligence—continued until his death. It was a coincidence that the death of his mother, Sarah Draper Prentice, aged eighty-three years, occurred the same year as that of her successful son.

It is said that she was a most disagreeable character in her old age but Paul never failed in his filial duties, visiting her often and providing for her necessities.

After Colonel Paul's death, two more sons, Charles Pinckney and James Fletcher, were included in the firm; "Grandma" retaining a fourth interest, and the name remaining "P. Whitin & Sons." In 1864 the business was divided; Paul<sup>2</sup> taking the cotton mills at Rockdale and property at Riverdale.\*

It was an established custom that the sons of Betsey should visit her on Sunday evenings, and each one found his special rocking-chair awaiting him. Then for an hour or more, they would consult with her about business, or affairs of village interest; often profiting by her keen insight and advice.

When Colonel Paul, as a lad of fourteen, his belongings tied in the big handkerchief of that day, trudged into the little village of South Northbridge, he found only a few houses and a small population. Even as late as 1854, there were only twelve hundred inhabitants in Whitinsville, all in the employ of the firm—in shop, mill, or on the farm. In his lifetime came many changes. An amazing event of his day was the invention of the steamboat, in 1807, by Robert Fulton. The *Clermont*, after its trial trip, ran daily between New York and Albany at the (then) incredible speed of five miles an hour! Sailing vessels were still the only means of oceanic travel—while land trips were taken either on horseback or by means of the stagecoach.

\*These properties had been purchased in 1851 by P. Whitin & Sons from Sylvanus Holbrook, who had owned them since 1820.



The brick boarding-house in Rockdale was once a Turnpike Tavern, where passengers between Boston and Hartford stopped for refreshments while there was a relay of horses for the coach. This was the direct route, and the narrow road extending east from there to West Upton (though little used today) is still called the Turnpike.

Among the local changes was the transformation of the old forge into a commodious machine shop. The brick cotton mill was erected; also the general store which still stands opposite Memorial Hall. This building contained, besides the store, the Company office, the post office, and a hall above in which meetings were held. The Company store did an extensive business, as there was no competition. The help in the mill and foundry were paid off once in three months and it was a great convenience to them to run an account at the store until pay day, when sometimes they were unpleasantly surprised to find their account larger than their wages!

A bill against Paul<sup>2</sup> Whitin has been found, showing how different some of the goods and values were from those of the present time. This bill is dated August 19, 1824, and extends over several months; amongst other charges are the following:—

1¼ yds. Fig. Book muslin	@ 40c.	\$ .50
3 " Cambric Dimity	@ 46c.	1.38
2 pr. Prunel shoes		.75
3 " Gloves	@ 22c.	.66
2 " kid gloves		.46
2 " beaver gloves		.50
1 " blk. Hoeskin gloves		.37
1 cravat		.37
2 yds. Pelisse cloth		3.00
1 wreath for Margaret's hat		.50
1 cashmere shawl		1.50

These sound rather odd, and the prices astonishing, to us, over a hundred years later!

Mr. Paul Whitin Dudley, a very competent active man, always bustling about, was now in charge of the store and no small detail escaped his eagle eye. The business has remained in that family up to the present time.

Dr. John Crane, pastor in Northbridge Center, (already referred to in the early education of Paul) preached occasionally in the schoolhouse in Whitinsville during the last years of his ministry. In 1833 a Sunday School was started; meeting in the "Chapel" over the "General Store," which had been erected that year. A Church was soon after organized, but services continued to be held in the "Chapel" until the "Meeting-house" was built in 1834. This was succeeded in 1898 by the beautiful stone edifice now in use. Previous to this time, the pious people of this part of the town (which certainly included Colonel Paul, Betsey, and their numerous children) had attended Church in Northbridge Center. It was the only purpose for which a horse and carryall was used on the Sabbath day, and many dutifully climbed the hill on foot. When the Church in Whitinsville was finished, Betsey's family (all so religiously brought up) were still faithful in attendance; each one of the brothers occupying the head of a pew on the middle aisle; "Grandma" sitting with James.

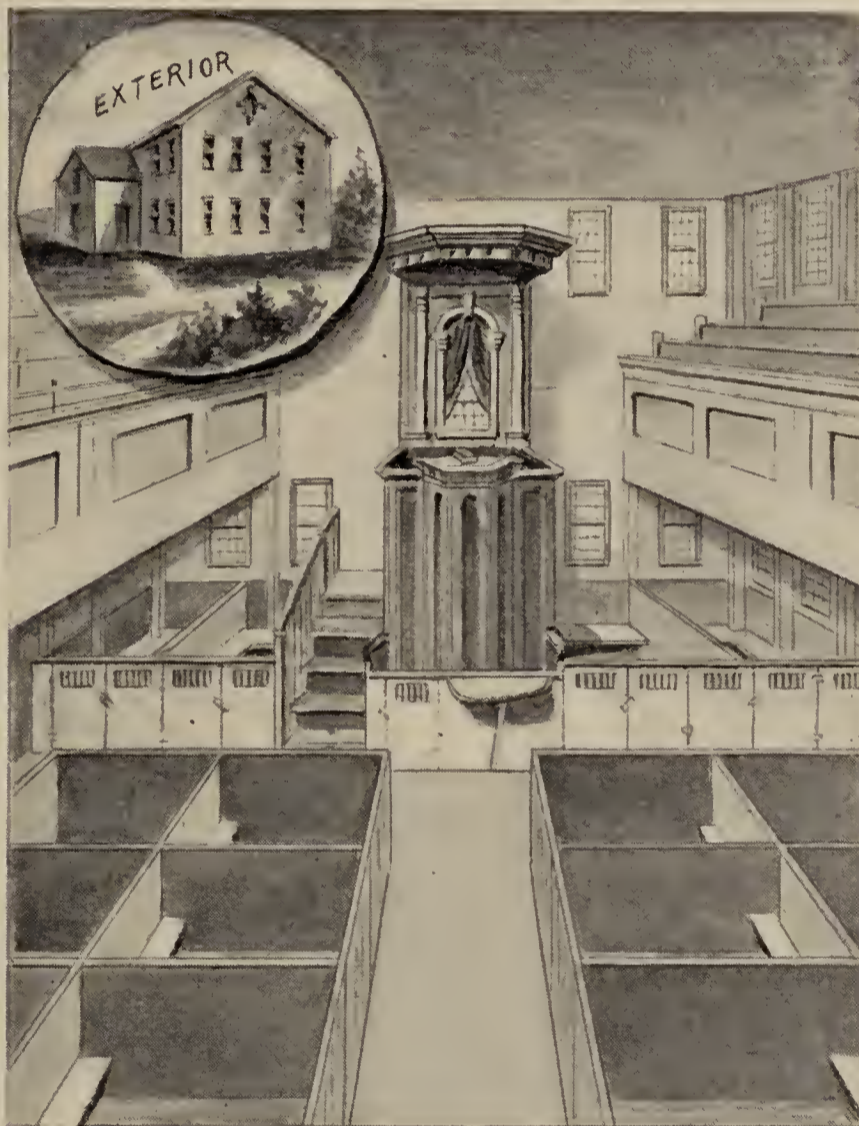
While Paul<sup>1</sup> never became a member of the Church, he supported it by his presence and his means. There is still treasured an old deed, which reads in the quaint phraseology of the time:

"in consideration of the full and exact sum of thirty dollars to me paid by hand by Paul Whitin in Northbridge and County of Worcester and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Blacksmith, I remit, release, and forever sell, convey and confirm unto the said Paul Whitin, his heirs, executors, Administrators and Assignees, all my right, title, interest, (illegible) and demand unto a certain pew adjoin to Nathaniel Adams' pew in the Meeting

House in Northbridge, lying on the Northwest corner of the body pews on the Northwest corner of said Meeting House to the said Paul Whitin, his heirs and assignees forever, and will warrant and defend it from all persons.”

He certainly owned that pew!

A description of that old Church may not be amiss at this time.



OLD MEETING-HOUSE, NORTHBRIDGE CENTER

“The Old Meeting-House built in 1782 on Northbridge Hill was a very plain building, like others of that period. There was no steeple; no bell to call the people to Church. The pews were nearly square and very high, with seats on three sides.

There were neither carpets nor cushions. There were three aisles—a center and two side aisles. There were galleries on three sides, that on the south side being reserved for the choir, and there were some high pews in the gallery at the north end. The pulpit was high, and over it was the customary “sounding-board,” something like a cornice, or square, flat roof extending over the preacher’s head. It was designed not so much for ornament as to compel the sound of the preacher’s voice to go down instead of up. The interior of the house was altogether plain—no paint, no paper—only white walls and ceiling, except the pulpit, which was of a dark color. For some years there was neither stove nor chimney, and the only means of warmth was small foot-stoves. For some time there was no choir, but during the last years of the stay in the old house there was a large and talented choir. There was no organ, but the loss was more than made good by an orchestra, supplied with violins, flute, bass-viol, clarinet and violincello.”

(MRS. EMILY M. MITCHELL.)

This old Church was on the little hill on the opposite side of the street from the present one, which was built in 1835.

The religious bent of Paul<sup>1</sup> is shown also by the phraseology of some of his letters. One was written to his half-brother, Luke Prentice, who was apparently teaching in Savannah, Georgia, in 1805. It was before the days of envelopes, and is much worn in the creases, but is still legible. It begins:—

“Dear Brother, this is to inform you that through the goodness and mercy of God I and my family, together with all the rest of your friends, are well and hope these lines find you enjoying the same blessing.”

—and ends—

“I must conclude for I have nothing entertaining, and a great part of what I have wrote sounds like empty table talk, so I remain your friend and affectionate brother till death.—Paul Whitin.”

I think this letter shows an unusually pleasant relation between half-brothers. Possibly this is contradicted by a deed executed that same year, showing the sale of a tract of land to Luke Prentice “in consideration of fifteen hundred *silver dollars!*”

Paul Whitin died in 1831 at the age of sixty-three years.

An extract from a letter written Feb. 16, 1831, by Betsey's brother, E. W. Fletcher, to a sister (?) Miss Mary Chapin in New York is further testimony to the abiding piety of Paul<sup>1</sup>.

“Providence, Feb. 16, 1831.

“My dear Sister:—

Your kind and ever welcome favour of 2nd inst. came to hand on the 7th and would have been earlier answered had I not been called to attend the funeral solemnities of my deceased friend and brother, Paul Whitin Esquire—he departed this life on the evening of the 8th inst. in the triumphs of faith and love—was sick with the pleurisy about 8 or 9 days. His illness was attended with excruciating pain nearly the whole time—but notwithstanding this he could and did frequently pray aloud for himself, family, friends, the church and for the world, and particularly and repeatedly for Sylvanus Holbrook who is now a professed atheist. He addressed his family collectively and separately and warned and entreated those who had not given themselves to Christ to do it without delay, that we may ‘live the lives of the righteous that our last end may be like his.’ ”

Perhaps some may be interested in Paul's last Will and Testament, of which we have a copy. The pious introduction may have been the custom of legal documents at that time. This Will was made the year of his death and is worded as follows:

“In the Name of God, Amen. I, Paul Whitin, of Northbridge in the County of Worcester, Esquire, being in a low state of health but of sound mind and memory, and Blessed be Almighty God for the same—calling to mind the mortality of my body, do make and publish this my last will and testament in manner following, that is to say;—

principally and first of all, I recommend my soul to God, who gave it, and my body to the dust to be buried in a Christian-like manner:

And as touching such worldly estate as it has pleased God to Bless me with, my will is that all my just debts be paid in convenient time after my death and what remains I dispose of as follows:”

Then comes a clause bequeathing to his beloved wife, Betsey, all his estate both real and personal, and directing her to pay the following legacies:

“I give and bequeath to my beloved children, Paul Whitin, Jr., Mary Walker, wife of Amory Walker, Nathaniel D. Whitin, John C. Whitin, Charles P. Whitin, Sarah A. Whitin, James F. Whitin and Margaret F. Whitin, one of Scotts family Bibles to each of them.”

Then comes the appointment of his wife as executrix, and the usual legal formalities. A quaint document and a valuable reminder of old ways and customs.

We always hear the “four brothers” spoken of; partly because the four were in partnership with their father,

and partly because the fifth one was of such different ilk. However, he deserves a place in this chronicle, and will be mentioned later.

It is to be regretted that there is no picture extant of Colonel Paul, the founder of the family, and of that most



ORIGINAL MEETING-HOUSE—1834-1898

flourishing part of Northbridge. Daguerreotypes were not invented until after his death, nor would the successful portrait painter be likely to arise or tarry in so small a place. In the late years of her life, Grandmother Betsey acceded to the demands of her children, and her portrait was painted by an unknown artist. We wish we could have had one in her earlier life also; but it is well for us to see the lines of strength and peace which the long, strenuous years left on her face.

This portrait is now in the possession of Paul<sup>5</sup> Whitin in Rockdale.

About the same period as the portrait Daguerreotypes came in vogue and there is an excellent one of her in possession of her namesake, Betsey Whitin Whittall. (See Frontispiece.)

At the time of Colonel Paul's death, he was living in a frame house (built in 1800), located where Memorial Hall now stands, and this remained the home of his wife during the thirty-seven long years of her widowhood. Here she reigned supreme—not only over her own family, but her strong influence was felt in all village affairs until, at the age of ninety-one, death claimed her. Of great independence of spirit, she refused to have "hired help" in the house, and up to the time of her last illness, she looked after the affairs of her household herself. Her youngest son, James, lived upstairs in the Homestead until he built the house in Linwood in 1871.

July 2, 1868, after an illness of weeks, retaining her faculties to the last, "Grandma Whitin" passed on. Her funeral was held in the Church and was largely attended. No one in the community was held in higher respect than this unusual woman. The Sunday following her death, Pastor Clark preached a funeral discourse, which was afterwards printed and is still extant. No one can measure the influence of this one life.

In 1835, four years after the death of Colonel Paul Whitin, the name "South Northbridge" was changed to "Whitinsville." He never knew the honor that was conferred upon him.

### *First Generation*

Children of Paul and Betsey (Fletcher) Whitin.

James	Born 1794	} Died in early childhood.
Mary	" 1798	



Paul, <sup>2</sup>	“	1800.	See Second Generation.
Mary	“	1802	} Married 1818, Amory Walker. Died without issue.
Nathaniel	“	1804	} See Part Second.
John C.	“	1807	
Charles P.	“	1809	
Sarah Ann	“	1812.	Unmarried. Died 1838.
James F.	“	1814	} See Part Second.
Margaret	“	1817	

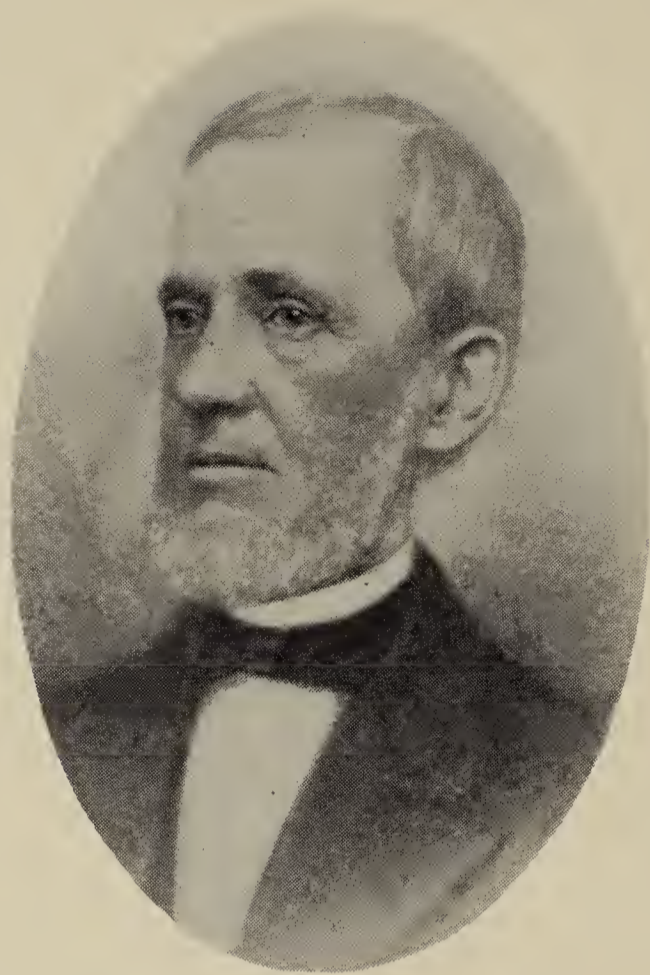




## SECOND GENERATION

*“All that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them.”*

JUDGES 2:10.



Paul Whitin, 2nd.



Sarah Chapin Whitin

## PAUL<sup>2</sup> WHITIN

WE will go back now in our story to the year 1800 when Paul<sup>2</sup> was born. Paul<sup>1</sup> and Betsey had been married seven years and had already lost two children by death. Of the early childhood of Paul<sup>2</sup>, we can learn little, but, as other children were added to the family in rapid succession, he did not lack for companionship in his own home. He attended the district school when it was in session, but at the age of ten he was put at work in his father's cotton mill. He eventually became a skilled operative in all departments of the mill. When about twelve years of age, he spent some time with an uncle in Amsterdam, N. Y., attending school while there. Two terms at the Leicester Academy completed what was quite a liberal education for those days. In addition to these educational privileges, from his tenth year—when not in school—he was kept at work in the mill or on the farm. A busy life this, but even quiet, staid young Paul must have found time for some diversion. The young people at Whitinsville sometimes, when life there seemed a trifle austere, found their pleasure in the neighboring and somewhat livelier village of Uxbridge. It was probably in this way that Paul met and succumbed to the attractions of young Sarah Richardson Chapin, daughter of Phineas and Eunice Taft Chapin.

When eighteen years old, he left country life behind and went to Boston as a clerk in the dry goods house of one James Brewer. Perhaps it was his interest in Sarah that led him to give up this clerkship in Boston, and seek his fortune in New York. At the age of twenty-one, with a former clerk as partner, he opened a dry goods store in Maiden Lane, under the firm name of Lee & Whitin.

The story goes that his father Paul<sup>1</sup> advanced him \$1,000 for his business investment, and when he closed out he was



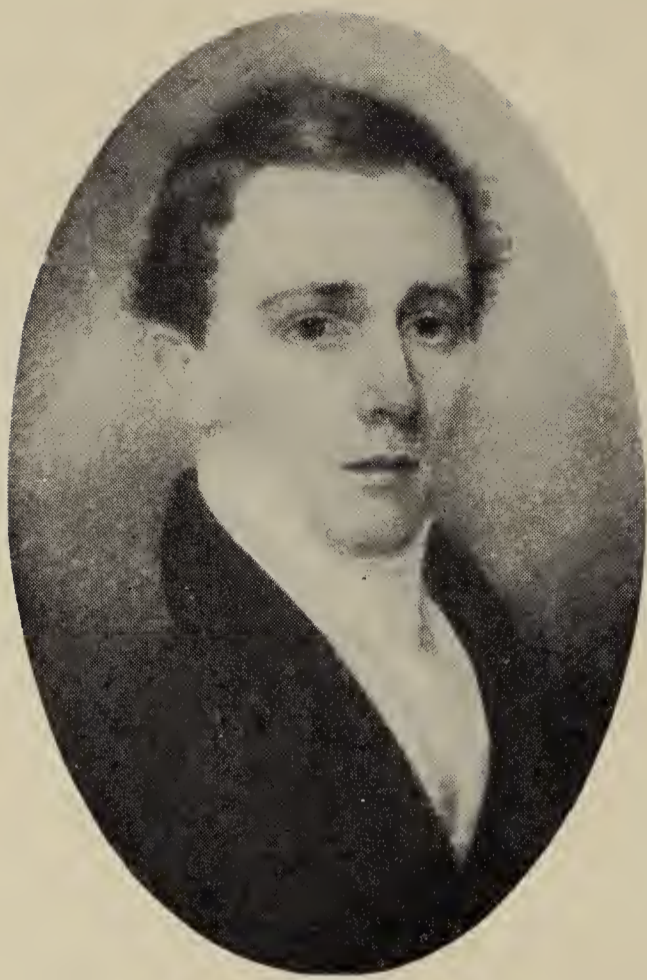
CHAPIN HOMESTEAD ON ROAD TO NORTH UXBRIDGE

the proud possessor of \$5,000. Thus early he showed his shrewd business ability! We know that part of the story is true, as there is a deed in existence showing a loan of \$500.00.

The year after starting this business in August, 1822, he married Sarah Chapin, of Uxbridge; taking his bride to make a home in New York. The store was in the ordinary brick house of the period, and the young couple rented the upper floor for their housekeeping, for the enormous sum of \$40.00 a year, so the story goes!

Pictures of them at this time, though quaint, show a very attractive young couple. Sarah was born the same year as her husband, in 1800; making their ages easy to compute throughout this story.

City life did not greatly appeal to them, and when Colonel Paul suggested that his son should go into business with him, Paul<sup>2</sup> gladly terminated his New York venture and returned to his native place. It was in 1826, with his father and younger brother, John C., the firm of P. Whitin & Sons was formed. His previous experience in Boston and New York had well fitted Paul<sup>2</sup> for the mercantile department of the business, of which he had charge for the next thirty-eight years. He bought the cotton, placed the products, as well as (in the earlier years) having charge of the Company store. He had a genuine love for the soil and managed the farm—a matter in which the others took little interest. At his father's death, five years later, he became the senior member of the firm, which was reorganized, taking in the two younger brothers, Charles P. and James F., but keeping the same name, as has before been mentioned. He lived in the house (built by James Fletcher) in the lane at the beginning of what is now called Douglas Road, and it was in this home that the four children passed their childhood: Charles E., born in 1823, Henry in 1826, Sarah in 1830, and Anne L. in 1839. Two other children, Elizabeth and George, who came between Sarah and Anne, died in early childhood.



Paul Whitin, 2nd



From Early  
Daguerreotypes

Sarah Chapin Whitin



With the steadily increasing prosperity of the business, Whitinsville was growing rapidly. Most of the residents were natives, although there was quite a sprinkling of Irish and some English. Yankee girls still were at work in the



EARLY HOME OF PAUL WHITIN, 2ND, AND SARAH CHAPIN WHITIN  
BUILT IN 1770 BY COL. JAMES FLETCHER

mills as weavers, and Yankee boys “doffed.” Many new and more pretentious houses were being built, among them John C.’s mansion with pillars, opposite the shop. The members of the firm lived very simply. The “Deacon” (John C.) kept a carriage, driver, and gardener, but the others were not essentially different in those days from the men and families in their employ.

Paul<sup>2</sup> in 1856 built on Douglas Road the mansion which he occupied the remainder of his life. His brother, Charles P., later built the "twin" house beside it.

Never of very strong physique, it was only by regular habits and attention to health that Paul<sup>2</sup> was able to accomplish a large amount of business. He took a deep interest in town and public affairs, and his perfect integrity and sound judgment caused him to be called upon to fill many positions of trust and responsibility. At the age of twenty-eight years, he was a director of the Blackstone Bank in Uxbridge—soon becoming president. This position he filled until 1865, when he resigned to become president of the National Bank in Whitinsville, which position he retained the remainder of his life. He was a director in the Worcester Mutual Fire Insurance Co. from 1838, and attended a directors' meeting in Worcester only the day before his death forty-six years later! He was also a director of the Worcester Manufacturers' Mutual Insurance Company from 1860, and of the Providence & Worcester Railroad from its formation until he resigned two years before his death. He was for many years an active member and trustee of the Worcester County Agricultural and Horticultural Societies, in which he took great interest. He became a member of the Northbridge Center Congregational Church when he was only twenty, and was very active in forming the new Congregational Church in Whitinsville in 1831. He was very generous in his gifts to Church and charity. In George Gibbs'\* Reminiscences (unpublished) he gives his impressions of "Squire Paul," from which I quote:—

"Paul Whitin at this time was fifty-four years of age. He carried himself with great dignity and I looked upon him—as did people generally—with great awe. As the head of the Firm, the largest and most prosperous in Worcester

\*George L. Gibbs came to Whitinsville in 1854 as clerk in the Company store. He later married Charles P. Whitin's daughter, Helen, and was prominent in the business of the town till his death in 1891.

South, the President of the Blackstone Bank in Uxbridge, the man who took the lead in town meetings and in public affairs, who had been a State Senator, and was entitled to be called 'Honorable,' the 'Squire,' as he was often called, seemed to me the incarnation of financial wisdom and sound business. While personally kindly, he rarely unbent, and, though he might laugh at a joke, he never made one. He was conservative in all things—a safe counsellor, and an able man. . . . In person he was tall and slim, narrow shouldered, with a long face and high forehead; had chin whiskers, but no moustache, and wore a wig." Mr. Gibbs was mistaken in the latter statement, as I have been well informed that the adornment he wore was not a wig, but what was termed a "scratch," which concealed the baldness. It was a matter of great interest to some of the younger generation, sitting behind him in Church, to figure the line between his own hair and the "scratch." From what we have learned of his character, we conclude that it was worn as a protection from drafts rather than from motives of vanity!

His dignified appearance was increased by his persistently wearing a tall silk hat (commonly called a stove-pipe!). Only the most intense heat of summer could separate him from that hat. It is said that, on account of his extreme thinness and poor circulation, he wore three pair of heavy woolen drawers in winter! I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement.

The life of Sarah Whitin (his wife) must have been much easier than that of her strenuous mother-in-law, Betsey—not only because she did not share her prejudice against "hired help," but because there were now more labor-saving devices. The sewing machine had been invented, so the clothing for the children was more easily accomplished.

Canal traffic from between Providence and Worcester began in 1828 and there are evidences of the tow-paths still to be seen in many places along the route. The boats were

used principally for freight, as the majority of people preferred the speed (?) of the stage coach to the two and a half miles an hour of the canal boats. The patronage grew less and less and the last toll was paid in 1846—as the railroad was already under construction. It was a welcome event when in 1847 the first train ran from Providence to Worcester, and shopping in the city became an easier matter.

The early locomotives all received names, such as the “Rocket” and the “Best Friend.” Among the first on the Providence and Worcester Road was one named the “Paul Whitin”—a fact which filled his small namesake (great-grandson) in Rockdale, with pride! He firmly believed that he not only owned the locomotive, but that the railroad was his also!

The advent of the railroads did away with the old method of sending letters by coach or rider, and mail service by train with regular postage stamps was instituted the same year. The telegraph had preceded that by about three years. Thus the village of Whitinsville came into easier communication with the outside world.

Schools were greatly improved, and the education of the children less of a problem.

The family had quite grown up when the Mansion on Douglas Road was built—for Annie, the youngest, was already eighteen when they moved in. The new home, with its modern improvements, was a great contrast to the simplicity of the one in which they had lived contentedly so many years. The running water, bath tubs, and the gas fixtures which replaced kerosene lamps—were all great innovations. It was really a beautiful mansion for the year 1856, and its mantels and elaborate friezes on the high studded rooms give it an air of elegance even today. Paul's<sup>2</sup> interest in all growing things soon transformed what was originally a pasture into well-kept grounds, with fine trees, shrubs and flowers. Sarah, like Betsey, was



PAUL WHITIN MANSION. BUILT IN 1856

deeply pious, and the atmosphere of the home was very religious. Grace before each meal was asked by the master of the house—who also led the daily morning worship. This household was not unique in this—it was the general custom of the times.

Some of the flat silver, which has been handed down, shows a curious custom: It is marked S. P. W., showing the joint ownership of Sarah and Paul Whitin! It was also customary for relatives to call her Aunt Sarah Paul, thus to distinguish her from Aunt Sarah Jane, the wife of Charles P.

The wildest dissipation known to the public was the semi-monthly meetings of the Ladies Sewing Society, which met at the various houses and was well attended. “Spelling Bees” had also become a popular form of amusement.

“In the winter there was a course of lectures given in the Chapel—a single ticket for the course costing \$1.00—while a family ticket cost \$1.50! Some winters there was also a Singing School, which helped develop the local talent—with meetings in the Chapel. The Church Choir held their weekly rehearsals there, also. There was no organ, but the mixed voices were accompanied by one A. J. White on the first violin, and were ably seconded on another by Deacon Batchelor, who, with face and mouth, followed the movements of his bow! It was never quite settled whether he played more than one tune or not! Plummer played the double base, while James F. Whitin (a very good player) played the flute. Nathan Newell, also, played a flute and was a finished player—the double extra touches that he gave ‘an octave above’ were the admiration of the congregation.”\*

Dancing and card-playing were still denounced as cardinal sins, and woe be unto a church member who indulged in such wicked amusements.

There was a Temperance Society which had membership of all the principal citizens of the town. There was no

\*Mr. Gibbs' Reminiscences.

known place where liquor could be procured, and the mass of the people were frugal and industrious. Mr. Gibbs says:—

“In many respects it was a wonderful and most orderly village—prosperous beyond most—and the residents were for the most part above the general average as to intelligence and character. While there was no exclusive set, all took hold together in any enterprise of a public character, and worked with a will, while everybody contributed as he was able. If there was any shortage, the firm (P. Whitin & Sons) made it up, so that any reasonable scheme for the public good, that had any endorsement, was sure to go through.”

I have digressed a little to give a picture of the life of the village, and now—to the character of Sarah. While she did not participate in public affairs to the extent that her mother-in-law Betsey did, she was always interested, and the amount of her private benefactions cannot be measured. I know she felt great responsibility and interest in the affairs of Rockdale, after that property came into her husband's hands. When the Church was formed there in 1878, it was she who presented the Communion Service with its two silver goblets, which sufficed for the use of all the communicants. I can visualize her at the age of seventy-six, when I first knew her, sitting in the corner of her library, the most serene, placid person I ever saw. She was then burdened with much flesh while her husband retained all the slimness of youth. I recall my embarrassment when she inquired, in her slow, serious way, as to the “Spiritual state of Mrs. B—.” one of the elderly women of Rockdale Village, and I, a matron of *twenty* years of age, was unable to enlighten her!

Those last years of Paul<sup>2</sup> and Sarah were serene and prosperous, both retaining their mental faculties, and he his activities, to the end. As has before been stated, he attended an Insurance Meeting in Worcester that last day of his life, seeming much as usual on his return. The next

morning he was found sleeping the sleep that knows no earthly awakening, the pleasant smile (which was his notable characteristic) upon his face. Sarah remained but a few months more, when—after their sixty-eight years together, they were reunited, December, 1884.



MEMORIAL HALL. BUILT IN 1876

It is a very regrettable and surprising fact that not one of the sons of Paul<sup>1</sup> named a child for the father whom they so much respected, and whose enterprise and ability had given them such a start in life! There is therefore an absence of the name of Paul in the third generation. However, the stately Memorial Hall, built in 1876 on the site



of the old Whitin Homestead—which is used for town meetings and all public purposes—was donated to the town by the “Whitin Brothers” in memory of their honored father, Paul Whitin.

*Second Generation*

Children of Paul<sup>2</sup> and Sarah (Chapin) Whitin.

- |                   |            |           |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. Charles Edward | Born 1823. | Died 1890 |
| 2. Henry          | “ 1826.    | “ 1895    |
| 3. Sarah          | “ 1830.    | “ 1907    |
| 4. Anne Louise    | “ 1839.    | “ 1923    |

- (1) Charles E. See Third Generation.
- (2) Henry Whitin married 1871 Isabelle Stagg.

Their children:

- a. Frederick Henry Whitin. Born 1874. Died 1926  
Married Olive Crosby.  
No children.
- b. Ernest Stagg Whitin. Born 1881.
- (3) Sarah Whitin married 1852 Franklin H. Orvis, of Manchester, Vermont. Their name has long been associated with the Equinox Hotel. Two sons, William and Louis, married and died without descendants.

Their other children:

- a. Paul Whitin Orvis. Born 1853. Died 1911  
Married Helen Tarbox 1903.  
Their son Paul Whitin Orvis. Born 1908.
- b. Edward Church Orvis. Born 1858. Died. 1918  
Married Mary Lowe Woods 1883.

Their children:

- Edna Born 1884.  
Sarah Whitin Born 1889

Edna Orvis married 1922 Isaac Langley Williams, direct descendant of John and Priscilla Alden.

Their children:

Mary Orvis Williams	Born 1923
Priscilla Alden Williams	“ 1925
Edward Elsworth Williams	“ 1927

c. George Orvis. Born 1870. Died. 1917  
Married 1896 Louise Simmons.

Their son:

Franklin Orvis. Born 1903.  
Married 1928 Sheila Swan.







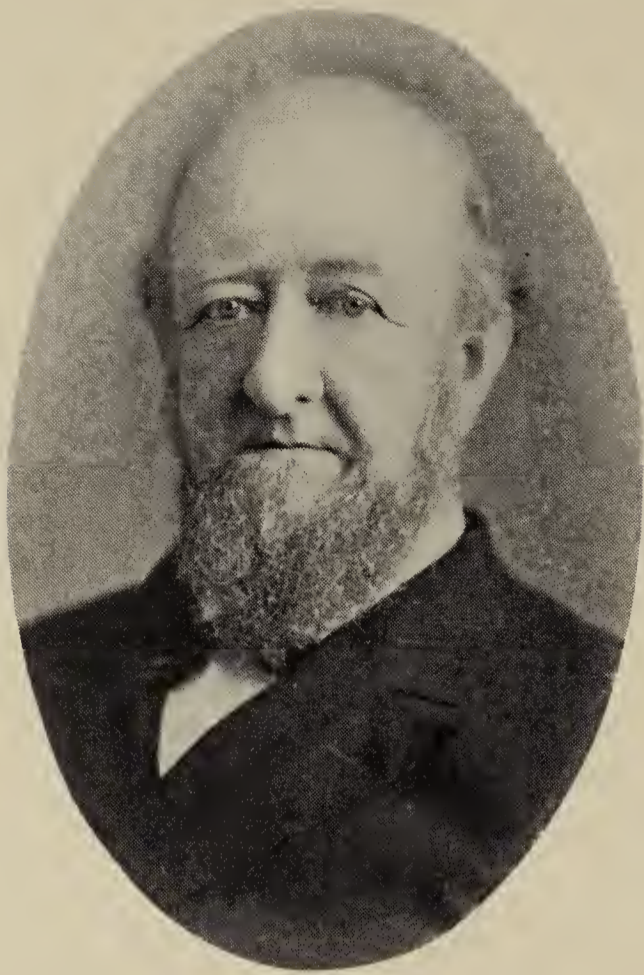




## THIRD GENERATION

*“One generation passeth away, and another generation  
cometh.”*

ECCLESIASTES I:4.



Charles Edward Whitin



Adeline Swift Whitin



## CHARLES EDWARD WHITIN

OUR interest next centers in the oldest son of Paul<sup>2</sup>, Charles Edward, who was born in 1823, a year after the marriage of Paul<sup>2</sup> and Sarah Chapin. The oldest of a group of four, his childhood was happily passed; attending the village school, working on the farm or in his father's mill during vacations. He attended the Mowry Academy in Uxbridge and, later, the Academy in Leicester in which his father had "finished" his education. Like his father and grandfather, he early and thoroughly mastered the details of cotton manufacturing.

As a part of his business preparation, he was sent to the Wamsutta Mills, in New Bedford, for a period; his father promising him a position with the firm if he "made good." Even his vacations were always used industriously. He was thus well prepared for a rapid advance to a position of responsibility in the firm. In 1849, at the age of twenty-six he was made agent of the mills at North Uxbridge, which had come into the possession of the firm two years before. Though following the tradition of the family as to business ability, young Charles was of different physique and of more lively disposition. He was of florid complexion, with reddish hair and beard, becoming bald very early. Later in life, he put on avoirdupois, quite a contrast to his forebears. He was always warmhearted and impulsive, socially inclined, and at maturity had achieved a very extensive acquaintance. It would not be strange, with his temperament, if he sometimes balked at the strict social traditions of Whitinsville society! He was very fond of his sister Sarah, and could always be relied on to help entertain any of the friends she had visiting her. Sarah attended a boarding school in Pittsfield, and her room-mate and favorite friend was Adeline Swift, daughter of Oliver and Eliza Robinson

Jenkins Swift, of Falmouth, Mass. Adeline, shy, petite, with large expressive gray eyes, was not easily won and Charles made many visits to the old Swift Mansion before he gained her consent to an engagement. They were married in the Congregational Church in Falmouth, October 12, 1853; going to North Uxbridge to live in the bachelor quarters which he had occupied before his marriage. It was in this old brick house that their first child, Henry Thomas, was born. Meanwhile, Charles E. had been building for their future comfort the house which was their home for nearly ten years.\*

Here in this secluded home their other three children were born: George Marston, and the twins, Eliza Robinson and Paul. The last named was the only one of the group called by his baptismal name: the others were known respectively as Harry, Mart, and Lila.

Charles E. was obliged to make daily trips to "the village" (Whitinsville) for the mail and for business, and his wife often accompanied him on these buggy rides, dutifully visiting mother-in-law while he attended to business. As the children grew old enough, they often went with their father. These daily trips were not without interest to him, as the store and post office (combined under one roof) was the general meeting place for the men, the "Club" of those days.

Of more liberal views than those who came before him, yet Charles E. was always a "stickler" for Sabbath observance. While living in North Uxbridge, he always drove to Church in Whitinsville, every member of his family of suitable age with him. It is reported that, as soon as his carriage was out of sight, the village livened up considerably. An eye witness reports that one Sunday, as he returned, he discovered some wicked boys skating on the pond. He left the vehicle, horse whip in hand, and those sinners soon disappeared from sight!!!

\*This house, remodeled and enlarged many times, is the present home of James Whitin, great-grandson of Paul!



Charles E. Whitin



From Early  
Daguerreotypes

Adeline Swift Whitin

Vacations for business men were not approved of by the firm. Charles E., after a siege of strenuous work, felt the need of relaxation and sought it in the Adirondacks. He was recalled ten days later to find there had been disaster at the dam, making serious repairs, occupying many days, necessary. Thus was the opinion of his elders vindicated! He nevertheless, in after years, indulged in occasional fishing trips; sometimes taking his son Marston with him.

As the years went on, the life of Charles E. became more varied, frequent business trips to Boston and New York became necessary.

North Uxbridge remained their home until 1864, when they moved to Whitinsville to the house on Railroad Avenue, now (much changed) used as the Episcopal Rectory. That same year saw the old firm dissolved and the formation of the Paul Whitin Mfg. Co., with mills in Rockdale and Riverdale; Charles E. becoming Agent and Treasurer of the concern. He gave his attention for many years to the development of these plants, which increased under his efficient management. It has been said of him that: "during the Civil War he devoted himself and his means freely to the support of the Union; helping the enlistment of troops and leading and influencing his fellow citizens to do their duty to the end. Such financial and moral support as men of his calibre gave to the Government in the Civil War was the primary source of the strength and endurance of the American Republic in its trial and distress. Men like Charles E. Whitin strengthened the soldiers in the field, as well as the President and others in authority in Washington.\*"

He was not content with giving his aid from a distance but after serious battles would go south to make sure that any wounded "boys from Northbridge" received proper attention in the hospitals.

He took a deep interest in politics all his life, and had a wide acquaintance among the prominent men of the Re-

\*Crane's History.

publican party. Like his grandfather and father before him, he was much interested in town affairs. For many years he was on the Board of Selectmen of the town of Northbridge, Mass., and showed marked ability during his term as State Senator (1883). He was a delegate from his Congressional district to the Republican National Convention in 1872. In fact, he was a man of wide influence and large grasp of affairs. Of strong personality, he was not *persona grata* with everybody, but he had many devoted friends. The great grief of the family life came in 1873, when Lila's twin brother Paul was taken suddenly from them by cerebro spinal meningitis. With the death of this very promising boy of eleven, the name of Paul disappeared from that fourth generation.

About 1877, the motherless niece of Adeline, Leila Robinson Swift, daughter of Elijah Swift, came to make her home in the family during her educational years. She was a very welcome addition to the home, a delightful companion and was always looked on as a sister. After her graduation from Smith College, she married Dr. Arthur Chute of Boston.

At his father's (Paul<sup>2</sup>) death in 1884, Charles E. became President of the Paul Whitin Mfg. Co., his oldest son (Henry T.) succeeding to his position. The following year saw the removal of the family, then consisting only of his wife and daughter Lila, from Railroad Avenue to the Mansion built on Douglas Road, formerly occupied by his father (Paul<sup>2</sup>), sharing this home with his sister Anne. Here was the family gathering place for some years, the married sons with their children coming together there for Thanksgiving and Christmas, days which still stand out in the memory of those children.

Charles E. was always what is called a "liberal provider," and on his frequent trips to Boston was seldom without a large market basket on his arm. That sounds simple in the day of automobiles, but was much more complicated

when it meant trains, with change of cars at Blackstone, and by horse-car or on foot to Fanuel Hall Market, where the basket would be filled with the good things not easily procured in early Whitinsville. Then, how he loved to dispense (as well as consume) those purchases! Many a delicacy found its way to the Rockdale family.

Adeline was of a domestic nature, and devotion to her children and cares of her household filled her life. She was an adept with her needle, and until her very last year was seldom seen with idle hands. She claimed that it was restful to simply change the character of her work, as from the finest hemstitching to knitting.

The Sewing Circle was still the principal dissipation in Adeline's life, though supper parties were the supreme form of entertaining. What good things they had to eat at those suppers, and how long seemed the evening that followed! Conversation (that lost art!) and possibly some "pieces" on the piano by the youngest member of the family, (generally including the "Maiden's Prayer,") filled the time till nine o'clock came to the relief of both hostess and guests.

The pulpit had ceased to lay such prominent emphasis on certain forms of evil, and card playing was being surreptitiously engaged in. In the family circle, cards were first openly played in the home of Charles E., showing his independence of mind. His uncles never changed their point of view!

Charles E. had a wonderful capacity for friendship and could never refuse a favor to one whom he liked. This often proved to his own financial disadvantage.

He was very thoughtful for the comfort and happiness of others; watching for opportunities to confer gifts on those he loved. The high chair, of the newest mechanical construction, which he bestowed on his first grandson, is still in use for his great-grandchildren, after over fifty years of service!

One of his sayings might well go down to posterity:

On hearing a member of his family make the familiar excuse "I forgot" for a duty unperformed, he said "forgetfulness is just another form of selfishness!"

Facilities of communication were greatly improved in his lifetime. The Atlantic Cable was one of the new scientific achievements. The electric trolley line from Worcester to Rockdale was a great convenience to the people. The open cars in summer made riding a treat, and trolley trips through the state were sometimes taken much as motor trips are today. The steam cars, the wonder of the previous generation, were quite neglected in summer. The telephone, that uncanny instrument, came into use the last years of his life and made the Rockdale Mills and his son's family seem next door.

Charles E. lived an active life during the five years that were granted him in the new home on Douglas Road. He was on a business trip in New York, where, in 1890, he suddenly succumbed to a distressing heart attack. The Church funeral was largely attended, not only by the townspeople and the surrounding villages, but by men of note from afar. His wife, saddened by her loss, continued in the home with her sister-in-law, Anne, until she was claimed by death in 1902. She had the companionship of her daughter, Lila, until she married in 1901 her cousin, Paul Whitin Abbott.

Adeline's favorite chair was in the same sunny corner of the library enjoyed by her mother-in-law, Sarah. Here she welcomed with her quiet smile, the children and grandchildren who loved to rally there. The slight cloud over the last months, caused by an embolism, only served to endear her the more to those around her. A sweet, shy, reserved nature, a faithful mother and ideal mother-in-law, when this sheltered life was ended, many there were to call her "Blessed."

The sister of Charles E., the "Aunt Annie" of so many loving nieces and nephews, was now left alone in the home to which she had come a young lady of eighteen. For twenty years more, with her faithful companion, Miss Hammond, she welcomed her kindred there, never losing interest in their individual affairs. As her strength declined in the later years, she was usually to be found in the same chair in the sunny corner of the library, which had been the favorite spot of her mother, Sarah, and her sister-in-law, Adeline.

The same serenity and benignity rested upon her, and that corner seemed a hallowed place.

In 1923, at the age of eighty-four, still mentally keen and interested in the affairs of the day, she passed on.

The fine old house, no longer needed, stands empty—a monument to the past.

### *Third Generation.*

Children of Charles E. and Adeline (Swift) Whitin.

1. Henry Thomas Whitin. Born Dec. 15, 1854
2. George Marston Whitin. Born Sept. 1856  
Died 1920
3. Paul Whitin } Born 1862. Died 1873
4. Eliza Swift Whitin } Born 1862. Died 1918

- (1) Henry T. Whitin. See Fourth Generation.
- (2) G. Marston Whitin. Married Catherine Whitin Lasell, granddaughter of John C. Whitin. See Part Second.
- (4) Eliza Swift Whitin. Married 1901 Paul Whitin Abbott. No children.

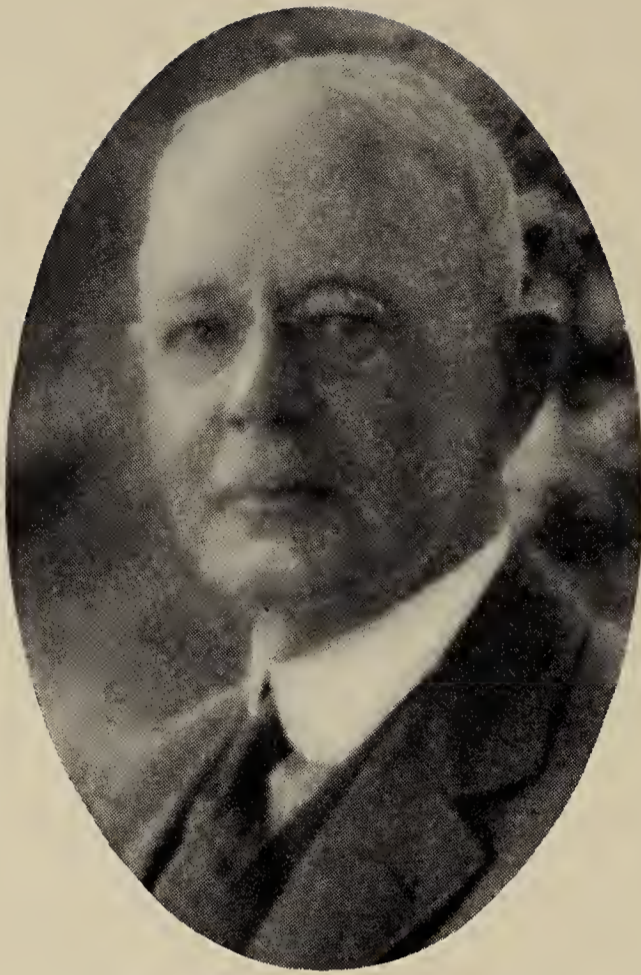




FOURTH GENERATION

*“And in today already walks tomorrow.”*

COLERIDGE.



Harry T. Whitin



Cora B. Whitin

## HENRY THOMAS WHITIN

THE next in line is the oldest son of Charles Edward and Adeline Swift Whitin, Henry Thomas<sup>4</sup> who was born in North Uxbridge in 1854. Though that was his baptismal name, it was never used except in legal signatures, and he was universally known throughout his life as Harry. His brother "Mart" (George Marston<sup>4</sup>) was his junior by less than two years, and the two were close companions; not only in those happy boyhood days, but the tie was very close through all the years. When the family removed from North Uxbridge in 1864 to the house on Railroad Avenue in Whitinsville, the children had more playmates than in the smaller village. The public schools, then so democratic, brought them in touch with boys from all classes, and did much to promote their future popularity with their fellow-townsmen.

Harry<sup>4</sup> has carried many memories, both grave and gay, of those school days. He recalls a certain schoolmaster who had an unpleasant habit of twirling a ruler in his fingers—which he would suddenly flip at any scholar who displeased him. Would Harry remember this if he had not been a frequent target? Another teacher "had it in for him!" No matter how much time he spent in preparation at home, with his mother's help, he would be asked questions not in the textbook, questions which only a mature mind could solve! How that injustice rankles even after a period of many years!!

He remembers helping himself to some "sapsy" (sappovine?) apples—which looked so tempting in his great-grandmother's (Betsey's) yard, and her stinging rebuke for his sinful act! He recalls the refreshing drinks of cool water from the great hogshead which stood on her back piazza. Great-grandmother's house, located where Memorial Hall

now stands, was in the center of things, and directly on his way to Grandmother's (Sarah's<sup>2</sup>) house. He remembers the impressive Church funeral when great-grandmother Betsey died; his first acquaintance with death. He was twelve years old then.

The long Sundays of his boyhood still dwell in his mind; three services and Sunday School. The evening service was not compulsory, but he went, as he was not allowed to leave the home premises for any other purpose. Even a call at his grandmother's was not permitted on that day.

When Harry reached the age of sixteen, he was sent to the Highland Military Academy in Worcester. For whatever reason this particular school was chosen, he was glad throughout his life to have had that strict military training. He ascribes much of his success to qualities imbibed during those two years in Worcester: precision of thought, definiteness of aim, facility in giving orders, as well as habits of orderliness and promptness, were acquired there. At his graduation at eighteen, he had achieved the honor of being "second in command." It was a tradition of the family that a college education was unnecessary for one who was to pursue a business career, so after his graduation Harry<sup>4</sup> became an apprentice at the Whittin Machine Works. This meant long, hard days of arduous manual labor from seven in the morning until six at night daily, except Saturdays when the "hands" were free at four-thirty.

The vacations of Harry's boyhood before entering the shop were not like those of the generations before him, spent in work in mill or on a farm, but were real vacations. At the old Swift Homestead in Falmouth, his grandparents on his mother's side always had a welcome for him and his brother. A cousin, his mother's namesake, Adeline Swift Marston, who was about the same age, shared the summers' pleasures with the boys. The scene of their activities were oftentimes on the other side of the Cape at the home of Addie's father, Judge George Marston, in Barnstable or New Bedford. Those were happy days!

At this time his father, Charles E.<sup>3</sup>, was driving daily to the mills in Rockdale, but "old Billy" was often in requisition evenings by Harry in search of pleasure, of which the strict atmosphere of Whitinsville afforded so little. It was on one of these occasions, at a dance in the neighboring Town of Uxbridge, that the young man met the girl who was destined to share his life. Cora Berry, daughter of Scotto and Mary Lovett Berry, was a Worcester girl, who with her father was spending that winter with her uncle, Samuel P. Lovett, at the old Wancantuck Hotel, which stood where the Uxbridge Inn now stands.

This seemingly chance meeting ripened rapidly into a more serious attachment; for two years the young couple awaited impatiently the arrival of Harry's<sup>4</sup> twenty-first birthday for their marriage. They began their life together on New Year's day, 1876. The simple ceremony took place at the residence of William H. Goulding (Cora's brother-in-law) in Worcester, with just the members of the family present. The wedding journey consisted of taking the train for Whitinsville, where the young couple were to stay for a while in the parental home. I think that New Year's Day is on record as the warmest ever in January—the mercury registering seventy degrees, and rivers of thawing snow flowing in the streets.

Harry had left the Machine Shop the previous year, and was working in his father's (Charles E.<sup>3</sup>) mill in Rockdale; driving back and forth each day. At the close of that summer, for greater business convenience, he took his wife to the boarding-house in Rockdale, and it was there their first child, Paul<sup>5</sup>, was born. In 1877 Harry<sup>4</sup> had been made Superintendent of the mill and as soon as Mr. Mascroft (the former incumbent) removed from the house now called "Wayside," the young family made that their home. The library hearthstone, still in its place, was built into the house in 1827. Though lacking the third floor, and much of the service department of the present house, it was quite an



“WAYSIDE” BUILT IN 1827. PORCHES ADDED IN 1880

establishment for the inexperienced and delicate young wife to manage. Having lost her own mother in early childhood, she fully appreciated the affection of her mother-in-law (Adeline), and benefited much by her ready advice. In addition to the housekeeping, the products of the cows, hens, and pigs must be cared for, quite a task for young shoulders to bear.

In the summer of '78 (August 6) Florence was added to the family, a premature and delicate baby, whose life Grandpa Berry, now a member of the household, helped to preserve. His devotion to her and to each succeeding baby was remarkable, and I believe all the children hold him in grateful memory.

The births of Marion Lovett (October 14, 1883) and Marjorie Swift (May 29, 1887) apparently rounded out the family; the sex of the latter being an intense disappointment to her father, but to which in later years he became more than reconciled. It was nearly ten years later, July 30, 1896, that the boy so much desired, Richard Courtenay, arrived—and great was the rejoicing thereat!

When Harry T.<sup>4</sup> became Superintendent of the Paul Whitin Mfg. Co., in 1877, the mill was small, of about 10,000 spindles and 250 looms, and the goods made were ordinary shirtings and sheetings. The village was correspondingly small, and it was possible for him to have personal knowledge of every operative and family in the mill. It is interesting to note that some of the third generation of these French Canadian families are still in the employ of the firm. The office was a small building at the extreme end of the property toward Worcester, while opposite "Wayside" was the Company store and post office—with hall above. There was a four tenement house next to it, on the side toward the boarding-house. The store building was moved to its present location in 1895; George R. Brown having bought the Company's interest many years before. The business has been in the Brown family ever since.

In the early years, there was neither trolley, bus, nor telephone. No matter how urgent the need for a physician, a horse must be harnessed and driven to Whitinsville and back, bringing the Doctor if he could be found! No quick service was possible, and mothers had to have some knowledge of remedies and of "first aid." There were no church edifices except the old Quaker Meeting House, which stood on the corner where the Quaker Cemetery still remains, as a reminder of the days when the Society of Friends held their Quarterly Meetings there late in the 19th Century. The Protestants worshipped in the hall over the store, and the Catholics attended church in Whitinsville, riding in a horse-drawn barge. The first Catholic Church in Rockdale was built in 1892; the present fine building replacing it in 1913. A Union Evangelical Church was organized in 1879, the congregation meeting in the hall over the store. The attractive Church on Fowler Road was not built until 1899.

In 1878 George Marston, brother of Harry T., was given charge as Superintendent of the Cotton Mill at Riverdale; community of business interest bringing the brothers close together. He married October 4 of that year his second cousin, Kate Lasell, and brought his bride to live in the little house at Riverdale. The intercourse between the two families was a very pleasant feature of their early married life. This intimacy was necessarily somewhat lessened (this was before the day of the automobile) when in 1881 Marston removed to Whitinsville, but the spirit was always there. He became the head of the Whitin Machine Works, and developed remarkable business ability. The business, so successfully founded by John C. Whitin<sup>2</sup>, ably carried on by Josiah Lasell, became, through the management and vision of G. Marston Whitin, one of the largest shops for the manufacture of cotton machinery in the country.

In 1889 the Riverdale Mill was seriously injured by fire. The property was soon after sold, as it was decided wiser,





ROCKDALE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. ERECTED 1899

instead of rebuilding that mill, to concentrate all the business activities of the Paul Whiting Mfg. Co. under one roof. This resulted in an enlargement of the Rockdale Mill. Two later enlargements brought it to its present size, and resulted in the building of many new tenements to house the increased number of operatives. During the fifty years that Harry has been at the head of the firm the character of work done has completely changed. No more does the plain weaving for "shirtings and sheetings" employ the looms. The change to elaborate textiles for women's wear has been gradual, and much credit for the success of these goods is due to Frank S. Berry (brother-in-law of Harry) who has long been with the firm. His ability as an expert and artistic designer has aided in bringing the Company into the front rank of manufacturers today. Instead of using cotton yarns alone they are using combed yarns, silk, rayons, etc., making many varieties of goods at the same time.

Though Harry is recognized as one of the foremost manufacturers in the state, he is also widely known outside the textile business for his connection with the Republican Party. Though persistently refusing all public office outside of his own town,\* he has served that faithfully through long years. He was on the Board of Selectmen for many years and has been on the Republican Town Committee for over forty years; as chairman most of that time. Through his extensive acquaintance and influence, many prominent men of the time have been heard on public occasions. He was a Director in the Whitinsville National Bank from 1884 until, after a period of thirty-six years, he resigned in 1920; a son succeeding in his place. He was a Director in the Merchant's National Bank (now called the Worcester County National Bank), from the time of its incorporation.

During middle life, Harry and his wife had much pleasure at the Grafton Country Club. The simple Club House

\*The only exception was when he went as delegate to the Chicago Convention in 1908, which nominated President Taft.

was off the main road and was reached through a narrow wooded lane, which made it seem far from the "outside world"—though in reality it was only a few miles from home. In addition to the usual attractions of a club, a notable feature was the Fall and Spring Club breakfasts



FAMILY GROUP 1890

Harry T. and Cora B. Whitin, Paul Whitin, Florence (Mrs. Theophilus Parsons), Marion (Mrs. T. Chittenden Hill), Marjorie (Mrs. Philip N. Curtis), and Richard C. Whitin, who arrived four years too late for the group (interpolated by artist).

(so-called!). Members assembled at a given place; riding thither on horseback, in four-in-hands, tandems, and traps, making a picturesque procession not seen in this locality since those days. The riders proceeded to the home of some member, where the bountiful feast was served with much jollity, and later adjourned to the Club House for a continuation of festivities.

Harry's genial disposition and love of sport has won him many friends. His love for bird hunting developed in early boyhood, and has always remained with him. He is a fine shot both in the field and at trap shooting. Many happy vacations have been spent in the Maine Woods.

When golf was introduced in this country, Harry was

among the first to adopt the new sport, and has remained an enthusiast; belonging to the Worcester Country Club, the Tatnuck Club, the Worcester Club, Brookline Country Club, Wianno and Hyannisport Golf Clubs, the Boston Athletic Association; also the Merchants Club of New York City, the Arkwright and Home Market Clubs of Boston, and Republican Club of Mass. It is his great pleasure, wherever he travels, to try the various golf links, and he is a familiar figure at Pinehurst. Business comes first, however, and is never neglected, although he wisely occupies each possible spare moment in exercise and recreation.

He has been affiliated with the masonic fraternity since early manhood, becoming Knight Templar and Shriner.

Before 1900 this generation had entirely broken away from the strict ideas of their fathers' and life was not as sombre. In dancing, the quadrille, polka, and galop had given place to the waltz, schottische and two-step—which later became the one step and the "Charleston." Instead of music which had melody as well as rhythm, the syncopated music called "jazz" came into vogue; bringing with it manners and postures of dancing which scandalized many even of their own generation.

Card parties were now openly indulged in, progressive euchre for the gay, and whist for the more sedate. The next development of plain whist was bridge whist, which became still more popular as auction bridge. The pendulum today has swung completely the other way, and card parties are the fad of the times, particularly afternoon parties among the women. This seems a great change from the busy days of Great-grandmother Betsey! That good lady who believed (as some still do) that woman's place is in the home, would probably have been horrified to see women going boldly to the polls; voting on an equality with men. The law granting suffrage to women was passed in 1920.

In 1901 a change came which added much to the comfort of the family. The old house was no longer adequate to their

needs. A family council was held to decide whether they should remove to Whitinsville, where they might have more social life—or have the old house remodeled. Each one was loyal to the village of Rockdale, and voted to remain there. The house was moved back forty feet, given an extra story, modern conveniences, and new service department. Before these changes were quite completed, the family began to diminish. Florence, having graduated from Smith College, was married in 1901 to Theophilus Parsons of Hempstead, N. Y. The ceremony took place in the Rockdale Church, and a room in the unfinished addition of “Wayside” was specially decorated for the reception. Her grandmother (Adeline) lived to see this occasion. Three other wedding receptions took place under “Wayside” roof; each following a Church ceremony. Marion Lovett Whitin was married to Cyrus Brewer, of Boston, in 1907. Marjorie Swift Whitin to Philip Nash Curtis, of Worcester, in 1909. Richard Courtenay Whitin was married in 1920 to Ina Watson, the daughter of the resident pastor, the reception at “Wayside” as the Parsonage was inadequate to the number of guests.

Paul's<sup>5</sup> marriage to Rebecca Dulaney Carter took place in Upperville, Virginia, in 1909.

Now, with ample house room, Harry<sup>4</sup> and his wife were henceforth to live by themselves. They never regretted the extra rooms, however, for they proved very convenient for the visits of grandchildren, who were added promptly to each family. “Wayside” has ever had a welcome for all. At each Thanksgiving and Christmas, it has been the scene of joyous family gatherings.

Among the improvements of Harry's time was the system of lighting by electricity. It was a great boon to his wife, when the kerosine lamps (which required two hours' care daily) were superseded by electric lights. Electric stoves, washing-machines, electric irons, as well as ironing machines, vacuum cleaners, all the devices taken for granted by future generations, were introduced in this age.



“WAYSIDE,” ROCKDALE, 1901

The Whitin family had all been very fond of horses and riding, and formed quite a cavalcade when they all started out together. Harry remembers the horror and indignation he felt at the sight of the first "horseless carriage"! He was among the last to give up horses and adopt the new means of locomotion, the automobile. All found, however, that country life was changed by their use. Horizons were widened; social intercourse with friends at a distance made possible; concerts, lectures, and other amusements brought within reach; and life altogether transformed! The aeroplane, once thought impossible, has been proven practical, and is used for speedier mail service, but is still in the experimental stage. The marvel of the age, the radio, brings many homes in touch with outside interests. Moving pictures also bring pleasure into many lives.

The crowning feature of the united lives of Harry and his wife was the celebration of their Golden Anniversary on January 1, 1926. The reception was held in Community Hall, where friends, relatives, and operatives came to offer their congratulations. Many messages and tokens of esteem came to Harry<sup>4</sup> from unexpected quarters and were most gratifying. While the people of Rockdale continued the festivities by an evening of dancing, the "bridal couple" were further honored by a dinner given them by their children. This was in Whitinsville in the bowling-alley of their sister-in-law (Kate Whitin), which has been the scene of many large family festivals, but only one Golden Wedding. Only their children and closest relatives and friends occupied the thirty-two seats at the beautifully decorated table. Paul Whitin<sup>5</sup> was toastmaster, and all present responded with original, merry quips and rhymes. It was a joyous and memorable occasion.

This episode (1926) is a fitting close to the chronicle of Harry. We leave him and his wife mentally and physically active, rejoicing in their many blessings and in the unbroken circle of their children and their sixteen grand-children.

## Children of Harry T. and Cora Whitin:

1. Paul<sup>5</sup>. See Fifth Generation.
2. Florence Whitin married 1902 Theophilus Parsons.

## Their children:

Theophilus, Jr.	Born Aug. 17, 1903
Paul Whitin	“ Jan. 26, 1905
Charles Chauncy	“ Jan. 3, 1907
Lorraine	“ July 4, 1911

3. Marion Lovett Whitin married 1907 Cyrus Brewer; 1923 Dr. Thomas Chittenden Hill.

## Her children:

Cyrus Brewer, 3rd.	Born April 5, 1910
Harry Whitin Brewer	“ Dec. 30, 1914

4. Marjorie Swift Whitin married 1909 Philip Nash Curtis.

## Their children:

John Whitin	Born Sept. 30, 1911
Marjorie Anne	“ March 10, 1914

5. Richard Courtenay Whitin married 1920 Ina Watson.

## Their children:

Richard Courtenay, Jr.	Born May 22, 1921
Thomson McLintock	“ Jan. 12, 1923
Mary Rowena	“ July 14, 1926













## FIFTH GENERATION

*“People will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors.”*

BURKE.



Paul Whitin, 5th



Rebecca Carter Whitin

## PAUL<sup>5</sup> WHITIN

PAUL<sup>5</sup>, son of Harry and Cora (Berry) Whitin, was born in Rockdale, September 22, 1876. The first few months of his life in the boarding-house (once the old Turnpike Tavern) were soon succeeded by life at "Wayside" where he remained until established in a home of his own. It is somewhat of a wonder that he survived his perilous childhood: he was made the victim of so many experiments by his youthful mother. Realizing her need of help, she read with avidity every publication on the care and education of children, and each new theory was tried conscientiously on young Paul and his sister Florence, who soon was added to the family group. I think his childhood was happy in spite of so much "bringing up"!

Paul<sup>5</sup> was a very "old" youngster! He was what a dear old neighbor called "precautious"! The brook running through the garden, narrow and shallow, was always a favorite place for the Whitin children to play. Every spring each one tried the temperature of that brook, coming in dripping. A child rarely fell in twice the same season! It was here that Paul made his experiments with water wheels, and finally invented one, which his grandfather (Charles E. Whitin) pronounced practical, but more complicated than those in use! The proud parents felt sure they had an inventor in the family. If he ever did anything more on the inventive line, he did not let anyone into the secret. Paul<sup>5</sup> was always of a reticent nature! I think his father was well pleased when, later in life, he proved to be a practical business man, instead of an inventor. His earliest business venture was in peddling daily papers at a summer resort. He felt very proud of those first earnings.

The foundation of his education began in the old-fashioned district school, comprised of all grades under one teacher.



WHITINSVILLE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND MEMORIAL PARK



By good fortune in this case it was a teacher of wonderful ability, Miss Jennie Pierce. She was an intimate friend of his mother's, and both before and after her marriage to Mr. George Thomas Fowler was known as "Aunt Jennie" to all the Whitin children. When Paul began to attend the schools in Whitinsville, he stayed through the school week at his Grandfather's, Charles E. Whitin; going home for the weekend to "Wayside."

His grandfather's family was still living on Railroad Avenue and he has many memories connected with that house, now so much changed in appearance and surroundings. There has been one great improvement: that is in the triangle forming the little park, which is now such an attractive feature of the center of Whitinsville. With its beautiful Soldiers' Monument, and Memorial to the Soldiers of the Great War, its attractive shrubbery (all so well cared for), it is difficult to visualize it as young Paul knew it, when it was utilized by its owner to raise various crops: corn, potatoes, or hay, and when there were footpaths, well worn by its use as a "short cut" between Railroad Avenue and Church Street. This tract of land was later sold for a nominal sum to the town by Paul's great-grandfather, Paul<sup>2</sup>.

Paul<sup>5</sup> continued in Whitinsville schools until prepared for the Worcester Academy, where he completed the four years' course in three years, still under home influences at the week-end. Lawrence Thurston, son of Rev. John R. Thurston (who was pastor in Whitinsville for forty years) was his room-mate and close friend, both in prep school and college. Paul was naturally a good student and at the age of sixteen he had passed without conditions his examinations for Yale College. The family tradition was now to be broken, and he was to have a college education! Youth as he was, he had very clear ideas of his own and now made the proposal to his father that he should go into the mill for a year. He said he had always been the youngest boy in his classes, and he preferred not to be in that position

in college. He had a year of hard work, "no favors shown," beginning with the first processes in the cotton manufacturing business and working upwards. His brief summer vacation was enlivened by camping with some boys of his own age on Johnny's Island, a small island in the Whitinsville Pond. It was only a short distance from the causeway, but the boys rigged up a ferry and felt very remote. This camping custom with the same youths was continued for a week each summer for many years.

Paul's career at Yale was creditable. He never had a condition, and could easily have had honors had he tried. The damp climate of New Haven never agreed with him, and he had repeated attacks of tonsilitis every year. Perhaps New Haven was not wholly to blame—for he seldom finished a Christmas vacation at home without succumbing to an attack. Never-the-less, "Wayside" was a lively place during the Christmas and Easter holidays—for his sister Florence would bring friends home from her class in Smith College and they rendered willing aid to Paul's college boys in making merry!

After Richard, who was twenty years Paul's junior, was added to the household, the family spent many summers at Hyannisport where Paul acquired his fondness for sailing. His love for this sport has remained with him always. After his return from a trip abroad, which he took after graduating from college, he went to Philadelphia to attend the Textile School in order to master the art of designing patterns for the manufacture of fancy goods. Towards the end of his course there, he was stricken with a very serious attack of typhoid fever, which nearly ended his career. His recovery was slow and it was a long time before his youthful energy returned to him—and he was able to resume his work in the mill.

When "Wayside" was remodeled, 1901, special rooms were planned for Paul's comfort on the third floor and he had apparently settled into bachelor habits.

He brought together those of his acquaintances who had both horses and hounds, and formed the Blackstone Valley Hunt Club. During the six years he was Master-of-the-Hounds, he put a great deal of work into the club but gained much pleasure therefrom. When the Hunt Club was discontinued about four years later he missed the exercise and pleasure it afforded.

Horseback riding became his recreation. Life continued in this groove, of work in the Rockdale Mill, relieved by his hunting, for several years. Trips to Virginia for the hunting there, or to look for suitable saddle horses, grew more and more frequent, until finally



the fact was announced to his unsuspecting family of his engagement to Rebecca Dulaney Carter of Crednal, Upperville, Virginia. She was the daughter of Colonel Welby and Sophie deButts Carter, lineal descendants of the much-famed "King" Carter. Their marriage was consummated in April 1909 and was a joyous occasion. Paul<sup>5</sup> had built the house on the hill, called "Beaumont", and prepared it for his bride. After their honeymoon abroad, they came to this home in Rockdale, where they still reside.

Rebecca was one of eight children, and the family at Crednal often included many guests—with the hospitality so delightful in the South. Moreover, the neighboring estates were occupied by an incredible number of cousins, and the intercourse between families was informal and frequent. Coming from Virginia to her northern home, Rebecca must have had many lonely moments that first winter. She won all hearts at once, and was such a good sport no one ever heard her mention her loneliness. This was relieved by the arrival in 1910 of their first son, Paul.<sup>6</sup> Rebecca brought with her a warmer atmosphere, and intro-



“BEAUMONT,” ROCKDALE, HOME OF MR. AND MRS. PAUL WHITIN<sup>5</sup>

duced some of the Southern customs—notably the following: on Christmas morning, open house is kept at “Beaumont.” All the relatives, and friends of relatives, are invited to partake of a wonderful egg-nog, prepared by the hostess herself from a secret Southern recipe. This is accompanied by a delectable fruit cake, which comes to her yearly from the home of good things, Virginia. It is a festive gathering of the kindred, but a poor preparation for the ample turkey dinner which follows later in the various homes.

When his family began spending summers at Nonquitt, Paul’s old craze for sailing revived—resulting in the building of the ketch *Hobomok*. Sailing has a close rival, however, as a sport, with the game of golf. Paul belongs to the Whitinsville Country Club; the Tatnuck and Country Clubs in Worcester; the Country Club of New Bedford and the New Bedford Yacht Club; also the Wamsutta Club of that place; the Worcester Club; the Merchants’ Club, New York; the Yale Clubs of both New York and Boston; the Arkwright Club, and the Republican Club of Massachusetts. He is also affiliated with the Masons in Whitinsville. He has held numerous town offices, and is a director both in the Whitinsville National Bank and the Whitinsville Savings Bank. In business he is called Treasurer of the firm, but the word seems to have a wide interpretation. Paul, his younger brother Richard, and his father, Harry T. (still the ruling spirit in the concern) are to be found at the office, which the sign over the door designates as the Paul Whitin Manufacturing Company. This was placed there in 1864, and has served appropriately for four generations.

On a November night, 1927, occurred an event which will ever remain in Paul’s memory. Retiring at his usual hour, though conscious of a severe downpour, he was surprised to be called by the night watchman at 2:00 a. m. The Blackstone River, usually a quiet stream, was rising rapidly, flooding into the engine-room and threatening damage to the machinery. Paul, plunging into the darkness, found

torrents of raging water everywhere, and his driveway (which only a few hours previous had been smooth as the highway) was gutted so deeply that he was constantly falling. It was truly a perilous trip from "Beaumont" to the office, and he was thoroughly drenched to his knees, as well as by the still descending rain. The narrow, quiet little brook, flowing unobtrusively through the estate, the safe playground for little children, had asserted itself and had become a mighty torrent flowing over the highway in its hasty rush to join the Blackstone. This would seem an absolutely incredible tale but for the testimony of eye-witnesses, and is therefore chronicled. Others will remember this flood for the destruction it carried in its wake. Bridges carried away, roads made impassible and property injured—though the Blackstone Valley was more fortunate than many places in New Hampshire and Vermont.

Paul<sup>5</sup>, as well as his father, saw the inception and development of the many inventions which have so transformed living. He felt the thrill of excitement when Colonel Charles Lindbergh made his first successful voyage alone across the ocean, and watched with interest for the news of the safe arrival of the giant Graf Zeppelin from Germany with its twenty passengers. He has seen the growth of the great arteries East, West, North, and South, through every state of our great country, those wonderful roads which the universal use of the automobile has made necessary. He has seen not only the advent of trolley transportation through the village of Rockdale but its discard in 1928, in favor of the motor bus, which needs neither tracks nor poles.

The radio, though admitted reluctantly into his home (for like the majority of male Whitins, "Music hath no charms to soothe 'his' savage breast"), he admits is a great force in the world's progress.

What a revolution in the manner of living since the days of that first generation! What a difference in the attire of the women! The simple, hygienic, and comfortable clothing

LOOKING FORWARD



Enter Paul Whitin of the sixth generation, but the fifth to bear the name, with his father Paul Whitin, of the fifth; his grandfather Harry T. Whitin, of the fourth; his great aunt Annie L. Whitin, of the third; and his great-great aunt Margaret Whitin Abbot, of the second.

of the women of today (impossible in the cold houses of “ye olden time”) would horrify the preceding generations.

Paul<sup>1</sup> and Betsey would be intensely surprised at many another change in our homes and manner of living. All the wonders that electricity has wrought for this age, they could not have conceived as possible, had they been looking into the future! Can the coming years bring as great transformations?

Paul<sup>5</sup> and his wife are much interested in glancing back at the simple but strenuous lives of their ancestors, but more intensely interested in what the future may bring to their lovely family—the children of the sixth generation,—to their son, Paul<sup>6</sup>, who, though of the sixth generation, is the fifth to bear this honorable name! Born into this amazing world, with all its wonderful advantages, which no other Whitin has ever had—will the “silver spoon” prove a handicap? It seems paradoxical, but the very ease which surrounds him may make his life hard! We believe he will be given the mental and moral vigor to “carry on.”

He can truly say with the Psalmist: “the lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage.”

Paul and Rebecca have been blessed with five children:

Paul,	born 1910.
Sophie Carter,	“ 1912.
Cora Berry	“ 1914.
Harry T.	“ 1917.
Welby Carter	“ 1921.

















PART II

KINDRED

OTHER DESCENDANTS OF THE FOUNDER  
OF THE FAMILY

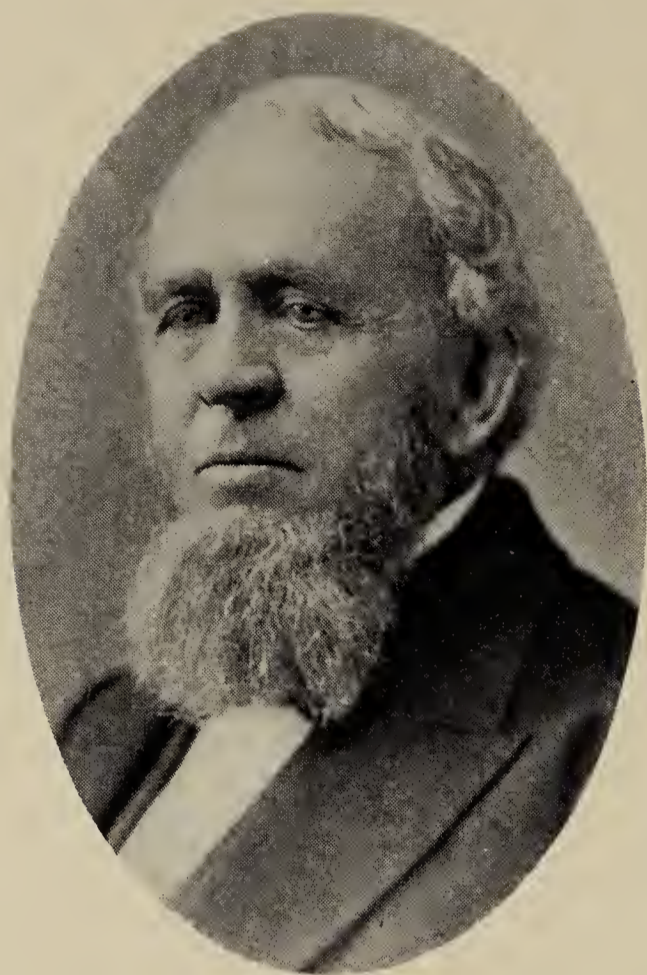




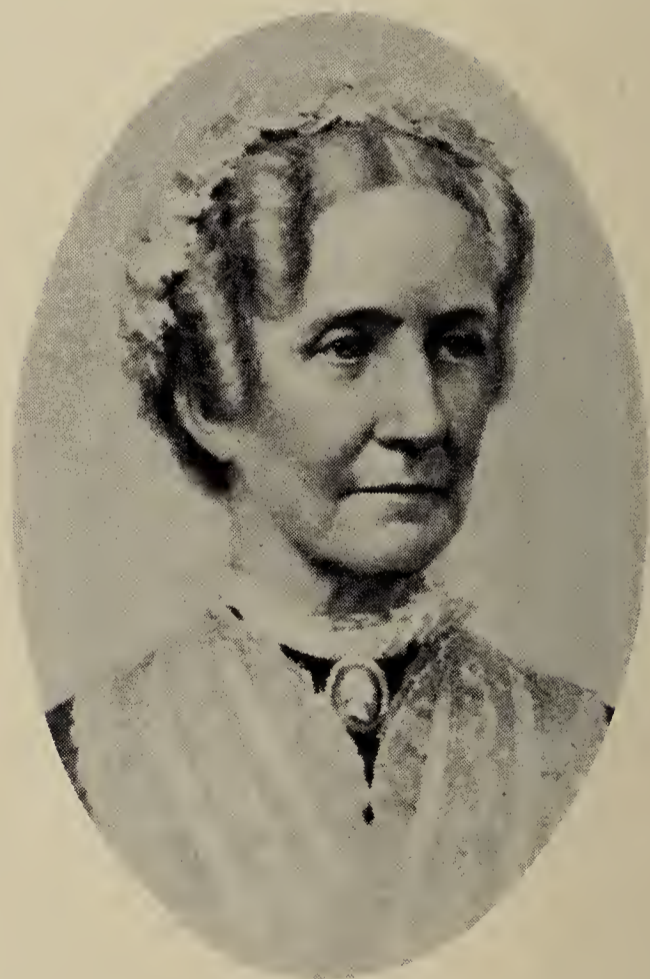
JOHN CRANE WHITIN

*“By their fruits ye shall know them.”*

MATTHEW vii: 20.



John Crane Whitin



Catherine Leland Whitin

## JOHN CRANE WHITIN

JOHN Crane, son of Paul and Betsey (Fletcher) Whitin was born in 1807 in the part of Northbridge now called Whitinsville. He was the namesake of the remarkable man who served the Northbridge Center Church for fifty years and who had been of such assistance to his father Paul<sup>1</sup> in his education. Doubtless, Dr. Crane watched over this boy, his namesake, with great interest for he lived until John Crane Whitin was twenty-nine years old, married and a successful business man! But we are anticipating our story.

Young John attended the district school until he was fifteen years of age, but after he was nine years old, at all times when schools were not in session, he was employed in the cotton mill of his father. When he was twelve, he was placed in the repair room where he worked for three years. This proved a wonderful preparation for his future life work.

He spent three years in the dry goods store of his brother Paul<sup>2</sup> in New York, but they both returned to go into partnership with their father Paul<sup>1</sup> in 1826; manufacturing cotton goods under the name of P. Whitin & Sons. John C. took charge of the manufacturing and mechanical end of the business; leaving the mercantile part to his older brother. He was a natural mechanic and inventor—and patented many valuable inventions and improvements in machinery.

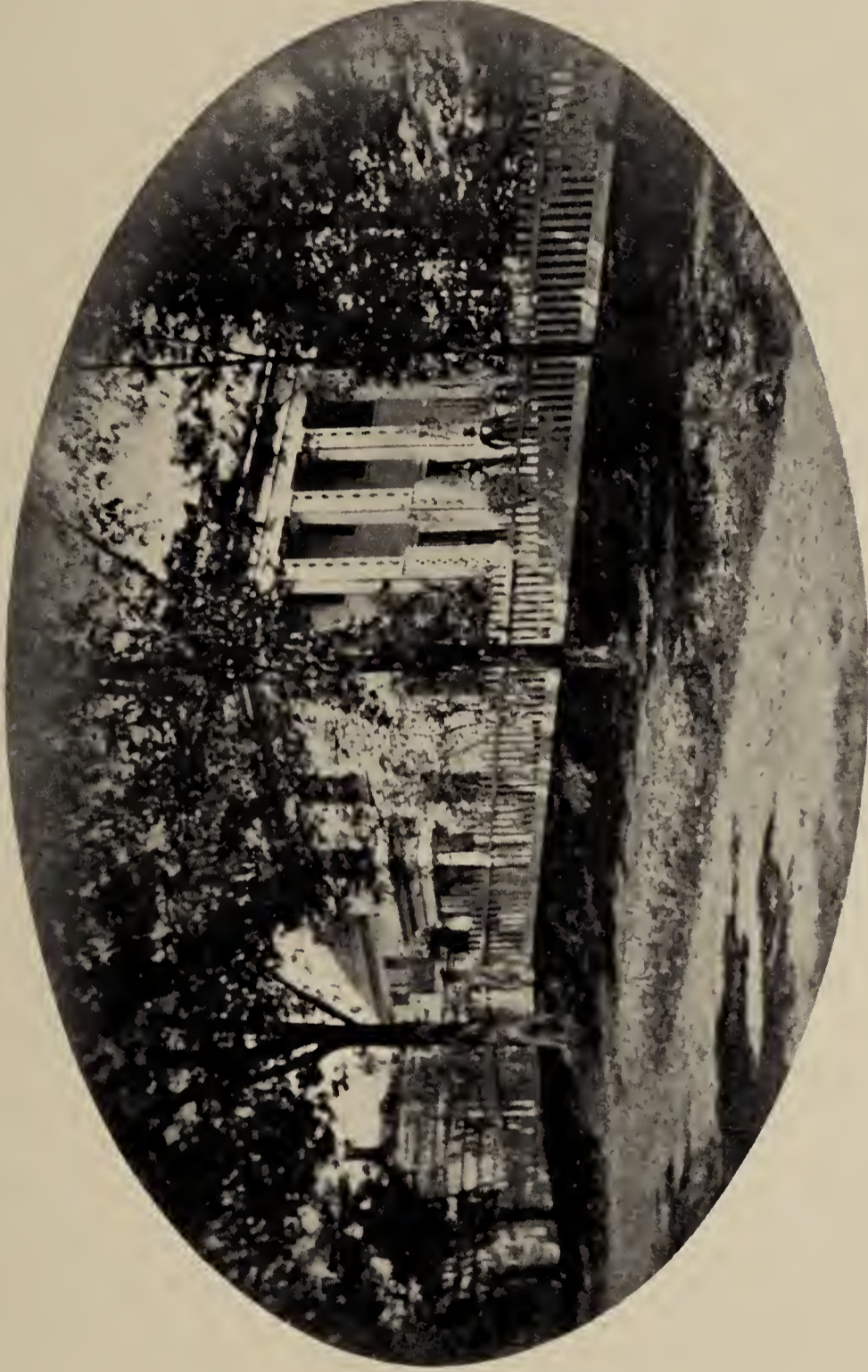
He was married in 1831 to Catherine H. Leland of Sutton, who was a lineal descendant of John Dwight, one of the pioneers of Dedham, from whom the Whitings also claim descent.

In 1860, John C. purchased the Holyoke Machine Works on his own account and retained them four years. In 1864, the firm of P. Whitin & Sons was dissolved, and the business divided; John C. taking the manufacture of machinery.

Since that time the business has increased to its present enormous proportions. Mr. Gibbs in his *Reminiscences* (unpublished) refers to him as a man of tremendous power and grasp. He describes him at the age of forty-seven as "a short, thick set man, fresh complexion, fine teeth, hair formerly red but now a handsome steel grey (inclined to curl), a pleasant voice, sometimes rather quick, tireless energy and power to work, ability to carry on all the details of his large business seemingly without an effort—he was the moving spirit of the caravan." Mr. Gibbs, comparing him with his brothers, says he was not so methodical as Charles or James; rarely finishing up things, preferring to conquer new difficulties. That was the spirit of the man. It was said he could plan a machine entirely in his mind before constructing it!

He was interested in public affairs, a strong Republican in politics, a representative to the General Court, and in 1876 a presidential elector from the state. He was a director of the Whitinsville Bank, President of the Whitinsville Savings Bank and Director of the Providence and Worcester Railroad. He was one of the original members of the Whitinsville Congregational Church, of which he was a deacon for forty-eight years—and served the Sunday School, as Superintendent, for twenty-five years.

When, crippled by rheumatism, he was obliged to use a wheelchair, he still felt a keen interest in his business. He would have a man wheel him around through the shop daily, and no detail of the work could escape his eye. As his condition failed to improve, his physician forbade further indoor work, and advocated some interest that would keep him in the open air. Just at this time, work in the Foundry was rather dull and there were several men in need of employment. Deacon John combined his need with theirs, and the hundred-acre lot, which bore a bountiful crop of stones, was cleared. These stones were built into the massive boundary wall which has been one of the interesting



“THE HOUSE WITH PILLARS”

John C. Whitin's first mansion, moved, remodelled and now occupied by Sydney and Elsa (Whitin) Mason.

sights of the town ever since, and has made the name "Castle Hill Farm" so appropriate. It is said that during the months of the construction Deacon John spent much of his time overseeing the work. It was a familiar sight to the village people, the genial Deacon driving back and forth in his top buggy—the horse chosen for his standing qualities rather than speed and often needing "the persuasion of the whip" to please his master! It was on this cleared lot that he built the large barn, bought a herd of Jersey cows and started, what was for the times, a model dairy. This was of great interest to him.

His wife, Catherine, was a very attractive woman,—of slender figure and delicate physique. She was blessed with a keen sense of humor which made her a delightful companion. This trait was certainly inherited by her oldest grandchild! She was the faithful assistant in all her husband's "good works"; attending the numerous prayer meetings which seemed the principle diversion of the age. We can almost see her, lantern in hand, tripping lightly up the stairs to the Chapel (the hall over the store), where the good people worshipped from 1833 to 1834. Those were the early years of her married life. Her children were born in the white house opposite the shop always described as the "house with the pillars."

When Deacon John built his new house on the hill (now occupied by his granddaughter, Katherine Lasell Whitin) he determined to do it in the best manner possible. This was carried to the extreme of even having the rafters made of hard pine and polished with sandpaper! The construction of that house would be a revelation to the modern carpenter. His marble bathtub was the first and, perhaps, the only one in town. His wife Catherine did not live to occupy the new house, passing away suddenly in 1873.

In 1875 he married Sarah Elizabeth Pratt of Hopkinton. Their only child died in infancy.

Seven years later, at the age of seventy-five (1882), Deacon John passed on. His widow, universally beloved and known to all as "Aunt Lizzie," remained in the home for thirty-five years longer. Her death in 1917 was mourned by a very wide circle of friends and relatives.



Elizabeth Pratt Whitin

Children of John Crane and Catherine Leland Whitin:

- |    |              |            |           |
|----|--------------|------------|-----------|
| A. | Jane         | Born 1834. | Died 1895 |
| B. | John Maltbie | " 1838.    | " 1872    |

A. Jane married Josiah Lasell, 1855

Their children:

- |    |                |                |
|----|----------------|----------------|
| a. | Catherine      | Born Mar. 1856 |
| b. | Jeannie Leland | " Jan. 1860    |
| c. | Chester Whitin | " July 1861    |
| d. | Josiah Manning | " Sept. 1863   |

- a. Catherine Lasell married 1879 George Marston Whitin, who died in 1920.

Their children:

1.	Elizabeth Klock	Born 1880
2.	Elsa	" 1884
3.	Katharine Leland	" 1887
4.	Lois Haven	" 1896

1. Elizabeth K. Whitin married 1905 Lawrence Murray Keeler.

Their children:

Murray Whitin	Born 1908
Marston Whitin	" 1911
Lawrence Murray, Jr.	" 1913

2. Elsa Whitin married 1909 Sydney R. Mason.

Their child:

Priscilla, born 1913

3. Katherine Leland Whitin married 1911 Elijah Kent Swift.

Their children:

Elizabeth Robinson	Born 1913
Katherine Whitin	" 1915
Anne Whitin	" 1918
Elijah Kent	" 1924

4. Lois Haven Whitin married 1921 Major William Carey Crane.

Their children:

Lois Haven	Born 1924
William Carey, Jr.	" 1927

- b. Jeannie Leland Lasell Married 1890 Dr. Ogden Backus. Died 1891. No children.



c. Chester Whitin Lasell married 1886 Jessie Murray Keeler.

Their children:

Hildegarde	Born 1888
Marion	“ 1890

Hildegarde Lasell married 1915 James Sibley Watson, Jr.

Their children:

Michael	Born 1918
Jeanne Iseult	“ 1921

Marion Lasell married 1912 Minturn de S. Verdi. Died 1922.

Their children:

Nancy Clare	Born 1913
Hildegarde	“ 1915
Patricia	“ 1917

d. Josiah Manning Lasell married 1888 Mary Frances Krum.

Their children:

Josiah 2nd	Born 1891
Elizabeth	“ Jan. 8, 1896
John Whitin	“ Nov. 30, 1897
Margaret Harding	“ 1900
Philip Bradford	“ 1905
Nancy Manning	“ 1907
Chester Harding	“ 1908

Josiah (2nd) married 1913 Nora Egerton Elliott.

John Whitin Lasell married 1921 Frances Summer.

Their children:

Elizabeth	}	Born 1922
Katherine		
Sonia		“ 1924
John Whitin, Jr.,		Born Nov. 6, 1928

Margaret Harding Lasell married 1920 Earl Smith.

Their children:

Nancy Earle	Born 1921
Earle, Jr.	" 1923
Josiah Lasell	" 1925

B. John Maltbie Whitin married Achsah, widow of Major Haggerty of Lowell, adopting her two children. The boy died young. Grace Maria married 1899 Dr. Thomas Savage. Her daughter, Pauline, married 1918 Dr. John Francis Ryan.



JOHN C. WHITIN MANSION AND GROUNDS





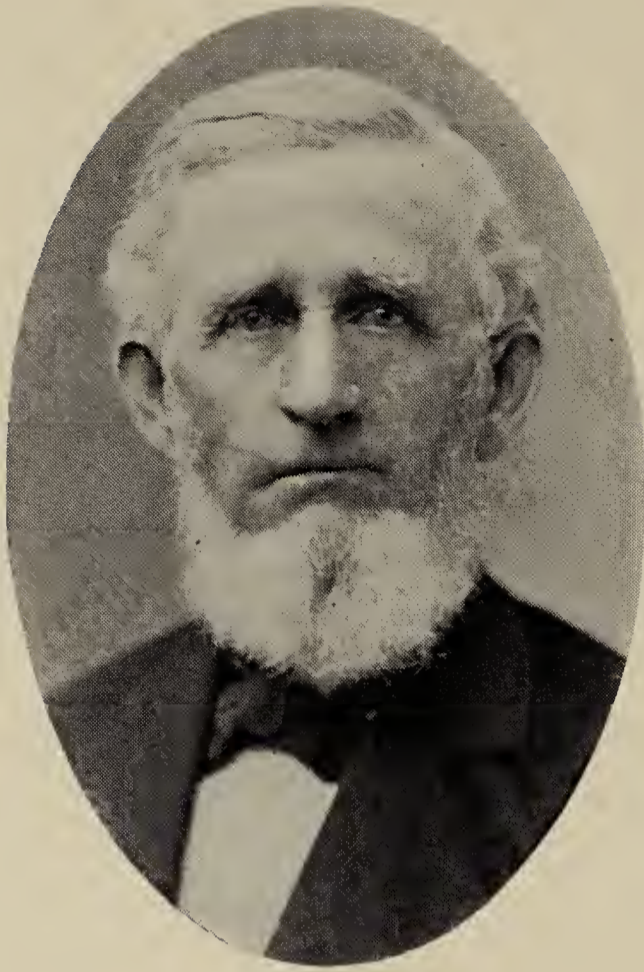




CHARLES PINCKNEY WHITIN

*“That best portion of a good man’s life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered acts  
Of kindness and of love.”*

WORDSWORTH.



Charles P. Whitin



Sarah Halliday Whitin



## CHARLES PINCKNEY WHITIN

CHARLES Pinckney, son of Paul and Betsey (Fletcher) Whitin was born in 1809. He attended the public schools, a few terms at the Leicester Academy, and, like his brothers, early worked all his spare time in the cotton mill. At the age of sixteen he taught in the picturesque old schoolhouse near Plummer's Corner. Though he taught acceptably, his natural bent could not keep him in a schoolroom.

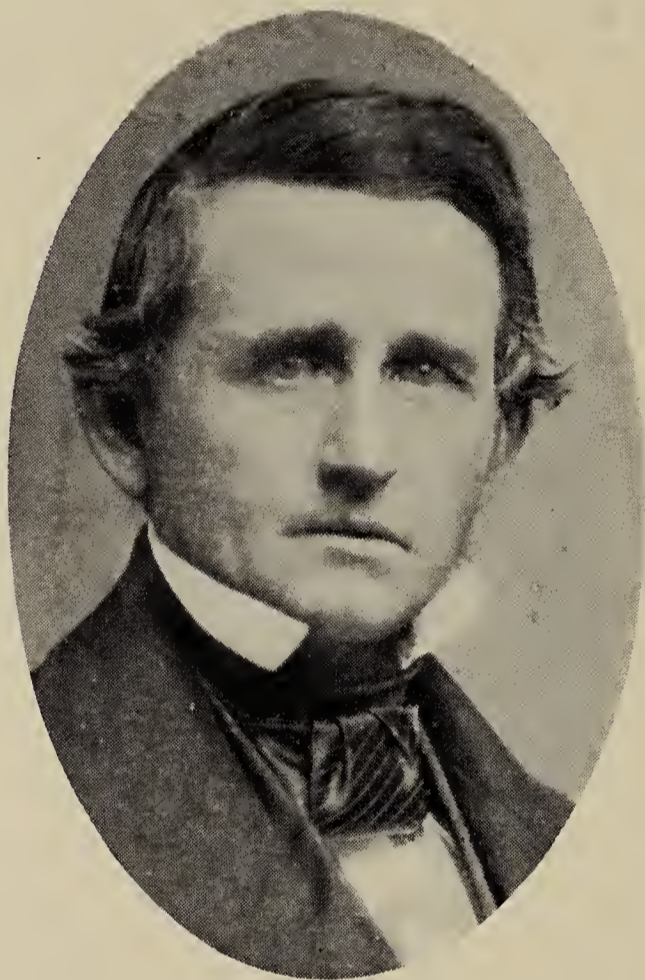
Manufacturing beckoned. He remained with the home firm until at the age of twenty-one he took charge of a mill at Willimantic, Conn. During his father's last illness, he returned home, and was thereafter identified with the growth of the business and the prosperity of Whitinsville. He was admitted to the partnership of the firm, P. Whitin & Sons; taking charge of the cotton manufacturing end of the business. He became an expert in this, and was recognized as an authority throughout the trade. When the firm was dissolved and the property divided, Charles P. took the cotton mills at Whitinsville and East Douglas. His business part was to look after the mills and outside buildings, especially water power, in which he became one of the highest authorities as a practical man. The summer of 1854 he was overseeing the building of the dam at the Douglas Reservoir, and away from home before light, returning often after dark.

Later, with his younger brother, James F., he built the mill at Linwood under the firm name of Whitin Bros. In 1881 he purchased the mill at Saundersville, and was actively interested in his business until his death in 1887.

As a child he was very religious and united with the Northbridge Center Church on his eleventh birthday. When the Whitinsville Church was built, he was at once identified with it and was an active member all his life. He

contributed generously to its support and to all charitable causes.

During his active years, he seemed to feel much responsibility for the morale of the town—was quick to discern anything going wrong, and quick to appear on the scene. He was always on the move and must have walked many



Charles P. Whitin  
From Daguerreotype

miles a day. His presence was dreaded by the wrongdoer, for he knew his continuance in the firm's employ was precarious. Mr. Gibbs, in his unpublished *Reminiscences*, comparing the brothers, says:

“Charles P. had just as much energy as his brother John, but was more methodical. He figured things down fine while John would jump at conclusions, generally pretty nearly right, especially if it concerned his own branch of the business.

Charles P. had a vein of humor in his composition, unlike the rest—and his jokes, though kindly, usually hit the point.”

Because of his kindly sympathetic nature, young people loved him. The sweetness of his nature shows in the Daguerreotype taken in his middle life. He was very fond of children and rarely passed a child without speaking and patting him on the head. Like his brothers, he was a Republican and held many public offices.

In 1857, he moved into the “twin” mansion he had built next his brother Paul.<sup>2</sup> His marriage to Sarah Jane Halliday took place in 1834. She was a singularly upright person in every sense of the word. Though she lived to be eighty-one years old, I doubt if any one ever saw her lean for an instant against the back of a chair. She disdained cushions and such needless luxuries!! Though genial at heart, she was a stern disciplinarian, dominating her bachelor sons to the end, although they were already past middle life when she was taken from them in 1891.

Children of Charles P. and Sarah (Halliday) Whitin:

1. Helen L. Born 1836. Died 1885. In 1863 she married George L. Gibbs who died in 1891.
2. Edward. Born 1838. Died 1913. Unmarried.
3. William Halliday. Born 1841. Died 1893. Unmarried.
4. Arthur Fletcher Whitin. Born 1846. Died 1928. Married Catherine Clark. Born 1877. Died 1918.
5. Louis Frederick Whitin. Born 1844. Died 1904. Married Lucy Morgan. Born 1872. Died 1923.

Their children:

Louise Whitin. Born 1873.

Charles Pinckney Whitin. Born 1876. Died 1894.

Gladys Morgan Whitin. Born 1881. Married  
1900 Thomas Entwisle Peters. Married 1913  
Francis Bryce.

Her children:

Jocelyn Entwisle Peters	Born March 14, 1902
Ralph Whitin Peters	“ Aug. 30, 1903
Rupert Peter Peters	“ April 14, 1905
Gladys Daphne Peters	“ June 25, 1907

Jocelyn married 1925 Guy Robinson.

Their child:

Lewis Anthony Robinson. Born July 30, 1926.



PICTURESQUE PORTION OF CHARLES P. WHITIN ESTATE

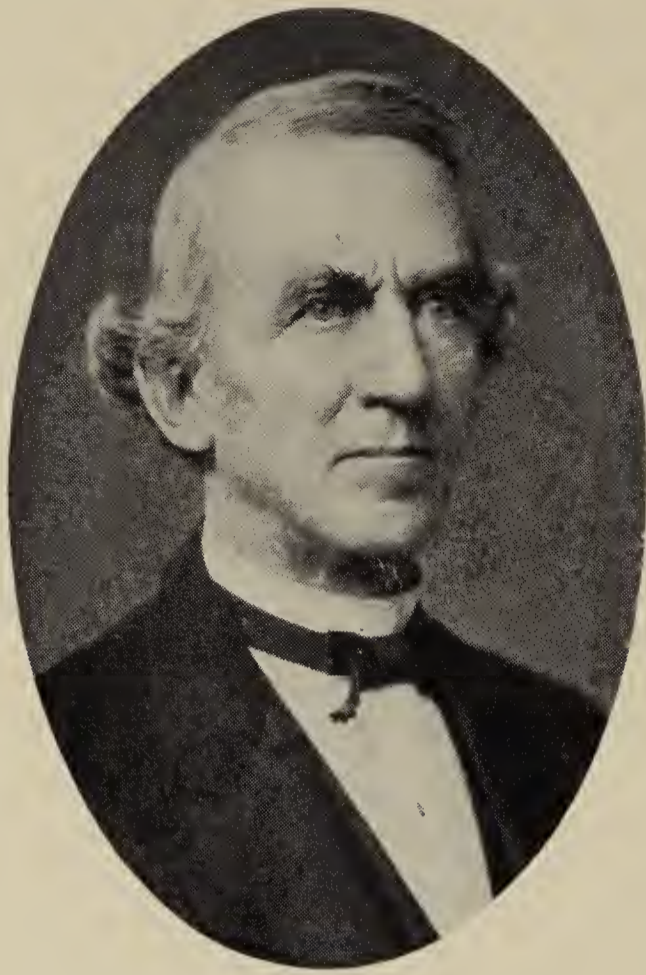




JAMES FLETCHER WHITIN

*“The web of life is of a mingled yarn—good and ill together.”*

SHAKESPEARE.



James Fletcher Whitin



Patience Saunders Whitin



## JAMES FLETCHER WHITIN

JAMES Fletcher Whitin, youngest son of Paul<sup>1</sup> and Betsey (Fletcher) was born in Whitinsville in 1814. There was a difference of fourteen years between him and his eldest brother, Paul<sup>2</sup>, who was married and settled in business while James was a mere lad. The education of James was a little more varied than his brothers, as he added to the public school, Uxbridge and Leicester Academies, Academies at Monson and Amherst. Never-the-less, he was still in his "teens" when he went into the counting-room of P. Whitin & Sons, and was soon placed in charge of the department. He became a member of the firm in 1847, but retained his same position in the office. When the division of the business came, the cotton mill at North Uxbridge became his share, and in 1866 he joined with his brother Charles P. in building the Linwood Cotton Mill. In 1842 he married Patience Howard Saunders, of Grafton. They lived in the upper part of the old Paul<sup>1</sup> Whitin Homestead (where Memorial Hall now stands), and it was there their children were born. The more spacious mansion at Linwood was built in 1871, but remained unoccupied for two years. Mr. and Mrs. Whitin were on their way to Boston to select the carpets for their new home when a disastrous train wreck occurred near Hyde Park. In this accident, Mrs. Whitin was severely injured; receiving a deep gash across the forehead and losing the top of one ear. She was taken to the hospital and it was a long time before she recovered from her injuries and the nervous shock.

James F. was in some ways like his brother Paul. He had the same fondness for nature, and the squirrels and birds abounding in the neighborhood knew him for a friend. He also had the same partiality for tall silk hats, and was seldom seen without that adornment. On a certain table in the

hall, stood a row of his favorite headgear, and he suited the vintage to the occasion. Even when advancing years had made him quite feeble, he insisted on driving alone in his "top buggy." It was a simple matter to drive under the shed and "hitch" the horse, but a more difficult matter to manage the animal eager for home after the long wait. Someone was obliged to "back out" for him, and hold the horse by the head while he courageously jumped in "on the fly!"

He had one peculiar taste that was so trying to his wife that he could only indulge it in the stable. It was there he kept a large jar of tobacco and a supply of his favorite clay pipes. These he smoked with such rapidity and vigor that one seldom lasted two days. It is said that on one occasion a new gardener, observing clouds of smoke issuing from the stable window, rushed for a pail of water—which he threw into the window without waiting to investigate the cause. The fire was quenched!!

Dignity and kindness were ideally combined in James F. He remained a staunch Congregationalist, always attending Church in Whitinsville; while his wife (who was a devout Episcopalian) was a member of the little Church in Saundersville, which owed much to her faithful interest. In this Church, one may see the bronze tablet to her memory, which her son Albert caused to be placed there. The youngest son, who was never affiliated with the manufacturing interests of the town, has lived many years abroad. Nevertheless, he has caused the lovely grounds around "Linwood Lodge" to be constantly cared for—the shrubs and trees pruned, and the whole place to be kept up; giving the impression to the passerby that his parents still live there.

It was Patience who always asked the blessing at the table, in brief but reverent manner. On account of her delicate health, the many years in the new home was passed very quietly. James F. died in 1902; his wife surviving him only two years. Two children, Mary Alice and Walter died in infancy.



LINWOOD GROVE. JAMES F. WHITIN ESTATE

Children of James F. and Patience (Saunders) Whitin:

- |     |               |            |           |
|-----|---------------|------------|-----------|
| (1) | George Milnor | Born 1849. | Died 1883 |
| (2) | Joseph Dudley | " 1856.    | " 1874.   |
| (3) | Albert H.     | " 1853.    | Unmarried |

George M. Whitin married 1871 Julia Wesson

Their children:

- |     |                  |             |
|-----|------------------|-------------|
| (1) | Frederick Birney | Born 1871   |
| (2) | Mary Alice       | " Jan. 1875 |
| (3) | Betsey           | " Dec. 1876 |
| (4) | James Earle      | " 1879      |

- (1) Frederick B. Whitin married first 1894, Eugenie Burbank.

Their child:

- |     |      |           |
|-----|------|-----------|
| (a) | Sara | Born 1900 |
|-----|------|-----------|

Frederick B. Whitin married 1911 Margaret Houghton.

Their children:

- |     |               |           |
|-----|---------------|-----------|
| (b) | Fred Houghton | Born 1911 |
| (c) | Margaret      | " 1913    |
| (d) | George Weld   | " 1914    |

- (2) Mary Alice Whitin married 1899 Charles H. Larkin.

Their children:

- |     |                 |           |
|-----|-----------------|-----------|
| (a) | Hubbard         | Born 1901 |
| (b) | Charles H., Jr. | " 1902    |

Charles H. Larkin Jr., married 1927 Aline Donan.

- (3) Betsey Whitin married 1900 Matthew Percival Whittall.

Their children:

- |     |                    |           |
|-----|--------------------|-----------|
| (a) | Matthew Whitin     | Born 1901 |
| (b) | James Paget        | " 1903    |
| (c) | Betsey Whitin      | " 1905    |
| (d) | Matthew John, 2nd. | " 1917    |

(a) Matthew Whitin Whittall married 1928 Bernice Emily Plante.

(b) Betsey Whitin Whittall married 1927 Richard Heyward.

Their child:

Deborah Heyward

Born 1928

(4) James Earle Whitin married 1905 EdgeworthWhittall.









NATHANIEL DRAPER WHITIN

*“It is indeed a desirable thing to be well descended but the glory belongs to our ancestors.”*

PLUTARCH.



## NATHANIEL DRAPER WHITIN

NATHANIEL Draper, son of Paul<sup>1</sup> and Betsey (Fletcher) was born in 1804. Unlike his brothers, he was entirely lacking in business ability, though in general intelligence, cultivation, and charm he was the equal of any of them. After having good educational advantages (for the times), he entered the drug business in New York. It is uncertain whether he ever received a medical degree, but he was always known as Dr. Whitin. While in New York, he invented a machine for spreading plasters and one for turning out pills, both of which made fortunes for other people; but, through his negligence about his patents, made none for him! He even had a little shop, beyond where the Spinning Ring Co. now stands, for spreading his plasters, but was so unbusinesslike in his methods that it did not amount to much. Nor did a "baker" which he patented to bake before an open fire!

Some time in the 1840's he returned to Whitinsville and built a little house on the corner of Cross St. and Railroad Ave.; making a pretense of farming. Here again his practice of procrastination made farming, as other things, a failure. Dr. Whitin, however, was universally popular. He was generous to a fault—thoroughly unselfish and very public spirited. He was instrumental in getting Cross St. laid out; not only giving the land to the town, but taking the building of the road for less than it cost him. That was characteristic of him!

In 1832, he married Sarah Nichols, who was also very popular. Mr. Gibbs, from whose Reminiscences I have gained much information, tells of an investment the doctor had made in Illinois lands. His brother, "Squire Paul," liked to chaff him about it when the tax bills would come in every year. But, when a few years later a man

came on and paid him in the vicinity of \$20,000 for his investment, all chaffing ceased! This seems to have been about the only successful business venture the doctor ever made. In 1856 he was sent to the Legislature. He died in 1869; his wife following a few years later.

Their children were:

Mary Gertrude, born 1840.

Married William Forbush. Died 1912.

Frances Elizabeth, born 1834.

Married Leander Forbush Smith. Died 1923.

Their descendants are difficult to trace.





MARGARET WHITIN ABBOTT

*“A good woman is a wondrous creature, cleaving to the right and to the good under all changes . . . lovely all her life long in comeliness of heart.”*

TENNYSON.





## MARGARET WHITIN ABBOTT

MARGARET, the youngest child of Paul and Betsey (Fletcher) Whitin was born in Whitinsville in 1817. She was undoubtedly the pet in that large family of children; her oldest brother Paul<sup>2</sup> being seventeen years her senior.



OLD SCHOOLHOUSE AT "PLUMMER'S"

It is one of the high spots in the history of the town that Henry Ward Beecher, the famous Brooklyn preacher, began his career in Whitinsville. He taught there for a year, and it is said his first sermon was preached in the old stone schoolhouse at Plummer's Corner—the same picturesque building in which Charles P. Whitin taught for a brief period. The fact that Margaret began her education under the tuition of Henry Ward Beecher was always a matter of pride to her. Her later education, or any details of her

girlhood, have proved unattainable. We know that in 1845 she married Rev. Jacob J. Abbott, and that they were settled in Uxbridge from 1850 to 1862. In the Parsonage there, six children were born to them.

The sons all married, but their descendants are difficult for me to trace!

It was one of her peculiar characteristics to save every letter, telegram, or bill that came into the house; making the settling of her affairs an enormous task. This devolved on her daughter-in-law, Lila Whitin Abbott. If we had access to some of those papers today, they might shed much light on the family history. Her son, Paul (who remained a bachelor so many years) was most devoted to his mother. She lived the long years of her widowhood in Whitinsville, and died at the age of ninety-six years.

Children of Margaret (Whitin) and Jacob J. Abbott.

James W.	Born 1846.	Died 1919
Elizabeth	“ 1848.	“ 1849
Jacob Jackson	“	“
Paul W.	“ 1862.	“
William W.	“ 1856.	“ 1899
Helen	“ 1852.	“ 1892

Paul W. married Eliza Swift Whitin 1902.

James Abbott married Florence Wood.

Their children:

1. Ruth.
2. Charles Whitin.

Ruth married 1906 Edward H. Letchworth.

Their children:

Edward H. Letchworth, Jr.	Born 1909
George Cutter	“ 1911

(2) Charles Whitin Abbott married 1915 Elizabeth Byrd.

    Their children:

James Whitin	Born 1917
Charles Whitin	“ 1919
Helen Ruth	“ 1922

J. Jackson Abbott married Jenny ———.

    Their children:

Margaret married Dr. John W. Robinson.  
Farrington married Dana ———.  
Catherine married Thomas Chase.  
Dudley.  
Ashman.

Records incomplete.



















