

EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

EXPRESSIONS

Our Town

The hard work of friends and neighbors has finally borne fruit: our village is now its own town. We think this is a good thing. We will now have control over our own schools, our churches, our roadways. We can decide in our town meetings how we want to spend our money, without interference from Lancaster or Boston or any of the larger towns who have a history of reserving power to themselves.

Our town, Harvard—see how the word rolls off the tongue!—encompasses a richness of natural bounty not seen in many parts of the country. Its farms and orchards are successful, its townsfolk hardworking and God fearing, its children above average, and its beauty unsurpassed.

We are blessed with myriad waters: ponds, streams, brooks, and rills that sustain our lives and our spirits. If we could only but look to the future 200, nay, 300 years from now, we might see that this liquid gold has retained its importance, and those Harvardians enrich their lives with its presence.

God bless this town and all its inhabitants.



The Beginning

We see that plans are being drawn up for a new edifice in town, a meeting house for all and sundry to use. We agree that such a place is needed, now that we will be more independent from our neighbors—Lancaster to the west, Groton to the north, Concord to the east, and Stow to the south. But we warn our residents that a proliferation of buildings could follow in the excitement of our new liberty, and we caution our deep-thinking and well-meaning brethren to rein in their spirits and give thought to the future. We are of the opinion that a committee should be formed to consider thoughtfully how best to use our town center. The sooner, the better.

Letters to the Editor

If It Ain't Broke . . .

My sister's boy Samuel said he heard that certain people are trying to break us out from Lancaster to start our own town. What are they thinking? Lancaster's been around a good long time and has been the center of business, our churches, our schools, and our protection. Think of the children!

We hope our friends and neighbors think better of this preposterous idea and get their senses back.

Hester Davis
Bare Hill

At Long Last

It took the politicians long enough, but we finally got our own town. And high time. For all the money we pay to Lancaster for churches and schools and that la-de-da preacher from Harvard College, we can build our own church and educate our children the way we want to. There will never be much growth in this area—all the good land's been taken—but we can do just fine with what we have.

Ephraim Houghton
Still River

What's in a Name?

I heard tell at church last Sunday that some of our high-handed landowners around here are not only trying to start a town, but the name "Harvard" keeps coming up as a possible name. Let the college keep its name to itself. It's bad enough that one place turns out those "better-than-thou" teachers and ministers and politicians, let's not add two to the world. If we do end up with a town, we've got plenty of down-to-earth names to use, like Whippleville for Nathan and his family or Nashua for the river or Intervale for the fields that cover the low land or Nonacoicus for the brook. Anything but Harvard.

Thomas Whipple
Near Hell Pond

Speed Kills

How long are we going to let those youngsters ride their horses and drive the family wagon at top speed down our roads? We've got cows crossing to water and wives carrying baskets to sick neighbors and children walking to school or crossing the road to help out in the other field. Some parents ought to apply a little more rod to their youngsters and stop spoiling them.

Elijah Wilds
Lancaster

My Two Pence



'Tis Well and Truly Done

by Hezekiah Willard

The good deed is finally done; Harvard is its own town.

Two years have passed since I and my brother villagers at Bare Hill presented a warrant at town meeting to set off part of the towns of Lancaster, Stow, and Groton to create a new Township. Our petition included inhabitants of Stow and Groton who covenanted with the petitioners, namely John Sawyer, John Nichols, John Priest Jr., Stephen Houghton, and 22 others with names of families long part of this area: Atherton, Whitney, Walker, more Willards, more Houghtons.

Although Groton approved the measure at its town meeting in 1730, Lancaster and Stow did not, to our great disappointment. We all know that traveling distances to attend church and to see that our children are educated is fraught with hardship and danger.

We took our proposal to the General Court in July of that year and the legislature required that Lancaster voters show cause as to why our request should not be granted.

And still the town voted that their representative "do oppose said petition on behalf of the town."

Then Groton went back on its word in an August town meeting and said that no part of Groton on the east or west side of the river can be set off or annexed, "any former vote to the contrary not with standing."

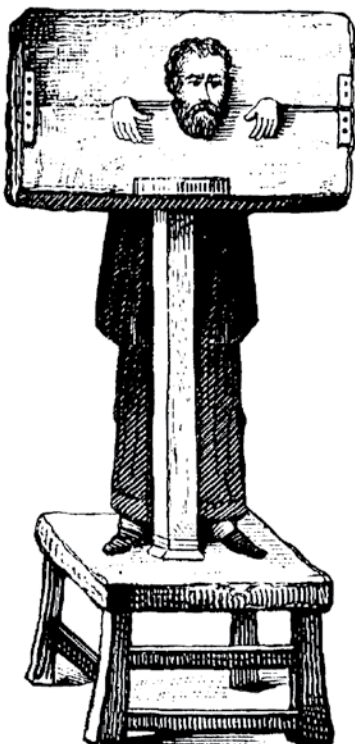
In September, Stow presented a remonstrance to its voters that said if Stow lost one-seventh of its land—which contains more improveable land than in Stow itself—the town would not be able to support its minister or bear other town charges.

And by gad, the legislature dismissed our petition.

An amended petition was heard in November, Lancaster citizens voted in December and March of '31, but the people in Lancaster who would be part of the new township objected.

We met, on behalf of residents at Bare Hill and surrounds, for one year in closed and secret meetings—of which no record was kept—with legislators and lobbyists, until we had enough support to pass the act of incorporation June 29 in this year of 1732 with the honored name of Harvard.

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