

A Look Back at Some Early Andover Farms

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I got the idea for this paper while thinking about how I might participate in the celebration of the 175th anniversary of the founding of Andover. I grew up on the Talbot sheep farm at 84 Long Hill Road, and because of that wonderful experience, have always been attracted to small country farms. I also have a keen interest in local history, so looking into what Andover farms were like near the time of its founding came naturally to me.

The federal Agricultural Census of 1870 has data for 78 farms in Andover. For each farm, the census gives the number of different livestock and the harvest of various crops. The paper has descriptions for 9 of these 78 farms. For each farm I report the Agricultural Census of 1870 and historical information on some of the people and events related to that farm. For some farms I also report the estate inventory that lists the household furniture and farm implements when the owner died. Farm Number 9, the George Blackman Farm, is the farm where I grew up and the description has some of my memories about that farm.

The name given to each farm is the name of the person owning the farm in 1870. On the last page is an 1869 map of Andover showing each house in town and the name of its owner. I have located by number each farm's location on the map. I copied the map from Scott Yeoman's fabulous book *A Historic Look at Andover, Connecticut* published in 2010. Both the date of the house and the name of the original owner for each of the 9 farms are from Philip D. Brass's 1979 book *A Survey of Early Andover Homes*. A copy of this book is in the Andover Public Library. The street addresses, current owners, and house photographs are from the online database of the Andover Assessor's Office.

1. The Elliot P. Skinner Farm 187 Route 6.

The house on this farm was built by Daniel Burnap in 1805. The current owner is Serenity Post-Jones. This farm is now known as the Post farm on Route 6.



The Agricultural Census of 1870 for the Elliot Skinner farm.

Acres of improved land: 238

Acres of woodland: 12

Present cash value of farm: \$7000

Present cash value of farming implements and machinery: \$400

Total amount of wages paid during the year, including value of board: \$400

Livestock on farm 1 June 1870

2 horses

5 milch cows

4 working oxen

13 other cattle

20 sheep

4 swine

Value of all livestock: \$1655

Farm produce during the year ending 1 June 1870

100 bushels of Indian corn

45 bushels of oats

60 pounds of wool

200 bushels of Irish potatoes

75 pounds of butter

150 pounds of cheese

50 tons of hay

Value of animals slaughtered or sold for slaughter: \$262

Estimated value of all farm produce: \$1150

Agricultural Census of 1880 (only items not part of 1870 form)

Poultry on hand 1 June 1880: 30

Dozens of eggs produced in 1879: 250

Bearing apple trees on hand 1 June 1880: 25

Cords of wood cut in 1879: 10

Value of wood cut in 1879: \$75

Elliot Palmer Skinner was born 2 Nov. 1831 in Vernon, Conn. On 9 Oct. 1862 he married Mary D. Burnap. Mary Burnap was born 21 Oct. 1827 in Coventry (now Andover) and she died 27 May 1912 in Andover. Elliot Skinner died 11 Mar. 1917 in Andover. Mary and Elliot are both buried in the Andover Congregational Church Cemetery. They had no children.

In 1852 Elliot enrolled at Williston Seminary in Easthampton, MA. The school was founded in 1841 and was started as a preparatory academy for those seeking the clergy. About 1855 he transferred to Plainfield Academy in Plainfield, New Jersey. Having decided upon teaching as the most congenial way of earning the means for a professional career, he became the principal of the Franklin Public School in Rahway, New Jersey, a neighboring town to Plainfield. His health soon broke down and he had to leave the teaching profession after a few years.

After their marriage, Elliot and Mary lived in Mary's Andover home for the rest of their lives. This home was built by Mary's father, Daniel Burnap, in 1805. Mary was born in that house and spent her entire life living there.

Daniel Burnap was a well-known New England clockmaker. In 1780 he settled in East Windsor, Conn. where he started his own clockmaking business. He specialized in tall clocks many of which featured moon phases and calendar attachments. His clocks were known for their fine craftsmanship and their incredible timekeeping accuracy. Around 1800 he moved his shop to Coventry (now Andover) and in 1805 built the house where his daughter Mary and Elliot would live. In his shop he made clocks, brass hardware, surveyors' instruments, and silver spoons and buckles. The most notable of his many apprentices was Eli Terry who, by 1830, had become the world's largest manufacturer of machine-made clocks.

Elliot was very involved in Republican politics. He was elected to represent Andover in the state legislature in 1880 and again in 1883. He introduced the bill entitled "An Act Concerning the Placing of Telegraph and Telephone Fixtures in Highways." He was a delegate to the Conn. Constitutional Convention Of 1892 and that same year a delegate to the Republican State Convention in Hartford. He was greatly interested in the Andover Congregational Church and was instrumental in modernizing the old church.

In a codicil to his will, Elliot directed that \$5,000 be taken from his estate for the erection and equipping of a suitable building for the use of a library, said building to be known as the Burnap-Skinner Memorial Building. The library now stands directly across Long Hill Road from the church. In order to make room for the new library, the former Congregational Church parsonage had to be moved from where the library now stands to its current location next to Dubois Automotive on Route 6.

2. The John S. Topliff Farm 65 Long Hill Road.

The house on this farm was built about 1734 by Benjamin Blackman. The current owner is Richard Laurinitis.



The Agricultural Census for the John S. Topliff Farm.

Acres of improved land: 165

Acres of woodland: 75

Present Cash value of farm: \$4000

Present cash value of farming implements and machinery: \$300

Total amount of wages paid during the year, including value of board: \$200

Livestock on farm 1 June 1870

1 horse

4 milch cows

4 working oxen

15 other cattle

3 swine

Value of all livestock: \$1335

Farm produce during the year ending 1 June 1870

100 bushels of rye

50 bushels of Indian corn

300 bushels of Irish potatoes
 420 pounds of butter
 40 tons of hay
 70 bushels of grass seed
 Forest products: \$12
 Value of animals slaughtered or sold for slaughter: \$50
 Estimated value of all farm produce: \$1150

John Topliff was born 9 July 1824 in Coventry. On 2 June 1851 he married Sophia F. Standish. She was born 17 Mar. 1825 in Preston, Conn. and died in 1888 in Andover. John Topliff died 27 Apr. 1900 in Andover. Both are buried in the Andover Church Cemetery. They had one child, Miles Standish (1852-1900).

The inventory of his estate had the following items.

Farm	\$1200.00
Wood Lot in Wildcat 50 acres	100.00
Near Wheeling Road 3 acres	100.00
Brindle cow and calf	25.00
Red cow	18.00
Jersey cow	15.00
Cooley creamer	12.00
Winnowing mill	5.00
Grindstone	1.00
Cultivator	2.00
Plow	.50
Harrow	.50
Corn sheller	2.00
Fruit drier	0.00
Cash	66.55
2 acres land in Manchester	100.00
An undivided half interest in	
6 acres of land in Manchester	<u>150.00</u>
	\$1797.55

Expenses Paid by Estate

C.B. Stearns	driving hearse	\$2.00
Robert Ryan	digging grave	5.00
O.A. Sessions	undertaker	40.00
Mary W. Topliff	care of place	41.25
W.L.Higgins	medical services	3.00
Taxes due Town of Andover		76.38

The Wildcat is a large forest of about 300 acres that starts across the road from the Andover dump on Shoddy Mill Road and goes all the way over to Boston Hill Road.

My family owned an eight-acre lot in the Wildcat and once I asked my father how it got that name. He replied that once there was a hermit that lived deep in the woods there, and kids would come around pestering him. He spread rumors around town that there were wildcats in those woods to keep the kids away.

In 1869, John S. Topliff, Democrat, was elected to be Andover's representative in the Connecticut State Legislature. He won by 1 vote over John F. Bingham.

The Stafford Springs Press on 4 Dec. 1890 reported in their Andover news "John Topliff and his son Miles, are getting out timber preparatory to building a new barn upon their premises." This barn, that is now behind the house, was moved to its current location in 1934 when Long Hill Road was straightened. Before that the barn was in front of the house where the road is now. At the bottom of the hill near the athletic fields, the bridge over the Hop River has 1934 inscribed in its cement as it also was built there when the road was straightened. When I was young the old pre-1934 bridge across the river was still there, about 200 feet upstream from the current bridge. One had to be careful walking across it as there were holes in the roadbed.

3. The Henry F. Standish Farm 184 Boston Hill Road.

The house on this farm was built about 1779 by Joseph White. The current owners are Terrie L. and Mark C. Skoog.



The Agricultural Census of 1870 for the Henry Standish Farm.

Acres of Improved land: 200

Acres of woodland: 40

Present cash value of farm: \$6000

Present cash value of farming implements and machinery: \$100

Total amount of wages paid during the year, including value of board: \$200

Livestock on farm 1 June 1870

3 horses

7 milch cows

4 working oxen

14 other cattle

2 sheep

2 swine

Value of all livestock: \$1450

Farm produce during the year ending 1 June 1870

150 bushels of Indian corn

125 bushels of oats

20 bushels of buckwheat

8 pounds of wool

200 bushels of Irish potatoes

600 pounds of butter

60 tons of hay

Value of animals slaughtered or sold for slaughter: \$400

Estimated value of all farm produce: \$1700

Agricultural Census of 1880 (only items not part of 1870 form)

Poultry on hand 1 June 1880: 35

Dozens of eggs produced in 1879: 600

Bearing apple trees on hand 1 June 1880: 100

Cords of wood cut in 1879: 20

Value of wood cut in 1879: \$61

Henry Friend Standish was born 10 July 1843 in Canton, Conn. On 21 Oct. 1865 he married Ellen Rosell Strickland in Rhode Island. Ellen Strickland was born 22 Dec. 1845 in Andover, and she died 5 Aug. 1921 in Andover. John Topliff died 5 May 1901 in Andover. Both are buried in the Andover Congregational Church Cemetery.

They had an only child Edwin Andrew Standish (1866-1931).

On 9 Sept. 1861 Henry Standish enlisted for the 10th Conn. Infantry Regiment, which was mustered in at Camp Buckingham, Hartford, on Sept. 30th. This regiment was assigned to the first brigade of General Ambrose Burnside's division. An early battle for Henry Standish's regiment was 8 Feb. 1862 when his regiment suffered 56 killed or wounded at the battle of Roanoke Island, North Carolina. His regiment fought in a great number of battles during the war. He was mustered out 9 Sept. 1864 when his term of service had been completed.

In the election of 1900, Henry Standish, a Republican, was elected to be Andover's representative in the state legislature where he served on the committee on constitutional amendments. He died only a few months after taking office.

Below are some of the items in Henry Standish's estate.

Buggy	\$10.00
Horse Hoe	2.00
2 Horse Wagons	15.00
Cow Nancy and Calf	35.00
Cow Beauty	25.00
Cow Black	25.00

Cow Black and calf	\$45.00
Cow brown	40.00
Horse	150.00
Sleigh	5.00
Harness	10.00
Harness No.2	2.00
Wheelbarrow	3.00
Express Harness	2.00
Contents of shop	10.00
Business wagon	3.00
Cultivator	2.00
Plow	2.00
2 shares Andover Creamery Stock	50.00
Cash at Society for Savings	158.18

Henry and Ellen Standish's son Edwin Standish, about 1920, acquired the Lucius D. Post general store located at 12 Center Street. Lucius D. Post ran the store there at least since 1869.

Edwin Standish died 2 Nov. 1931 and like his father Henry, died shortly after being elected to represent Andover in the state legislature. After Edwin Standish's death, his son Leslie Standish ran the store for some years, but had to go out of business during the great depression of the 1930's. People say he went out of business because he was so generous giving people credit. In the 1940 census, Leslie is working at the thread mill in Willimantic. On page 20 of Scott Yeoman's book *A Historic Look at Andover, Connecticut* there is a photograph of Leslie Standish standing in front of his store. The Andover Public Library has a copy of this book. During the 1940's and 1950's this store was known as Avery's store. Later, Steward Hoisington took over the store. The store closed in 1975 when the Andover Plaza on Route 6 opened. This general store had existed in the same place for at least 106 years (1869-1975).

4. The Willard Loomis Farm 180 Long Hill Road.

The house on this farm was built about 1839 by Willard Loomis.

The current owners are Frank D. and Christina H. Tamburro.



The Agricultural Census of 1870 for the Willard Loomis Farm.

Acres of improved land: 126

Acres of Woodland: 30

Present cash value of farm: \$3000

Present cash value of farming implements and machinery: \$300

Total amount of wages paid during the year, including value of board: \$ 0

Livestock on farm 1 June 1870

1 horse

3 milch cows

4 working oxen

8 other cattle

2 swine

Value of all livestock: 9940

Farm produce during the year ending 1 June 1870

75 bushels of Indian corn

75 bushels of oats
 175 bushels of Irish potatoes
 200 pounds of butter
 40 pounds of cheese
 30 tons of hay
 Forest products: \$10
 Value of animals slaughtered or sold for slaughter: \$130
 Estimated value of all farm produce: \$740

Agricultural Census of 1880 (Only those items not on 1870 form)

Poultry on Hand 1 June 1880: 17
 Dozens of eggs produced in 1879: 100
 Bearing apple trees on hand 1 June 1880: 60
 Pounds of honey produced in 1879: 100
 Cords of wood cut in 1879: 10
 Value of wood cut in 1879: \$5

Willard Badger Loomis was born 23 Oct. 1809 in Andover. He first married 5 Oct. 1834 Susan Adeline Manley in Andover. She was born 3 Nov. 1812 in Columbia and died 30 Jan. 1859 in Andover. She and Willard are both buried in the Andover Church cemetery. Willard's second wife was Elizabeth "Betsey" A. Manley Hunt, his first wife's younger sister. They were married 10 Apr. 1867. "Betsey" Manley's first husband was Anson Hunt who died in 1851. Willard Loomis died 17 Nov. 1882 in Andover. "Betsey" Loomis died 20 Jul. 1909 and is buried in the Old Willimantic Cemetery with her first husband.

Willard and Susan Loomis had the following children: Jared M. (1835-1838), Jared M. (1839-1896), William N. (1838-1901), Jane A. (1842-1883), George W. (1844-1908), Minerva A. (1846-1857), Monroe S. (1848-1913), Arthur P. (1850-1900), Frank M. (1853-1918), Dwight E. (1855-1941).

On 20 Aug. 1862 Willard Loomis's son William was mustered into Company K of the 14th Conn. Infantry Regiment. He was mustered out 31 May 1865. This regiment lost 17 officers and 188 enlisted men killed or mortally wounded and 1 officer and 191 enlisted men by disease during the Civil War. The 14th sustained the largest percentage loss of any Connecticut regiment during the war.

The following inventory gives the dollar amounts for various household and farm items. The first few items are: best overcoat \$3.00, 2nd best overcoat \$1.00, frockcoat \$2.00, etc.

Inventory of the Willard Loomis Estate.

best overcoat 3. 2nd best overcoat 1. frockcoat 2. sackcoat 2. satin vest 1.50 vest .75
 best pants 3. 2nd best 1.25 linen pants 1. dressing gown 2. comforter .50 felt hat .50
 pr. undershorts 1. 2 pr. woolen stockings .30 calf boots 1.50 pr. shoes .25 slippers .25
 8 pr. sheets 4. 7 pr. pillow cases 1. 2 bed spreads 1. 4 comfortables 4. 2 feather beds 10.

4 bedsteads & cords 2. 6 pillows 1. carpet 3. rag carpet 1.50 3 rockers 1.
 6 cane bottomed chairs 3. 6 chains 1. Invalid chair 1.50 sofa 10. best table 2. 2nd best 1.
 2 stands 1. washstand .75 bowl & pitcher 1. 3 lamps 1. bureau 2. 2 mirrors .50
 parlor stove & pipe 2.50 kitchen stove and furniture 3. crockery & glass ware 2. tin ware 2.50
 4 sets of knives and forks 4. 6 plated tablespoons .75 8 plated dessert spoons .75
 10 plated dessert spoons .75 10 plated tea spoons .75 sewing machine 20. 3 baskets 30.
 8 wool skins 2. corn sheller 4. 5 draft chains 2.50 2 binding chains .50 2 crowbars 1.50
 ox shovel .50 drag 1.50 grindstone 1. 4 cider barrels 2. Lot of books 5. clock 1. Hay cutter 4.
 2 dung forks 1. winnowing mill 4. ladder .75 ox yoke 1. 2 plows 2. harrow 4.50
 monkey wrench .50 wagon jack .50 buggy wagon 15. old wagon 2. Harness 3. horse 75.
 poultry 20. 2 heifer calves 20. yearling steer 12. 2 year old heifer 20. 4 cows 100. yoke of cattle
 145. cart 15. ox wagon 15. horse shed at Cong. Church 10. 3 sheep 9. money on hand \$55
 D.E. Loomis note of \$50 dated Mar 1st 1882 amt to date 55.37
 farm of 250 acres more or less with buildings thereon 2400.
 amt, of F.M. loomis note to date 166.01
 TOTAL \$3295.73

5. The John B. Baker Farm 253 Boston Hill Road.

The house on this farm was built about 1850 by John B. Baker.

The current owners are James Arthur and Kathleen C. Gorman.



The Agricultural Census of 1870 for the John B. Baker Farm.

Acres of Improved Land: 85

Acres of woodland: 15

Present cash value of farm: \$1500

Present cash value of farming implements and machinery: \$100

Total amount of wages paid during the year including value of board: \$0

Livestock on farm June 1, 1870

2 horses

5 milch cows

2 working oxen

2 other cattle

7 sheep

2 swine

Value of all livestock: \$970

Farm produce during the year ending 1 June 1870

40 bushels of Indian corn

25 bushels of oats

16 bushels of buckwheat

22 pounds of wool

50 bushels of Irish potatoes

42 pounds of cheese

18 tons of hay

Value of animals slaughtered or sold for slaughter: \$50

Estimated value of all farm produce: \$500

Agricultural Census of 1880 (only those items not on 1870 form)

Bearing apple trees on hand 1 June 1880: 60

Cords of wood cut in 1879: 10

Value of wood cut in 1879: \$40

John Brooks Baker was born 30 July 1816 in Uxbridge, Mass. On 26 June 1836 he married Rebecca E. Williams in Hebron (now Andover). She was born 22 Jan. 1818 in Andover and died 12 May 1890 in Andover. He died 15 Jan. 1887 in Andover. Both are buried in the Andover Congregational Church Cemetery. The estate papers, filed by his wife and the executrix of his estate, show the following expenses paid by his estate: Probate Fees \$10, Taxes \$15.81, Bills paid to 17 different creditors \$291.57, Casket \$50, Digging the grave \$4, Gravestone \$50, Clergyman \$3.

John and Rebecca Baker had the following children: Charles H. (1839-1920), Chloe Louise (1842-1929), Abion W. (1846-1864), John Adelbert (1857-1944).

Albion W. Baker enlisted 22 December 1863 into Company I of the 1st Connecticut Calvary Regiment and died 2 June 1864 from disease at the Marine Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

In 1877 their eldest child, Charles H. Baker, purchased a forty-one-acre lot directly east of his father's lot where he had grown up. In the Andover Land records, this lot is known as the Crocker Lot. On the Crocker lot, right next to Boston Hill Road and across the street from 224 Boston Hill Road is the grave of Captain Simon Smith. On 11 Feb. 1924 The Estate of Charles H. Baker donated a four-rod by four-rod (fifty feet by fifty feet) square of land that contained the grave of Captain Smith to the Andover Cemetery Association. The Andover Cemetery Association maintains this grave and the Townsend Cemetery.

During the French and Indian War campaigns of 1759 and 1760, Capt. Smith was captain of the 4th company of the 4th Conn. Regiment of Provincials. There were 96 men under him, mostly from the New London area. On 8 Sept. 1760 the English army, including Capt. Smith, won a major victory by capturing Montreal, from the French. A month after the capture of Montreal, Capt. Smith's regiment had completed their tour of duty and headed home. On his way home, Capt. Smith stopped at Buell's tavern which was in the present Andover on the east side of East

Street, just south of the intersection of East Street and Boston Hill Road. Buell's tavern was where the M. Lord house is shown on the 1869 map at the end of this paper. Before the creation of Andover in 1848, Buell's tavern was in Hebron. Benjamin Buell, the tavern landlord, had also served in the 4th Conn. regiment at various times.

The landlord Buell submitted an itemized bill to the executors of Capt. Smith's estate showing "5 lodgings", "hors keeping 5 nites", and "13 meels". Receipts from John Gardner of New London indicate he was sent "to tend Capt. Smith at Hebron with the smallpox and to cleanse the smallpox things." When Capt. Smith died in 1760, landlord Benjamin Buell owned the Crocker lot where Capt. Smith is buried. On 2 Apr. 1759 Benjamin Buell had purchased this lot from John Crocker. The lot was described as 40 acres with a dwelling house [Hebron Land Records Volume 4 Page 392]. When it was determined that Capt. Smith had the smallpox, he must have been taken to this house where he died and taken outside to be buried there. No tavern keeper could keep someone with smallpox in their tavern.

The long inscription on the headstone has deteriorated so badly as to be now illegible. Fortunately, someone copied it down years ago while it was still legible.

Revered, yet unattended –
 All alone, sweetly repose
 beneath this humble stone
 ye last remains. In memory
 of Capt. Simon Smith of New
 London who after a series of
 kind and useful
 labors, publick & domestic,
 particular hazards, & hardship
 of ye late campaign which he
 endured with uncommon fortitude
 on his return home was stricken with small pox, cheerfully
 resigned to death in the 43rd
 year of his age. November 28, 1760.
 Death loves a shining mark;
 A Signal blows and calls his
 Victim from ye fairest fold.

The footstone simply reads Capt. Simon Smith

The grave of Capt. Simon Smith is aligned on an east-west axis with the front of the headstone facing west and the footstone east of the headstone. The headstone marks the head of the deceased, and the footstone marks the feet of the deceased. The early settlers believed that Christ on his second coming would be coming from the east, and they wanted to rise up whole from their graves facing Him.

This belief comes from Matthew 24:27 “for as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” This is the orientation of graves in many old New England cemeteries including Andover’s three cemeteries. The gravestones in Townsend Cemetery face in a compass direction of 270 degrees which is due west. The gravestones in the Olde Burying Ground Cemetery in Andover Center face in a compass direction of 251 degrees which is west southwest. The gravestones in the Congregational Church Cemetery face in a compass direction of 310 degrees which is northwest.

6. The Chester D. Norton Farm 36 Boston Hill Road.

The house on this farm was built about 1761 by Benjamin Lamb.

The current owners are Katherine and Justin Marino.



The Agricultural Census of 1870 for the Chester Norton farm.

Acres of improved land: 20

Acres of woodland: 16

Present cash value of farm: \$1800

Present cash value of farming implements and machinery: \$25

Total amount of wages paid during the year, including value of board: \$0

Livestock on farm 1 June 1870

2 milch cows

Value of all livestock: \$140

Farm produce during the year ending 1 June 1870

8 bushels of rye

10 bushels of Indian corn

15 bushels of oats

13 bushels of buckwheat
 20 bushels of Irish potatoes
 75 pounds of butter
 20 pounds of hay
 Value of animals slaughtered or sold for slaughter: \$20
 Estimated value of all farm produce: \$300

Chester Davis Norton was born in 1817, died in 1891, and is buried in the Andover Church Cemetery. His first wife was Elizabeth A. Kingsbury. She was born in 1823, died in 1844, and is buried in the Andover Church Cemetery. Chester Norton married his second wife Emily Hutchins 24 May 1869 in Bolton. She was born in 1836 and she died 15 July 1915 in Manchester and is buried in the Andover Church Cemetery. There were no children from either marriage.

Chester Norton stipulated in his will that after the death or marriage of his wife, that \$500 be given to St. Peter's church in Hebron, then varying amounts to 10 different individuals, and the rest to be divided equally and given to:

1. The town of Andover for the care and support of the poor children in Andover
2. The town of Andover in support of its public schools
3. The Congregational Church for the care of its buildings
4. To the Porter Library Association for the care and increase of the books.

The Porter library was Andover's library before the current library and was housed in the conference house of the Congregational Church. There was \$12,000 to be distributed so each of the four beneficiaries received \$3,000. To fulfill the request to help the children in Andover, The Norton Children's Fund Commission was established in 1937. Now the Commission has five members that meet twice a year and give assistance with back-to-school items, and Holiday-time assistance. They also give a small annual scholarship to an Andover high school or home-schooled senior who will be continuing their education.

7. The Edgar J. Kingsbury Farm 92 Hutchinson Road.

The house on this farm was built about 1805 by Seba Loomis.

The current owner is Cheryl L. Price.



The Agricultural Census of 1870 for the Edgar Kingsbury Farm.

Acres of improved land: 61

Acres of woodland: 30

Present cash value of farm: \$4000

Present cash value of farm implements and machinery: \$200

Total amount of wages paid during the year, including value of board: \$0

Livestock on farm 1 June 1870

1 horse

3 milch cows

2 working oxen

6 other cattle

2 swine

Value of all livestock: \$835

Farm produce during the year ending 1 June 1870

10 bushels of spring wheat

10 bushels of rye
 50 bushels of Indian corn
 50 bushels of oats
 6 bushels of buckwheat
 510 bushels of Irish potatoes
 10 bushels of orchard products
 200 pounds of butter
 70 pounds of cheese
 20 tons of hay
 Value of animals slaughtered or sold for slaughter: \$90
 Estimated value of all farm products: 890

Edgar Joseph Kingsbury was born 3 Apr. 1831. On 25 Dec. 1867 he married Hannah Mariah Reynolds in Adams County, Illinois. She was born 3 Jun. 1832 and died 18 Dec. 1899. Edgar died 20 Nov. 1903 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Edgar and Hannah are both buried in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, Sioux Falls. Their children were Amelia J. (1868-1935), Horace Reynolds (1873-1935).

Edgar attended Williston Academy in Easthampton, Mass. At the age of seventeen he commenced teaching school and for the next eight years he worked on the farm and taught school during the winters. In 1854 he was admitted into the Bolton Congregational Church and was chosen to be a deacon there in 1872. In 1880 Edgar and his family moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. In Sioux Falls he lived next to his brother Walter Reynolds Kingsbury and his family. After a few years Edgar moved to a farm of 320 acres in Mapleton, just north of Sioux Falls. About 1897 he moved back to a house he had built in Sioux Falls.

8. The Gurley Phelps Farm. 131 Route 6.

The house on this farm was built in 1773 by Joel and Daniel White. The current owner is the Connecticut Meditation Center.



The Agricultural Census of 1870 for the Gurley Phelps Farm.

Acres of improved land: 255

Acres of woodland: 45

Present cash value of farm: \$8000

Present cash value of farm implements and machinery: \$300

Total amount of wages paid during the year, including value of board: \$500

Livestock on farm 1 June 1870

1 horse

9 milch cows

4 working oxen

15 other cattle

101 sheep

2 swine

Value of all livestock: \$2000

Farm produce during the year ending 1 June 1870

8 bushels of spring wheat

12 bushels of rye

120 bushels of Indian corn

75 bushels of oats

300 pounds of wool

200 bushels of Irish potatoes

600 pounds of butter

60 tons of hay

Value of animals slaughtered or sold for slaughter: \$437

Estimated value of all farm produce: \$1740

Agricultural Census of 1880 (only those items not on 1870 form)

Poultry on hand June 1, 1880: 30

Dozens of eggs produced in 1879: 150

Bearing apple trees on hand 1 June 1880: 50

Cords of wood cut in 1879: 10

Value of wood cut in 1879: \$75

Gurley Phelps was born 8 Aug. 1803 in Hebron. On 11 June 1845 he married Ann Eliza Sperry in Bolton, and he died 14 May 1889 in Andover. Ann Eliza Sperry was born in 1817 and she died 19 Nov. 1895. Gurley and Ann Phelps are buried in the Andover Congregational Church Cemetery. Their children were Anna W. (1846-1883), Henry G. (1849-1917), Eliza T. (1851-1905).

Gurley Phelps's home apparently was built as a tavern in 1773 with a sprung floor and sliding partitions. In 1772 Daniel White did not have a tavern license but did have one in 1773. White's tavern was sometimes called "the tavern at the sign of the black horse." The front of Gurley Phelps's house faces Hutchinson Road. When the tavern was built, Hutchinson Road was part of the Norwich to Hartford Turnpike, the main road through what is now Andover. There used to be, and probably still is, a mile marker for this turnpike on the lawn of the current Shell gas station in Andover. The stone marker had NTH and I think the number 19 below the NTH. It was 19 more miles to Hartford on the Norwich To Hartford turnpike. This stone marker had to have been moved from its original location because the Norwich to Hartford Turnpike was on Center Street on the other side of the railroad from the gas station. About 1930 Route 6 was realigned to straighten it, thus causing several "eyebrows" to be created. Three "eyebrows" were created in Andover: Hutchinson Road, Center Street/Monument Lane, and Merritt Valley Road.

The French were our allies in the American Revolution. In June of 1781 a French army led by General Rochambeau marched through Andover on their way to New York to join General George Washington's army. From New York the two armies marched to Yorktown, Virginia and had a major victory against the British on 19 Oct. 1781. Rochambeau's army had about 5,000 soldiers divided into four regiments of 1,000 to 1,500 soldiers each. Each regiment had oxen-drawn artillery and baggage carts. The regiments marched one day apart, so it would have taken three days for the whole army to pass through what is now Andover.

Going to Yorktown in June 1781, some of Rochambeau's officers dined and presumably slept at White's Tavern. On their way back to Newport, RI in November 1782, the French Army again marched through the present Andover and some officers dined at White's Tavern.

Gurley Phelps taught school for several years as a young man. He purchased White's Tavern in 1844. He was elected to the state legislature from Hebron. He was a member of the Whig party. After Andover became a town in 1848, he was elected on two occasions to represent Andover. For several years he held the office of Tolland County surveyor. In 1851 he was made judge of probate and held that office for 7 years. He was often called Judge Phelps in newspaper articles and town records.

The inventory below gives the values in dollar amounts for furniture and farm items that Gurley Phelps possessed when he died. Thus, the parlor had 3 pair of curtains \$5.00, a sofa \$6.00 and a Carpet \$4.00.

Inventory of the Estate of Gurley Phelps.

Parlor. 3 Pr. Curtains 5.00 Sofa 6.00 Carpet 4.00

Sitting Room. 6 Cain Bottom Chairs 3.00 Table and Cover 1.00 Piano 75.00 Carpet 5.00

Dining Room. Lounge and Red Blanket 6.00 Table and Cover 2.00 Carpet 5.00

6 Chairs 1.50 2 Rockers 1.50 Easy Chair 3.00 Foot Rest .50

Extension Table 5.00 Stand 5.00 Book Case & Desk 5.00 2 Clocks 5.00

Sewing Machine 3.00 Melodian 20.00 Oil Lamps (all) 2.00

Dining Cupboard. Glass Ware 1.00 2 Set Blue China 2.00 1 doz. Silver Tea Spoons 6.00

1 Silver Tea Set (7 pcs) 17.50 6 Plated Dinner Knives .75

6 Plated Dessert Knives .75 1.5 sets Table Spoons 3.00

Bedroom. Bed, Dres Case, Stand, Marble Top Table 20.00

Wash Bowl and Pitcher .75

North Chamber. 3 Cain Bot. Chairs 1.50 1 Rocker .75 1 Stand .75 1 Dres Table 1.50

1 Dres Case 3.00 Bedstead 1.00 Slop Pail .25 Toilet Set 2.00

Carpet 6.00 Matting in Middle Front Chamber 3.00

South Chamber. Bureau 1.00 Stand .25 Bowl & Pitcher .50 Mirror .50

Bedstead .75 Carpet 3.00

West Chamber. Table .50 Bowl & Pitcher .75 Matting 1.50

North Chamber. Bedstead 1.00 Table .50

House. 21 pr. Sheets 12.60 10 pr. Pillow Cases 1.50 3 Beds 6.00

12 Bed Quilts 9.00 3 Blankets 1.50

Kitchen. 6 Chairs 1.50 Cook Stove 12.00 Heating Stove for Dining Room 8.00

Livestock. 12 New Milch Cows 240.00 4 Dry Cows 60.00 1 Calf 7.00 15 Hens 6.00

1 Yoke Oxen 100.00 8 two year olds 88.00 2 Horses (Tom) 150.00 (Jim) 100.00 2 shoats 20.00

15 Hens 6.00 1 Carriage 30.00 1 Wagon 70.00 Ox Wagon 17.00 Cart 10.00

Ox Sled 4.00 Drag 1.50 2 Stacks of Old Hay 24.00

1 Mowing Machine 10.00 Sleigh 5.00 2 Dble harnesses 10.00

1 Cultivator 6.00 2 Plows 3.00 2 Cradles 4.84

1 Wheel Rake 7.00 1 pr. Ice Tongs 1.00 1 Creamer 45.00 1 Crow Bar 1.00

Shop. Carpenter Tools 3.00 3 Chains 3.00 2 Ox Yokes 2.00
Axe .50 Post Axe .75 Barb Wire 2.50
3 Ladders 5.00 Grindstone & Frame 1.00 4 Hay Forks 1.00
2 Manure Forks 1.00 3 Hand Rakes .45 4 Scythes 2.00

In Addition to the above furniture, livestock, farm equipment and shop tools, the inventory listed four properties, cash on hand, stocks, bonds, and 14 mortgages held by the estate giving a grand total of \$79,796.09 for the value of the estate. When he died in 1889, Gurley Phelps was probably the wealthiest person in Andover.

9. The George F. Blackman Farm 84 Long Hill Road. The house on this farm was built about 1774 by Jonathan Blackman. The current owners are Keith A. and Sarah Lynn Pedro.



The Agricultural Census of 1870 for the George Blackman Farm.

Acres of improved land: 80

Acres of woodland: 10

Present cash value of farm: \$2500

Present cash value of farm implements and machinery: \$100

Total amount of wages paid during the year, including value of board: \$50

Livestock on farm 1 June 1870

1 horse

4 milch cows

2 working oxen

2 other cattle

2 swine

Value of all livestock: \$490

Farm produce during the year ending 1 June 1870

10 bushels of rye

100 bushels of Indian corn

75 bushels of oats

15 bushels of buckwheat
 125 bushels of Irish potatoes
 250 pounds of butter
 25 tons of hay
 Forest products: \$6
 Value of animals slaughtered or sold for slaughter: \$230
 Estimated value of all farm products: \$850

Agricultural Census of 1880 (only those items not on 1870 form)

Poultry on hand 1 June 1880: 30
 Dozens of eggs produced in 1879: 175
 Bearing apple trees on hand 1 June 1880: 50
 Cords of wood cut in 1879: 10
 Value of wood cut in 1879: \$40

George F. Blackman was born about 1814 in Andover. On 10 Apr. 1837 he married Emily Ann Newell in Columbia. She died 24 Feb. 1850 and is buried in the Yantic Cemetery, Norwich, CT. George later married Eliza Anna Hubbard, who died 15 Jan. 1887 aged seventy-five. George Blackman died 28 June 1906 in Andover and both he and his second wife Eliza are buried in the Andover Congregational Church Cemetery. There were no children from either marriage.

Eliza Anna Hubbard was born in Norwich, CT where she spent a large part of her life as a successful teacher in private schools. The inventory of the estate of Eliza Hubbard Blackman has the following entries:

1 cherry table	\$1.00
8 cane seat chairs	1.50
1 carpet	1.00
1 desk	.50
1 bed and bedstead	5.00
3 sheets	.25
1 warming pan	.50
1 cook stove	.25
1 pair brass top andirons	<u>.25</u>
	11.25

In 1850 George F. Blackman was living in Norwich and was a railroad worker. George Blackman was one of the oldest residents of Andover when he died at age 92. He was active for his years and late in the afternoon went to his garden to hoe potatoes. Not returning at the usual time, search was made, and he was found some distance away, dead. Speculation was that he had become overcome by the heat.

The inventory of the Estate of George F. Blackman.

1 hay cutter	\$0.50
1 corn sheller	1.00
1 harness	1.00
1 sleigh	1.00
1 wagon	1.00
1 bureau	1,00
1 grindstone with frame	1.00
8 hens	2.40
2 watches	2.00
1 farm wagon	10.00
1 horse	25.00
Money on hand	33.29
3 acres of land with buildings	250.00
In Society for Savings, Hartford	106.04
In Norwich Savings Society	<u>1159.36</u>
	1596.59

This is the farm where I grew up. The old part of the house, the back part facing the woods, was built about 1774 by Jonathan Blackman, son of Benjamin Blackman who, just down the road, had built in 1734 the number 2 John Topliff house. The new part of the 1774 house, facing the road, was built about 1850.

In 1910 my grandfather Ward Talbot purchased this farm and the Talbot family on 1 Apr. 1910 moved three miles down the road from their home at 307 Silver Street, Coventry to their new home on Long Hill Road. My father, Roscoe Post Talbot, aged 4, had the job of carrying the cat.

My grandfather Ward died in 1944, his wife and my grandmother Elizabeth died in the spring of 1946. In the summer of 1946, my family consisting of my parents, Roscoe and Margaret, my older brother Jerry, aged 7, and myself, aged 3, moved into the Andover house. The house was in a very primitive condition. For the first year there was no indoor bathroom and we had to go outside and use an outhouse. There was a faucet for water at the kitchen sink, but only for cold water. Once a week, my mother would heat water on the kitchen stove and give me a "sponge bath" in a big tub in the kitchen. A pipe from the 20-foot dug well to the house was connected to the house in the 1920's but before that, my grandparents had to drop a bucket in the well and haul up the bucket.

Our neighbors to the south (toward the church) were the Birminghams: Tom, a Hartford attorney, his wife Editha, son Stephen born 1929, and daughter Susan born 1931. Editha was a past president of the state PTA, the organist and choir director for the Andover Congregational

Church, The *Hartford Courant* correspondent for Andover for many years, and was very active in other town affairs. Susan taught English at Weaver High School in Hartford, was chairwoman of the Andover Board of Finance and the Andover Conservation Commission for many years and was also very active in other town affairs. Susan now is living in Fremont, California near her son Wulf Losee. Stephen became a noted author and for many months his book *Our Crowd* was number 1 on the New York Times Best Seller List. Stephen died in 2015. In 2022 his son Carey Birmingham published a book *A Writer Writes* that contains unpublished memoir material Stephen wrote before his death. Stephen describes growing up in Andover and his experiences with many famous people including Jackie Bouvier, Ava Gardner, Marilyn Monroe, Richard Burton, Elizabeth Taylor, Neil Armstrong, Queen Elizabeth, and others. It is an amazing book and I highly recommend it.

Soon after moving to Andover, my father began building up a flock of cheviot sheep. Cheviots have white faces with no wool on their face or the top of their head. The flock eventually grew to about 50 ewes and one ram. There was a flock of sheep on the farm when he grew up there. I think he wanted to re-experience that for himself and to give Jerry and me the wonderful experience of living on a farm. The barn on the property was no longer there, so for the first few years we kept our sheep in grandma Thompson's barn at the bottom of the hill near the athletic fields. We kids all liked grandma Thompson. She would invite us in for cookies if she saw us walking by. In 1950, a new big white barn was built next to the foundation of the old barn and the sheep were moved to our place.

A favorite memory is my delivering of lambs when a ewe needed help during "lambing season" which was the month of February. During the winter the sheep were in the barn nearly all the time or just outside the barn. During lambing season, we would check the barn every few hours to see if a ewe was in labor. If so, and the lamb was not born within an hour, I would deliver the lamb. I would do three or four deliveries a year and did about 30 deliveries in total. A few times I was called out of school to do a delivery.

Here is how it went. My father would be standing in front of the ewe with her head between his legs to steady her. I would be kneeling behind the ewe. If the lamb were properly positioned, I would see a little triangle: the tip of the lamb's nose and below that, the tips of the hooves of the lamb's two front legs. My mother would put mineral oil on my right hand and wrist, and I would go in with my right hand over the top of the lamb's head and firmly grip it at the shoulders. My left hand would firmly grip the tips of the lamb's front legs. Then I would pull outward with my right hand and down with my left hand and out would come the lamb. Normally, the lamb was fine and within a few minutes would be trying out its legs. On a few occasions, the lamb would lie motionless, as if dead. Each time, my father would take his finger and clean the mucous from the lamb's mouth, take the lamb by its back legs, and swing it in several complete circles. When he put the lamb down, it would shake itself, and get up on its wobbly legs and be fine. At that moment, I felt my father was God. We would put mother and lamb and a pail of water into a five-foot-by-five-foot pen. The mother would be licking the afterbirth off the lamb. The afterbirth is rich in nutrients and helps the mother regain some

strength after the ordeal of giving birth. After a few weeks, the lamb will be strong enough to be out with the rest of the flock.

My last delivery was different. This time only the tip of one hoof was visible. I had to push the lamb back into the womb, get the two front legs, and bring the lamb out with the normal posture. After the delivery, my father and I went into the house and my brother Jerry stayed behind for a while to make sure mother and lamb were ok. About 15 minutes later Jerry came into the house and relates that a second lamb had just been born. I was shocked and am so glad I did not know there were eight legs inside that womb.

We always had loose hay in the barn for the sheep. Most of our hay came from the large hay fields half a mile up the road that once belonged to Julie and Ron Haverl at 167 Long Hill Road. We also hayed the field directly across the road from our mailbox. That field long ago grew up to forest. There was a large field down the hill and across the brook that we hayed, but it also long ago grew up to forest. We also hayed the small field between our house and the Birmingham house to the south.

Haying worked like this. Connie Schatz would cut the hay with his mowing machine. The hay would lie in the field to dry out so as not to burn our barn down. He would then pull a hay rake through the field making long windrows of cut hay. Then he would drive his flatbed truck through the field, straddling the long windrows, pulling a hay loader behind the truck. The hay loader had long metal teeth that would bring the hay up and drop it at the rear of the flatbed truck. Here is where I get involved. I would be standing at the rear of the truck with my pitchfork and would distribute the hay to "build the load." My father's only instruction was "keep the corners high." That worked great and I was very proud of the huge loads I was able to build.

We had to move the sheep to a new pasture every two weeks to prevent them from getting worms. The sheep drive went from our north pasture, then down our driveway and across the road into our pasture across the road. This was an all-family affair. My father would open the north pasture gate and run in front with the stampeding sheep behind him. As he ran, he would bang on the side of a pail of grain shouting Kuh Day, Kuh Day, Kuh Day with the Day a higher pitch than the Kuh. This is the standard sheep-calling call. My mother would be in the road stopping traffic coming from the direction of the church, and Jerry would be stopping traffic coming from the other direction. I would be behind the stampede dealing with any stragglers.

This field, across the road from our driveway, belonged to Mr. Alvah Gilchrist before my father purchased it in 1953. Before coming to Andover, Mr. Gilchrist was a captain on a Staten Island ferry in NYC. In Andover he had a chicken farm and peddled his eggs in Manchester. On the night of 26 January 1953, the Gilchrist home was completely consumed by fire. My mother's bedroom faced the road and beyond that the Gilchrist property. Early that morning my mother looked out and first thought 'what a beautiful sunrise this morning', but soon realized it was the Gilchrist home in flames. My father ran across the street and found Mr. Gilchrist, age 81, sitting in his car that would not start due to the bitterly cold night. Mr. Gilchrist came and spent the

next few days living with us. It is a blessing that Mrs. Gilchrist was not home. She was wheelchair bound and easily could have perished in the fire.

She was in an Abington nursing home recovering from a serious operation. The day after the fire, my mother and Mr. Gilchrist went to visit Mrs. Gilchrist. They had decided not to tell her about the fire. When they entered her room, she said she had had the strangest dream that night. She dreamed that her house had no windows. My mother and Mr. Gilchrist looked at each other and said nothing. The 3 February 1953 edition of the *Hartford Courant* had an article titled "Andover Cat Wins Award for Saving Master's Life". Mr. Gilchrist's cat Beanie is credited with jumping on Mr. Gilchrist's bed and arousing him from sleep. For saving the life of her master, Beanie was awarded a case of 48 cans of Puss 'n Boots cat food by the Connecticut humane Society.

In January 2018 I sold the farm to Keith and Sarah Lynn Pedro. Keith had grown up in the George Nelson house, just a quarter mile up the road. In the 244 years from 1774 to when I sold the house, only three families had lived there: Blackman (1774-1904), Hoffner (1904-1910), and Talbot (1910-2018).

