# Researched With by Edward P. Homiten For Mrs ayer THE SUFFICIA RESOLVES HOUSE COUTROVERSY REVIEWED. COTOBER 1953.

but they have perhaps not been inclined to attach a great deal of importance to them, at least in the more recent years. Catherine Drinker Lownen ("John Adams and the American Revolution", Boston 1950) states that the Buffolk Reselves were the boldest statement ever made on this Continent. They had been rushed to the Continental Congress by Paul Revere, and Mrs Drinker stresses the tremendous impact they made in Philadelphia. The Congress passed a vote of approval, despite the statement of one of the opponents, Joseph Galloway, that such a vote was tantamount to a complete declaration of war. John Adams noted in his diary that night: "This day convinced me that America will support (the) Massachusetts or perish with her."

The Buffelk Resolves were of much greater importance than we have appreciated, and they were finally signed, after an earlier meeting held in Dedham, at the house of Daniel Vose in Milton on the 9th of Deptember, 1774. There is no question of this whatever. The question is, where was the house in which they were signed and does it still exist?

Suppose that it is September 1912, and we are curious to learn all that we can about where the Suffolk Resolves were styned. In Milton Lower Wills village, on Adams Street, just south of the railroad we would have seen an old hip roofed house beauing a tablet which stated that the Resolves were signed in this house. Externally, except for the watchmakers shop of Alexander Hobbs, with its show window, we would have seen an attractive if somewhat shabby house, evidently of considerable age. Had we examined it carefully internally, we would save found that it consisted of the frames of two entirely separate and different shall houses, which had been cleverly combined into a

fairly large and attractive two story house. We also would have learned that, when the introduction of the railroad caused a material raising of Adams Street in front of the house, the structure was jacked up, and a third story added below ground level. The house thus consisted of two separate structures each of which had evidently had previously a history of its own.

We would probably refer first to Teele's"History of Hilton", and we would find on page 150 the statement that the Resolves were signed in Dahiel Yose's old house on the east side of Adams Street, near the way to the Landing Place, but that later the house was moved to a place near the Rail Road Station, and a new store and residence, 75 by 45 feet bublt on its site. Coposite page 424 we would find a view of the house with a copy of the inscription placed on it. On page 425 it is stated that the house is still standing near the Railroad Station and owned by N.F.Safford.and that this is the house where the delegates met. If we had looked through newspaper files, we would have found a reference in the Roston Post in September 1974 to a meating to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Resolves, and this might lead us to a record of this meeting in the files of the Milton Historical Society. This record stated that the Resolves were signed within the very walls where the meeting was held. We would have learned that the leaders of the meeting were Edmund J. Baker, Henry L. Pierce, N.F. Safford, Edward L. Pierce, James M.Robbins,

l. Appendix # 16 gives a detailed structural description by Arthur R.Tuaker, a competent builder, much interested in Milton history, and includes a ground floor plan which he drew.

<sup>2.</sup> Appendix # 26

<sup>3.</sup> Appendix # 4

and D.T.Y.Huntoon of Canton. Rad we investigated farther, we should have learned the following about these gentlemen:

EDHUMD J. BAKER, born 1804, a grandson of Daniel Vose, asurveyor a lifelong resident of the Hilton Lower Hills settlement, a founder and later a longtime president of the Dorchester Antiquarian Society, and then the owner of the land at Adams Street and Wharf Lane.

HENRY L. PIERCE, born 1825 a great grandson of Daniel Vose, owner of the Walter Baker Chocolate Mills, ex-mayor of Boston, congressman, and later reform mayor of Boston. He was later a member of Massachusetts Historical Society.

NATHANIEL F.SAFFCRD. A well known lawyer, and at that time owner of the Suffolk Resolves House. He had moved to Milton from Salem in 1839. A director of the N.Z. Hist Gen. Society.

EDWARD L.PIERCE, born 1829, a lawyer, a great granson of Daniel Vose, a man much interested in history; both of his family and of his town. Later the author of the still (1953) standard life of Charles Summer, and a member of the Mass. Historical Society.

JAMES .M.RCBBINS, born in Milton 1796, a wealthy merchant with antiquarian interests, author of the first six chapters of the "History of Dorchester", orator at the bi-centennial celebration of the founding of Hilton, and in 1884 appointed by the Town as one of a Committee

1. Note on Edmund J. Baker. He wrote the chapter on mills in the "History of Dorchester", Boston, 1859. ( See N.E.Hist.Gen.Register of Cot. 1890.) In this chapter he says: "Rachel (who furnished the writer with many of the facts here related) married Daniel Vose, and died at Milton in 1821, aged 84." Rachel was his grand—mother( through Elizabeth Vose Lillie's 2nd marriage). Thus we have a definite statement that Daker learned various historical facts from Daniel Vose's wife direct. The certainly knew the facts about the Suffolk Resolves House.

of four to prepare the History of Milton. Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

DANIEL THOMAS VOSE HUNTOON, Born 1842 a great grandson of Daniel Vose, founder and president of the Canton Historical Society, author of the "History of Canton", and author of a series of articles on the history of Norfolk County. His father was the Rev. Benjamin Huntoon, minister in Milton 1834 - 1837.

We would probably have said to purselves something like this:

"Five of these men evidently were much interested in history. Though
not trained historians as we define the term today, they evidently
qualified well above the average. Four of them were in direct descent
from Daniel Vose, in whose house the Resolves are known to have been
signed. Two of them were boys at the time of Daniel Vose's death.
Since they all gathered together to commemorate the signing in the
house in which they met, it is obvious that they all believed without
any shadow of doubt that it was a fact that the Resolves had been
signed in this particular house. What better evidence can I want
than this statement and mutual agreement on their part, these men of
solid standing?"

Let us suppose, however that we want more evidence if possible. We might with luck have located a scarce little book by the same Edward L. Pierce: "Capt John Lillie & the Lillie Family of Boston", Cambridge 1896. On page 19 of this book we read: At the house of Daniel Vose, still standing though on a slightly different site, were passed....the Suffolk Resolves."

Ead we been persistent and lucky we might have found the series of articles on Norfolk County towns which D.T.V. Huntoon wrote for the Dedham" Transcript" between August 1884 and February 1885. In one on Milton he wrote"......Daniel Vose. The first house south of the

in Revolutionary days on its present site. It was farther up Milton Hill on the land now occupied by the Associates Bldg".....In this mansion..... the Suffolk Resolves were adopted....."

Looking still farther, we might have found an account in an old copy of the "Milton Leader" of 15 Sept 1899, which describes the 125th anniversary of the Suffolk Resolves. It says that Miss Mary Webster stood in the doorway of the Suffolk Resolves House near the Milton Depot, and said, among other remarks, that the Convention met at the house of Daniel Vose, which then stood farther up the street, near the passage to the wharf.

That would be about all the information we could find. Some of the participants at the 1374 meeting were still alive. We might have talked to Alexander Hobbs, who was at the meeting, and who remembered a statement that this was the house where the Resolves were signed.

All the originators of the meeting were dead, but there were various descendents. Mrs Lydia Taft, daughter of Edmund J. Baker, would have been most positive in her statement that it was the house, and she had an amazing memory. We might by chance have found a privately printed book by Miss Elizabeth Harris, which said that the Resolves were signed in the house. She had lived in the house as a girl previously to 1831, and

<sup>1.</sup> See appendix \$9 e2

<sup>2. 200</sup> appendix # 12 and 12-A.

<sup>3.</sup> See appendix # 11 and #19

in 1912 would have been 90. If we had talked to her in 1912 she would probably have said that she never heard as a child that the desolves had been signed in the house, despite her earlier statement in this book, but that she knew that the house had belonged to Daniel Vose.

This I think would have been all the direct evidence that we could have found, and I think we would have concluded without question that the Resolves were signed in this house, but that the house now the writer was standing on a slightly different site. This A believe was the attitude of anyone who gave the matter any thought, which few if any would, any more than we today would question the authenticity of the Paul Revere house.

Now we are at a meeting of the Milton Mistorical Society in Cotober 1912, listening to a piger by Miss Ellen Vose and Miss Eleanor 2 Martin about Daniel Vose and his times. We would have been surprised to hear these good ladies say that the house in which the Resolves were signed had burned in 1861. We also would have heard that the house we knew as the Suffolk Resolves House had been built subsequent to 1781,or at least seven years after the signing. If,in discussion after the meeting we had questioned the ladies for proof of their surprising statements, we should have found nothing beyond the fact that Wm. Babcock worked on a cellar for Daniel Vose in 1773, that they had no evidence that Daniel Vose ever owned the house near the R.R. station, and that men living at the time of the 1874 meeting must have known that the Resolves were not signed in the house! This, plus 1. See appendix # # 1

#### 2. See appendix # 22.6

In 1910 the Milton Hist. Soc. published "The Milton Catechism" a small historica book et for school children. The toble of contents shows that the section on old houses was prepared by Miss Eleanon P. Martin, and in this section on page 22 it states (by question a answer method) that the Soffolks Resolves Congress met in the old house in the village now owned by N.M. Sofford, and series a cut of the house is given.

their statement:" In this enlarged building (the one burned in 1861) in all probability the Suffolk Convention...passed....the Resolves ..." was all the proof offered to substantiate their claim. Having just and informed ourselves a few months ago of all the known available facts regarding the signing, we probably would have been surprised and quite a bit amused at the temerity of these good ladles in contradicting what have accepted tradition with such entire absence of evidence. The minutes of the Society give no record of any discussion after the reading of the paper, and it does not appear that any great interest was raised by Hiss Vose and Hiss Martin's questions as to the authenticity of the house.

Hiss Eleanor Martin is a descendent of Deacon Mathan Martin, who was the Milton postmaster for 37 years (during two separate but not continuous appointments.) Shortly after 1826 he built a house on the lot next to the north of that on which the Suffolk Resolves house last stood. Miss Martin has been keenly interested in Milton history, and has done a great deal of searching in old records, both in the Town and at the County Registry of Deeds.

Miss Ellan Vose was particularly interested in Senealogy as all as local history. She was the author of the standard Vose Senealogy.

Hiss Hary Hinckley, who opposed the authenticity of the house at later proceedings in 1924, was the daughter of Thomas Hinckley, a well something of Enown painter, who was born in Hilton in 1813. She was an authority on local history, and in 1908 wrote a pamphlet on various Milton subjects, including, it is interesting to note, a cut of the Suffolk Resolves House with the statement that the Resolves were signed in this house.

There is one facet of this controversy which will only be touched

on here, (See appendix # 20) as this is notther the time nor the place to bring up matters which might offend persons still living, even if it be most germane to matters being discussed tonight. The fact that one is a Yankee presupposes the possession of a certain amount of innate "cussedness" which may or may not crop out upon occasions. One of the surest ways to bring it to the surface in the old days seems to have been during petty disputes over trespass or boundaries. This often resulted in hard feelings, which, again on account of our Yankee nature, are prone to be carried, to a later generation.

A delightful statement by Edmund J.Baker, cited by Teele, seems to be worth recording here. Baker wrote (concerning Capt. John Swift.)

"His was no negative character. He loved his friends and hated his enemies...." Such a characterization would certainly have applied to some of the actors in our little centroversy. Baker's daughter, Lydia, at the 1924 hearing at the Town Hall, produced another little gem:

"....When Hr Safford put up that tablet, (stating that the nesolves were signed in this house) he consulted my father about it, so my father was equally responsible for it; and as they never agreed on any other subject, I think it must have been correct."

occured in 1924, and under vote of the Town Acating that year a committee was appointed which was empowered at its discretion to petition the General Court for authority for the Town to take as eminent domain. the Buffelk Resolves House on Adams Street During the preceding year there had been a considerable number of letters written to the Milton Record regarding the authenticity of the house, and a pumphlet defending it had been published by Ar Ameriston L. Domifo. From what can be learned today it appears that Miss Blommor Martin and Miss Ellen

<sup>1.</sup> Ces Appandix # 7.

Vose were: those most active in attempting to destroy the tradition concerning the house. They were later joined by Miss Mary Hinckley, and finally by Ar Felix Rackemann, who appeared as advocate for the three one ladies in the final phase. Beyond these four, and the author of XX anon-ymous letter, it appears that no one else, at least publicly, questioned the authenticity of the house.

The Committee, Roger Wolcott, chairman, Mrs 3.3. Churchill, and Roger Scaife, held a public meeting at the Town Hall on the 20th, Cctober 1924. The major part of the evening was devoted to a carefully prepared and detailed attack on the house by Felix Rackemann, representing "several of our citizens" (i.e. Martin, Vose and Hinckley). Miss Martin gave the Committee a condensed statement on behalf of herself and Miss Vose, and Miss Hinckley spoke a few words. Mr and Mrs E.J.B. Huntoon and Mrs Lydia Taft spoke in favor of the house, and two antiquarians testified as to its construction and probable age. Despite the newspaper controversy of the preceeding months, and Mr Scaife's very carefully prepared pamphlet there was no organized defense presented at this meeting, and the case was almost allowed to go by default.

The Committee turned the evidence that was offered at the meeting, as well as some additional that they had secured elsewhere, to Worthington C. Ford, editor of the Massachusetts Historical Society, as an historical expert, and requested his opinion. It does not appear that they offered one of their own, at least formally. Mr Ford, according to his report to the Committee, considered the evidence, and made some independent research for additional evidence, although it does not appear that anything of any value was found. He concluded that the house was not the one in which the Suffolk Resolves were signed. This apparently closed the matter, and the Committee reported back to the Town Meeting that there was so much House on the authenticity of the house that they thought it 1. See appendix # 10

unwise to petition the General dourt. It is interesting that they did not definitely report that it was not the house, they merely reported very considerable doubt on its authenticity.

Apparently certain people still believed in the authenticity of the house, and it was the occasion for discussion and argument at various times. In 1950 when the house reverted to the Milton Historical Society under the deed of transfer from Mr Safford to Mr Copley and was finally saved from destruction by Dr and Ars James B. Ayer, the question of its authenticity naturally came up again. The writer offered to make a new study of the entire matter for the Milton Historical Society, and this paper is the result. He might say that as a descendent of Daniel Vose, he had considerable interest in the matter, and started somewhat disposed to question the authenticity, but, he hopes, with an open XIKAX and inquiring approach. All the mass of evidence, opinion and correspondence which had accumulated in the Eilton Historical Society's files was turned over to him. He has been working on this problem to a very considerable extent for over two years, and has been carrying this inquiry along in conjunction with a study of the growth and development of Milton village, a most kindred subject. Very little, if any additional new evidence has been produced, so carefully was the field covered in 1924, but certain important facts which apparently entirely missed at that time have come to light. The writer is now entirely convinced as to the authenticity of the house.

There are two separate approaches to this subject which will be taken up here. The first is the tradition, and the writer believes that he can convince you that it is true. The second, what actually happened to the house physically during its sojourn in the village, can probably never be learned and proved, but quite a lot can be demonstrated, and quite a bit more can be shown to be reasonable and probable.

The society unable to finance restoration, deeded the house to the Ayers who moved it to their property at 1350 Canton Ave. It was repaired and restored by Wm. Morris Host.

We will start our approach to the first subject by reading an outline of the evidence offered in the attack on the suthenticity of the house.

THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED AGAINST THE HOUSE AT THE TOWN HEARING.

Following is a summary of the various arguments presented by Mr Rackemann:

- 1) The original Vose-Fenno house built in 1760 at the corner of Wharf St. was 40 ft.square.
- 2) There was also a shop, the dimensions "we think" to have been 30 ft. by 16 ft.
- 3) In 1773 Daniel Vose built a large addition to the original building on the next lot north, which belonged to his wife.
- 4) There is no evidence that there was any substantial change in this building until it burned in 1861.
- 5) A sketch of the house that burned in 1861, drawn by Miss Hinckley in 1924 from memory, was presented.
- 6) The house built in 1760 and remodelled and added to in 1773 was not changed or altered until it burned in 1861. As proof of this statement, he presented copies of three maps, of 1782,1835, and 1855.
- 7) In 1773 the shop was moved away from the corner lot, and a new building took its place.
- 8) Sixty delegates could not have gotten into the house, and there was large and adequate room available elsewhere.3
- 9) Stated that the owner of the house, Mr Safford, endeavored to give historical prominence to the house. Suggested that Mr Safford put a tablet on the house in order to sell it as a house of historical importance.
- 10) Discussed a bound listed in a deed of 1808 as corner of dwelling house formerly built by Joseph Fenno and Daniel Vose. This was a telling point, and one which will be discussed later.
- 11) Claimed to have proved that nothing was ever moved from the Wharf Lane corner lot (see #7 above) until the fire of 1861.

#### WORTHINGTON FORD'S FINDINGS

A record of the remarks at the meeting, and the various maps and exhibitions were given to Mr Ford by the Committee, and his

1.See appendix #9 for the complete evidence.

2.5ee appendix #15.

3. See appendix # 27 for study of seating space.

findings were requested. This he did at considerable length in a report, which added nothing new, accepted and used as substantiation practically all of Mr Rackemann's claims, and stated that:

"The house and store huilt by Daniel Vose, and in which the Suffelk Resolves were adopted, was wholly consumed by fire in 1861".

He then, in fact, stated that Mr Safford, in hope of selling the house, succeeded in bulldowing the other members of the 1874 Committee into believing that the Resolves were signed in this house.

It is hardly practical or desirable in a paper such as this to detail all the minutiae of the pro and con arguments that took place in 1924. The gist of the opponents attack on the tradition boils down to the following statements made by them at the Town Hall hearing.

- Claim no.1) Daniel Vose and Fenno built a 40 foot square building on the corner of Adams Street and wharf Lane, occupying the entire lot.
- Claim no.2) In 1773 Vose built a large addition to this on his wife's lot, which adjoined his corner lot to the north.

  This became Vose's Inn. (Personally the writer does not believe that Daniel Vose ever kept an ibn, his liceense was to allow him to sell liquer in the store.)
- Claim no. 3) From 1773 until destroyed by fire there was no substantial change of any nature in the building. In it the Suffolk Resolves were signed.

While many other minor points were brought up, assumptions and accusations made, and legal arguments engaged in, the above three claims were the basis of their argument.

Mumber 1. a forty foot square building can be partly proved

without question from old deeds

which use parts of the building

as bounds. These deeds clearly show that the 1760 building was at

least 40 ft deep along a line at right angles to Adams Street. The

other dimension, the front on Adams St., might have been 40 ft, but the

1. Buffolk 100-219,106-65, in appendix # 1.

writer's interpretation would place this dimension of the house proper, exclusive of a well house or shed of sorts, as less than 40 feet. Every one, there, is in agreement that the first building was at least 40 ft. deep.

Number 2), the matter of an addition to this first building of 1760, was offered without any proof or statement of reasons for their claim, but the inference is that it is based on entries in the account book of wm.Babcock. This book was available to both sides in 1924, but its whereabouts today are unknown. Fortunately certain extracts were made from it in 1924. They show that during 1773 William Babcock did the following work for Vose. (certain non-pertinent entries omitted.)

- 1) He worked one day at raising a house (24th June)
- 2) He worked on stone step( 2-4 August)
- 3) He worked one day levelling sills ) All marked 2-4 Aug.
- 4) He dug and stoned cellar

but obviously spread

5) He moved the old shop

- over much longer period.
- 6) He and Vose Cranebegan Vose's shop" on 25th August and the account ran until 20th Nov.

From these items the opposition apparently assumed that the original 40 feet building had a large addition built onto its northern end, the whole building constituting an inn. None of these jobs are specified as to location, and Daniel owned land elsewhere in town, but it is probable that the work was on the land at the corner.

The cellar job was a pretty big one, representing some 40 man days based on Babcock's daily rate, while moving the old shop amounted 1. See appendix # 14.

To about 15 or 20 man days. Apparently no other evidence that they cared to use was available, although Teele says that Vose built a new 1 building 75 feet long by 45 feet wide at approximately this date. The above facts can be used to build up a number of other reasonable assumptions, as well as the one they chose to use. If we follow the order of dates given above the logical assumption would be:

- 1) A frame house was raised somewhere.
- 2) A cellar was built.
- 3) The old shop, moved, perhaps on to it.
- 4) Finally a new shop was started on the old shop site.

Claim number 3, that there was no change in the enlarged building from 1773 to its burning in 1861, is the first of these statements for which proof is offered. Moreover this proof is quite definite in so far as it shows that there was no change between the building shown on the 1782 map and that which burned in 1861. The first map which can be found covering this site is that of 1782 (Map A.) and the opposition assumed that the building shown there was the one that they claimed was added to in 1773 and its addition. Again the writer agrees entirely with this claim, with the single provise that it be rephrased to say that the building at the corner resulting from the 1773 operations underwent no essential change until it burned in 1861.

A new piece of evidence can now be introduced, one that was overlooked entirely in 1924, and one which the writer believes completely demolishes both claim Ne.2 and claim Ne.3. A map by its very nature is drawn to scale by measuring distances and directions, and recording them on a piece of paper. Conversely these factors can be scaled off

1. Teele, "Hist.of Milton, "Boston 1887, p.150, appendix #46

of a finished map, and restored to distances or directions. There is, of course, often some error introduced in restoring a dimension. It might not be plotted exactly on the map particularly if the map is of small scale, but within reasonable limits such scaled dimensions can be assumed t be correct. It was customary in the early days of map making to attempt to show on a map something of a picture of a building. Instead of lookingdirectly down on a building from above, and plotting its outline on the map as we do today, the length was plotted, and a front view of the building sketched on this as a base. Thus such a map would give us the length of the building and some idea of its appearance, but would not give us the other dimension the width. By the time of the Revolution to general use. this old practice was dying out, and the present method coming in general Unfortunately our oldest map, that of 1782, was of this earlier kind, and shows us only the length but several laber maps, (Maps B., C. and D.) . give both length and width or in this case depth in from the street. Here is what the various maps tell us of the X773 and 1861 building.

White--1782.....75 feet long,....ft wide.

Baker-1826.....77 ft long.....31 ft wide (somewhat careless as to bldg size)
Baker-1835.....75 ft long.....34 ft wide (a very careful map)

Gardner-1855....76 ft long.....33 ft wide (a large scale map)

All four maps agree essentially as to a length of from 75-77 feet,

and three give a width of not over 34 feet.

Now it is very simple to widen a building by adding a shed or overhang, but the reverse is not possible unless there is a shed to remove, as the whole frame must be rebuilt. This 34 ft.width Sives us absolute proof that the building of 1760, which was proven to be 40 feet deep, was not there in 1732, (nor by inference after 1773.)

l.Gridley Bryant's survey of frontages only in 1847 shows a length of 74 ft. Map is &n files of Milton Historical Society.

<sup>2</sup> It might be argued that there was a shed to remove, but both deeds refer to a corner of house, and 100-219 of 1762 says (for a different bound) "corner of house or well (house?),

20 It corners were not of house proper they would probably have been otherwise defined or qualifie

but had been replaced by a new and narrower structure. This is exactly what tradition says and what Teele says, although the latter gives dimensions of 75 x 45 feet. The old building of 1760 was replaced by a new one some 14 years after it was built, or about 1774.

The writer carlier claimed that the tradition must be allowed to stand unless unquestionable evidence is found to prove it wrong. The basic evidence produced by the opponents other than minor points and hints and inferences of unworthy motives of earlier defenders of the house, boils down to these three claims, in fact, the last two only, as the first is factual. To the writer's mind the collapse of these claims knocks out all the underpinning of the opponent's case, and nothing remains which can in any way three doubt on the tradition. In this case so much work and so much bitter controversy was devoted to the attempt to destroy the tradition that it would appear obvious that the collapse of this attempt must result not only in a resatablishment of the tradition, but also such a strangthening of it that it becomes acceptable as an historical fact.

Che detail must be taken up here because it was brought up by Mr Rackemann, and was never satisfactorily refuted. In fact it was the one point that Mr Scaife's pamphlet could not explain away entirely, despite valiant attempts.

In 1808 the M.W. boundary of the corner lot was defined as "a corner of a dwelling house formerly built by Joseph Jenno and Sardel Vose." The natural inference, lacking some positive evidence to the contrary, is that the Vose-Fenno house still was there in 1808. This, to the writer's mind, was the strongest single point ande by the

<sup>1.</sup> Toole's History of Milton, page 150. Qeendix # 26

attackers. It can be explained very simply when we realize that the deed of 1808, (Norfolk 63 - 201) reconveys a specific lot, that adjoining the corner lot to the north on Adems St., which was first deeded in August 1764 (Suffolk 106-65). The bounds as specified in the two deeds are interprised throughout, with the single exception of the addition of the word "formerly" in the later deed. Could we have better proof than this to show that the Fenno-Yose house was no longer there?

#### A RECONSTRUCTION OF WHAT PROBABLY HAPPENED.

Let us start our attempt at a solution of this problem by assembling the various facts and traditions which our solution must satisfy. The most important chas as far as the Suffolk Resolves House itself are concerned are:

- 1) It was the house of Daniel Yose. (Record of 1774 meeting.)
- 2) It was the larger half only of the 1950 house. (Huntoon.)
- 3) It was at that time on part of the present site of the Associates Building. (Teels. M.L.Pierce.)
- house, and at a later time the south half was added.

  (Examination of original foundations by E.P.H. and C.F.B. before its collapse in spring of 1952.)

#### Other requirements are:

- 1) The 1760 building on the corner site was used as a shop for fourteen years. (Teals.)
- 2) Wm. Babcock moved the old shop in 1773, and then commenced l.Milton was shifted from Suffolk to Norfolk County in 1793.

building a new shop. (Babcock's account book.)

- 3) The new shop had living quarters on the second floor. (Teele. E.L.Fierce)
- 4) Jeremiah Smith lived in the Suffolk Resolves House after Daniel Vose moved out. (Lydia B.Taft.)
- Dr Holbrook lived in the house both before and after the move to the 1950 site. (Teels.)

with all these requirements in mind let us now attempt to reconstruct what actually happened on the wharf Lane corner between 1760 and 1782. In 1760 Baniel Vose was a young man, just starting to build up a business jointly with his cousin Joseph Fermo. Daniel needed two things: 1) a place to do business, and 2), a place to sleep. The 1760 building furnished both of these needs. (Map E.) At this point it might be well to define two terms which have already appeared. The word "shop" in 1760 and later was used in the British sense, what we today call a "store". Search through many tradesmens' advertisements as collected in Dow's "The Arts and Crafts of New England" (Topsfield 1927), confirms this, as well as the fact that the word "store" then probably meant storehouse.

In 1762 Daniel married Rachel Smith, whose father owned all the land east of Adams Street and north of the Town Landing, except the Fenno-Vose corner lot. At this time, or at least within the next year or two, quarters upstairs over a very active business in a not too large building were no longer suitable for the family of a rising young merchant. In 1764 the father in law deeded to his daughter a second lot adjoining the corner lot to the north (Suffolk 106-65). What is more probable, or in fact certain, than that a suitable small dwelling house was erected there for the Vose family? In 1767 Joseph Fenno was drowned, and Daniel became sole Owner of the business. He prospered, and in 1769 we find him acquiring half of the paper mill

BUBCOCK NORTH LINE OF TOWN LAWDING PERHAPS NOT CLEARLY DEFINED IN 1760. MIGHT 04 DIMENSIONS NOT KNOWN 106-65 & BAKER'S MAPS

TENNO-VOSE LOT OF 1760

A RECONSTRUCTION E.P. HAMILTON OCT 1953 SCALE: 1": 40'

SOURCE: SUFFOLK 95-10, 100-219

from Jeremiah Smith.his father-in-law. (Suffolk 116 - 155).

We can assume, from Teele and from Babcock's bills for work done, that by 1773 his growing business was getting beyond the capacity of the old shop. He required a larger building, but he was still in business, and had certain requirements to keep the business going during during the new construction work.

He now required: 1) room for the new larger building. 2) A place to continue business. 3) A place to live. The new building required some 44 ft. more, land to the north, land on which his dwelling house now stood. Under a deed, recorded February 1775 (Suffolk 131 -192) he secured a further 15 feet of frontage on Adams Street. This additional land was just sufficient to tuck a small house, with some 22 ft frontage on Adams Street, in between the resulting property line and the north end of the new building, Next the old shop was moved somewhere else, probably down wharf Lane a bit, and business continued in it. Then the new 75 ft. long building was started on 25th August 1773. Map F shows the property as 1t is assumed to have existed at the time the Surfolk Resolves were signed. The small dwelling is the larger, or north, half of the 1950 Surfolk Resolves House, turned 90 degrees from its present position.

At some subsequent date, which the writer would assume to have been after the British evacuation of Boston in 1776, the upstairs of the new building was finished as living quarters, and Daniel moved his family into it.

- 1. Since all these land transfers were entirely within the family, there is no need to take dates too literally, actual promise to transfer, or permission to build, might well take place before the final legal accomplishment, and the actual papers would be put off to a convenient time.
- 2 This building, at that time shop downstairs and residence upstairs, was of course the building that finally burned in 1861. It was referred to as his mansion house in Vose's will.

Jeremiah Smith then moved into the small house, let us say in 1777. He lived there for some years, and was later replaced by Dr Holbrock, who married Daniel's daughter Patience in 1733, at which time he probably first occupied the house. In 1785 wm Babcock did some work for Dr Holbrock, including stoning a cellar. This is probably the time when the house was moved to its 1950 site. At some subsequent date, but previous to 1810, when the house can be proven to have existed in its 1950 form, material the southern half was added, and the enlarged house resulted. Ho change then took place until 1950.

The events described require a double move of the dwelling house, one to clear the way for the new enlarged shop, and a second, perhaps to secure more space and dignity for the house of a prominent doctor. It would be such simpler to move the house only once, in 1773 from the lot adjoining the corner directly to the 1950 site, but various statements and traditions would be violated if we accepted this easy solution. All of the moves and changes cutlined above are practical and reasonable. In all cases the neve was a simple ene, down hill, with no obstructions. \*\*Involved\*\*. Finally in all cases everyone concerned was a member of the same family, and only land owned by that family was involved.

The above assumption of events is not the only one that may be made, but it appears to the writer to be the most probable. He finds it hard to believe that either part of the 1950 house was the building of 1760, since we know that one of the 1760 dimensions was greater than any of those of the two components of the present house. On the other hand it is possible that the original 1760 building was itself composed of two separate framespoined together, one of which was later separated and used as a dwelling house.

1. A map by Mather Withington, referred to in Morfolk 36-51, shows the house in its present form. See Appendix #1.

Mr Tucker's study of the 1950 house showed that the southern, or smaller, half was the older, had once been a complete dwelling house by itself, and previous to that had probably been a structure for storage purposes. It is possible that it originally was part of the 1760 building and later a separate dwelling house, which finally was moved to and incorporated into the larger half of the present house, which at that time was on the 1950 site. None of this would be incompatible with the previously outlined assumption of events.

It was remarked earlier in the paper that we probably never will learn exactly what happened to the house and its components during the many years that it was in the village. The best that we can do is to make certain assumptions which are physically possible, in agreement with such facts as can be found in maps and doeds, and which, finally, agree with tradition. The writer believes that in the chain of events outlined above he has fulfilled all of these conditions.

#### SUMMARY

This completes the writer's story. He believes, and trusts that you will agree with him, that he has:

- 1.) Summarized and perhaps clarified Atradition.
- 2)Demolished the claims, contentions and assumptions of the very small group which denied the authenticity of the house.
- 3) Furnished a possible and reasonable explanation of the physical changes that took place on the land between wharf lane and the railroad tracks.

The next time that you pass the old house on its new location on Canton Avenue, and perhaps stop to admire its restored appearance, give thought also for a moment to all the vicisal tudes, removals, and alterations

1. See Appendix #16.

it has survived. Remember also that the official action that was formally taken within those walls was one that led, finally and inevitably, to the Declaration of Independence.

Edward Pflamilton Multan Mass 3 Nov 1953

(Original in Files of Massachusells Misbracel Society)

#### APPENDICES

- 1) Abstracts of deeds and wills.
- 2) Tracing showing location of lots.
- 3) White's Map, 1782.
- 4) Record of 1874 Moeting.
- 5) Newspaper clippings of 1874 Meeting.
- 6) Martin Yose paper of 1912.
- 7) Scaife's pamphlet 1923-24.
- 8) Martin Vose "Brief Statement" of 1924.
- 9) Hearing by Town Committee October 1924.
- 10) Worthington Pord's Report, 1924.
- 10 a) Report of Town Committee.
- 11) Letters, 1898 1924.
- 12) Alexander Hobbs' statement, December 1923.
- 12 a) Alexander Hobba' statement , October 1924.
- 13) John Shields' statement, November 1924.
- 14) Wm. Babcock's bills, 1772 1775.
- 15) Miss hinckley's skatch from memory.
- 16) Arthur Tucker's description of house and ground floor plan.
- 17) Hiss Hinckley's pamphlot of 1908.
- 18) Letters to the "Milton Record". 1923 24.
- 19) Note on Lydia Taft.
- 20) Note on Miss Martin and Miss Vose.
- 20a) Line of descent from Daniel Vose of Saker Pierce -Huntbonand Hrs Taft.
- 21) Baker's Map, 1835.
- 22) Map of Dr Gardner's estate circa 1855.
- 23) Boker's day 1825.
- 24) Miss Mertin's measurements in village, 1912.

### APPENDICES, continued.

- 25) ' Extract from EL. Pierce's book on Lillie family.
- 26) Extract from Teele on Daniel Vosa.
- 27) Study of seating capacity of room.
- 28) Slides.
- 29) Milton Town Moeting, 2 April 1787.
- 30) In which Half of the House was the Gigning ?
- 31) Who Said "This is the House" and Where Did He Say It ?

Unfortunately most of the appardices ghist only as single exhibits and are attached to the original copy only. They few that are available in duplicate are included here.

MR VOSES SHED MRYOSES OUTHOUSE NOTE: A SURVEY OF THIS AREA OMY SCALE: 1":40'~ ORIGINAL: 1"-67.2' PINP OF LANDING PLACE OCT 1782 JOHN WHITE

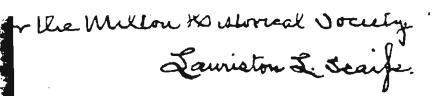
MR VOSES

MR VOSES BARBER'S SHOP

HOUSE

ROAD FROM MILTON TO BOSTON

SLIPSHOD DRAWING IN O'RIGINAL 19 REPEATED. COPIED ON A COMMON SCALE WITH GREAT THIS & THE THREE FOLLOWING MAPS HAVE CARE.



## SUFFOLK RESOLVES HOUSE

By Lauriston L. Scaife

movement has recently been made to secure and permanently preserve, as an historic relic, the so-called "Suffolk Resolves House" situated on Adams street adjoining the Railroad property. This movement was based, of course, upon the assumption that the house in question was in fact the house in which the Suffolk Resolves were adopted. That assumption was denied in your columns by Miss Eleanor P. Martin in a forceful and well written article, in which she referred to a paper written by Miss Vose and herself, for the Milion Historical Society and which was published in the Milton Record December 14, 1912. In her article published November 17, 1923, she says that Miss Vose and herself

"—reached the conclusion that the house of Daniel Vose, where the Resolves were passed, stood on the corner of Adams St. and the way to the Town Landing, and unfortunately was destroyed by

unfortunately was destroyed by fire January 15, 1861."
Of course, if the building where the Resolves were passed was destroyed by fire in 1861, the present so called Suffolk Resolves Building is not what the tablet thereon declares it to be. In the original paper (1912) considerable space is devoted to argument for the conclusion thus stated above. She treats the matter as one to be determined by circumstantial evidence.

"Up to the present time the identity of the building has been veiled in more or less uncertainty.

. . . she here relies upon cir-

led to a theory which, while never abandoned, yet has lacked complete proof until recently. It may interest those unprejudiced minds, who value historic accuracy, to know that this house, about which the movement has been made, was built by Milton's early physician, Dr. Amos Holbrook, eleven years after the passing of the Suffolk Resolves."

Here is an unqualified statement that the house in question "was built by Dr. Amos Holbrook, eleven years after the passing of the Suffolk Resolves."

When treating the subject in 1912, she and Miss Vose gave considerable space to show the basis for the conclusion of less certitude. Here, although she makes the unqualified statement that this house was built eleven years after the passing of the Suffolk Resolves, she offers no evidence whatever in support of the statement, although in the above quotation she impliedly claims that she has obtained "complete proof," which, however, she does not disclose. Thus she leaves the public to rely simply upon her assertion.

Apparently her "complete proof" was requested in a communication printed in the Milton Record January 19, 1924. In the Record of January 26,

"I would say that the real story of the so called Suffolk Resolves House appears to be as follows":

Examination of the details of that article is deferred for the moment; but it may be noted that the conclusion here reached has been modified from the statement of a certainty, to the following:

"After his" [Dr. Holbrook's]
"marriage to Patience Vose, Dr.

Holbrook, in 1785, sold his Milton. Hill estate and the same year, we seem justified in believing, he built the house under discussion."

#### (the italics are ours)

It may be inferred that if the evidence, which she has acquired "recently." had come to her notice before the lengthy article of 1912 was written, that article would have been greatly shortened.

The question at issue is simply whether, or not, the statement on the tablet—'In this mansion,—the Suffolk Resolves were adopted"—Is true, or false.

Obviously the establishment of the fact that that building was not built until eleven years after the Suffolk Resolves were passed, would establish absolutely the falsity of the inscription on the tablet, and should and would stop all further movement on the part of citizens of the Town of Milton to perpetuate such falsity.

Miss Martin says in effect that this inscription is false. She has not lightly taken this position. Moreover she is recognized as particularly well versed in the History of Milton, and her work and writings show a high degree of both ability and accuracy. What she has written on this subject deserves, and should receive, serious examination and consideration.

It will be noted that she has two independent lines of attack:

First, that the house in which the Suffolk Resolves were passed was destroyed by fire in 1861.

Second, that the so called Suffold Resolves House did not exist when the Suffolk Resolves were passed, but was built eleven years after that date.

As the house now standing and known as the Suffolk Resolves House is the real subject of attack, it seems preferable to take up this subject first

Was the so-called Suffolk Resolves House built after those Resolves were passed?

It seems a fair claim that, as the present house has carried on its front the marble tablet declaring that

"In this mansion—the Suffolk Resolves were adopted,"

this touse may be regarded as having become a Milton institution; and that any attack upon it should throw upon the attacking party the burden of proof. Apparently Miss Martin recognizes this position; for when called upon, as shown above, for the evidence upon which she based her conclusion in regard to the identity of the house, she responds promptly in the next issue with the statement of her evidence, saying—

"In 1781 a lot of land adjoining the estate of Daniel Vose was bought for his two year old boy, Daniel Thomas Vose. In 1783 the latter's sister Patience was married to Dr. Amos Holbrook, who was then living in the house, which stood on or near the present site of Mrs. J. Malcolm Forbes' cottage. After his mar-riage to Patience Vose, Dr. Holbrook, in 1785, sold his Milton Hill estate and the same year, we seem justified in believing, he built the house under discussion. An account-book of William Babcock for 1785 shows debits against Dr. Holbrook for stoning the cellar and chimney of a house somewhere in Milton. The census of 1790 indicates Dr. Holbrook's residence as the house next porth of Daniel Vose's, and the Milton Tax Lists of 1801 to 1809 hear witness L that Dr. Holbrook owned the house occupied by H. M. Lisle, while deed of the same period proves that H. M. Lisle lived in the house, which stood on the land of Daniel Thomas Vose."

We have taken the trouble to examine the William Babcock (Badcock) account book.

[Incidentally it may be said that this Is much more than a mere account book. It contains memoranda and records of services in the Revolution which, we think, would give this book a place of honor on the files of any Massachusetts Historical Society,—indeed of any Colonial Historical Society.]

This book is in the possession of one of William Badcock's descendants, Mrs. Frederick M. Hamlin, who kindly furnished me with a copy of the entries referred to by Miss Martin, as follows:

4

#### Lydia Baker Taft.

"Cousin Lydia" to the Pierce family, although you have to go back to Elizabeth Vose Lillie Baker for common ancestry. When I knew her she must have been well into her 80s, but she had an amazing memory. She was most positive in her beliefs, particularly re Mrs W.W.Churchill tells me that in the Suffolk Resolves House. 1924 Ers Taft stated to her that it was an absolute and undemiable fact that the Resolves were signed in that building. She said that she knew this from her father (Edmund J. Baker) who learned it from his father (Edmund Baker) who married Deniel Vose's daughter. (Eliz. Vose Lillie's second marriage). Edmund J. Baker was 17 at the time of Rachel Vose's (wife of Daniel) death, and we have his statement in "History of Dorchester" (see footnote on page 3) that he learned many facts of Hilton history from Rachel Vose. Thus Edmund J. Baker may have learned about the signing direct from Rachel (who most certainly knew) rather than through his father.

#### Appendix # 20

#### Eleanor Martin.

In 1924 she would have been in her 50s, I believe. Still living 1953, a very old lady in poor health.

From reading her papers, statements and letters to the milton Record, I would describe her (in 1924) as a keen and diligent student of local history, perhaps prone to jump at a conclusion she favors without sufficient (or any at all) proof. For instance, she supports the claim against house by "men living must have known the facts", and "we seem justified in believing." She "reasonably supposes....."

In 1950 Mrs W.W. Churchill (from Derby Line, Vt., but married some 50 years to W.W.C. the local engineer-surveyor, and member of old Milton family) told me that the Martin family had always been "off horses" and "agin" everything that most people stood for. Mrs C.has been president of local Womens'Club, and is hobody's fool at all. She and Mr C probably know the old town as well as anyone alive.

It is obvious that Henry B. Martin, (her father) did not get along with some people. See letter #m.B Thurber (in Appendix #11) for statement as to Martin - Safford row. Martin owned building and land adjoining S.R. House 1950 site to the north (Railroad between two lots after 1847 (approximately)). In 1900 he had a store here and was also Town clerk. Had his good points, for he left a surpriseingly large sum to local charity in form of an old persons none. His daughter Eleanor was operator of this house until recently.

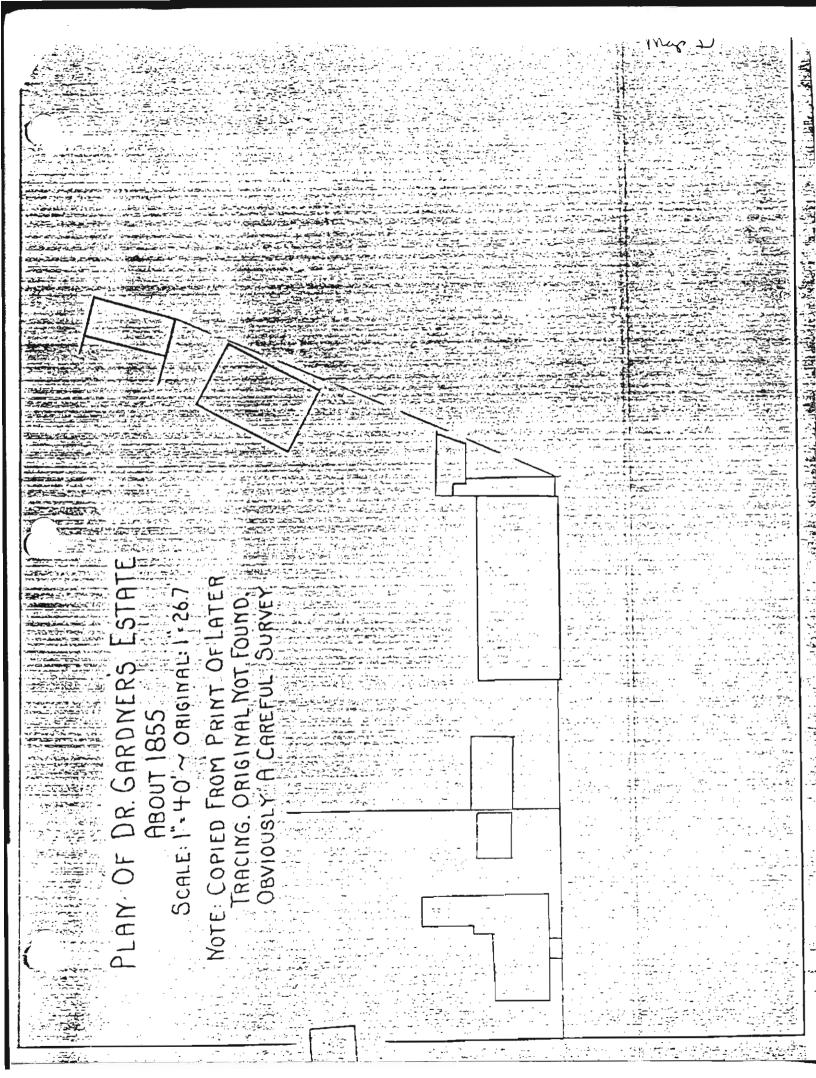
Deacon Nathan Martin, Eleanor's grandfather, came to the village as a school teacher in 1810. In 1817 he started a store. Was judge

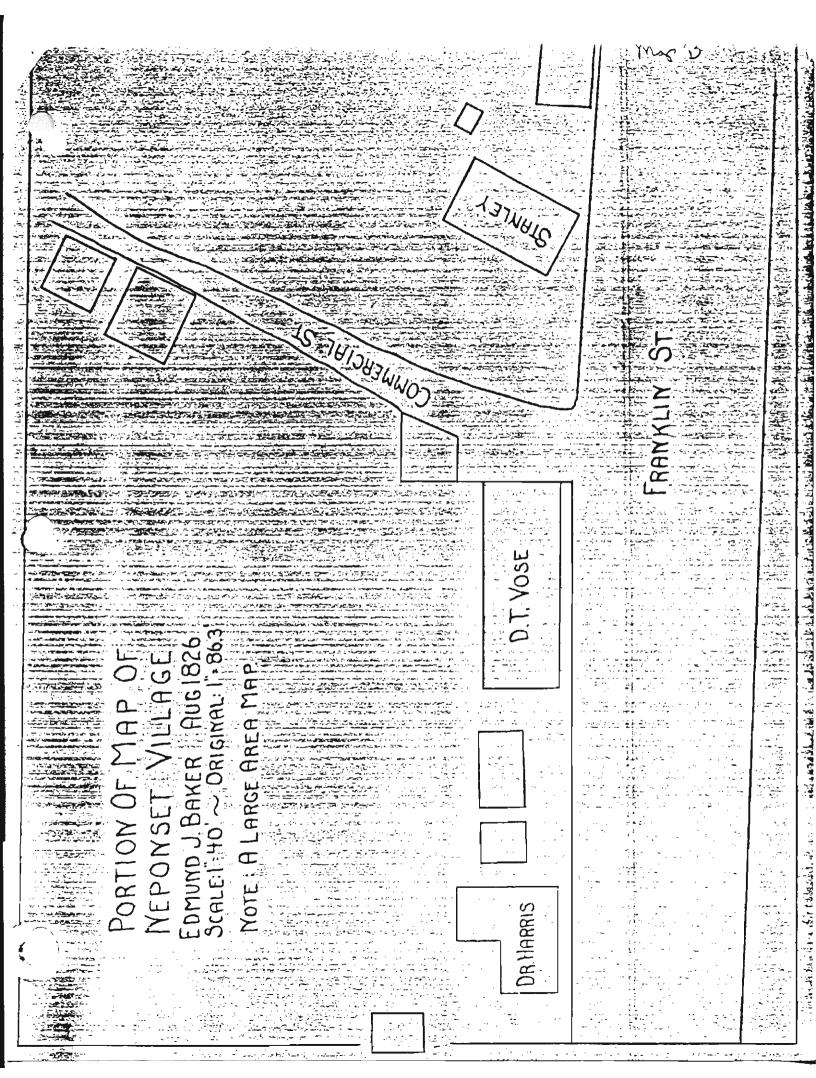
Appendix # 20, continued.

of district court, kajor 1st Rag't M.V.M. and an ardent temperance worker. (Statement of H.B. Martin in Hurd's "History of Norfolk Co." Phila. 1884)

#### Ellen Vose.

I can learn almost notaling about her. She evidently was a competent genealogist. Think that she was very much second fiddle in the effeir of 3.R. controversy. Born 1850. Brother van a green sto green house of florist business. The left Millon about 1926. The Vase Genealogy Seems to be alvery well prepared book.





Appendix # 25

"At the house of Daniel Vose, still standing though on a slightly different site, were passed, Sept.9,1774, the "Suffolk Resolves" drawn by Joseph Warren."

P. 19.Waj.John Lillie and the Fillie Family of Boston. Edw.L Fierce Cambridge 1896.

Appendix # ab

#### DANIEL VOSE

"Daniel Vose married Rachel, daughter of Jersmith Smith. In company with Joseph Fenno, he bought of Mr Smith a piece of land on the east side of Adams Streat, near the way leading to the public landing place, where the pump now stands. There they erected a building serving as a dwelling place and store. In this building they traded for fourteen years. In the mean time Mr. Fenno having been drowned, and the business increasing greatly on the hands of Mr. Vose, he was led to put up a store seventy-five feet long and forty-five feet wide, with conveniences for residence above, occupying meanly the same ground as Associates "Mall. This was burned in 1860. The cli house was removed and enlarged, and now stands next to the Milton depot, memorable as the building in which the "Suffelk Resolves" were passed Sept. 9, 1774. It is now owned by the Mon. N. F. Safford. Or Holbrook compiled the old house before its removal, and also, for a time, who house in its present location."

Page 150."History of Milton ."
. eleeT. N.A.
. Boaton 1887.

#### APPENDIX # 29

Milton Town Meeting, 2 April 1787.

" Capt Daniel Vose presented the Town with a petition which is as follows: To The Inhabitants of the Town of Milton, Gentlemen: This petition humbly sheweth that at a late Twon Meeting it was voted to establish the line between Milton Landing Place and myself according to the report of a committee chosen for that purpose: And whereas said line takes in a corner post, the pump and two or three feet of buildings much to the disadvantage of your petitioner. Therefore under those circumstances your patitioner requests that the Town would consider the detriment and the very great expense that would attend the removing those buildings, which would be of no service to the Town or any other individual, and that they in their goodness would relinquish to your petitioner the small quantity of land that his buildings occupies, he making compensation for the same as shall be edjudged by disinterested appraisers, and that the flown would appoint some one person or persons and legally empower the same to give a quitclaim to your petitioner of said land.

Town voted to grant patition.

Milton Town Meeting, 14 May 1787

Lemuel How asked reconsideration of this sale and lease of the land to himself. Sale was upheld.

#### Appendix 430.

#### IN WHICH HALF OF THE MOUSE WAS THE SIGNING 3/

I am quite sure that I have seen a statement by Huntcon (?) that at the time of the signing the house consisted only of the northern half, consisting of the large room and the hall. I cannot find the statement again, and it is possible that I am thinking of the statement in the 1874 "Dedham Transcript" that the signing was in the hall and the parlor at the right of the entrance". On the other hand I am positive of a printed statement somewhere that the house then consisted only of one half, and I am almost equally sure that it referred to the northern half. I find this in my notes but I failed to record source.

Re the "Transcript" statement of parlor to right of entrance and hall, right depends upon whether one faces in or out. Formally one would expect facing in. If so, the statement is impossible value the hall was integral with the northern or left hand room. Hobbs says that Safford told him that the northern or lefthand room (where Hobbs had his shop for many years) was the room of the signing. If we face out, then the northern room is referred to and everything agrees.

This matter is of minor importance since the major question is only one as to whether or not the signing was in the house, or in a house which now constitutes part of the house, which part being of some interest, but not material to the main point.

I believe that the large room to one's left on entering and the adjoining hall, was the place of signing.

#### Appendix # 31.

#### Who Said "This is the House" and Where Did He Bay It ?

- The record of the 1874 meeting: "within the very walls where the Resolves were passed". appears in the record of the meeting, and presumably was agreed to by all the speakers. We have no record of exactly what the speakers said. Can we tie agreement down to specific speakers, and where?
- Edw. L. Pierce. In "Maj. John Lillie and the Lillie Family of Boston." See appendix # 25.
- D.T.V:Huntoon. In article by "Historicus" in Dedham Transcript.

  See appendix # 9, page 2, where we also find statements

  by Ned Huntoon that his father wrote article under

  this pen name.
- Edzund J. Baker. Verbally to his daughter Lylia Taft, appendix 9 and appendix 11.
- Nathaniel M. Safford. Verbally to Alexander Hobbs. See appendix #12.