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### The Bracketts of Peaks Island : An Introduction.

Reta Morrill

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## THE BRACKETTS OF PEAKS ISLAND

### AN INTRODUCTION

The Brackett family has been very prominent on Peaks Island. The island was even called "Brackett's Island" for awhile. The family members are descendents of George Cleeve, one of the first settlers of Portland. The immigrant ancestor was Anthony Brackett, who came to Boston from Scotland about 1629. His sons, Anthony and Thomas came to Falmouth (Portland) sometime around 1662. Anthony married Anne Mitton and Thomas married her sister, Mary Mitton. Their parents were Michael Mitton who had married Elizabeth Cleeve, daughter of George Cleeve. Thomas Brackett was killed by Indians in 1676 and his wife and children carried off. She died soon afterwards, but the children survived and were returned. One of the children, Joshua Brackett, who was 2 years old at the time of his capture, became the father of Joshua, Jr., and Anthony, of whom the Bracketts and Trotts of Peaks Island are descended.

The pages following are from a book entitled "Brackett Geneology" and describe above narrative in far more detail.

Thanks are due to Reta Morrill who allowed us to copy this information and whose family this is.

## CHAPTER II.

ANTHONY BRACKETT, THE IMMIGRANT,  
OF PORTSMOUTH.

Nearly all persons by the name of Brackett who reside in the States of Maine and New Hampshire, and persons residing elsewhere whose forefathers of that name lived in either of those States, descend from the immigrant, Anthony Brackett of Portsmouth. In 1640, he, with several others who lived in the present limits of Portsmouth, or in the vicinity, signed a deed for a glebe; he settled in New Hampshire several years prior to 1640. There is also mention of a William Brackett as a settler near Portsmouth at as early, if not at an earlier, time than is known that Anthony Brackett came to America. Whether William and Anthony Brackett are identical in person, or whether Anthony was son of William, or was any kin to him, are matters of speculation and conjecture. The uncertainty, or lack of certainty, upon these subjects, as well as pertaining to the time and in what capacity, Anthony Brackett came to America, make of interest in these connections, the early history of the first settlement in New Hampshire, as it sheds all the light we have on these questions; also said history is of interest to us, as at the place where the settlement was made, Anthony Brackett there dwelt all his life from the time of his coming to America, a period of over fifty-five years.

One David Thomson, a Scotchman, in the spring of 1623, made the first permanent settlement in New Hampshire, at a place called Little Harbor, near the mouth of the Piscataqua river, on its south side. In the year 1622, he entered into an agreement with some merchants of Plymouth, England, who had obtained a lease for a term of five years, of a tract at the mouth of the Piscataqua river as a site for fisheries, to superintend their enterprise, and during the following year, in the bark "Jonathan," came to America with the men in the employ of the merchants. At Little Harbor he erected fish-stages and built a house; remained there during the term of the lease; then removed to the island in Boston harbor, which bears his name, and died there in the year 1628. When is considered that there is proof, by tradition, that the early immigrant Bracketts were Scotchmen, the fact is of moment that the leader of the first colonists to New Hampshire who settled where Anthony Brackett lived, was himself a Scotchman, and gives rise to the conjecture that the first Brackett in America came as early as 1623, with Thomson.

Soon after, or about the time of the departure of Thomson from Little Harbor, the enterprise passed into the hands of the Laconia Company, an unincorporated association, of which Sir Ferdinando Gorges and Capt. John Mason were members. Its patent from the council of the New England company bears date November 17, 1629.

Mention has been made of the deed for a glebe; by it were conveyed to the wardens of the Episcopal church for its benefit and the benefit of the local clergyman, fifty acres of land in Strawberry Bank on which then stood the church building; the land now is part of the city of Portsmouth. The signers to the deed were Francis Williams, governor, Ambrose Gibbons, assistant, William Jones, Reginald Fernald, John Crowther, Anthony Bracket, Michael Chatterton, John Wall, Robert Pudington, Henry Sherburne, John Langden, Henry Taler, John Jones, William Berry, John Pickering, John Billings, John Wotten, Nicholas Row, Matthew Coe and John Palmer.

Of the early history of the church little is known; at intervals, a clergyman for a few years served the people as their pastor. Anthony was a member of the church until his death; none of its records of interest to us are extant, and nothing is contained in the meager scraps which have been preserved, relative to the history of the colony antecedent to its union with the Bay colony, that afford us any light as to Anthony or his family. Also, the town records of Strawberry Bank (Portsmouth) from 1641 to 1649 are not extant; it is not known with certainty in what part of the town he resided prior to 1649. However, the evidence we have, warrants the belief that he lived in the vicinity of Little Harbor and the "Pascatawa" house; its site was on a peninsula now called Odiorne's point, formed by Little Harbor on the northeast and a creek on the south side; to the west was a large tract of salt marsh. It is mentioned that John Berry was the first settler within the limits of the present town of Rye, near Little Harbor, "followed by Seavey, Rand and Brackett," in 1635. It is probable that the persons named were the first to whom as colonists, land was allotted. It is ventured that the persons who, prior to 1640, located near Little Harbor, by their choice settled there, they having been in some capacity connected with the fisheries carried on at the place, and had their habitation there from the time of their coming to America; that upon the discontinuing of the fisheries, they turned their attention to farming and stock raising. From 1649 until his death it is known that Anthony lived but a mile or so south of the harbor, west of Sandy beach, on or near the stream, Saltwater brook, and on Brackett lane, now Brackett road. It is traditional that he lived near the ocean.

In the year 1649 at a meeting of the selectmen, held August 13, was voted "by common consent" a grant of a lot to "Anthony Brakit", lying between the lands belonging to Robert Pudington and William Berry "at the head of the Sandy Beach Fresh Reiver at the western branch thereof."

At a meeting of the inhabitants of the town held January 13, 1652, a grant of thirty acres was voted to "Anthony Brackite." March 4th following, at a town meeting the selectmen were directed "at the next fit time" to lay out the land "unto the people of Sandy Beach, vid. unto William Berry, Anthony Brackit, Thomas Sevy, Francis Rand and James Johnson."

Under date of March 17, 1653, the town records read that a grant was made of land near Sandy beach, by the people, "unto James Johnson, of medow 20 ackers; unto Olliver Trimmings, 4 ackers; unto Thomas Sevy, of medow 8 ackers, and upland 8 ackers;

unto William Berry, of medow unto his ould hous that is by William Sevy's, 6 ackers; unto Anthony Brakit, upland 30 ackers adjoynge unto his hous and of medow 20 ackers more; unto William Berry, from the littell creek next unto Goodman Brakits as much as shall amount unto ten ackers of medow between the sayd creke and the creeks mouth upon the south sid thearof, and 4 ackers of \* \* \* \* \* wheare he hath alreedy ploued upon the north sid of the creek; mor upland to ajoyn his house upon the necke, 26 ackers; unto James Rand, medow 8 ackers, upland 20 akers for a lotte."

The foregoing discloses who were the near neighbors of Anthony Brackett. He was granted by the town at meeting held March 20, 1656, "50 acres more land than his former grant to join with his hous and to lye in such form as it may enclose his hous, so that it be not in any man's former grant." Also was granted to him February 3, 1660, one hundred acres under provision approved by the people at town meeting granting such amount of land to each head of a family "who had come to dwell in the town." A further provision, approved at the same town meeting, was that thirteen acres of land should be allowed to each son in a family over the age of twenty-one, to each son under that age, if married, and to each daughter over the age of eighteen years. Under this provision Anthony Brackett, Jr. was granted thirteen acres and Elinor Brackett thirteen acres. They were children of Anthony, the immigrant. In all, our ancestor was granted over two hundred acres of land. The town was so sparsely settled at the time the grants were made, that the several grants to each person could adjoin one another and the whole lay in quite compact form. March 31, 1650, Anthony deeded land and buildings at Strawberry Bank (Portsmouth) to William Cotton. This would warrant a surmise that he had lived in Portsmouth prior to 1650, and when granted land in 1649 he sold his property in Portsmouth and removed to Sandy beach in the same town. September 19, 1678, he purchased land at "Sandie Beach from Henry Sherburne."

He has usually been designated as "Anthony, the selectman." In the year 1655, at a town meeting held March 8, Anthony, Thomas Wallford, William Seavy, James Johnson and John Webster were chosen selectmen for one year. On July 10 following, three of said selectmen signed a warrant for collection of a tax to pay the salary of the local minister, the Rev. Mr. Brown. Thomas Wallford signed by mark thus, "V." Anthony "Brakit" signed by mark thus, "A." In February, 1656, a meeting of the selectmen was held. Three of their number signed records by mark; James Johnson signing thus, "I." All the selectmen, except Thomas Webster lived near Sandy beach. The following year one only of their number was chosen selectman, viz., James Johnson. Several years subsequently Anthony was again chosen selectman; mention of the fact will be made in its proper connection.

The extant town and parish records relative to constable rates for collection of taxes to pay the minister's salary, show his name in the lists for the years 1677 and 1688; the tax, eighteen shillings, which he was assessed for the year 1688, is considerably in excess of the average amount of tax paid by other townsmen for the purpose. In 1666 he subscribed £1, 10s, for support of the minister.

The blow fell on Tuesday, September 28, 1691. On that day were killed Anthony Brackett and his wife; also, on that day were made captives two children of his son, John Brackett.

The Indians effected a landing, perhaps, to the south of Little Harbor, and from there directed their attack on the settlers at their homes, situated on what was then known as Brackett lane, now Brackett road. Fifteen bodies of the slain were found and it was thought that at least three persons were consumed in the burning of the houses. The Indians killed one or more small children by dashing out their brains against a large rock which stood on what is now Wallis road, near Brackett road. It is traditional that for many years the rock bore the stains of the blood of the victims; the rock has long since been removed in improving the road.

The story of the attack as told by an ancient chronicler is as follows:—

"The sons of Francis Raud went a fishing; the sons of ould Goodman Brackett were in the salt marsh and with no suspicion of danger. The settlers went about their usual vocations. Early in the afternoon a party of Indians came from the eastward in canoes, landed at Sandy Beach, left the garrison there unmolested, and attacked the homes of the defenseless ones, killing and capturing twenty-one persons. Among the killed was Francis Rand, one of the first settlers. When his sons came in from fishing they followed the Indians over to Bracketts, fired upon them and frightened them away. The sons of Anthony Brackett who had the guns with them ran to the garrison at Odiorne's Point."

The garrison house was the place to which the people fled for safety in the event of an attack by the Indians. The persons referred to in the account as the "sons of Anthony Brackett" were John and Joshua Brackett, the latter a grandson of Anthony. They were in the salt marsh near to the garrison house, and hastened there with their arms as directed to do in case of an attack, to defend those who had escaped the Indians. The attacking force, estimated at from twenty to forty, probably exceeded those of the settlement capable of bearing arms. If the garrison house was taken all were lost—consigned to death or captivity; hence, the precaution of the assembling of the armed men at the garrison house to defend it and the aged, the women and children who fled there for safety against the attack of the remorseless and vigilant foe.

Fugitives fled to Portsmouth, and Capt. John Pickering with the local militia hastened to the scene but did not arrive until after the Indians had made their escape with their captives. No less than fifteen persons were slain; their bodies were gathered in one place and buried in separate graves.

Sandy beach, in the town of Rye, is about four miles south of the city of Portsmouth. It is now a delightful drive from Portsmouth to the beach along a fine country road bordered by profitable farms well kept in a good state of cultivation; there are fine shade trees and abundant orchards along the way; the country thereabouts is level and the soil is a rich loam. There is an electric car line through Portsmouth, Rye and Hampton. The people of Rye owe a large part of their prosperity to the great number of summer boarders who flock there annually. Straw's point and Concord point are now covered with summer cottages. The New Hampshire State boule-

ward, which is now being built along the coast, will pass along Sandy beach on land between the beach and the spot where the remains of Anthony, the immigrant, are buried. As to this place, Mrs. Grace Brackett Scott, of New Market, thus writes about it:—

"Next we drove to Rye and found Saltwater brook; close by it, between Brackett road (which was the first road laid out through Rye) and the sea, in the salt marsh, is a little piece of higher ground covered with bushes; on parting the bushes we found the rough stones which mark the graves of our ancestor, Anthony Brackett, and fourteen other victims of the same massacre. The fifteen graves entirely cover the little knoll which is entirely surrounded by the salt marsh. My brother remarked that Anthony could not have chosen a surer resting place forever to lie undisturbed by the hand of man. Surely no use will ever be made of that spot unless it becomes necessary for the people of Rye to make more land, in which event those remains will be covered deeper.

Saltwater brook is a small stream; a man can step across it; two narrow planks bridge it for the carriage road; it is between Concord point and Straw's point; Concord point is the same as Sander's point and Straw's point is the same as Jocelyn's neck or Locke's neck."

Frequently it happens that men in the anticipation of death, or of other unforeseen and unexpected direful happening, unknowingly make preparation for such calamitous event or make manifestations in some way of their prescience of their fate. But a few days before his death, viz., on September 11, 1691, Anthony Brackett executed his will. It reads as follows:—

"In the name of God, amen. Ye 11th day of Sept., 1691.

I, Anthony Brackett sen<sup>r</sup>, being in perfect memory doe make this my Last will & testament, Comiting my soul unto the hands of my Redemer, the Lord Jesus Christ & my body to the earth.

Item: I give and bequeath to my daughter Jane hains, fouer acors in part of marsh, being more or Les, which shee formerly made use of, and so upward to ye head of ye cove, and to young oxsen, After my desece.

Item: I give and bequeath that three acres of marsh mor or Les, being at black poynt, to my daughter, Ellener Johnson, which marsh I have a deed I do assign over to my daughter, Ellenor, and she to take it into her possession After my desease.

Item: I give and bequeath unto my grandaughter kasia bracket three cows to be payed at age of Eighteen years or day of marridg.

I give to my grand daughter Roose Johnson on heffer.

I give to my grand son samuel bracket one heffer, all the Rest of my cattle and sheep I doe give to be Equally divided among the Rest of my gran Children of what is Lefe After my wiffs deseac. I doo here ordain & make my sonn John Bracket, Executor of this my Last will & testament and him to pay all my Just debts & together all debts which is Justly dew unto me. my housall goods I Leve with my wiff for hur one use. to this I set my hand.

Anthony Brackett

Witnesses.

Nathaniel drack by his mark

John Lock. present

major vaughn

Mr. Rich. martyyn

portsm<sup>th</sup> ye 11th of July 1692.

John Lock came and made oath that hee was present & saw Anthony bracket sign & did declare the above wretten to be his Last will and Testament & that hee was of a well desposing mind at same time; also testefyeth that Nathanel drack was present & set his hand as a witness.

JOHN PICKERIN, Recordr.

The testator disposed of but little real estate by the will; on July 20, 1686, he deeded his farm and buildings at Sandy beach to his son John, — "grandson Joshua to be paid a portion" after decease of himself and wife. It will be observed that he remembered all his several grandchildren in his will though he named but three, perhaps his favorites. He lived to a ripe old age; sad was it, indeed, that his lot, and that of his aged wife, was not to pass quietly away surrounded by his children and grandchildren, instead of being murdered by persons whom he never had harmed, and who, probably, would never have harmed him or his, had they known him. Issue:

1. Anthony, Jr. See chapter III.
2. Elinor; mar. 26 Dec., 1661, John Johnson. Issue:
  - 1st. John, b. 2 Nov., 1662.
  - 2d. Rosamond, b. 10 June, 1665.
  - 3d. Hannah, b. 7 Feb., 1670.
  - 4th. James, 13 Nov., 1673.
  - 5th. Ebenezer, b. in 1676.
3. Thomas. See chapter IV.
4. Jane; mar. (1st) 19 Apr., 1667, Mathias Haines; (2nd) 28 Dec., 1671, Isaac Marston, b. 1650, d. 1689. Issue:
  - 1st. Samuel, b. 22 Dec., 1674.
  - 2d. Joshua, b. 3 Apr., 1678.
  - 3d. Mathias, b. in 1679.
  - 4th. Jane.
  5. John. See division I.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THOMAS BRACKETT OF FALMOUTH.

Thomas Brackett, the second son, and perhaps the third child of Anthony Brackett, the immigrant (see chapter II), was probably born at Sandy beach, then of the town of Strawberry Bank (Portsmouth), now a part of the present town of Rye, in New Hampshire, about the year 1635, if not earlier, and removed to Casco, Me., soon after 1662. Little is known of him prior to his marriage to Mary Mitton, daughter of Michael Mitton. Subsequent to this event he became prominent in the town, was one of the selectmen in 1672. His wife's mother, Elizabeth Mitton, daughter of George Cleeve, married for her second husband, a Mr. Harvey. Mrs. Harvey lived with Thomas in 1671; during that year he entered into an agreement for her care and maintenance, and in consideration received from her a deed of land. The tract was situated on the southerly side of the upper part of the Neck; it had been occupied by Michael Mitton for several years. The house stood near to where the gas house is in Portland. There is no doubt that Thomas prospered in his undertakings; how well is shown by his marriage into the Cleeve-Mitton family and by his having been chosen as selectman. The office at the time was an important one, as the selectmen of the town were authorized to make grants of land in the town. While he held the office in 1672, his brother Anthony received a grant of four hundred acres. As to how long he held the office or as to what other office he held, nothing is known, as the records of the town covering the period, are not extant. Probably there were few men in Casco who had brighter prospects before them or were more happily situated than he, when the fateful year, 1676, brought ruin, desolation and death to his and him.

When, on the capture of Captain Anthony Brackett and his family, August 11, 1676, the Indians divided, a part passing around Back cove and a part onto the Neck, the first house in the course of the latter was Thomas Brackett's, on the southerly side of the Neck. Between the houses of the two brothers, was an unbroken forest. The accounts relative to their line of march are conflicting. It is thought that the Indians went along the northerly side of the Neck until they had passed the farm of Thomas Brackett. In their course they met John, the son of George Munjoy, and another, Isaac Wakely, and shot the two. Others who were with or near them, fled down the Neck to give the alarm, and thereupon the Indians retreated in the direction of Thomas Brackett's house. That morning three men were on their way to Anthony Brackett's farm to harvest grain. They probably rowed over the river from Purpooduck point and had left their canoe near Thomas Brackett's house. From there they crossed the Neck towards Anthony's house, to where they went near enough to learn of the attack by the Indians on his family; the three hastened

onto the Neck, perhaps over the course pursued by the Indians, to give the alarm. On their way they heard guns fired "whereby it seems two men (perhaps Munjoy and Wakely) were killed." Thereupon the three fled in the direction of Thomas Brackett's house to reach their canoe. The Indians reached the farm, nearly at the same time as did the men, who saw Thomas Brackett shot down while at work in his field. Two of the men succeeded in reaching the canoe; the third, not so fleet of foot, hid in the marsh and witnessed the capture of Thomas Brackett's wife and children. The three men escaped. Among the Indians who were concerned in the killing of Thomas Brackett, was Megunnaway, one of the braves of King Philip. All of the residents on the Neck, except Thomas Brackett, his family, John Munjoy and Isaac Wakely, succeeded in reaching Munjoy's garrison house, which stood on Munjoy's hill at the end of the Neck. From there they passed over to Bangs' Island, then called Andrew's Island. Among the fugitives were Lieutenant Thaddeus Clark and his family. While thus huddled on the island, Clark wrote a letter to Mrs. Harvey, then living in Boston. So accurately does it describe the horrors of the day and the deplorable situation of the survivors, that a copy is here given:

"Honored mother —

After my duty and my wife's presented to your selfe these may inform you of our present health, being when other of our friends are by barbarous heathen cut off from having a being in this world. The Lord of late hath removed his witnesses against us, and hath dealt very bitterly with us in that we are deprived in the Society of our nearest friends by the breaking in of the adversare against us. Anthony and Thomas Brackett and their whole families were killed and taken by the Indians, we know not how; it is certainly known to us that Thomas is slain and his wife and children carried away captive; and of Anthony and his family we have no tidings, and, therefore, think that they might be captivated the night before because of their remoteness of their habitation from the neighbourhood \* \* \* There are of men slain, 11; and of women and children 23 killed and taken. We that are alive are forced upon Mr. Andrew's, his island to secure our own and the lives of our families \* \* \*. Having no more at present, but desiring your prayers to God for the preservation of us in these times of danger, I am,

Your dutiful son

From Casco Bay 14-6-76.

THADDEUS CLARK."

Thomas Brackett was about forty years old at the time of his death. His wife, we are informed, died during the first year of her captivity. During the course of the war, probably after her death, the children were redeemed by their grandfather, Anthony Brackett.

Following futile efforts to negotiate a peace with the Indians, the Bay colony sent a force, under the command of Major Waldron and Major Frost, against the Indians at Maquoit bay, where it arrived in Feb., 1677; there were skirmishes and minor conflicts resulting in no particular advantage to either side. One of the purposes of the expedition also, was to conclude a treaty of peace. In the latter part of February, the Indians met the English at Pemaquid to enter into negotiations, as the former pretended; that neither had any confidence

in the other is shown by the agreement that each party was to lay aside its arms and submit to a mutual search. At the meeting in the afternoon of Feb. 26, 1677, "Waldron espying the point of a lance under a board, searched further when he found other weapons hidden also, and taking one he brandished it toward them exclaiming 'perfidious wretches you intended to get our goods and then kill us did you?' They were thunder-struck! Yet one more daring than the rest seized the weapon and strove to rest it from Waldron's hand; a tumult ensued in which his life was much endangered. Major Frost laying hold of Megunnaway, one of the barbarous murderers of Thomas Brackett and his neighbors, hurried him into the hold of the vessel \* \* \* ; reinforcements arrived from the vessels and the Indians scattered in all directions \* \* \* Megunnaway, grown hoary in crimes, was shot." (Williamson's History of Maine, Vol I, p. 547, citing Hubbard's Indian Wars.)

Thomas Brackett had at least four children, all born in Falmouth. William Willis, in his History of Portland, on the authority of the Rev. Mr. Hubbard, author of Hubbard's Indian Wars, mentions three children only, viz., Joshua, Sarah and Mary. In Chapman's Descendants of Leonard Weeks, it is stated that Thomas Brackett had four children; that his wife and three children were carried into captivity, which children were redeemed by their grandparents. In Austin's One Hundred and Sixty Allied Families, we read that Thomas Brackett was killed August 11, 1676; "that his wife died the same year shortly after her return from captivity and the children went to Portsmouth, probably to the care of their grandfather. Three children are mentioned as captured; but to this number should be added a fourth, doubtless, viz., Samuel, for he could have been the son of none other than Thomas, as Anthony Jr., had no son Samuel and John could hardly have had children born early enough."

John, the son of Anthony, himself had a son Samuel. The name was not that of any member of the family at the birth of Samuel, the son of John, other than of Samuel, the son of Thomas. It is presumed, as the latter for a time lived with John at the home of Anthony, the immigrant, in Portsmouth, that John named his son Samuel for his nephew Samuel. The first mention of Samuel in existing records, is that of his marriage in 1694, in Berwick, then a part of the town of Kittery. It is believed that from a period in his childhood, until about the time of his marriage, he lived with his aunt Martha, the wife of John Grove or Graves. Also, one of the daughters of Thomas resided in Kittery after her marriage, and, perhaps, for a time prior to her marriage. James H. Brackett, the father of the writer, was born in 1807. He lived with his grandfather, Deacon James Brackett, for seventeen years (in his father's home), until the latter's death in 1825, past the age of ninety-eight years; his opportunity for information as to his ancestry was excellent, as his grandfather, Deacon James Brackett, had lived with his grandfather, the said Samuel Brackett, from 1725 until his death in 1753. Whatever doubts may arise from lack of record evidence showing that Samuel Brackett was a son of Thomas Brackett, they are dispelled by the force of the testimony of James H. Brackett upon this point, as competent as he was to testify thereon. He stated that Thomas Brackett who was killed at Casco, was his ancestor; that Samuel Brackett of Berwick

was said Thomas' son. His source of information was his grandfather, Deacon James Brackett, who had talked with his grandfather, Samuel Brackett of Berwick. No oral tradition could be more certain and positive.

It would be supposed that records of deeds show the relationship between Joshua of Greenland, and Samuel of Berwick, as the former purchased the interests of his mother's heirs in the Mitton estate. The record of one deed only, that of Mary Mitchell to Joshua, is found. Issue:

1. Joshua. See chapter VII.
2. Sarah; mar. John Hill of Portsmouth; perhaps he was the John Hill who served with Joshua in the garrison at Oyster river.
3. Samuel, b. in 1672. See chapter VIII.
4. Mary; mar. Christopher Mitchell of Kittery, who d. in 1743; she d. before 1694, as he had son b. in that year by a 2nd wife; had dau. Mary who mar. 14 Nov., 17—, Chas. Brown. In deed dated 18 Nov., 1709, made by Christopher Mitchell as guardian, is recited that he was formerly mar. to Mary Brackett, dau. of Thomas, by whom he had dau. Mary, and deed was made to release daughter's share in estate of Thomas to Joshua Brackett of Greenland.

## CHAPTER VII.

### LIEUTENANT JOSHUA BRACKETT OF PORTSMOUTH.

Joshua Brackett, the son of Thomas Brackett (see chapter IV), and grandson of Anthony Brackett, the immigrant, was born in Falmouth. The year of his birth is not known; he, himself, probably did not know with certainty his age, for all town and parish records were destroyed and both of his parents died during his childhood, his father having been killed by the Indians and his mother having succumbed to the hardships of captivity while in the hands of the same foe. With his mother, his brother and sisters, Joshua was taken captive on that fateful day, August 11, 1676. With the Indians he remained until he was redeemed by his grandfather Anthony Brackett, in whose family he resided for several years. We have nothing certain as to his captivity, either as to its length or where he was confined. Probably not until the close of the war did he reach his grandfather's house at Sandy beach. His mother had passed away; all the personal effects of his father had been destroyed; the farm and large tracts on the Neck alone remained to him, and when he arrived at an age to be able to cultivate and improve them, war commenced with the Indians, which, but for a short interval of peace, lasted for twenty-five years. From this condition of privation and destitution he arose to become one of the richest men in the province, in his day.

By his grandfather he was reared. He became sufficiently skilled in the English language to write with ease and to express himself in good diction. We have no better, and want no better, evidence of the excellent qualities and aspirations of Anthony Brackett, the immigrant, than is afforded by the degree of culture attained by his children and grandchildren who were his charges, principally through the advantages he bestowed upon them. During the nine years which followed the peace of 1679, the boy was in good hands, was being well instructed and carefully trained by his aged Episcopalian grandparents, and petted and comforted by aunts, uncles and cousins. Then commenced the war of 1688, and Falmouth was in danger. The emergency of the times called him to Falmouth where was the gallant Anthony Brackett, his uncle. Imagine him shirking duty, if you can, permitting others to defend the town where he was born, where was the home of his father, all that he owned, and he remaining at Sandy beach. He went to Falmouth and became a partisan follower of his uncle on those questions over which the conflict waxed strong and split in twain the settlers of the devoted town. At the time, the contest between the parties was over

the appointment of their military officers. A petition dated May 2, 1689, to which Joshua was a signer, was presented to the insurrectionary authorities at Boston, opposing the continuation in command of their local military force, of Colonel Tyng and Captain Sylvanus Davis. The opposition to these officers was not so much on the account that they had been appointed by Sir Edmund Andross, as on the account that they had profited, as beneficiaries of his harsh civil government in Falmouth, at the expense of its people. The conflict of the parties had taken successively the form of contests over different questions, and at this critical juncture the contest in the matter of appointing officers was deplorably virulent and untimely. Joshua was probably past the age of twenty-one when he signed the petition. It is not thought that boys who had not attained their majority would have been permitted, in those days, to petition the officials of the Bay colony on so grave a subject. How long he remained in Falmouth is not known, probably until after the danger had passed; was with his uncle when he fell and thereupon hastened, on that frosty morning in September, to the Neck, to give the alarm on the approach of the Indians; took part in the battle; attended the funeral of his uncle, and then returned to Sandy beach. With the arrival of spring came the news of the fall of fort Loyal at Falmouth, and of the death and captivity of relatives. Let us not again draw the pall of that terrible last Tuesday of September, 1691; for, to write of it once, even at this date, is sickening. Young Joshua was there; "The sons of auld goodman Brackett were in the salt marsh and with no suspicion of danger," reads the old chronicle. The sparse and meager accounts we have of those stirring times, hardly afford us a glimpse of young Joshua. But this we have, showing that he was doing his part, stationed at the most exposed point, at the height of the conflict:

"April 1, 1697, Thes may inform Howe it may conceren that these fouer men hear named, William pomeri, John Hill, Richard place and Joshua bracket sarved thair majesty Shoulders in garrison at Oister Riew (Durham) in the provens of new Hampshire in the yer 1696. Richard pomri, five weekes, the other thre fouer weekes a pece; thay Hev. Had former debenters for the sam time but Lost. John Woodman, Captain."

About the year 1698, he was married; his oldest child was born in 1700. He continued to live in Greenland until his death in 1749, was a resident of the town for nearly seventy years. At times during the war commencing in 1701 and ending in 1715, he did some soldiering; was chosen lieutenant of a local military company; and hence, we find him spoken of as Lieutenant Joshua Brackett. During twenty-eight years of the first forty-five years of his life, there was continuous war with the Indians. The horrifying accounts of the bloody conflicts in night and day, during all seasons of the year; of murder, rapine, torture and bloody reprisals; of the most shameful treachery on the part of the English as well as on the part of their determined foe,—the reading them two hundred years after the scenes they depict, took place, gives one the nightmare. There was not a man in the province on whom blows fell faster and harder, and produced deeper heart pangs, who had cause to cry louder for revenge, than Joshua Brackett. Of those slain whom he had to

mourn were his father, grandfather, grandmother, uncle Captain Anthony Brackett, uncle Nathaniel Mitton, uncle Lieutenant Thaddeus Clark and cousin Seth Brackett; of his relatives who were made captives were his mother, who died while a prisoner, his brother, two sisters, the children of his uncle John Brackett, one of whom never returned to the province to live, and the children of his uncle Anthony Brackett. Who of his relatives were maimed and wounded, have not been learned.

There is evidence that he was engaged in the coast trade, whether as merchant or transporter it is not known; certain it is that he was the owner of vessels; was also a manufacturer of lumber, owned a saw mill or two, owned one at Wadleigh's Falls in Strafford county. So with some reason it can be presumed that the product of his mills, he shipped to Boston. Whatever was his line of business, he prospered, accumulated wealth. Early in his business life he purchased land, farms from their respective owners adjoining one another and bordering for miles along the southern shore of the Great bay.

"These lands around the bay were far the best in town  
And here the prudent Bracketts came and settled down."

Commencing with a tract over the line in Stratham, now owned by the heirs of Mr. Dudley Littlefield, the farm extended into the present town of Greenland, the southern shore of the bay being its northern limit; it is probably one of the most beautifully situated tracts of land in the state.

"The lands along the bay  
Were in the Dover grant and things were mixed that way.  
'Twas called 'Cottrell's Delight.' This place round Littlefield's  
Was owned by men in Exeter. From them it yields  
Itself some way to Brackett."

The long Indian war came to an end in 1713. Two years later the settlers commenced to return to deserted Falmouth. The contest over land between the old and the new settlers arose. The heirs of Michael Mitton were petitioning the general court for their rights as proprietors of Falmouth, but the name of Joshua Brackett does not appear among those of the petitioners. We have no evidence that he took steps to secure his property in Falmouth until the year 1726, when he applied for administration on his father's estate, quite fifty years after his father's death. Two years later his sons, Joshua and Anthony, took possession of the old farm. About this period Lieutenant Joshua became interested in Peak's island and other landed property of the Mitton estate. In Boston lived his second cousin, Anthony Brackett, son of Captain Anthony, "the good pilot and captain for his country," son of the gallant Captain Anthony of Falmouth, the husband of Ann Mitton, daughter of Michael Mitton. This Anthony, the fourth, had purchased the interests of some heirs of Michael Mitton, children of all the daughters of Mitton except one, Mary, the mother of Joshua, and Joshua himself purchased the interests of his brother and sisters. The two, Joshua and Anthony, by these purchases became the owners of Peak's island and other large tracts of land in Falmouth.

Quite a lively contest will have the Rev. Thomas Smith et al, who have been purchasing wild-cat claims to these same lands, as no

time does this Anthony of Boston propose to lose in bringing suit to test the title to lands in question which the reverend gentleman sets up. Anthony and Lieutenant Joshua are in communication by letter, and when the wind is favorable, this Anthony takes a sail to Portsmouth to talk over the business in hand with the prosperous merchant, landowner, manufacturer and veteran soldier, Lieutenant Joshua. Well the two know with whom they have to deal; know that the Rev. Thomas Smith of Falmouth, has such an eye to business that he disdains not to put a few pounds sterling into stock of a scalp-hunting company, whose profit is the government bounty of some hundred pounds paid for the scalps of every Indian, squaw and papoose taken by the men hired and equipped by his company.

Fortunately a few letters which passed between the cousins are extant. Mrs. Grace Brackett Scott of New Market, a descendant of Joshua, often thought that in the house, which was her grandfather's, built by this same Joshua, there must be documents of value in a historical way. When the house became the property of her brother John, in recent years, sure enough there were found in an old secretary, letters whose contents are sources of authority on what follows concerning the plans of the two cousins to recover the Falmouth property.

Anthony of Boston, was many years the junior of his cousin Joshua; it is noticeable that he addressed him with a deal of respect and consideration, introducing each paragraph of his letters to him with "Sir," and deferring to his judgment in all important matters. Anthony was much the more of the two on the speculative order and finds occasion to remind Joshua that, through oversight, steps are not being taken as hastily as they may be, in the matter of acquiring possession of the Mitton estate, while Joshua seemingly pays more attention to his shipping interests than he does to the legal matter in hand,—to ancient claims to real estate through grandfather Mitton, Thinks he did not get enough for his sloop which Anthony sold for him, by some odd pounds, does Joshua. He is not fully aware as to how keen, active and well informed a partner he has in this Anthony until he is taken to task, in a very deferential way, for not executing and forwarding certain documents which Anthony must have for their lawyer's use. They leave no stone unturned to secure possession of the Mitton property; do get it all but two-ninths of Peak's Island, and Joshua purchases Anthony's interest. The Rev. Thomas Smith gets nothing, will have to content himself with tithes and scalp money for a time.

However, long before he secured the Mitton estate he was well off in a worldly way. In spiritual matters he made a change to accord with the views of his neighbors. Both of his grandfathers were Episcopalians; probably his mother was of that faith and his father also. The Congregationalists had pretty much everything their way in Portsmouth. But it was not until Joshua was well passed the middle age that he acknowledged the covenant, and soon after he united with the church; his eight children were baptized, all on the same day.

It is interesting to see how faithfully he selected family names for nearly all of his children. His first son he named John, for his uncle John, with whom he had soldiered for a score of years; the



second, Joshua, he named for himself; the third, Thomas, for his father; the fourth, Samuel, for his brother; the fifth, Anthony, for his grandfather; the sixth, James; the name is not one that was borne by any member of either the father's or the mother's family; the seventh, Nathaniel, for his uncle Nathaniel Mitton. Two daughters he named Mary, for his wife and his mother; one of the daughters died in infancy; the next, Abigail, he named for his cousin, daughter of his uncle John; the next, Elinor, for his aunt, his father's sister; the next, Kezia, for another daughter of his uncle John; the youngest, Margaret, whose name is not a family one.

To all the sons he made legacies and bequests sufficient to place each in good financial condition. The youngest child, Nathaniel, was given the home farm with its mansion house, lying partly in Stratham. About two hundred acres adjoining the home farm on the east with its mansion house, were devised to James. As many acres lying to the east of the latter farm with its mansion, were devised to John. It is traditional that the frames of the three houses were raised on the same day, and that when the houses were finished they were taken possession of by the sons in the lifetime of their father. Sons Joshua and Anthony were given the lands in Falmouth; to Samuel were given a farm in New Market and a half interest in the sawmill at Wadleigh's Falls; to son James, the other half of said mill. Son Thomas died in the lifetime of his father, leaving an estate which inventoried 5,000 pounds.

It has been written that Joshua acquired these farms about the bay from his grandfather Anthony. The statement is not the truth; there is no foundation for it whatever. Anthony never owned land about the bay, did not mention Joshua's name in his will.

The grave of Joshua is on the home farm. On the tombstone, marking his last resting-place, is the following inscription:

"Here Lies Mr. Joshua  
Brackett Who Died  
June 19: D: y. 1749. Aged 77  
ye"

The wife of Joshua Brackett was Mary Weeks; she was born 19 July, 1676; d. in 1740; was daughter of Leonard Weeks; he mar. Mary Haines; she was dau. of Samuel Haines; he was b. about 1611, in England, and d. in 1686; his wife was Elinor Neate. Issue:

1. John, b. about 1700. See division 13.  
2. Joshua, b. about 1701, in Greenland; mar. Abigail —; lived in Falmouth from prior to 1728, to his death in March, 1794. The account of his life is given in connection with that of his brother Anthony (see div. 15). Issue:

1st. Abigail, b. 14 Sept., 1728; mar. (1st), intention published 8 Oct., 1749, Job Lunt; (2nd) Anthony Brackett (see issue, div. 4); d. 1 Feb., 1805. Issue by first husband:

I. Michael Lunt, who mar. his cousin, Sarah Skillings; Parson Dean refused to perform the ceremony; Joshua deeded to him a tract of land in Portland. Issue:

- a. Sarah, b. 19 Dec., 1775.  
b. Job, b. 22 Feb., 1778.

- c. Mary, b. 25 July, 1784.  
 d. Michael Mitton, } twins, b. 23 Sept., 1792.  
 e. Abigail, }  
 f. Isaac Skillings, b. 16 June, 1794.  
 Names of other children, if any, of Abigail and husband, Job Lunt, not known.
- 2nd. Mary, bapt. in 1732, in Falmouth; mar. 18 Dec., 1752, Isaac Skillings. Issue:
- I. Sarah, who mar. Michael Lunt.
  - II. Mary, who mar. William Malone.
  - III. Benjamin, who mar. Mary Pride.
  - IV. Eleanor, who mar. William Cleaves.
- 3d. Sarah Weeks; bapt. in 1734, in Falmouth; mar. (intention published 13 March, 1756), Daniel Wood; mar. (2nd) 27 Oct., 1776, Daniel Green; her father deeded to her a tract of land in Falmouth. Issue, by husband, Daniel Green:
- I. Daniel Wood, b. 15 Nov., 1778.
  - II. Nabby, b. 19 Mar., 1780.
- 4th. Nelly; in 1789 her father deeded her land adjoining property of Daniel Green; was then unmarried.
- 5th. Thankful, bapt. in 1737, in Falmouth; mar. (intention published 20 Aug., 1761); Benjamin Trott, b. in 1737, son of John and wife Lydia; to them were deeded by Joshua, his part of Peak's island, where they resided. Issue:
- I. Joshua, who mar. in 1799, Elizabeth Bartlett; had children, William; Daniel; George; Jane; Polly; and Sally.
  - II. Elizabeth, who mar. in 1807, Daniel Bartlett of Freeport.
  - III. Abigail, who mar. Samuel Woodbury; had children, Benjamin; William; James; Eliza J.; and James F.
  - IV. Thankful, b. 1 Jan., 1769.
  - V. Benjamin, b. 30 Dec., 1770; mar. in 1799, Susannah Bartlett; had children, Samuel; Benjamin; Thomas B.; Betsey, Sarah A.; and Lydia.
  - VI. Mary, b. 21 Nov., 1773; mar. Samuel Rand.
3. Thomas, b. about 1703; mar. Martha Wiggin, dau. of Thomas; lived in Greenland; estate inventoried in July, 1753; no issue known.
4. Samuel, b. about 1705. See division 14.
  5. Anthony, b. 25 Jan., 1708. See division 15.
  6. Mary, b. about 1709; d. young; name not mentioned in will.
  7. Abigail, b. in 1710; d. young; name not mentioned in will.
  8. Eleanor, b. in 1712; mar. — Folsom and had six children.
  9. James, b. about 1714. See division 16.
  10. Mary, b. about 1716; d. 1 May, 1800; mar. 24 May, 1739, Joseph Fabyan, b. 1 Apr., 1707, d. 15 May, 1789; he and his brother John, were the first of the name in Scarboro, in which town they lived until their deaths. Issue:
- 1st. Joshua, b. in March, 1742; mar. Sarah Brackett; d. 20 June, 1799. Issue (see div. 15, fam. 1.)
  - 2nd. Mary, bapt. 2 Feb., 1746; mar. (1st) John Brackett (see div. 15, fam. 2); (2nd) Pelatiah March.
  - 3d. Elizabeth, bapt. 19 June, 1748; mar. William Haggett.
  - 4th. Phebe, bapt. 1 July, 1750; mar. 2 Dec., 1767, Nicholas Dennett.

- 5th. Mehitable, bapt. 28 June, 1752; mar. James Brackett (see div. 15, fam. 4); d. 1 July, 1832.
- 6th. Olive, b. 23 Oct., 1755; mar. Charles Moulton.
11. Keziah, b. 1 Nov., 1717; d. in 1765; mar. 13 Dec., 1738, Henry Clark, b. 23 Apr., 1717; son of Henry and wife, Elizabeth Greenleaf, of Newberry, Mass.; removed from Greenland, N. H., to Candia, N. H., in 1765. Issue:
- 1st. Nathaniel, b. 19 Mar., 1744.
- 2nd. John, b., 20 May, 1760; d. 21 Dec., 1831; mar. 22 Dec., 1785, Lydia Leavitt, b. 3 Dec., 1759; dau. of Joseph of Exeter; a Continental soldier; settled in Campton, N. H.
- Six other children whose names have not been learned.
12. Margaret, b. in 1719; d. in 1749.
13. Nathaniel, b. in 1721. See division 17.

## DIVISION NO. 2.

COLONEL THOMAS BRACKETT OF BRISTOL  
AND HIS DESCENDANTS.

## SIXTH GENERATION.

## FAMILY NO. 1.

From Chapter X. Descent: Anthony, Anthony, Anthony, Anthony, Thomas.

Thomas Brackett was born in Boston, where he resided until about 1774, when he removed to Bristol, Me., From a deed, to which he was a party, it appears that he was still a resident in Boston, April 1, 1774. By an address, sent by the town of Bristol to the "Provincial Congress," held at Watertown, Mass., in which he is called the "town's attorney," his residence is given as in Bristol. When a young man, he was associated with a fire company in Boston, serving engine No. 7, and later was transferred to engine No. 2. In 1769, William Sutton of engine No. 2, "presented Nicholas Deering, as a suitable person for his engine company, in lieu of Thomas Brackett who left town." In 1770, he was "approved as a taverner in the house on the neck (Boston), called the King's Arms, formerly the George Tavern, lately kept by Mr. Bowdine." (Selectmen's minutes.)

Rev. Mr. Adams recorded in his journal —

"Oct. 4, 1771. Voted that the perambulation between Roxbury and this town be on Tuesday at 10 o'clock before noon, and that a letter be wrote to the selectmen as usual and a dinner provided by the clerk at Mr. Brackett's on the neck."

Colonel Brackett severed his connections with this tavern in 1773. In that year his name appears in "alarm list" of Captain John Haskin's company, Col. John Erving's regiment.

Prior to making Bristol his home, viz., on June 10, 1767, he purchased a tract of about thirty acres in that town on the side of the Pemaquid river, on which was situated the estate of his wife's father, James Sproul, who settled there in 1729. James Sproul was born in Ireland probably near Belfast, and came to Boston in 1727. He had eight children, of whom Margaret was married to Col. Brackett about 1767-8. Mr. Sproul was a helpless invalid for several years prior to his death, which happened before the close of the eighteenth century. His lands on the west side of the Pemaquid river, are now in the possession of one of his numerous progeny, Eugene Sproul. Col. Brackett's homestead was on the east side of the Pemaquid. May 2, 1775, but shortly after his arrival in Bristol, at a town meeting, it was voted to send him as agent for the town "to Congress to represent the difficulty of the town for the want of ammunition" and "other stores." One, Miles Thompson, was hired by the town at \$8.00 per month to carry on Col. Brackett's farm during his absence. By his efforts one-half barrel of gunpowder was secured, which he

was to pay for, and which was distributed among the three militia companies of the town. Also, at the meeting an address to the Provincial Congress was agreed upon, which Col. Brackett probably took with him, and which is still on file in the state house at Boston. He was allowed by the town £38 O. T. for his expenses.

Thomas Brackett was an officer in the Continental army, was captain in the 5th (1st Bristol) company, 3d Lincoln county regiment; commissioned May 8, 1776; also, captain of the 5th company, Col. Joseph North's (Lincoln county) regiment. By his descendants he is referred to as Colonel Thomas Brackett. He was, in 1787, a member of the board of selectmen; was accorded the rank of esquire and gentleman, which, at least, signified political and social distinction. During a partial famine in Bristol, he, with his vessel, went to Boston and returned with a cargo of grain and merchandise; this he sold on trust to the people in need, with the result that he lost heavily and brought upon himself financial ruin. In December, 1784, he made an assignment for the benefit of his creditors, scattered from Nova Scotia to Massachusetts; the one to whom his largest debt was owing was John Hancock, — he of the famous signature. This act was purely voluntary on his part and attests his integrity, as does his concern for his famishing townsmen attest his benevolence. Like his father in Boston, and his great-grandfather in Falmouth, he was a slave owner. Among his slaves was, probably, one called "Boston Brackett," descendants of whom now reside in Bristol. A Boston Brackett (mulatto), in 1880, lived in Bristol, and then was eighty years old. His father was born in Massachusetts and his mother was born in Maine. Mr. Jeffrey Richardson, Jr., in his *Genealogy of the Bracketts* mentions a negro in Boston, called "Boston." It is probable that Colonel Brackett was his owner in that city. The story is often told in Bristol, by the descendants of Colonel Brackett, that he, his son, Thomas, Jr., and slave went aboard the father's vessel lying in the river, and while the father was engaged at some work below deck, the son fell overboard and was rescued by this slave, who plunged in the river after the boy, all unknown to the father until the lad was safe. For this act of courage, the grateful father ever loved the negro and treated him as one of the family.

The following incident illustrates the public spirit of this enterprising man. In September, 1775, one Andrew Gilman, having under his care two Indians, who were to appear at the general court of the province, was obliged to apply to the committee for Bristol for assistance, to convey them to Watertown; Gilman received the necessary aid in money from Thomas Brackett and Thomas Boyd, "two of the committee." The general court refused to pay the bill and the two patriotic citizens of Bristol probably never received the money so justly due them.

Colonel Brackett died May 7, 1788, aged 46 years, and was buried from the home of his brother Joshua, at Cromwell's Head inn, on School street in Boston. Issue:

1. Thomas. See family 2.
2. Elizabeth, mar. 9 Nov., 1801, Jacob Partridge.
3. Mary, who married Michael Jones.
4. Margaret (Peggy), who mar. 24 May, 1798, Joseph Reed, blacksmith, of Bristol.

## DIVISION NO. 15.

ANTHONY BRACKETT OF FALMOUTH AND HIS  
DESCENDANTS.

## FIFTH GENERATION.

## FAMILY NO. 1.

From Chapter VII. Descent: Anthony, Thomas, Joshua, Anthony.

Anthony Brackett was born in 1707, in Greenland, N. H. He was eight years old, when in 1715, shortly after hostilities with the Indians had ceased, settlers commenced to return to devastated Falmouth, his future home. It was not until three years subsequently to the close of Lovewell's war that he took up his abode in the town where his great-great-grandfather had settled nearly one hundred years prior to his going there to dwell. His father Joshua Brackett, had secured recognition from the government of his title to the large tracts of land on the Neck, which he claimed as heir of his parents, Thomas Brackett and Mary Mitton. This estate Joshua designed for his sons, Anthony and Joshua, and during the long interval of peace with the Indians, beginning with 1725, they went to Falmouth and took possession of it.

In the first Congregational church of Scarborough, Me., on February 14, 1734, Anthony was united in marriage to Sarah Knight, the Rev. Mr. Wm. Sargeant officiating. It has not been learned with certainty who her parents were. The six older children of Anthony were the fruit of this marriage. After the death of his first wife he married (intention published November 5, 1756,) Keranhappuck Hicks, *nee* Proctor, daughter of Samuel and wife, Sarah Brackett (see chapter VI); she survived him thirty-seven years and died in 1822.

Nearly all of his property was real estate. On the Neck he had, in addition to other tracts, a farm on which he resided; during his life it increased much in value. He also owned the greater and more valuable portion of Peak's island and this he conveyed shortly before his death, to his son Thomas; he also conveyed to said son and to third parties, tracts of land on the Neck including his homestead. His second wife had ideas of her own relative to the disposition of his estate and somewhat strenuously opposed him in the matter of parting with his farm on the Neck. Possibly it was her foresight to prospects of future values of these lands, whose magnitude can now be realized, to be enjoyed by their descendants, if conserved for them, which prompted her to resist him in his plan and to thwart him in what she could. She was the descendant of a man who feared not the loss of his life in his efforts to save from torture the victims of the Salem-witchcraft madness. With such blood in her veins, she was not to be turned from the course of her sense of duty for the welfare of her children. And he—well, Anthony was the descendant of George Cleeve, whose determination to win always compassed his purpose. A con-

test between the two was probably as near an approach to a contact between an irresistible force and an immovable body, relative to results, as can well be imagined. There was but one course as neither husband nor wife would bend to the will of the other; he sold the land and she refused to sign the deed—was immovable, and he irresistible. Like the dust from the destruction of a comet a hundred years ago, yet lingering in space, cobweb notions still find their way into the brains of the descendants of the two, that out of their clash an estate in those lands will some day be theirs. Out of the tracts of land conveyed by Anthony by deeds which his wife did not sign, upon his death two years later, a dower interest was set aside to her. From the time of his death in 1784, to her death in 1822, the widow enjoyed the rents, issues and profits of the tracts so set aside; her stepson Thomas, each year paid to her a rent for the use of her dower estate in Peak's island. She had endowment of traits which well equipped her for securing her rights in her husband's estate whatever they were. Upon her death, possession of the tracts set aside as her dower, passed under the deeds made by her husband to the grantees named in them, or to such persons as claimed under them, as the possession of the dower tract on Peak's island passing to the heirs of Thomas Brackett, instance. Her dower right could not pass to her heirs. There may have been tracts in which she had title in fee simple, that were of little value during her life, and which in time became the property of others through adverse possession, and such estates, or some other property right in her, misled some of her descendants into the belief that to some land which she claimed, as her heirs they had title as against others who claimed and occupied it by what right soever.

It is difficult to explain how so many of her descendants became convinced, or inclined to believe, that as her heirs they had an estate in fee simple in lands in which she had but a dower interest. About 1858, a lawyer whose knowledge of the law must have been obtained in an empirical way, though not always at his client's expense, proposed to recover for the heirs of Kerahappuck Brackett the tracts of land set apart from her husband's estate as dower, upon condition that he was to pay the expenses of the suit to be brought for the purpose, and was to receive one-half of all he recovered. This was agreed to.

What was the lawyer's view as to the title of the heirs in said tracts, is evident from that he based the suit in equity which he brought in their behalf to recover the same, solely upon the fact that the widow did not sign the deeds conveying said tracts, and during her widowhood had possession of them by right of dower. As the lawyer was paying the costs of the suit (had paid \$500 he stated), he rested quite content upon learning from the trial court that a dower interest in land does not survive the widow whose right it was. He may have talked about taking an appeal to the supreme court, but never entered any. There were many descendants who believed that the lawyer settled the suit to his advantage and that the interests of the heirs were sacrificed.

The suit came to an end in 1862. No concerted move on the part of the claimants was again made until 1902. During the intervening forty years, as probably during the preceding forty, there was much

talk about the "widow's dower" and "our rights." In 1902, a committee was appointed to search records and other sources of information for data as to the foundation of the claim for "our millions." From time to time appeared in the daily papers published in Maine, flaring headlines containing more information in them than was contained in the accounts that followed, relative to said claim, and the proceedings of the committee. It seems there was no need of search for data more than an inspection of the records of the circuit court of Cumberland county; *there* was to be found about all that was necessary and that which was quite determinative of the matter. However, recourse was taken to certain musty deeds sold at one time as junk. This supposed "find" served well for advertising purposes; there were more headlines in the dailies. Much was made out of the matter in a talkative way until was given the opinion of an able jurist who had been employed by the committee, and who relied upon an examination of the court records for his knowledge of the case, to the effect that if peaceable possession under a deed made by one having title in fee simple to the land in question, for over forty years, was good title forty years ago, a fortiori, peaceable possession under the same deed for forty years longer was still a good title at the present time. He did not discuss the idea of a freehold estate growing out of a dower interest, and as for said musty deeds, returned them to the committee. Thus ended the "widder's dower contest" until the cycle of another forty years is completed.

The last effort was fruitful in no one thing more than the crop of "Brackett heirs" so called, which sprang up like weeds, when was made known the news about "those millions." Parties wrote to the committee claiming to be heirs of Anthony Brackett, no matter what particular Anthony. Some of the letters were delivered to the writer, by the committee, with the view of learning if the parties were descendants of *the* particular Anthony. Some of the parties would not take no for an answer as to their being "an heir," and demanded explanations from the writer as to why they were not a descendant of Anthony Brackett, to whom they would have been no greater kin than sixteenth cousin were he living. Those who were most sure of a "fortin" were certain Bracketts living in Canada, one of whom implored the writer "to be a man and let me in," and added that his sister was "going to Washington and would look you up." It transpired that the Washington to which the sister journeyed, was Washington state—quite a distance from the home of the writer, who thus escaped being "looked up."

One of the nineteen persons who contributed the total of \$95 to pay the expense of the investigation made in 1902, cautioned the chairman of the committee not to let "Honorable Thomas B. Reed know" he had paid anything. Thus the great man's advice that there was no foundation to the claim, passed for naught, as did the information freely given by the writer to certain other contributors that they were not descendants of Anthony Brackett, who at one time owned the land concerning which there was so great an ado.

It is probable that, for quite two hundred years there have been traditions with the several branches of the family living in Maine, concerning tracts of land in Falmouth which belonged to George Cleeve, to which title was asserted by members of early generations



without avail; thus is accounted for the fact that many persons have stated that in the families of their forefathers it was contended that there were large estates belonging to Bracketts which they did not get. Hence, the wildfire spread from Nova Scotia to Washington and Oregon of the news of a concerted effort of a few of the descendants of Anthony Brackett to recover the widow's dower. A material result realized was this, that through persons making inquiry to the committee, lines of descent were established of certain ones whose ancestry was a difficult task to trace, and the whereabouts of members of the family were learned of which there was little hope of discovering.

Anthony and his brother Joshua were prominent in Falmouth in social and business affairs. Their estates extended from one side of the Neck to the other near its base. The house of Anthony stood at the corner of Danforth and Brackett streets in Portland, which latter street ran through his farm. The dwelling house of two stories, mentioned as the mansion house, faced towards the south; in its rear stood the barn, and in front of it was an orchard on the slope of a hill. Joshua's house stood on Congress street near High street. This house, which was burned subsequently to his death, he built after he had dwelt for several years in a log house which stood where Gray street is. In the log house the brothers lived at the time of Anthony's marriage in 1733. They had dwelt in Falmouth since 1728, the year following that in which administration was granted on the estate of their grandfather, Thomas Brackett, who was killed in 1679. Between their houses was a swamp through which was a foot-path. The division line between their estates was along Grove and Congress streets. Anthony's included nearly all the land on the southeast side of Congress street from about opposite Casco to Vaughan street, and a lot of nearly fifty acres on the westerly side of Grove street running from Congress street to the alms house farm. Joshua's land lay on the northwest side of Congress street extending from Grove street easterly. Portions thereof he deeded to his daughters. For his daughter Sarah, whose first husband was Daniel Wood, he built a frame house, the original site of which is that of the Y. M. C. A. building; its present site is the rear of the property of Henry L. Taylor on Oak street; the building is used as a storehouse for paints and varnishes. In its issue of November 28, 1896, "The Argus" presented its picture as the oldest dwelling in the city, "and the only one (of farm houses) which stands on the same lot that it stood on when it was a farm house."

In the early days of his dwelling in Falmouth, Joshua was engaged in shipping wood to Boston; he said that he worked many nights by moonlight in order to have sufficient wood ready for the coaster when she returned. Of his wife nothing more is known than that her Christian name was Abigail.

Situated as their dwellings were upon the outskirts of the settlement on the Neck and at the edge of the primeval forest of the mainland, separated by swamps and surrounded by woods, the brothers and their families were subject to extreme danger of attacks by the Indians. Prior to the coming of the brothers to Falmouth, the town had been settled for nearly a century; during one-fourth of the time it had been forsaken by its inhabitants whose homes were desolated.

Then sixteen years passed before there was another war with the Indians, and for the first time the homes of the brothers were menaced with the horrors of Indian warfare. Yet for all of their exposed situation, it is not known that their houses or buildings were ever burned or that any member of their families was either killed or taken. Hostile Indians were seen in the swamp and near their homes on more than one occasion during the years from 1744 to 1748, and a few years following 1755. The brothers must have been skillful woodsmen and well fitted to battle with their hardy foes, to come off as well as they did. On the roll of Captain James Milk's company, under date of May 10, 1757, appears the name of Anthony; in the alarm list of that company appears the name of Joshua. The latter was the elder of the two; though at the time Anthony was fifty years of age, he was not too old for active duty in those days, while Joshua was available when the alarm was given of an expected attack by the Indians.

Anthony was seventy-seven years of age at the time of his death September 10, 1784. He was buried on his farm in the course of Summit street as subsequently laid; his remains were removed to the Brackett cemetery on Peak's Island, and at the head of his last resting place was erected a marble memorial stone. There was a tradition that he had taken out a sound front tooth; upon an inspection of the remains when exhumed, the absence of the tooth served to identify his body.

In the mansion house were set apart rooms for the use of his widow; she occupied them but a few years; she resided in Gorham where settled at least three of her children, and at the time of her death in 1822, she was living with a son of her daughter Meribah. Her convictions of right and duty were second only to her determination of purpose in carrying them into practice even at the cost of a lifetime's effort or of life itself. Like traits of character had her grandfather, John Proctor, whose efforts to stem the tide of prosecution of harmless and defenseless old women on the charge of witchcraft in Salem, cost him his life, as he, himself, fell a victim to the orthodoxy of that day and place.

It will be noted that Anthony named his six known sons for his six brothers. It is believed that the Anthony Brackett mentioned with his children was also his son; the writer has nothing certain as to his parentage. But it is not known of whose family he could have been a member unless he was of Anthony's family among whom he is placed. The gallant fellow lost his life while serving as a soldier in the Continental army. Issue:

1. John, born in 1734. See family 2.
2. Sarah, b. 9 Apr., 1740; mar. Joshua Fabyan, of Scarborough, son of Joseph and wife, Mary Brackett, (see wife, chapter VII).<sup>24</sup> Children were John; Joseph; Samuel; George; Sarah; Mary; Joshua.
3. Thomas, b. in 1744. See family 3. ~
4. James, b. 13 June, 1745. See family 4.
5. Elizabeth, b. 22 Oct., 1747; d. about 1816; mar. Dr. James Brackett (see fam. 4, div. 16).
6. Anthony, private in Captain Tobias Lord's co., enlisted 15 Apr., 1776, served to 25 Nov., 1776, seven months and eleven days at Falmouth. Name also appears on return of men enlisted into

Continental army from Peter Noyes' (1st Cumberland county) regiment dated 20 Nov., 1778; resident of Falmouth, enlisted for the town; joined Captain Skillings' company, Colonel Frances' regiment, enlisted for three years. Also name appears in Captain Clark's company, Benjamin Tupper's regiment, on Continental army pay accounts for service from 25 Jan., 1777, to 1 Jan., 1778; reported d. 1 Jan., 1778. Name also appears in Captain John Skillings' company, Colonel Ebenezer Frances' regiment on return for rations from date of enlistment 25 Jan., 1777, to time of arrival at Bennington, fifty-four days. Also name appears in Captain Samuel Thomas' company, Colonel Tupper's regiment, muster return dated 26 June, 1778, mustered by Colonel Varrick, muster master; reported sick at Albany.

7. Meribah; mar. (1st) Halliday, of Newbury, Mass.; (2nd) James Sullivan Smith; (3d) Isaiah Thomas; resided in Gorham. Issue:

1st. William H. Smith, b. 22 June, 1788; mar. (1st) Sally Mayberry; (2nd) Esther Bramhall. Children were Samuel M., b. in 1812, living in 1900, in Dixfield; James; Simon; Sarah; William; Harriet E.; Silas; Sina; Elihu; Mary; Caroline; James; Albert.

8. Joshua, b. in 1762. See family 5.

9. Keziah, bapt. 11 May, 1766; mar. Dr. John Bancroft.

10. Samuel, bapt. 26 Mar., 1769; d. about 1801-4; said not to have mar.; lived in Portland.

11. Nathaniel, b. 29 Sept., 1771. See family 6.

## SIXTH GENERATION.

### FAMILY NO. 2.

From Family No. 1. Descent: Anthony, Thomas, Joshua, Anthony, John.

John Brackett was born in Falmouth in 1734; he was in the tenth year of his age when war commenced between the colonists and the Indians which continued for six years. Situated as was his father's home, it was the theater of war alarms; so this boy at an early age knew its danger signals and before the close of hostilities was able to respond to them. There were four years of peace when commenced the Seven years' war, though the Indians in Maine did not take any active part until 1756. His name appears in a list dated May 10, 1757; of the members of Captain James Milk's Falmouth Neck company. As Maine furnished her full proportion of the troops from the colony of Massachusetts which took part in the campaigns of 1758, 1759 and 1760 against the French and Indians, there is little reason to doubt that he saw active service in these years. In 1762, he purchased a tract of land at Saccarappa in Falmouth and began at farming; was a surveyor and laid out the highway between Saccarappa and Gorham; was captain of the local company of militia and held that rank when commenced the War of the Revolution. The express from Boston arrived at Falmouth before the break of day of April 21, 1775, with the news of the battle of Lexington. Before the sun went down that day Captain Brackett

with his company of minute men was on the way to Cambridge; the town of Wells was reached when the company received orders to return to Falmouth. He recruited a company for service in the war and was commissioned its captain; the company was assigned to Colonel Edmund Phinney's regiment; among the privates were James Brackett, son of Joshua, Jeremiah Brackett, son of Anthony, and William Brackett, son of Thomas, all grandsons of Zachariah Brackett. The company left for Cambridge, July 3, 1775. Soon after it reached the seat of war Captain Brackett was taken ill and while on his way to his home he died at Ipswich, Mass., September 24, 1775. Married December 20, 1768, Mary Fabyan (see chapter VII). In September, 1776, she married Pelatiah March, a tanner of Saccarappa. Issue:

1. John, b. in 1770. See family 7.
2. Mary, who mar. Alonzo Burbank.
3. Lucy, who mar. Asael Foster, b. 4 Oct., 1774, son of Asael and wife, Joanna.
4. Sally, who mar. (1st) Simon Quimby; (2nd) Thomas Mayberry.

#### FAMILY NO. 3.

From Family No. 1. Descent: Anthony, Thomas, Joshua, Anthony, Thomas

Thomas Brackett was born in Falmouth in May, 1744; was a farmer, also engaged in other pursuits. His father conveyed to him nearly all the estate which he possessed on the Neck and also the greater portion of Peak's island. He resided on the island from an early date, probably lived there during the War of the Revolution. There were then only three dwellings on the island one of which belonged to Benjamin Trott. No military service of Thomas Brackett is mentioned in any published records. That he did serve as a soldier, was a member of a local militia company, it would be unreasonable to doubt. When Captain Henry Mowatt with a British fleet on October 16, 1775, arrived in Portland harbor, he anchored near to Peak's island, in Hog Island roads between Hog and House islands and in sight of Thomas Brackett's home. Falmouth was defenseless and the greater portion of the town was destroyed by fire. At the breaking out of the war his family consisted of four small children, and early in the war the fifth child was born. He was a young man when the war commenced and the owner of a large estate. He probably did not serve in any organization that was subject to be, or was, called upon to perform duty at a distance from Falmouth.

There are facts which tend to indicate that he was born earlier than 1744. A Thomas Brackett in May, 1757, was a private in Captain James Milk's Falmouth Neck company. At the time there was but one other Thomas Brackett (son of Zachariah) in Falmouth and he resided at Morrill's corner. It is not thought that Thomas, the son of Anthony Brackett, would have been on the regular or active list of available men for military duty at the age of thirteen years as his age would have been in 1757, if he were born in 1744. A Thomas Brackett was baptized in Falmouth in 1737. Thomas the son of Zachariah Brackett, was baptized in Hampton, New Hampshire.

However, the descendants of Thomas Brackett are authority in giving the year of his birth as 1744. Married December 9, 1762, Jane Hall, born in 1740, died May 10, 1810, daughter of Cornelius and wife, Elizabeth (perhaps White), of Cherryfield, Me. Died December 13, 1815. Issue:

1. John, b. 12 Jan., 1763. See family 8.  
2. Elizabeth, bapt. 4 May, 1766; mar. Capt. James Sawyer; d. 20 June, 1799. No issue.

3. Sally, b. in 1768; mar. 1 Jan., 1789, John Fabyan (see fam. 1, this div.); lived in Scarboro; removed to Leeds; buried at Monmouth Center, Me. Children, Mary; John; Thomas, who mar. Mary Haynes; George, who mar. Charlotte Warren; Joseph, d. young; David Hall, d. young; Jane Brackett, who mar. John Moulton; John, who mar. Julia Jackson; Patience Hall, who mar. Darius Healy; Florence; Ilus, who mar. Elizabeth —; Horace, who mar. Marian D. Eaton; Joshua, who mar. Mary Ham; Oliver, who mar. Susan Tucker.

4. Patience, b. in 1774; never mar.; d. 10 Mar., 1794.

5. Mary, bapt. 9 June, 1776; mar. 10 Nov., 1796, Joseph Reed who d. 1 Apr., 1852; her father sold to her two acres of land on Peak's island; it is in front of the present Mineral Spring house, which was her house, remodeled; the house may have been built by Thomas Brackett; she d. 13 Nov., 1860. Issue all born on Peak's island:

1st. Mary, b. 24 Apr., 1800; mar. 19 Jan., 1822, Walter S. Hatch, who d. 12 Feb., 1865; lived in Portland; d. 18 Nov., 1883. Issue: Eliza E.; Harriet J.; Walter T.; Eliza C.; Charles W.; Mary F.; Isabella M.; Joseph R.; Margaret; and Martha C.

2nd. Elizabeth, b. 3 Feb., 1802; mar. in 1823, Nathaniel S. Millet.

3d. Thomas Brackett; b. 24 Aug., 1803; married in 1838, Matilda R. Mitchell; d. in 1883. Issue:

I. Thomas Brackett Reed, Jr., b. 18 Oct., 1839; d. in 1902; mar. dau. of Rev. Mr. Samuel Merrill; has one child, Kittie.

Of this distinguished man it is only necessary to say that for twenty years he was a member of our National Congress and thrice was chosen speaker of its House of Representatives.

II. Harriet E. S., b. in June, 1846; mar. Elisha W. Conley, manager of Standard oil works in Portland.

4th. Joseph, b. 28 Apr., 1806; mar.; had sons Joseph and George W.

5th. Jane, b. 13 June, 1807; mar. 13 July, 1829, Melzar T. Dillingham, of Minot; he d. 17 Feb., 1879, she on 11 Nov., 1891. Issue:

I. Frances Scott, b. 3 Aug., 1881.

II. Joseph Reed, b. 13 Nov., 1833.

6th. Smith, b. 20 Jan., 1809.

7th. William, b. 18 Oct., 1811.

8th. Daniel C., b. 22 Apr., 1813.

9th. Lydia W., b. 18 Oct., 1814; mar. in 1841, Abraham T. Sterling.

10th. Elneline P., b. 10 Aug., 1819; mar. in 1841, William S. Trefethen.