

## PIONEERS

SARAH - Her grandparents

. . . after a few years the pair wandered farther on into the unsettled barren country.

. . . all their lares and penates (consisting mostly of children) heaped upon an oxcart.

. . . and pitched their tent among the rocks of Wilmot.

. . . it is a dreary spot now after a hundred years of civilization where they settled. What must it have been then?

. . . You can't imagine the desolateness of it with neighbors miles away.

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SARAH - Her own family's home

. . . The only heat in the house beside the kitchen stove was the big fireplace in the "settin room" but it was a fireplace and always going.

. . . We used to get up, the boys and I, at four o'clock in the morning in the dead of winter, build a roaring fire in that cold kitchen, and study our lessons by the light of a tallow dip.

. . . They made two kinds of candles, run and dipped. The run candles were made in a tin mold and the dipped ones by dipping wicks into a kettle of hot grease.

. . . doesn't seem very tempting to you, does it?

Marion Nicholl Rawson - New Hampshire Borne a Town

It soon becomes evident that there was a reason for every act of these study first settlers and that chance entered in but rarely. Plainly too we may see another fact standing boldly out, that the men who dared the New England wilds believed in putting first things first. The minutes of their civic meetings called for roads to reach their houses as the first need, ground to bury their dead, a sealer of weights and measures to watch for honest balance in trade, the care of morals, a place for worship, necessary taxation, safety from wild beasts, and in time a school for larnin' the youngsters.

When the "firsts" had all been cared for in their variety we find layer upon layer of living growing one upon the other, the growth of schools, the calls to war, the religious upspringings, and each phase of country life taking its place to form the history of the countryside.

THE OLD HOUSE

SARAH

Of the house where Aaron and Rebecca Teel lived, I found only a pathetic suggestion of an overgrown cellar, with a bit of lilac bush still struggling beside the half buried flat stone which served as a door-step. . . .

Van Wyck Brooks - The New England Scene

. . . one observed the transformation of the Yankee scene. The Yankee ebb tide, a world of empty houses and abandoned farms. A weather worn house with a maiden aunt and rooms that ached with loneliness; a mass of tumbling wood; or a brick filled hollow where the lilacs bloomed in Maytime, where, --as Dr. Holmes has written --

". . . naught remained, the saddening tale to tell, save life's wrecks--the cellar and the well."

## THE FARM

SARAH

The work is hard on a farm, and never finished, and I don't blame the boys for deserting. We had no machinery at all. We raised all our food on the farm; the corn and wheat and rye were ground at the mill and used in the kitchen, pigs and sheep were raised, and a "beef critter" put by for the household use; but fried salt pork and boiled potatoes were eaten once every day, and we had lots of hot bread. Autumn brought the harvesting, the apple gathering and the cider making. Autumn was time for making soap, dipping candles, killing the pig and putting down the beef critter. Another work which was made a pleasure was the husking of the corn. There were sure to be a good many huskings during the winter, when, on invitation, all the young people about gathered in the barn to do a big evening's work. I must not forget to mention the threshing. A big two horse machine with two men came every fall and usually spent at least two days at our house. I remember the fascination of watching those poor horses walking, walking in their everlasting treadmill, and never getting anywhere. I have seen men threshing with a flail on the barn floor, but that method really belongs before my day.

Van Wyck Brooks - The Flowering of New England

Everyone who traveled through the country marveled that the New England farmers' doors were seldom locked or barred, even at night; and, while the land flowed with rum, the great popular drink was homely cider. The cider barrel was never empty at weddings, at ordinations, at huskings; at Thanksgiving, when the sounds of chopping and pounding and baking and brewing rose from the smoke-browned walls of the farmhouse kitchen.

Van Wyck Brooks - The World of Washington Irving

. . . one entered the land of the Yankees who were famous for their schools as well as the stones in their fields and the stiffness of their necks.

Most of the Yankees were farmers still. Even the country ministers tilled their own fields. But the soil of New England was hard and stony and many of the farmers were going west.

## GRANDMOTHERS

### SARAH

I was named for my grandmother Sarah Clough, and she used to tell me that I was to have her gold beads--but I never did! She was the real story-grandmother who always had doughnuts and sage cheese for the young 'uns. We were sure to find her in the front room with her knitting work, sitting beside the open fire, the cat lying on the braided rug at her feet.

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My paternal grandmother Rebecca Tweed deserves more than a passing remark that she was my grandmother. She was a Scotch-Irish lassie whose forbears prove thus far very elusive. She married Aaron Teel when she was nineteen years old. Together this bride and groom went to Goffstown, New Hampshire, where they settled upon a farm in the wilderness. How desolate it is, even now!

After a few years they went farther on and settled in North Wilmot. The house was standing in my day and even to me was a wonder. A wonder because, here, besides inheriting the cares that always fell to the lot of a farmer's wife, she spun the yarn and knitted the stockings for her brood (ten children), wove the cloth for their clothes, and made them, gave them healthful food and the necessary spankings.

I remember her a tiny little woman who, at eighty, used to walk from her house to ours, a distance of two miles over hill and dale to spend the day with "Sam's family."