

filled by the younger trees, and although growth in the crowded spaces and obstructed light is slow, it is enough to keep the general appearance unchanged, which is a condition characteristic of forests that have never been touched by axe or fire.

In the Petersham sample, the age of the oldest living tree goes back to the very early eighteenth century, and of the dead to considerably earlier. The shape of many of the tree-tops and the vestiges of stumps show that a century or more ago some of the largest dominant pines were cut, which lowered the average of size but did not greatly alter the constitution of the stand. The days of these selective cuttings were the days of the ox-team and the brookside sawmill with its monstrous overshot water-wheel — and the days, too, when the fruit of their deliberate labors became the unrivaled woodwork of the colonial house. The foundations of such a mill are still standing on the stream close by, and in the village much fine paneling bears witness to the quality of its product. Thus, quite apart from its picturesque and scientific value, this fragment of old woods is a most significant relic, which helps to bridge for the physical eye two centuries of unpictured alterations in the face of the country. It preserves a scene which the earliest settler took, and transmitted without substantial change, direct from the bear and the Indian.

NATHANIEL TRACY, HARVARD, 1769.

T. A. LEE, LL.B., '13.

NATHANIEL TRACY, of the class of 1769, was one of the most interesting characters of the Revolution. "The meteoric brilliancy of this man's career is unmatched in the early history of the State." He was descended from two famous Harvard families on his mother's side, the Gookins and Cottons, and some of the most prominent Harvard men of our day are descended either from Nathaniel Tracy or from his father, Capt. Patrick Tracy, including, among others, Mr. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, '61, Maj. Henry Lee Higginson, ('55), the late Col. Henry Lee, '36, and the late Dr. Arthur Tracy Cabot, '72.

Nathaniel Tracy was born in Newburyport, Aug. 11, 1751, and was buried there, Sept. 21, 1796. His father, Patrick Tracy, Esq., was a well-known and wealthy merchant of Newburyport, who was probably born in the county of Wexford, Ireland, about 1711, and died in Newburyport, in 1789. The family tradition is that his patrimony was stolen by his guardian, and that he was thrown penniless upon the world at an early age. He came to New England as a young lad, made frequent voyages to the West Indies, became a competent and skilful navigator, a master

mariner and shipowner, and presently, an importing and exporting merchant of high standing and much wealth. He was a vestryman of St. Paul's Church, a justice of the peace, and a prominent patriot during the War of the Revolution, during which time he was a member of the Committee of Safety of Newburyport. In 1764, he was a liberal subscriber of money and books to the fund given to Harvard to repair the damage done by the fire of that date. Capt. Tracy married Miss Hannah Gookin, the daughter of Rev. Nathaniel Gookin, Jr., 1731, and Dorothy (Cotton) Gookin, of Hampton N.H. Rev. Nathaniel Gookin was a well-known minister of his day, and the son of Rev. Nathaniel Gookin, 1703, who in his turn was a well-known minister, and the grandson of Maj.-Gen. Daniel Gookin, 1669, one of the most prominent of the early colonists of New England, and descended from the ancient English family of Deane of Deane. On his mother's side, Nathaniel Tracy was descended from another famous Harvard clerical family, the Cottons of Boston. Dorothy Cotton was the daughter of the Rev. John Cotton, 1730, the granddaughter of Rev. Seaborn Cotton, 1651, and the great-granddaughter of the famous divine, Rev. John Cotton. Dorothy Cotton was a second cousin of Oliver Wendell Holmes's "Dorothy Q." Nathaniel Tracy was also descended from the famous Ann Hutchinson, Gov. Simon Bradstreet, Gov. and Maj.-Gen. Thomas Dudley, and Capt. Abijah Savage, 1659.

Nathaniel Tracy graduated from Harvard, A.B., in the Class of 1769; took his A.M. there in due course, is said to have taken a post-graduate course at Yale, and then traveled abroad. In 1875, he married "the greatest beauty of her day," Mary Lee, the sister of his classmate, Capt. Joseph Lee, of the Revolution, and the daughter of the patriot Col. Jeremiah Lee, of Marblehead. Col. Lee, with Adams and Hancock, was a member of the famous Province Committee of Safety and Supplies, chairman of the Essex County Congress, 1774, a delegate to the Massachusetts Provincial Congresses, and was elected to the First Continental Congress by the town of Marblehead as its delegate.

When his son was married, Capt. Tracy built for him a beautiful brick mansion on State Street, Newburyport, and there Nathaniel Tracy and his bride made their home. This mansion is now the city library of Newburyport, and in it hangs Stuart's portrait of Nathaniel Tracy, presented to the town by Tracy's grandson, Gen. William Raymond Lee, hon. A.M., '51, of Boston. Shortly before the Revolution, Tracy went into partnership with his brother, Col. John Tracy, 1771, and his brother-in-law, Hon. Jonathan Jackson, 1761, the ancestor of the present Boston family of that name. Their firm became very prominent, and as soon as the Revolution broke out, Tracy and his partners determined to support vigorously the patriot cause. In August, 1775, he fitted out the first privateer of the Revolution, and this vessel gained many prizes.

During the next eight years, Tracy was the principal owner of 110 merchant vessels, having a gross tonnage of 15,660 tons. These vessels, with their cargoes, were valued at \$2,733,300. Twenty-three were letters of marque, and carried 298 carriage-guns and 1618 men. Of this large fleet but 13 were left at the end of the war, the others having been either lost or captured. During this period he was also the principal owner of 24 cruising-ships, with a gross capacity of 6330 tons, carrying 340 guns, — 6, 9, and 12 pounders, — and 2800 men. Of these 24 ships, but one remained in 1783. The services which these vessels rendered to the Government, in bringing in stores of ammunition and supplies intended for the British army, were inestimable. During the War, in fact, Tracy's cruisers and privateers captured 120 vessels, aggregating 23,360 tons, with 2225 men. These vessels, with their cargoes, were sold for the large sum of \$3,950,000 in specie. Nor was this the only service Tracy rendered to the country; for, during these trying times, he loaned the Government more than \$167,000, which was never repaid, besides providing much assistance in the matter of clothing and other necessities, as the records of the Continental Congresses show.

At this time Tracy might well say that he could travel from Newburyport to Philadelphia, and sleep in his own house every night. As it was a matter of a week's journey at that time, we may judge somewhat of the extent of his possessions. He owned the beautiful Vassall House in Cambridge, now owned by the Longfellow family; he had a farm in Medford; he had large properties in Connecticut; and, with his superb mansion in Newburyport, the "Spencer-Pierce" farm in Newbury, and other lands and houses in different places, he was enabled to live in the grandest style and in the most luxurious manner. He had the finest horses and coaches, and possessed a well-selected library, part of which was recently given to the Massachusetts Historical Society. His cellars were stocked "with the choicest wines, his horses and carriages were the best that money could buy, and the appointments at his tables were rich and sumptuous." At his home in Cambridge, now known as the Longfellow House, he entertained many distinguished guests. Here he gave a celebrated "frog dinner" to officers of the French fleet, which was then in Boston Harbor, a dinner excellently described by Andrews in his *Letters*. In the brick mansion on State Street, Newburyport, he was often the host of many prominent people. In 1788, Brissot de Warville visited Tracy at Newburyport, and a description of the visit is found on pages 254 and 255 of his *Notes of Travel in the United States*: "We dined at Newbury with Mr. Tracy, who formerly enjoyed a great fortune, and has since been reduced by the failure of different enterprises, particularly by a contract to furnish masts for the marine of France. The miscarriage of this undertaking was

owing to his having employed agents in procuring the first cargo, who deceived him and sent a parcel of refuse masts that were fit only for firewood. Though the manner in which Mr. Tracy had been deceived was sufficiently proved, yet, for the clerks of the marine at Versailles, whose interest it was to decry the American timber, this fact was sufficient to enable them to cause it to be ever after rejected. And Mr. Tracy's first cargo was condemned and sold at Havre for 250*l.* He lives retired; and, with the consolation of his respectable wife, supports his misfortunes with dignity and firmness."

In 1784, Tracy went to Europe on his ship *Ceres*, endeavoring to bring about a satisfactory settlement of his business affairs. Thomas Jefferson, who had been named Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain, Mr. Adams, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Jefferson's oldest daughter were Tracy's guests on this voyage, they being intimate friends. He went on to Portugal in hopes of obtaining a satisfactory settlement of his accounts with Gardoqui, but in this was disappointed. He remained in Europe several months, but at length was compelled to return home discouraged and broken-hearted. Two years later, he found himself hopelessly involved in financial difficulties, owing large sums of money which he could not pay, and with the close of the War, his wealth vanished like smoke. His vessels had been captured, and his varied enterprises had met with disaster instead of success. In 1786, he found himself bankrupt. His splendid estates were sold for a small portion of their value; he retired from active business pursuits and, with his wife and children, lived in comparative quiet and seclusion for the remainder of his days in the old stone mansion on the Spencer-Pierce farm in Newbury, which was secured to his family by his father, Capt. Tracy. He was so loved and respected by his fellow townsmen, many of whom were his creditors, that he was not pressed by claims for money due. John Quincy Adams, who was at that time a student at law in the office of Theophilus Parsons in Newburyport, gives a good description of Tracy and his family in his diary for the year 1788-89.

Tracy was the first treasurer of Dummer Academy, was a selectman of his town, a deputy to the General Court in 1780, 1781, and 1782, a State Senator in 1783, a delegate to the United States Constitutional Convention, and a charter member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He also made at least one contribution to the records of the Massachusetts Historical Society in its early days. In 1778, he was given the honorary degree of M.A. by the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University. His portrait was painted three times, once by Stuart; once by Trumbull, a picture now owned by his great-granddaughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Amory Lee Ernst, the daughter of Gen. Lee, and the wife of Gen. O. H. Ernst, of Washington; and once by Miss Hills.

Nathaniel Tracy and his wife had eleven children, among them Hannah, who married her cousin, Lieut. Wm. Raymond Lee, of Boston, of the War of 1812, the son of Col. Wm. Raymond Lee of the Revolution, and grandson of the patriot Col. John Lee, and the father of Gen. William Raymond Lee, Harvard, *h* '51, and colonel of the "Harvard Regiment" (20th Mass. Vols.) during the Civil War and president of the Vermont Central Railroad; Lieut. Jeremiah Lee Tracy, an able and gallant officer of artillery of the War of 1812; Nathaniel Tracy, Jr., a prominent merchant of Boston, and a member of the first Stock Exchange; Miss Louisa Lee Tracy, who was born in the Longfellow House, and Miss Helen Tracy, both of whom lived for many years in Newburyport.

THE UNIVERSITY.

THE OPENING OF THE YEAR.

THE UNIVERSITY EDITOR

THE total enrolment of students in the University shows a substantial gain as compared with the figures of a year ago. The increase is almost wholly in the graduate and professional schools; the registration in Harvard College having just a little more than held The initial enrolment its own. It should be mentioned, however, that many undergraduates, at the beginning of the College year, were serving in various militia regiments on the Mexican border. Most of these have now returned to Cambridge and have rejoined their respective classes. But they did not figure in the initial enrolment. Were it not for this fact the registration in Harvard College, taken as a whole, would have shown a substantial gain. It is significant, however, that the increase in fees from \$150 to \$200, which went into force this year for all students entering Harvard College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the Graduate School of Business Administration, has had to all appearances no adverse effect upon the enrolment in these departments of the University. The Freshman Class is larger than last year; the number of first-year students in the Graduate School of Business Administration has increased; while the enrolment of resident students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is slightly above last year's total. There is a drop in the number of unclassified students in Harvard College. These unclassified students are men who come to Harvard after having spent one or more years at some other college and who remain without any definite class status until the quality of their work at Harvard indicates what rank should be given to them. It may be that the increase in the tuition fee is responsible for such a reduction in the number of these students as the registration discloses.