

928.11.1 California Gold rush – Arlington pioneers. Paper read by Marion Fessenden, Jan 31, 1928 Annual Meeting. We are devoting this evening to reading the personal accounts of the men of Arlington, who went to California in the Gold Rush of 1849 & 50. We were aware of the account of the Cutter brothers, that was all, and we were several times asked if we would have sufficient material for an evening's program. Gradually, one account led to another, until we have the names of at least sixteen California pioneers, who started their journey from Arlington in 1849. Three or four more men connected with Arlington before or after those stirring days, besides eleven more names of men, mentioned in these records who were associated with these men of Arlington, but whom we have been unable to actually locate. Twenty members of this Arlington Historical Society are related to the pioneers of 49'er from this town. Probably there are more.

There is no intellectual slight to men who started from other places besides Arlington. T night we have only time for a few. Some have asked if any of the 49ers are living today. One of our committee, Miss Peirce, discovered a 49er living on Cleveland St. a Mr. Albert M. Murch, now ninety seven years of age, has been a resident here for three or four years, making his home witg his daughter Mrs. Maxwell. We had hoped that he might attend this evening, but he cannot. We hope his daughter and her family may be with us tonight.

Soon after the Jason Russell House became the property of the Society Mr. William Whittall, then in his nineties, walked up this large photograph album, which you see on that table of which he had the care, to loan to the Society. It contains photographs of New England pioneers. You may enjoy looking it over later this evening.

Mr. Whittall's daughter Mrs. Bennett has loaned us several articles this evening, one of which gives the facts regarding the discovery of gold in California. Miss Peirce will now read this, that we may know the truth, before reading the journal and letter just that we may understand better the excitement of the days.

Miss Peirce

You see this note book. It is the journal of Mr. Francis Seth Frost written during his sea voyage from Boston around the Horn to San Francisco. This Journal is loaned to us brought by a member of the Society Mrs. H. A. Phinney, a daughter of Mr. Frost. We decided to have someone connected with Mr. Frost read extracts from it, failing in this it will be read by one of the Committee. Please note the date of Mr. Frost's Journal: Feb 2, 1849. Two days short of seventy nine years since he went aboard the (undeciferable).

M. B. F.

The next paper is really responsible for our evening, devoted to the subject. Long ago Blanche Cutter lived on Summer Street, West Cambridge; later she moved to the middle west. After years ago she was visiting Arlington and told Mrs. Gannett a most interesting account of the trip, which her father and his two brothers made to California. Later it was suggested to the Committee as a nucleus for an evening's program. Mrs. Hatch (formerly Blanche Cutter) had sent us the account of that trip. Given to her years ago by her father. She could not be here to read it herself, but a cousin will replace her, and Mrs. Samuel Cutter Easte will read it to you.

Mrs. Easte

The Cutter brothers have told you a little about Panama – Let us hear a few items from a Panama newspaper of that time, giving their side of the story. This past year, this paper has been given to the Society by Mr. Louis Metcalf one of our members. Miss Peirce will read from it.

Another of our members has provided us with his father's account of his experience. Mr. J. Francis Frost has given us the next entertainment and we will now hear what his father Mr. Joseph Locke Frost can tell. The paper will be read by Miss Edith Winn.

Yesterday morning's mail brought a short account from Chicago sent by one of our new members Mr. E. Emerson Russell, a descendant of Jason Russell in response to the notice of the call for this meeting. It will be read by Mr. Otis Russell.

Mr. Russell

Many of you remember most pleasantly Mr. William Whittall, long actively a resident of Arlington. His daughter Mrs. Bennett has loaned us an interview he gave to a newspaper in 1910. It will be read by one of the Committee.

Mr. Woodhead

We now have come to our last paper extracted from the letters of Mr. George K. Fessenden loaned by his daughter, Mrs. Farmer Fessenden Elence (?), a brother of our . . . and . . . A. T. Whittemore. In 1849 George Fessenden was twenty three years old. Like Mr. Seth Frost, he chose the water route. You really must feel very familiar with the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Possibly you begin to feel the motion of the boat and get the briny odor of the sea. Hence we will omit George Fessenden's account of the sea voyage except to state he sailed on the ship Charlotte leaving Boston in early March and arriving in San Francisco Bay about Sept 22nd 1849 – 196 days. Read the extracts from his letters telling of the impressions of the new country en route to and experiences in the (. . . ?).

(This paper is also forced back to the Committee to read. . . ?) M.B.F.

The accounts I have read lately of early California days all give the same general conditions, especially of the (. . . .) due to the "rainy season". This ends our program. We have tried to give you, with as little duplication as possible, a fair and general idea of the experiences of the adventurous pioneers, also a little idea of the State of California in 1849, leaving to you the comparison to the California of 1928.

COPY I: New England Colonized? California Pioneers of '49

Officers: Pres. Robert Bragg of Boston and San Francisco; Vice President William B. Wilbur of South Boston; Secretary Leonard A. Saville of Lexington; Treasurer William Whittall of Arlington.

Directors: David A. Hodgdon of Westwood, George L. Kittredge of Cambridge, George P. Rust of Gloucester, Isaiah Geaver of Lynn.

Gold was Discovered in California Fifty-Nine years Ago. In January 1848, John W. Marshall was building a mill for himself and Gen. John A. Sutter on the south fork of the American River, fifty-four miles east of Sutter's Fort. The mill, it was expected, would supply the ranches and settlements with pine lumber.

One morning Marshall picked up from the bed-rock of the race of the mill a small piece of yellow metal which weighed about seventeen grams. It was malleable, heavier than silver and in all respects resembled gold. Marshall showed the piece in the afternoon to those who were working at the mill. The result of the discussion which ensued was the rejection of the gold theory. Marshall, however, was not satisfied, and afterward tested it with nitric acid, and found it was actually gold. He discovered pieces like it in all the surrounding gulches wherever he dug for it. The news of the discovery soon spread, and in April reports of the find were published and created much interest and excitement through the country. The above statement was sent out with the notice of the annual meeting of the Society to be held as usual at the Revere House, Boston, on Friday, January 24, 1908.

Names of the West Cambridge Arlington pioneers follow.

Names of the West Cambridge Arlington men who went to California in search of gold 1849 – 1850.

Francis Seth Frost

George Harris Fessenden

George Teel (born in Jason Russell House)

Joseph Locke Frost (born in Jason Russell House) Josiah Locke Frost (born in Jason Russell House)

Henry Cutter James Cutter

Porter Fobes

Frank Dodge Davey Dodge?

Stephen Blake

Pleade? Theodore Russell

Henry Lawrence

Henry Adams

John Russell

William Whittemore

49ERS WHO IN LATER YEARS CAME TO RESIDE IN ARLINGTON

T. Emerson Russell William Whital Albert Murch

NAMES OF PIONEERS MENTIONED IN JOURNALS AND LETTERS OF THE ARLINGTON PIONEERS

Samuel May

Warren Fletcher

Albert Cook Cloud? brother of Daniel Clark?

Hall

Pike, brother of Dr. Pike Hieletinge? Hobart? Moirell? of West Cambridge

MEMBERS OF THE ARLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY KKNOWN TO BE RELATED TO 49ERS

Mr. Gewell Crosby Mr. Welan Crosby

Mr. Edward H. Cutter

Mrs. L. K. Easte

Mrs. Albie Dupee (sister and cousin to several) Miss Effie Dupee

Mrs Marion B. Fessenden

Mr. Edward L. Fessenden

Mr. J. Fred Frost

Mrs. Henry Hornblower

Mrs. E. L. Prescott

Mr. E. Emerson Russell

Mr. & Mrs. George L. Russell Mr. G. Otis Russell

Mrs. Marion E. Shirley

Mrs. F. M. Stales

Mr. William E. Wood

Mrs. G. A. Phinney

Mrs. Edith A. Whittemore Mr. Oman W. Whittemore