

A mill was built on the Agawaam, at a much earlier date; a bridge erected in 1719; a constable chosen in 1727, under Plymouth, and made a precinct within the same, 1733, where Mr. John Cotton, afterwards settled at Halifax, occasionally officiated as minister, the same year; and, March 1, 1739, Plymouth "voted and consented to their separation as a town, adjoining with the inhabitants of the easterly part of Rochester, according to the purchase deed of the town of Plymouth."

Classes of names—shewing their origin.

Hingham.

Fearing Bates Norris Chubbuck Jones

Dartmouth. Hathaway

Plymouth.

Barnaby Savory Churchill Sturtevant
Bosworth Faunce Samson Morey

Sandwich.

Swift Gibbs Hammond Saunders Blackmer
Burgis Nye Bessey Bassett

Marshfield and Rochester.

Briggs Bourne Winslow Bumpus Howland
White Crocker

There are a few names from Middleborough, Yarmouth, the Vineyard, and Long Island.

Alewives. Having collected a few notes, physiological and historical, on the alewife fisheries, we have thought this a proper place to arrange them in one view.

Of the alewife, there are, evidently, two kinds, not only in size, but habit, which annually visit the brooks passing to the sea at Wareham. The larger, which set in some days earlier, invariably seek the Weweantic sources. These, it is said, are preferred for present use, perhaps, because they are earliest. The second, less in size, and usually called "black backs," equally true to instinct, as invariably seek the Agawaam. These are generally barrelled for exportation. In the sea, at the outlet of these streams, not far asunder, these fish must for weeks swim in common, yet each selects its own and

peculiar stream. Hence an opinion prevails on the spot, that these fish seek the particular lake where they were spawned.

Another popular anecdote is as follows: alewives had ceased to visit a pond in Weymouth, which they had formerly frequented. The municipal authorities took the usual measures, by opening the sluice ways in the spring, at mill dams, and also procured live alewives from other ponds, placing them in this, where they spawned, and sought the sea. No alewives, however, appeared here until the third year;* hence three years has been assumed by some, as the period of growth of this fish.

These popular opinions, at either place, may, or may not, agree with the laws of the natural history of migratory fish.

The young alewives we have noticed to descend about the 20th of June and before, continuing so to do some time, when they are about two inches long, their full growth being from twelve to fifteen inches. We have imbibed an opinion, that this fish attains its size in a year; but if asked for proof, we cannot produce it.

These fish, it is said, do not visit our brooks in such numbers, as in former days. The complaint is of old date. Thus, in 1753, Douglass remarks, on migratory fishes, "The people living upon the banks of Merrimack observe, that several species of fish, such as salmon, shad, and alewives, are not so plenty in their seasons as formerly; perhaps from disturbance, or some other disgust, as it happens with herrings in the several friths of Scotland." Again, speaking of herrings, he says, "They seem to be variable or whimsical as to their ground." It is a fact, too, that where they most abound, on the coast of Norway and Sweden, their occasional disappearance is a subject of remark also of early date in a comparative view.†

* This anecdote was related in a circle of the members of the general court, at Boston, when a member from Maine remarked, that a similar event had occurred in his vicinity.

† "Previous to the year 1752, the herrings had entirely disappeared seventy two years, on the coast of Sweden; and yet, in 1782, 139,000 barrels were cured by salt, at the mouth of the Gotheis, near Gottenburg." *Studies of Nature.*

The herring is essentially different from the alewife in size (much smaller) and in habit. It continues we believe, in the open sea, and does not seek pond heads. Attempts are sometimes made, by artificial cuts, to induce them to visit ponds which had not before a natural outlet. These little cuts, flowing in the morning, become intermittent at noon, as the spring and summer advances. Evaporation, therefore, which is very great from the surface of the pond, should, probably, be considered in the experiment, making the canal as low as the mid-summer level of the pond, otherwise it may be that the fish perish in the passage. This may, in other respects, have its inconveniences, at seasons when the ponds are full.

The town of Plymouth, for a series of years, annually voted from 1000, to 500 and 200 barrels of alewives to be taken at all their brooks, in former years.

In the year 1730, the inhabitants were ordered not to take more than four barrels each; a large individual supply indeed, compared with the present period, (1815) when it is difficult for an householder to obtain 200 alewives, seldom so many.

In 1762, at a vendue, the surplus appears to have been sold in 25 barrel lots, which sold at 3s7 and 4s the barrel. In 1763, Plymouth and Wareham took 150 barrels at the Agawaam brook; * 200 barrels was the usual vote, down to a modern date, perhaps 1776. Manhaden were also taken in quantity, at Wareham, and barrelled for exportation in former years.

Agawaam appears to have been a name for several places, where migratory fishes resorted. Thus at Ipswich and Westfield River as well as this place. Wood, in his "New England Prospect," writes the word Igo-wam. At the season of fishing, the whole population of the country was, doubtless, in motion, resorting to these places. Hence we incline to the opinion that this expression became, in several places, a fixed and permanent name, and was, in some way, typical of it. We think "abundance of food" is understood.

* Plymouth retains a fishing privilege in this brook within Wareham. The alewives, we are told, were more numerous in 1815 than for some years.