

MOUNT VERNON LITERARY SOCIETY.

A YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER

THE STRANGE SPELL OF WEATHER IN 1816.

Ten Inches of Snow in June and People Froze to Death--Suicides Through Fear That the Sun was Cooling Off.

"I haven't heard much else but talk about the weather since I came to Albany," said Nonagenarian James Winchester, of Vermont, who is visiting his daughter in this city, "and you have had a pretty snug winter for her, I suppose, but I remember the year that was winter from one end of it until the other, and when the weather was so severe in June that a terrible snow-storm prevailed on the 17 of that month and people were frozen to death in the month of roses. I don't think there are many people who have as vivid a recollection of the year without a summer as I have, for various reasons, one being that there are few surviving who were as old as I was in that year, and another is because a near relative of mine was frozen to death in Vermont on June 17, of that year, which was the year 1816. I was 14 years old then, and lived in Vermont, where I have always lived, and where that memorable season was at its very worst, as in the New England states the June snow fell but

FIVE INCHES DEEP,

and in New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey it was nowhere deeper than three inches. In Vermont it was ten inches on the level. I mean the great snow of June 17. Snow fell several times during that month and ice froze every day in the month. In fact there was snow and ice in every month of 1816. The snow-storm of June 17 was one of the severest ones I ever saw, even in the depth of winter in that locality of severe snows. An uncle of mine had some sheep in a back pasture lot. To get to that lot he had to go through a piece of woods for nearly a mile. The weather had been very cold all through June. The big storm of the 17th began along about noon, and my uncle started after dinner to go to the sheep pasture to fix up a shelter of some kind for the sheep. No one had any idea, cold and eccentric as the season had been up to that time, that we could have a fall of snow that would amount to anything at that time of year. I was at my uncle's when he left home to go to the sheep lot, and as he want out of the door he said to his wife in a jocular way: "If I'm not back in an hour call the neighbors and start them after me. June is a bad month to get buried in the snow, especially when it gets to be so near the month of July." Nothing more was thought of the matter. The snow

INCREASED IN FURY,

and by night it had drifted so that the roads were almost impassable, but even then, and when it grew dark, none of us felt uneasy about uncle. When night set in in earnest, though, and there was no sign of my uncle's return, his wife sent me and my cousin, who was two years younger than me, to alarm the neighbors and tell them that we believed uncle had perished. We had a hard time getting to the nearest neighbor's, less than a mile away, and there gave the alarm, but could go no farther. The neighbors summoned others, and in spite of the severity of the night they searched the woods until morning, but no signs of the missing man could be found. The search was taken up by others during the following day, and all of the next night, without any trace of him being discovered, except that he reached the pasture and built a shelter of boughs in one corner of the lot, under which the sheep were huddled. On the forenoon of the third day the searchers found my uncle buried in the snow a mile from the pasture, in almost an opposite direction from home. He was frozen stiff. He had evidently become bewildered in the blinding storm and had wandered about until he succumbed to fatigue and cold. It seems a most improbable thing that a person

EVER FELL A VICTIM.

to a snow-storm in the middle of June in this latitude, but I have this sorrowful knowledge of one instance, at least, where such a thing was only too true. The wind during June, July and August of 1816, was continuously from the north, and it blew fiercely and cold. Farmers wore heavy overcoats and mittens while about their work every day during those months. There was but little use of planting anything, nothing grew to speak of, but they did plant corn as usual, and planted with mittens on. There was very little rain during the entire season. The great pines of firewood that always accumulated during the summer months at the farmhouse back doors in readiness for winter didn't accumulate in 1816. They were needed for current use. July was colder even than in June, and August was colder than July. Ice half an inch thick formed in July, but in August it froze an inch or more. There was a heavy storm on August 30. The whole summer was as bleak and dreary as November. There was not a green thing to be seen anywhere. The first two weeks in September brought the first real warm weather there had been during the year. The thermometer went up to seventy degrees, which was twenty-five degrees warmer than it had been since May. The general opinion had been that the cause of the cold summer was the rapid cooling of the sun by some violent disturbance, and many believed that the end of all things was at hand.

THE APPEARANCE

of the warm spell in September, though, dispelled that fear for a time, but on the 15th of the month the cold weather returned suddenly, and the calamity believers were once more made miserable by their old fear. One old man, James Gooding by name, was so hopeless over the prospect that he killed all his cattle and then hanged himself, after vainly trying to induce his wife to make away with herself also, to escape the terrible and gradual death by freezing and starvation which he believed was to be the common doom. Cold increased from the middle of September until winter returned, and it may truly be said that, in Vermont at least, the year 1816 had neither spring, summer nor autumn. There wasn't grain enough grown that year for seed the next year, and those who were lucky enough to have more of the crop of 1815 on hand than they wanted for their own use had no difficulty in selling it for $5 and more a bushel. I remember that an old farmer named Shay was the only man in our neighborhood who had any corn crop to gather in 1816. He saved his crop in a curious way. He built immense bon fires around his cornfield and kept them burning night and day. He and hired help took turns in patrolling the field keeping the fires going continuously The fires were made of "fat" pine knots, which were an abundant materia' in those early days, although they are scarce enough now. This novel but expensive expedient of Farmer Shay kept his cornfield warm and free from pests, and he had the only crop of corn in that part of Vermont in 1816 All the corn raised in that State, and I don't know but all through New England, in 1817, was from seed grown in 1815. Those people who feared that the sun was cooling off in 1816 changed their minds in 1817, for the summer of that year was one of the hottest and dryest that ever settled down in that region"

SHERIFF'S SALE FOR TAXES.

BY virtue of the authority vested in me as Sheriff of Kent county, upon whom was laid the duty of collecting the State and County Taxes unpaid on the 1st day of April, in the year 1895, by process of law, in and for said county and State, under the Public Local and Public General Laws of the State of Maryland, in such cases made and provided, I have seized and taken in execution

All That Property

assessed to EDWIN COOPER, situated one mile from Millington on road from Peacock's Corner to No. 10 School House in the First Election District of Kent county together with Improvements thereon

And notice is hereby given to the owner or owners thereof, or any party interested therein, that I will expose the same at Public Sale at the Court House Door, in Chestertown, Maryland, on

TUESDAY, July 8th, 1902,

at 11 o'clock a. m., and sell the same to the highest bidder for cash, to pay and satisfy the State and County Taxes due thereon for the year, 1901, together with all interest and cost due and to become due thereon, conditioned upon the provisions of the Acts of Assembly aforesaid.

State Taxes due and unpaid.....$ 19
County " " " 1 00

je14 tds. THOS. J. FLETCHER, Sheriff.

SHERIFF'S SALE FOR TAXES.

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All That Property

assessed to ALEX WILSON, colored, situated near Smithville on the road to St. James Church and adjoining the lands of Peter Clare and others, in the Third Election District of Kent county, together with Improvements thereon.

And notice is hereby given to the owner or owners thereof, or any party interested therein, that I will expose the same at Public Sale at the Court House Door, in Chestertown, Maryland, on

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State Taxes due and unpaid.....$ 41
County " " " 2 19

je14 tds. THOS. J. FLETCHER, Sheriff.

A CARD.

Special mention is made by the Architect of the fine new building of Mr. W. W. Hubbard, in Chestertown, Md., of the Ruberoid Roofing as a proper roofing material, as it is fire resisting, easily laid, needs no paint or coating, odorless; is said to outlast shingles, tin, steel and felt; cost no more than a fair good shingle roof and has a grand appearance. Mr. Frank Duyer has just completed the laying of nearly 10,000 square feet of Ruberoid Roofing for me on the large new storage building of the peach basket firm of Crane, Hynson & Valliant and I invite everybody to view and examine this roof. By permission, I refer all interested to above named party. Samples of roofing and quotations furnished by Mail on request by

JOSEPH GUEST,
Chestertown, Md.

j7 tf.

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Headquarters for Everything in

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Agateware, Rope and Twines,
Harness, Fly Nets,
Lap Spreads, Paints, Oils,
Varnishes and Brushes.
Monarch Wickless Blue
Flame Oil Stove.

BINDER TWINE.

Window Screens and Screen Doors.
Screen Wire, all widths.

CARRIAGE HARNESS—We sell the best line in the county at..... $10.00
3-Inch CULTIVATOR PLATES, complete with bolts, per set..... 30c
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HAMMOCKS, now is the time to buy..... 80c

PARIS GREEN.

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THE CANNING AND MERCANTILE CO.

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THEY ARE HERE.

Our Spring and Summer Styles in FINE FOOTWEAR have arrived and we invite you to call and see them.

All we ask is that you come in and let us show the handsome new styles for this season. Some of them are beauties.

We claim to carry the handsomest and most perfect fitting shoes to be found in town, as we deal in shoes only.

We guarantee satisfaction and at prices that will meet the size of any pocket book.

Men's Shoes $1.00 to $5.00.
Ladies' Shoes 75c to $4.00.
Misses' & Children's 25c to $2.

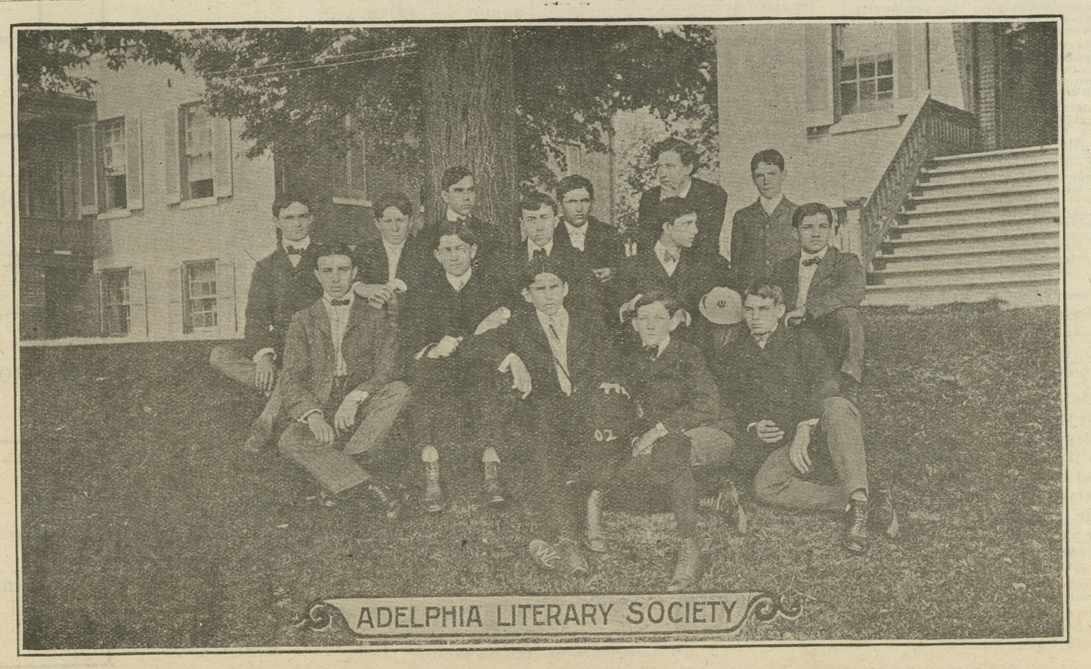
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When you want the latest in shoes come to the Shoe Store. It costs no more to have the latest style and freshest goods if you seek them in the right place. Keep up with the crowd.

See our windows! Every shoe shown can be duplicated in your size inside,

Twenty years in business; Twelve years in Shoes exclusively.

THOMAS G. WROTH,
The Shoe Man. Under Stam's Hall.



R. Heston Hicks.

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The 75c. kind at 50c
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All of our last year's styles will be sold at 50c., regardless of cost.

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Fashionable Hats at reasonable figures. High quality and at such prices that no man can object to the margin. From

5c. UP TO $2.50.

Underwear for hot weather.

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10c. Ivory Starch . . 5c
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