

## THE COGSWELL HOMESTEAD—GILMANTON

Col. Thomas Cogswell, Proprietor



THE COGSWELL HOMESTEAD.

Prominent among the old historic homesteads of Belknap county, is the Cogswell place in Gilmanton, embracing the contiguous estates of Gen. Joseph Badger and Col. Thomas Cogswell, natives of Haverhill, Mass., who settled here, the former in 1763 and the latter at the close of the Revolutionary War, throughout which he served gallantly with his seven brothers. General Badger was a member of the New Hampshire provincial congress and of the first constitutional convention, and was prominent in public affairs. He died in 1803. His daughter, Ruth, was the wife of Colonel Cogswell. The latter was also an influential citizen, and chief justice of the court of common pleas from 1784, until his death in 1810. In 1820, Thomas Cogswell of Atkinson, a nephew of Colonel Thomas, and son of Gen. William and Judith (Badger) Cogswell, located in Gilmanton, uniting in his possession the Badger and Cogswell farms. He was a young man of twenty-one, having just been united in marriage with Mary Noyes. Coming of a strong and distinguished ancestry, and endowed with great natural abilities, he soon became a leader of the people, and was conspicuous in all the affairs of this important town, serving repeatedly as moderator, selectman, and representative ; as deputy sheriff, associate justice of the court of common pleas, and member of the executive council, while his success as a farmer was also marked, an addition of some 500 acres having been made to his estate, this portion subsequently constituting the farm of his elder son, the late James W. Cogswell. At the death of Judge Cogswell, August 8, 1868, his younger son, Col. Thomas Cogswell, Jr., came into possession of the homestead, and its management has since been in his hands. Colonel Cogswell was born February 8, 1841, graduated from Dartmouth with the class of 1863, served gallantly as first lieutenant and captain of Company A, Fifteenth New Hampshire Regiment, during the regimental term of service : studied law with the firm of Stevens & Vaughan at Laconia, and at Harvard Law School ; was admitted to the bar in September, 1866, and immediately commenced practice at Gilmanton Iron Works. After returning to the farm he continued practice to some extent and also became active in political affairs, as a Democrat, serving as school committee, representative, and selectman for several years. He was a member of Governor Weston's staff in 1871, and represented his district in the state senate in 1878. In 1886 he was the Democratic candidate for Governor. He was appointed on the board of railroad commissioners in April, 1893, serving until he became U. S. pension agent at Concord, July 1, 1894, which position he now holds. He is also president and treasurer of the board of trustees of Gilmanton Academy, which notable institution his great-grandfather and great-uncle were instrumental in founding. He is a Mason, a prominent Grand Army man, and a Patron of Husbandry. The Cogswell homestead embraces 517 measured acres, and has always been known as one of the best farms in the county, sustaining large stocks of cattle and horses, and producing great crops of wheat and corn as well as hay. Colonel Cogswell has carried out important improvements in various directions, putting in a new 100-ton

silo the past season. The barn is 120 feet in length, and this, and the fine stable for horses, are thoroughly appointed, and, together with the fine old mansion, are abundantly supplied with running water, by means of a windmill, put in for the purpose. Colonel Cogswell proposes to make dairying his leading farm industry, increasing his number of cows from 15 to 25, now that a creamery has been established in town, in which enterprise he is a leading spirit. His hay crop is from 80 to 100 tons per annum, and he pastures from 50 to 75 head of cattle for outside parties. He has reduced his stock of horses, but keeps a fine span for driving, a stallion, and a few colts. The farm work is largely done by oxen. Although a lawyer, a politician, and a man of affairs, Colonel Cogswell is a thorough-going, representative farmer; his sympathies and interests are with the agriculturists of the state, and he is an earnest champion of their cause on all proper occasions. He married, October 8, 1873, Florence, daughter of R. D. Moores of Manchester, who died February 14, 1892, leaving a daughter and two sons. The daughter, Anna M., married Walter J. Edgerly of Gilmanton. Thomas, the elder son, entered Dartmouth College class of '99. Clarence Noyes, the younger, is employed in the wholesale boot and shoe establishment of Parker, Holmes & Co., Boston.