

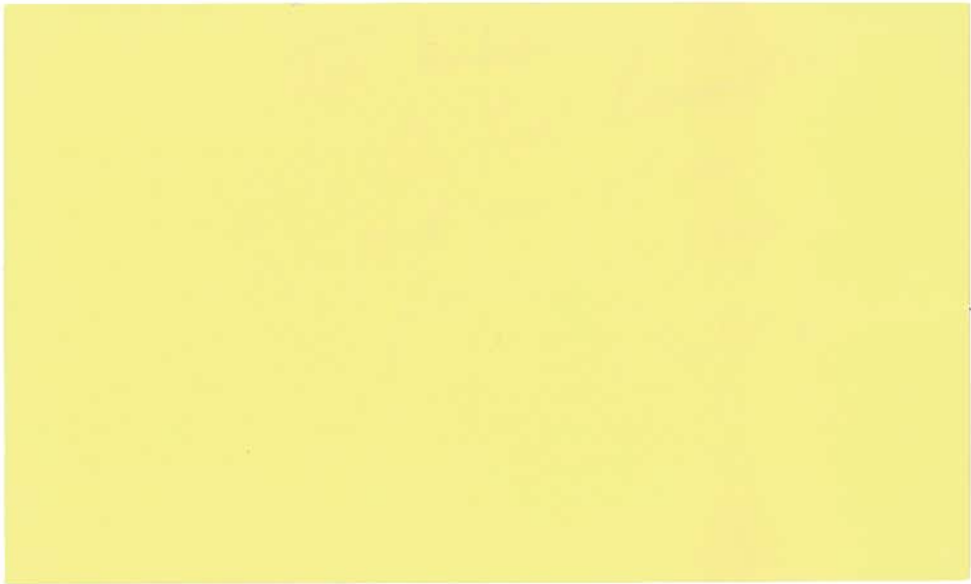
EARLY LEE SCHOOL HOUSES

*A search for the old school houses
of the 18th and 19th Century
in Lee, Massachusetts*

by

WILLIAM A. CLARKE, M.D.

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INTRODUCTION

Recently, in a search for the origin of the name "Brick Hill" in Lee, Massachusetts, I learned that a brick school house once stood at the foot of Summer Street. It was abandoned in 1869. While this may or may not be the origin of the nickname "Brick Hill," my curiosity was aroused. I had never heard of that school house when I was growing up in Lee. As I looked into its history I found that it was only one of several early school houses in the town of Lee.

I decided to see if I could find the locations of our early school houses. I have confined my search to the period before the beginning of the 20th century. This is an incomplete result of my search. It will not be a history of the school system in Lee as this has been covered by the treatise, *LEE, ITS EDUCATIONAL HISTORY, 1777-1940*, by Severina Avigo, Mary Voght and Elaine Cavanaugh published in 1948. My hope was to be able to determine the locations of all the old school houses in Lee, but I have come to realize that this may be beyond my abilities. It may be impossible for anyone to do this as so many early records are lost and so many are hard to decipher.

This treatise, therefore, is only a summation of what I have been able to find. It has been said that the average thesis is an exercise in moving old bones from one graveyard to another. While this cannot be considered a thesis, it is an attempt to move old bones from several old graveyards to one. If this does not remain a graveyard it could be of value to someone who might want to pursue the subject further in the future.

The "graveyard" that I have explored include the Lee Town Hall, the Lee Public Library and the public libraries of Stockbridge, Lenox and Pittsfield. Hours of digging were spent at the Registry of Deeds in Pittsfield with occasional side trips to examine records at the Probate Court in Pittsfield. The bound issues of the old weekly Gleaner newspapers published in Lee between 1857 and 1944 and kept at the Lee library were of great value, as were Hyde's *CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF LEE*, published in 1878 and *SEE ALL THE PEOPLE* by Florence Consolati, a history of the second hundred years of Lee, published in 1978.

Many of the old official records have been lost or destroyed and are no longer available. The records of the individual schools in the Hopland District and in the town proper have apparently not been preserved. Many of the old records are difficult to decipher because of archaic handwriting and grammar and entries that are often terse and cryptic.

If I lived closer to Lee, it would have been helpful to be able to spend more time at the Lee Library and read through all of the early Valley Gleaners (renamed the Berkshire Gleaner on December 24, 1904). A hasty scanning of only a few of the bound volumes turned up useful information.

The Registry of Deeds in Pittsfield is a gold mine of information but is difficult for an amateur to use. In an article about Lee's first settlement, published in the Berkshire Gleaner in about 1930, Mr. Edward S. Rogers commented on his attempt to find early records of Dodgetown at the Registry of Deeds: "Of course, I quickly realized what a formidable and well nigh impossible task this would be." To this I say, "Amen." The assistance of a professional would have been helpful.

There were school houses very early in the development of Lee that I can not accurately locate. We find these schools mentioned in various places such as Lee School Committee reports, Hopland School District meetings, and in at least one old newspaper article.

There may have been very early school houses in records that I have not found or in records that have been lost. For instance, it was only by accident that I ran across an article in the April 26, 1892 issue of the Valley Gleaner, when the cornerstone was laid for the Ingram Chapel of the Christian Endeavor Society in East Lee, which refers to a school house which had existed in the area before the one in use in 1892. I will quote from that article when I discuss the East School District. I wonder how many other little gems of information could have been found if I had had the time to read every available issue of the Gleaner!

EXPLANATION OF CITATIONS, COMMENTS AND CONVENTIONS USED

School vs. School house—The old school committee reports almost invariably used “*school*” to mean a student body of an educational institution, and used “*school house*” when referring to the school building itself. For example, the 1853 Lee School Committee Report says that for the North Center District “*a school house was built for two schools - primary and intermediate.*” This distinction is seen throughout the old reports and can be confusing if one is not familiar with their terminology.

18## Lee School Committee (or Town or Treasurer’s) Report—refers to the year of publication of the report and covers the fiscal year up to (usually) March of the year of the report. Thus the Lee School Committee Report of 1860 would include events occurring between March, 1859 and March, 1860.

Hyde’s History—this refers to *LEE, THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION AND CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF LEE, MASS.*, compiled by Rev. C. M. Hyde, D.D., and Alexander Hyde. It covered the first hundred years of the town’s history published in 1878.

Consolati’s History—refers to *SEE ALL THE PEOPLE OR, LIFE IN LEE* by Florence Consolati. This work covers the years 1877 to 1977 and was published in 1978 as a bicentennial project of the Town of Lee. This and the previous work should be required reading in the Lee schools. They are both available in the Lee Library.

Registry of Deeds—Throughout this treatise the Registry of Deeds will be cited as a source of information on transfers of property. Wherever this is used it refers to the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

Acknowledging my limitations, I realize that there are some gaps in this search for the location of the old schools of Lee. It is my hope that someday someone younger and abler than I will use this beginning to do further research that will add further insight into this and other aspects of Lee’s early days. It can be a fascinating experience!

Maps are used throughout this paper and the locations of the school houses are identified by numbers as listed below. The arbitrarily assigned numbers used in this list will be used as map markers throughout.

LEGEND USED FOR ALL MAPS USED IN THE BOOK

1. Hopland District School house #1
2. Hopland District School house #2
3. Hopland District School house #3
4. Hopland District School house #4
5. Hopland District School house #5
6. Hopland District School house #6
7. Central District School house
8. North Central District School house
9. N.W. District School house until 1869
10. N.W. District School house after 1869
11. N.E. District (Bradley Street) School house until 1894
12. N.E. District (Bradley Street) School house after 1894
13. West District School house
14. East District School house
15. Valley School house
16. Ferncliff School house
17. Lee Academy and later, the Lee High School
18. St. Mary’s Parochial School
19. Alexander Hyde’s Private School
20. The general area in which the red, or Center School house in the Hoplands was built. Possibly the first school house in Lee.
21. Probable general area in which an early East District school house was built.
22. East Lee School, a school house built by the town to replace Hopland District Schools numbers 4 and 6 after the dissolution of the Hopland District school system.
23. South Lee School, a school house built by the town to replace Hopland District Schools numbers 2 and 5 after the dissolution of the Hopland District school system.
24. A private school for young women was conducted on this site by Miss Lydia Barlow in the early 1850’s.

SOURCES OF THE MAPS

- 1858 maps - *MAP OF THE COUNTY OF BERKSHIRE MASSACHUSETTS*, published by Smith, Gallup & Co, of New York and Boston. This is a large wall map hanging in the Historical Room of the Stockbridge Library,
- 1876 maps - *COUNTY ATLAS OF BERKSHIRE MASSACHUSETTS*, published in 1876 by R. T. White & Co., New York.
- 1895 maps - *ATLAS OF THE GARDEN SPOTS OF BERKSHIRE: STOCKBRIDGE, LENOX AND LEE, MASSACHUSETTS*, published under the direction of James P. Beirne. It is undated, but from internal evidence local historians in the three towns have dated it differently —1895 in Lee, 1894 in Stockbridge and 1890 in Lenox. I have opted to use the 1895 date.
- 1904 maps - *ATLAS OF BERKSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS*, published by Barnes and Farnham, Pittsfield, Mass.

SOURCES OF PICTURES USED

The pictures on the following pages have been found in various places. A few of them were poor copies of originals when I found them. More complete information about the sources is given below. The source of each picture will be acknowledged by a brief notation after the description of the photograph.

PICTURESQUE BERKSHIRE PART II - SOUTH
Picturesque Publishing Company
Northampton, Mass.
Published in 1893

VIEWS OF LEE, EAST LEE AND SOUTH LEE, MASSACHUSETTS.
IN THE BEAUTIFUL BERKSHIRE HILLS
The J. B. Goussett Co.,
Lee, Mass.
Published in 1895

STREETS, PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GENERAL VIEWS OF LEE, MASS.
O. J. Copeland & Co.,
View Artists and Publishers,
Pittsfield, Mass.
Published September 4, 1886.

HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE COUNTY
J. B. Beers
New York
Published in 1885

There are also some photographs from the Lee Library collection, a photograph from the private collection of Ms. Gloria Shembroom, a summer resident of Stockbridge, two photographs from the John Fraser family, and a photograph taken by Frank McCarthy of Lee which was given to me by Frank Kelly of Sun City Center, Florida. Some of the pictures are photographs taken by me.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would not have been able to do the research and organization of the material for this booklet if it had not been for the patience of my dear wife, Susan. Thank you, Susi.

In preparing this paper, I received much personal help from several people in and around Lee whom I want to thank for their help. It would be impossible to name everyone who has given me help, but some of them are:

Florence Consolati helped with her vast knowledge of the history of the town and was also helpful in correcting some of my grammatical errors. Unfortunately, she saw only some of the manuscript and any grammatical errors are my sole responsibility.

Georgia Massucco, librarian of the Lee Library, went out of her way to help me locate sources of information in the historical collection of the library, and carried countless heavy loads of books up from the depths of the library for my use.

Mary DeVarennes was always available if Ms. Massucco was busy elsewhere and never complained about my requests for some of the heavy books from the basement of the library.

Pat Carlino and Sue Scarpa at the Town Clerk's office and Tim Taylor in the Tax Assessor's office were always very helpful.

Some of the other people who helped with their knowledge of various aspects of Lee history include Frank Consolati, Charlotte Davis, Betty Dennis, Dorothy Fraser, John Fraser, Dr. John M. Hyde of Williams College, Frank Kelly, Richard Sitzer, Jim Toole of Lenox Dale, and Joseph and Fannie Valenti.

I especially want to thank my son-in-law, Hugh "Putt" Brown, the owner of Monolith, a printing company in Bloomfield, Connecticut, for taking time from his busy schedule to set up and print this booklet.

A BRIEF HISTORY

This is not an effort to reconstruct the history of Lee and of its academic system, but only an attempt to locate its many old school houses. For a fuller understanding of the following chapters, however, a rudimentary knowledge of some aspects of that history will be helpful.

The Town of Lee was incorporated in 1777. In 1774 the residents of the Hopland section of Great Barrington, the residents of the western portion of Hartwood, and the residents of the Williams Grant and of the Glassworks Grant petitioned that they be formed into a separate town. This is their handwritten petition (including misspellings and crossed-out words):

To his Excellency Thomas Hutchinson, Esq., Captain General & governor & Commander in Chief, the honorable his Majesty's Chief Council, and the honorable the House of Representatives of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England -

We the Subscribers humbly Shew that we Living on & owning lands in that part of Great Barrington in the County of Berkshire, called the Hoplands - and a grant called the Glassworks grant, joining to said Hoplands & in no Town, and also part of Hartwood in said County, & also part of the grant made to Col. Ephraim Williams deceased, which same land is not in any Town - all which several Tract of Land are Contained in the Annexed plan - And your Petitioners beg leave to observe that the Situation of the Lands is such that the Inhabitants thereof could ~~not~~ be well accommodated by being made into a separate Town or District & that whilst the Inhabitants of such Land are in their present Situation they cannot enjoy those privileges which people ought to enjoy in those Towns where they are obliged to do duty - and your petitioners beg leave further to observe that those of us who belong to said Great Barrington, Live from Eight Miles & an half to fourteen Miles Distant from the Meeting House in said Great Barrington & about a Mile & an half further from the Church in the same Town - That those of us who live in said Hartwood are seperated ~~by~~ from said Town of Hartwood by a Mountain, over which, a road for carriages can never be made to said Hartwood - and those of us who Live on the said Glassworks grant, & on the said Grant made to Col. Ephraim Williams cannot be better Situated by joining with any other Towns.

Your petitioners therefore pray that the above Lands, described in the annexed plan, with the Inhabitants, may be made into a Seperate Town or District - and as in Duty bound shall ever pray.

Jan^y 6, 1774

(Here followed 45 signatures)

After much discussion and politicking, principally because of objections raised by the people of Hartwood (now Washington, Massachusetts), Lee was finally incorporated as a town on October 21, 1777.

It is not known whether there were any school houses in Lee at the time of its founding in 1777. The 1900 Lee School Committee Report says "No records exist to show when the first school houses of the town proper were erected, but the red, or Center school house in the Hoplands was built, or at least finished in 1791."

To my knowledge the available records make no mention of schools or school-

ing prior to a town meeting on April 5, 1784 when the following votes were recorded:

- Voted to raise Money for Supporting a publick School in this town.
- Voted to raise forty pounds the present year to be laid out in Schooling.
- Voted to Choose a Committee to divide the town into Districts for Schooling.

Within a month the committee reported back recommending that four districts be established. Their recommendation was accepted at a town meeting on May 10, 1784. These districts were called the First (Hopland), Second, Third and Fourth Districts¹.

By 1794 there were five school districts - Hopland, Center, South East (later known as the East District), Northwest, and North East Districts¹. This number of districts remained essentially the same until 1825 when the West District was organized. In 1853 the North Center District was formed from parts of the North East District and of the Center District¹. We don't know whether school houses were built in all of these districts immediately or not. For example, although the West District was organized in 1825, there was no school house built there until 1856. In this district, before 1856, some pupils attended Hopland District School house #1 and some went to a school in Stockbridge.

Thus, by 1853 there were seven school districts in the Town. But one of them, as noted, was the Hopland School District. The self-financed Hopland School District over the years eventually divided into six schools, sometimes called districts or divisions of the Hopland District. The result of this was that Lee had, in effect, twelve school Districts, the six districts outside the Hoplands and the six divisions of the Hopland District.

The Hopland school district and its schools became a separately financed school system in 1791 when the inhabitants voted to become incorporated for the purpose of managing the funds derived from the school lands. The reasons for this unusual arrangement will be covered in the next chapter. This situation in the Hopland District persisted until 1889 when an act of the Legislature abolished the charter of the Hopland School District and the administration of the former Hopland schools became the responsibility of the town of Lee.

Over a period of many years the Lee School Committee in its reports would express dissatisfaction with the district system in town and the opinion was repeatedly expressed that it should be abandoned. The district system was not abandoned, however, until it was abolished by an act of the Massachusetts Legislature² on March 24, 1869. Even though the District system was abolished at that time, the situation of the Hopland School District did not change. That District, as pointed out above, had its own charter until it was abolished by the state legislature in 1889.

These several schools, with children ranging in age from 5 to 15, were each taught by one teacher and were known as common schools and were ungraded. They must have offered a very basic education at best, for in 1876 there was established a grammar school "in consideration of the numbers that never attained to the High School, but who ought to have better advantages for education than the common schools furnished."³

¹ From the 1900 report of the Lee School Committee, when they were reviewing some of the history of the Lee schools.

² Hyde's History.

³ A quote from Hyde's History.

Since no records are available to tell us whether there were any school houses before 1791, and none to tell us when most of the early school houses were built, we don't know how Lee children learned the basic three R's in the town's infancy. However, histories of neighboring towns may give us a clue.

Taylor's HISTORY OF GREAT BARRINGTON describes the situation in that town:

The custom then prevailed of gathering the children of a certain section at some dwelling house, or other place conveniently located for the purpose, where they were taught for a stated length of time; at the expiration of this period the teacher removed to another part of the parish, where the children from that part were assembled and instructed. By this method the children enjoyed nearly equal advantages; the teacher itinerated and one master, mistress or dame sufficed for nearly the whole parish.

In David H. Wood's LENOX, MASSACHUSETTS, SHIRE TOWN we read:

Undoubtedly, at first school was held in whatever convenient place offered.

Since such a system existed in Stockbridge and Lenox, it may have been a common practice at the time and may also have been the way things were done in the very early days of Lee.

Repeated references to truancy in the old School Committee reports seem to suggest that education was not taken too seriously by the parents in Lee in the early days. The 1845-46 Lee School Committee report of 1845-46, for example, said that of 657 scholars in town, aged 4-16, including those in the Hoplands, only 350 attended school in summer and 356 in the winter, on the average.

During the many weeks of my search for the location of the old schools of Lee, including those of the Hoplands, I was frustrated in my attempt to locate deeds recording the purchases of land on which to build most of the very earliest school houses. In addition, I was unable to find deeds recording sales of most of these earliest school house lots after they were no longer used. Finally, I stumbled on some phraseology in a couple of places that may explain the reason for my failure.

In a vote taken at a meeting of the Hopland School District on April 25, 1808 it was voted to remove the Hopland Center School house to the Center between James Smith's and Miss Dodge's, "provided the owners of this land will give it for the purpose."

ERROR - Page 3, line 37 - the 1904 map of South Lee is on page 81, not on page 66.

the property on which the was in use at the time. I was up of private individuals to the 1904 map of South Lee on page 66 shows the former school house lot as belonging to the Risley Estate. The deed, selling two plots of land near the former covered bridge in South Lee reads, in part, as follows, "Also one other parcel of land situate in s^d Lee being a three cornered piece called the School House Lot containing about one acre of land more or less, Bounded Northerly by the highway leading up the mountain, Easterly by the highway leading to Tyringham, Westerly by the Stockbridge and Pittsfield Rail Road - Reserving to the public or school district all the right they may have to have and maintain a school house for the benefit of said district on the same." (Underlining added)

In the first case the School District was thinking of building a new school house if someone would allow them to use the land, and in the second case a school house was apparently operating on privately held land. This strongly suggests that

⁴ Book 231, page 483, dated 4/30/1877 - Registry of Deeds.

it may have been the practice in the early years to build the school houses on privately owned land with the permission of the owner. Apparently the ownership of many of the school house lots of the earliest schools was never relinquished by the land owners and, therefore, were never owned by the town or by the Hopland School District.

As I said earlier, this applies only to most of the earliest school houses. I am unable to pinpoint just when the school districts started buying land on which to build school houses, but I have found a record of the purchase of land in 1809 that appears to be for the Center District School house. (See Chapter 10)

I came upon the 1809 purchase by accident when reading an old newspaper article. I would not have found it without that help, for the purchase was by three men who acted as agents for the Center District. Later purchases were made by the Town of Lee or by the Hopland School District, and were found at the Registry by checking all the purchases made by these entities. One would not usually know the names of any individuals acting as agents for the various school districts, so would not be able to check for any purchases made by them.

After 1809 I found no other purchases of land for school purposes until that of land purchased by Hopland School District #4 in 1840 "to be used as a school house." I have found no record of purchases between 1809 and 1840, but it would be easy to miss such purchases for the reason given in the previous paragraph.

THE HOPLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

In Chapter 1 we noted that one of the original school districts of Lee was the Hopland School District. The Hopland was originally part of Upper Housatonic Parish of Great Barrington and was so called because of "the great quantity of hops that formerly grew upon the banks of the river that flows down from Tyringham."⁵

The Hopland District was unique. When it was still a part of the Upper Housatonic Township (Great Barrington), it was divided into individual parcels. Most of the rights to these parcels were owned by individual Proprietors of the Upper Housatonic township, but some lots were set aside as school lands which were the exclusive property of the inhabitants of the district. These so-called school lands totalled about 170 acres and were usually leased for 999 years at a yearly rent of 6% of the assigned price, with the income going towards the support of the schools. The lessees had the right to pay the principal and interest due at any time during the period, thereby extinguishing the rent for the remainder of the 999 year term. When reading the old Hopland records one must always keep in mind that school lands were not school house sites. When the Hopland School District was abolished in 1889, three school land parcels were still on lease and the leases were taken over by the town. The lessees were still paying rent to the town at the time the 1900 Lee School Committee Report was written.

When the town of Lee was incorporated the town of Great Barrington raised no objection to the inclusion of the Hoplands in the new town. The control of the school lands then came under the control of the town of Lee. In 1791, however, the inhabitants of the Hoplands voted to incorporate as the Hopland District to support the schools in the Hoplands. By 1798 laws were enacted by the Legislature forbidding the Town of Lee from assessing the residents of the Hopland School District for town schools and giving the residents of the Hoplands the power to tax themselves if their school fund (money from the lease and sales of the school lands) should be insufficient. Thus the Hopland District was a separately financed school system until an act of the Legislature abolished the charter of the Hopland School District on April 5, 1889. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that the Hopland District was part of Lee and that Lee governed the Hoplands area in everything but their school system. There were many years, however, when the Hopland School District relegated some of their responsibilities, such as oversight of educational standards, to the Lee School Committee. Sometimes the town tax collector was asked to collect the school taxes for the Hopland District.

There was originally only one school house in the Hopland District, the Center (or Red) School house on Fairview Street, completed in 1791. By 1800 there were three divisions of the Hopland School District, but it appears that besides the Hopland Center (Red) school house only one of these divisions had a school house, one having been built in the Forge area in 1798 or 1799. The Forge area encompassed the area that is South Lee village today, and the school house was built at the corner of today's Pine and Meadow Streets.

Apparently some pupils in the eastern part of the Hopland District attended school in what was called the "Cape Street District" according to the Hopland School District minutes quoted in the next few paragraphs. Here they were un-

⁵Hyde's History.

doubtedly referring to the East School District of the Town of Lee which was called the Cape Street District in at least one of the Lee School Committee reports, that of 1853.

At a meeting of the Hopland School District on March 24, 1800 it was "Voted to divide the money arising from the Public School Lands, and what does not go to the Cape Street District, between the Red School house Division and the Forge Division equally that half to each." Although the Hopland School Committee reports often used the word District instead of Division, I believe that if the Cape Street School had been a division of the Hopland School District it would have been called the Cape Street Division as were the Center School and Forge Divisions in this vote, and not District. Also, the wording probably would have indicated an equal division of the money among the three Hopland divisions.

In 1802 the vote was recorded similarly; "Voted that the money now voted to be raised be divided as follows (viz) that East part of the District ~~that which attend the Cape Street School~~⁶ have the money that they pay, the remainder to go to be divided between the Red School house school and the school near the Forge equally without respect to what each pay or the number of scholars." This seems to indicate that the people in the East District of the Hopland District should get back their proportional part of the school tax money as they were not using the schools of the Hopland School District.

The 3rd article of a warrant announcing a meeting of the Hopland School District in May, 1810 seems to confirm this supposition. That warrant reads as follows:

3rd- to see if the district will allow the inhabitants of said District living from Jacob Winegar Eastward including said Winegar to unite with the Inhabitants of the East part of the Town of Lee in School affairs and to have their proportion of school money.

At the meeting itself it was voted to pass over this article, and after a careful reading of the records for subsequent years, I was unable to find any further reference to this matter. The article itself, however, seems to make it clear that in 1810 there was not yet a school house in the eastern part of the Hopland District.

The 1900 Lee School Committee report tells us that a Hopland school must have been built east of the river soon after the beginning of the century, i.e. soon after 1800, but that no record of it has been found. Why they could not find any such record could be explained by the above theory. It appears to me that the school house called Hopland District School house #3, near today's Massachusetts Turnpike interchange, was probably the first school house built anywhere near the eastern part of the Hopland District, but when it was built is not known. The first mention of the school house itself that I have found in the records of the Hopland School District is in 1838 when the Hopland School District met there. The 1896 Lee School Committee report, however, says that a meeting had been held there 70 years ago, i.e., about 1826, but I can find no record of such a meeting in the minutes of the Hopland School District that are currently available. The decision made at the 1830 meeting discussed in the following paragraph is evidence, however, that both Hopland District Schools #3 and #4 might have had school houses built before 1830.

⁶ These words crossed out in the original.

By 1830 it appears that there were now four school districts in the Hoplands. At a meeting of the Hopland School District in 1830 it was decided that the Center District of the Hoplands would be called District #1, the South District would be called #2, the East Middle District would be called #3, and the East District would be called #4. It was also ordered that the door of each school house was to be painted with the letters H.S.D. (Hopland School District) and the number of the district. From this we get the impression that there were now school houses in each of these districts, but it could be that this decision was made in anticipation that each of these districts would eventually have school houses.

As we will see later, the records show that land was bought in 1840 for Hopland District School house #4 and that the wording in the deed implies, but does not prove conclusively, that the school house was yet to be built. The deed⁷ at the time the land was bought said the land was "to be used as a school house for said district." There is always the possibility that the school house already existed on rented or borrowed land which was finally bought in 1840. I have found no other records which clarify this matter. The 1900 School Committee of the town of Lee reported that no records of the North East, North West, East, nor of the Hopland districts Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 have been found. To my knowledge, these records have never been found. I have found no records of Hopland District School #6, and they have probably been lost or destroyed since the 1900 report of the School committee.

In 1833 it was voted to divide Hopland School District School #2 in South Lee and to form a new school district to be called Hopland District School #5. Finally, the last division of the Hopland School district was made in 1848 when Hopland District School #3 was divided and Hopland District School #6 was established.

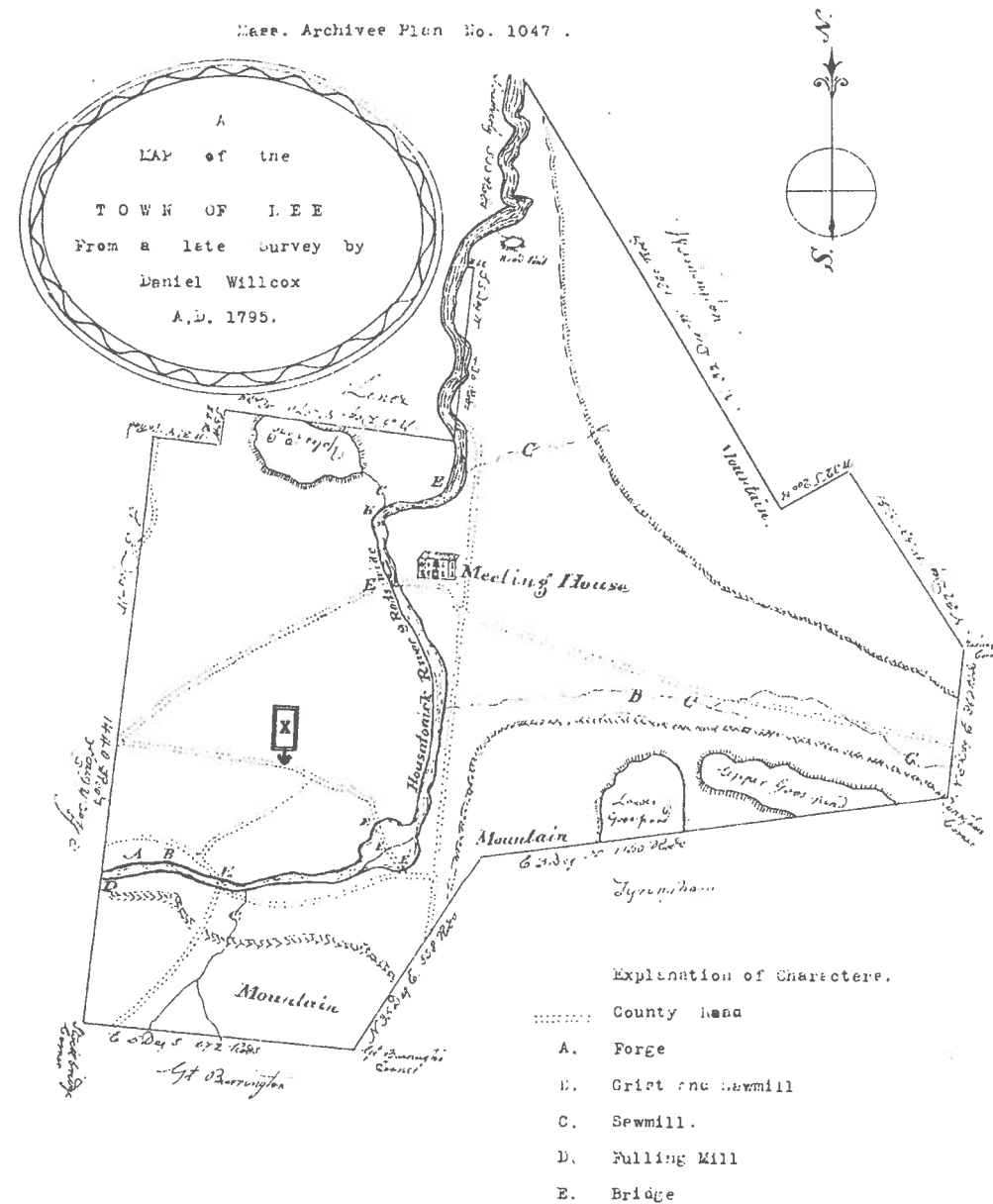
The following chapters will go into more detail on the various school districts, both those in the Hoplands and those in the town proper.

On the next few pages are several maps. The first two are early maps, one of Lee in 1795 and one of the Hoplands drawn up before Lee was a town. Following those two maps are two additional maps which show the locations of the old school houses of Lee that I have been able to find.

⁷Book 114, page 351, dated 2/11/1840—Registry of Deeds.

The 1795 map on the opposite page was copied at the Registry of Deeds in Pittsfield. It is rather crude and nowhere near as exact as a modern map would be. It does give a general idea of the layout of the town of Lee in 1795. It does not show all the roads in the town, only so-called County roads. Surprisingly, no schools are shown, although the Center School house of the Hopland District is said to have been completed in 1791.

The County road marked with an X has since been abandoned. It is my belief that a remnant of it still exists as a lane off Fairview Street. This is further discussed in Chapter 3.



The Town of Lee contains four Ponds, (Viz) Yale's Pond, 96 Acres. Wood's Pond 26 A. Lower Goose Pond 200 Acres, Upper Goose Pond 150 Acres. Total 472 Acres. From a survey of November 1794. One hundred and forty miles west of Boston and five miles southerly from Lenox Court House.

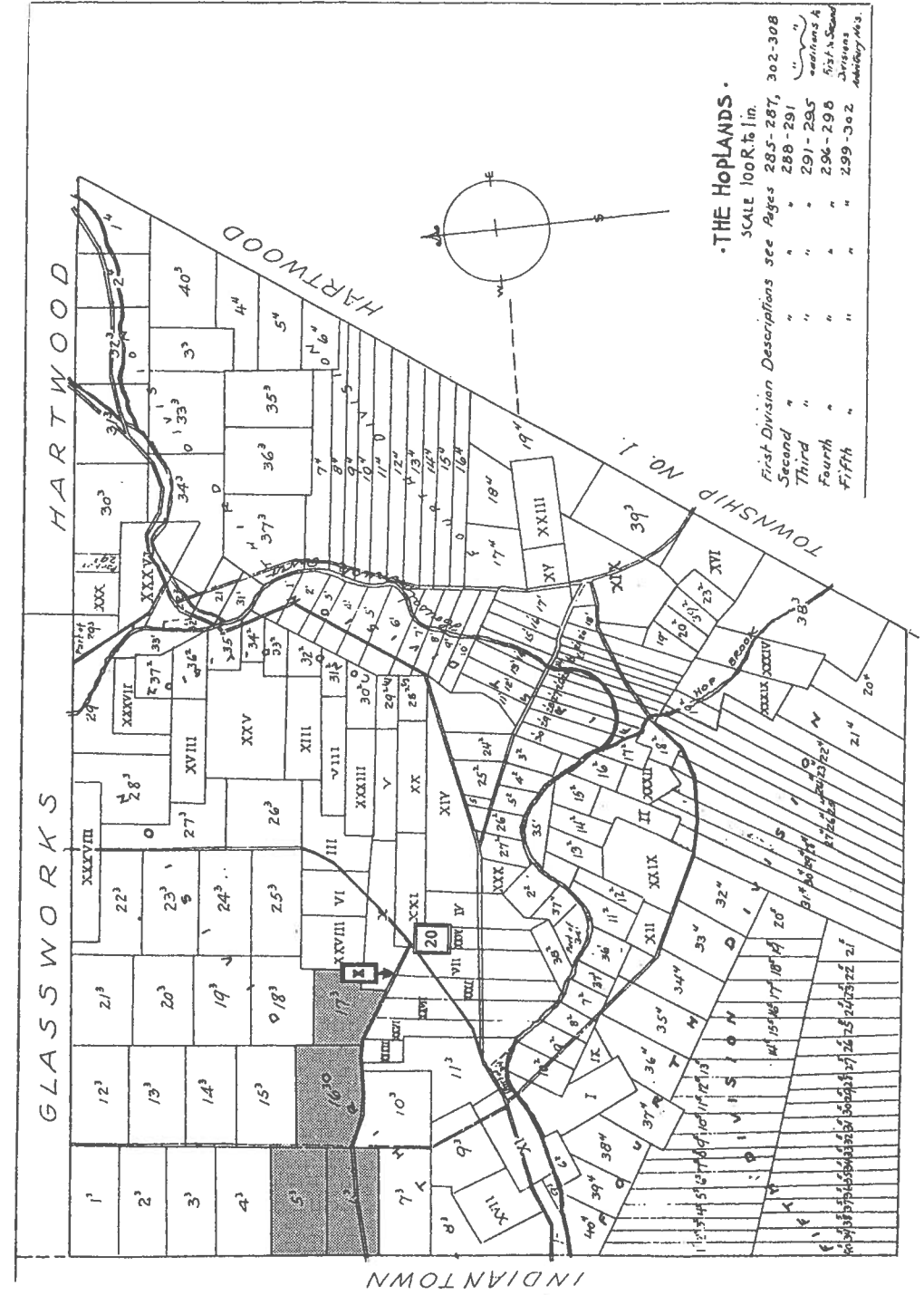
There is a dispute in the East line of Lenox. The inhabitants of Lee claim from the southeast corner of Lenox the line N. 5 E. to the Newington River, thence the River. The inhabitants of Lenox claim from their southeast corner N. 5 E. 435 rods thence westerly to the river the line.

The map of the Hoplands on the opposite page was made while the Hoplands was part of Great Barrington. While it may not entirely reflect the eventual layout of that section of the town, it is helpful in locating property that has been identified in some of the old deeds that referred to the lot numbers shown on this map.

On this map I have shaded in lots 5, 6, 16, and 17 in the 3rd Division of the Hoplands. These lots are referred to in Chapter 3.

The following identifiers have been added to the map:

- X-The County Road, later abandoned, except for the short lane leading to Miss Goodspeed's farm.
- 20-The approximate location of the Center School of the Hopland District.

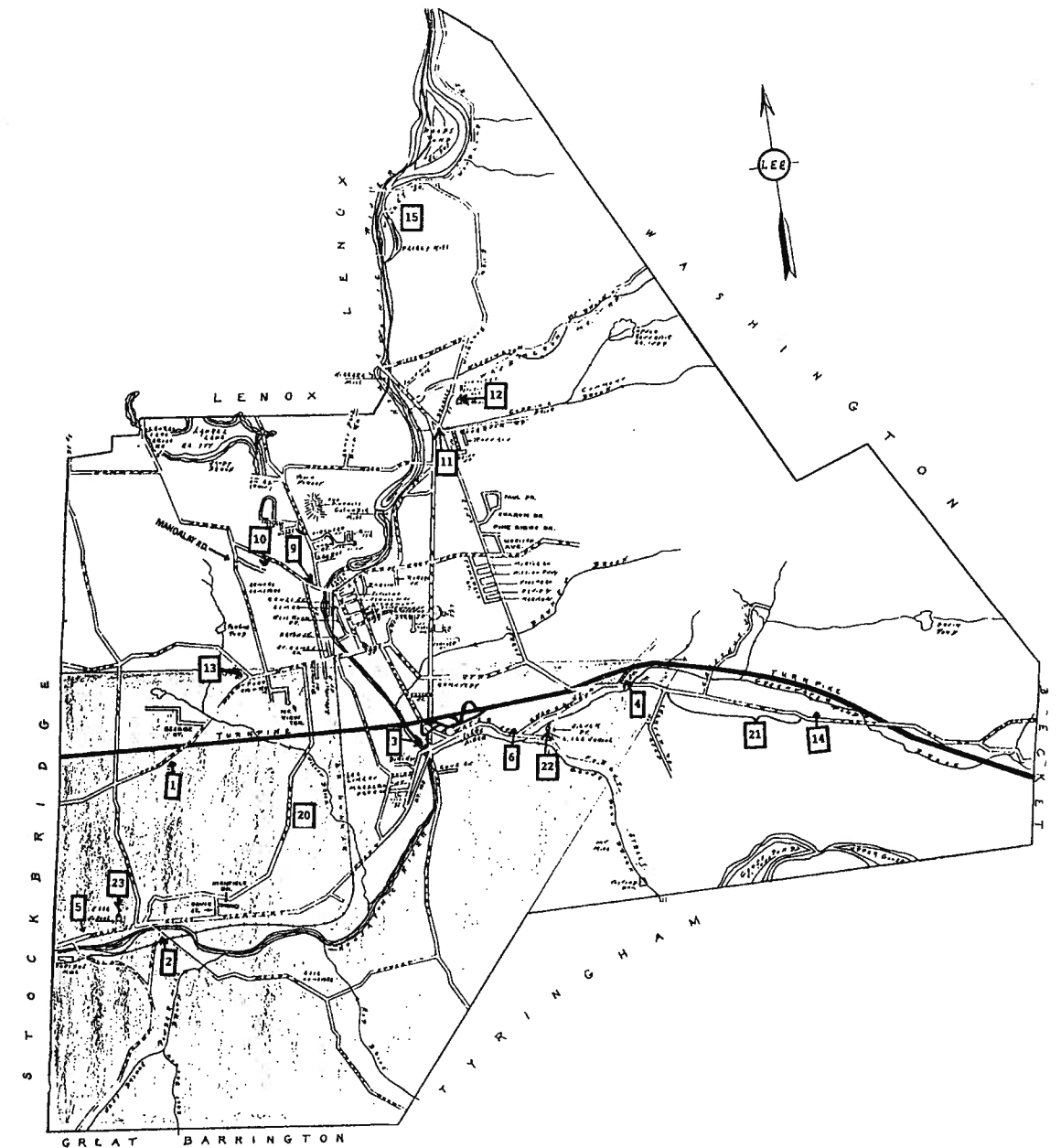


Using a modern map, opposite page, I have indicated the approximate locations of the old school houses that have existed at various times outside the central part of Lee. They are indicated by numbers which correspond to the key below. The map following this one will show the location of school houses in the central part of Lee.

The shaded portion of the map is the part of the town of Lee that was originally the Hoplands section of Great Barrington. It was this part of Lee that became the Hopland School District and which for almost a hundred years operated as a separately financed school system.

A KEY TO MAP ON NEXT PAGE

1. Hopland District School house #1
2. Hopland District School house #2
3. Hopland District School house #3
4. Hopland District School house #4
5. Hopland District School house #5
6. Hopland District School house #6
9. N.W. District School house until 1869
10. N.W. District School house after 1869
11. N.E. District (Bradley Street) School house until 1894
12. N.E. District (Bradley Street) School house after 1894
13. West District School house
14. East District School house
15. Valley School house
20. Area in which the red, or Center School house in the Hoplands was probably built. It may have been the first school house in Lee.
21. Probable area in which an early East District School house was built.
22. East Lee School, a school house built by the town to replace Hopland District Schools numbers 4 and 6 after the dissolution of the Hopland District School system.
23. South Lee School, a school house built by the town to replace Hopland District Schools numbers 2 and 5 after the dissolution of the Hopland District School system.



To show the locations of school houses in the central part of Lee I am using an 1876 map on the opposite page. It is a convenient map to use as it is very clear and detailed. However, as the key to the map shows, some of the school houses no longer existed in 1876 and some had not yet been built.

A KEY TO THE MAP ON THE NEXT PAGE

- 7. Central District School house.
- 8. North Central District School house.
- 9. N.W. District School house until 1869
- 16. Ferncliff School house opened 1886.
- 17. Lee Academy, later Lee High School and Grammar School, and today the Hyde wing of the Lee Central School.
- 18. St. Mary's Parochial School opened in 1886.
- 19. Alexander Hyde's Private School until about 1867.
- 24. Site of a private school for young ladies which was run by Lydia Barlow in the early 1850's.

