



UNTOLD TALES OF FALMOUTH

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Summer in Paradise

by *Franklin Lee Barrows (1844-1922)*

It is nearly sixty years since first I saw Falmouth, on March 5, 1862. I landed in a northeast rainstorm. [The stagecoach driver] Joe Hewins forgot to leave my trunk at Capt. John Hatch's. By chance, I saw a suspicious looking object upon the platform of Dimmick & Jones store, so I took Capt. Hatch's wheelbarrow and went upon a tour of investigation. The "object" proved to be my trunk. I pounced upon it and trundled it home.

My first impression was not very favorable, but improved rapidly as time went on. I had a good deal of sickness to contend with in those days, but I was always well in Falmouth: the air was a fine tonic for me.

The boys used to play ball on the green. It was there I first met F.J.C. Swift, Alex Goodspeed, Charles Lewis, Weston Jenkins and others whose names escape my memory.



Wendell Freeman house at Crocker Pond in W. Falmouth.

I found the people very friendly, remarkably so. If I chanced to meet Capt. Silas Jones or Capt. Bunker and we were upon opposite sides of the street, did they wait for me to cross over to them? No! They came to meet me, gave me a hearty handshake and welcome to the town. I



L-R: *Capt. Henry Bunker, Capt. Silas Jones, George W. Swift.*

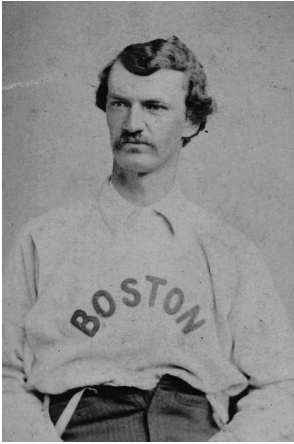
[was] but a boy, they well on in years. They were certainly mighty fine men. They belonged to a generation of men that has well nigh passed.

At the close of the Civil War, two of my brothers joined me in my trip to Falmouth. We took Mr. Geo. W. Swift's tent and pitched it about one hundred yards above and to the west of the present R.R. Station. The spot selected was a little to the right of the old footpath leading from William Nye's Lane up over the hills to the spring bars and on to the Gunning Point.

After the tent was set and the ground cleaned up, Capt. Silas Jones suddenly appeared with a wagon load of settees, chairs, etc. He said we would probably have callers and would find use for the articles. He was right. We did; as many as thirty some nights. His kindness did not stop there, for he brought us fruit—pears, plums and early apples.

We had quantities of food brought to us by generous, kindly souls: fruit, pies, cakes and corn puddings galore. I will relate an incident that shows the same vein of courtesy and good will.

A gentleman from New York was visiting Falmouth in the spring. He heard that trout were to be had in the vicinity. He made inquiry and was told that Geo. W. Swift was the man [to] see for information on that subject. Mr. Swift assured him that trout were to be had, and asked if he had his rod etc. with him. He replied that he had not brought rods, but he



Frank Barrows, 1871.

could telegraph for them. Mr. Swift opened the closet where he kept his rods, guns etc. and took out two rods, saying “you are welcome to use one of those.” He also took out his book of flies (artificial), [and] told him which ones to use.

“You will need a rig to take you about. They are not easily procured here. I will harness up and we will look one up.” The gentleman was not willing he should take so much trouble, but Mr. Swift said “Jump in and we will look up a rig. *No stranger is coming to this town and lack for anything I can give him.*”

Whenever I was about to leave home for a visit to Falmouth, someone was sure to say, “Frank is going to Paradise today.” That was right. Do you wonder that I loved the dear old town and its people? They were the finest lot I ever had the good fortune to meet.

Frank Barrows grew up in Boston. He played 18 games for the Boston Red Stockings baseball team in 1871, then worked in the wool industry, ending as overseer of a mill in Fitchburg, Mass. He is buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.