THE LAND OF NOD IN GROTON

Soon after the grant for the plantation of Groton was made, or maybe before, a few men came to this area to trade with the Indians. They were the old planters, John Tinker, Richard Smith, William Martin, Richard Blood, Robert Blood and John Lakin. As there was no way of getting into this wilderness except by routes of their own making or by Indian trails, they doubtless followed the latter. The trail that they traveled probably did not follow the line of the old "bay highway," now for the most part the Boston Road, but led from one pond to another and to the river, as the Indians were want to wander for their fishing. As they approached from Chelmsford their route led from Forge Pond to Knops Pond, via a path north of so-called Carmichael Swamp, over the ridges, through "Lost Lake," across Lowell Road, through present-day "Hemlock Park," toward Baddacook Pond, bearing left into Martins Pond Road, then leaving it and going over Chestnut Hill north of Martins Pond, again to Martins Pond Road as far as today's "Memorial Common," and down Common Street to the first settlement on the Nashua River. The four corners where Common Street, Nod Road, Sand Hill Road and a private road into the late Mr. Rich's land meet and the area along Nod Road and near the River were the places where these adventuresome men settled and built their trading post and whatever houses they had. It was called "Nod," or the "Land of Nod."

The road that goes into Mr. Rich's land was then a continuation of the path of Common Street and after leaving the four corners it passed over a brook, turned left, and, as soon as the river was crossed, went through Stony-Fordway or Stony Wading-Place, and into a path that probably led directly into what is now Mt. Lebanon Road.

Nod Road, or Path of those days, led from the four corners westward to a point just east of the brook by the same name, where it turned southward and crossed the brook by a bridge and path that may be traced somewhat today and came into present-day Mill Street, probably the way to Lancaster from Nod.

The trading post belonged to Mr. Tinker, who lived in Lancaster, holding town office there. His post was located on the lot of land east of Nod Brook on the north side of Nod Road and on the River at the "mote." He traveled by horseback or by canoe down the River from Lancaster to his place here at Nod. As Mr. Tinker left this part of the country in 1659 and moved to Connecticut, it shows how early he must have been at Groton.

A plan of Chelmsford and surrounding area that is now in the Massachusetts Archives, dated 1653-6 shows houses at Groton near the "Nashawaye River, and deeds in existence confirm somewhat an early settlement at Nod. In 1661 there was a
transferral of land in this area from Amos Richardson to Richard Blood, and in 1683 Richard Blood deeds to his son, James Blood, "The House Lott Called and Known by ye name of Mr. Tinker's Lott, with Northerly ye mote of Water in Compassing, And a Island as part of this Lott Intended to be given, with a Highway leading to ye Pine Neck Known and Called by the name of Blood's Neck as in Exchange for my said Sonn's Twenty Acres at Shipley's Hill. The Said Twenty Acres is to be on ye Northerly Side of my Neck Towards Said James Blood my Sonns own Lott." James Blood had previously built on part of his father's lot, to the east of his father's house (on the lot often referred to as "Leonard Dodge's asparagus bed," now growing up to planted trees) and there in his own dooryard was killed by an Indian in 1692. Later his son-in-law, John Shattuck, lived in the same place, and he and his eighteen year old son, John, were killed by the Indians as they crossed at Stony-Fordway from the west side of the river, where they owned land, to their home. The river was not as high in this vicinity as now because no dams, as at Pepperell, were then in existence.

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NOD

== Present Day Roads - not in use then.
2. Part of John Tinker's Lot, later James Blood's Lot.
4. Old Wow ing place. "Noil Farm."
5. Present Day Dump.
By deeds of the Lakin family, land in this area was referred to several times as "at Nod."

A hundred years ago there was a farmhouse that stood below the four corners on the continuation of Common Street. This place was known as "Nod Farm," and, we are told, was occupied by five generations of Nuttings. Passing by this house and toward the river was once a well-traveled road (previously mentioned) that led to Stony-Wading Place at what was known as the "Great Neck" which may have been "ye Pine Neck" referred to in the old deeds. Another road led from near the Nutting house northward and was in use until the railroad cut it off.

We may conclude that this area was early known as Nod, and over the years since has been called by the same name. Some of the earliest settlers here were from Woburn and we find in studying the history of that town that there was a part of Woburn known as "Nod" or the "Land of Nod," terms used to denote a remote place or a place reached by wandering. In the History of Middlesex County, 1890, the statement is made that 3000 acres of land at the head of the grant (Woburn-1642) bore the name of "Nod," or the "Land of Nod." Although this piece of land belonged to Charlestown it was under the jurisdiction of Woburn, and later became the town of Wilmington, and to this day Wilmington is often referred to as the "Land of Nod." The territory was soon given to Woburn by Charlestown, and in compensation Charlestown took 3000 acres to the north of this area. As this "Land of Nod" was in the wilderness and beyond the reach of the church, then in Charlestown, the reason for it being so named is evident. Frothingham in his "History of Charlestown" under the subject of Woburn, gives a history of this tract which he says was appropriately named, "as it was neither remarkably fertile nor valuable." These reasons for calling the Woburn land, "Nod," are doubtless the same for Groton.

In the early records of Groton there is only one mention of Nod, and that is in the record of the roads as stated by the selectmen on Feb. 17, 1670. It reads as follows: "Also another highway from John Lakins (to) the meeting house as it is now stated the way by the new bridges from Nod." John Keep Nutting in his "Nutting Genealogy" describes the old Nutting house and the path through the farm and says "The bridges are gone now," which might explain the "new bridges from Nod."

In the Bible, Genesis IV,16, the following statement is made, "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod." It is probable that both Woburn and Groton received the name of "Nod" from this biblical quotation with its implied meaning of a distant place and perhaps also from the fact that neither were "remarkably fertile nor valuable."

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1967