

TAFT VISITS HOMES OF HIS ANCESTORS

**Meets Many of His Rural Kin in
Mendon and Uxbridge and
Names a Taft Baby.**

REVIEWS FAMILY HISTORY

**Covers with Gov. Draper Route Which
Washington Traveled 131 Years Ago
—Reads Old Tombstone Inscriptions.**

Special to The New York Times.

BEVERLY, Mass., Aug. 19.—President Taft to-day roamed over the rugged Massachusetts towns where his forefathers dwelt. In Mendon and Uxbridge, he penetrated to quaint spots. He visited an ancient church, rummaged through grass and weeds in searching out tombstone inscriptions, named a two-weeks-old Taft baby, met a score of rural Taft folk, and late in the afternoon motored fifty miles back to Beverly.

He found all this an interesting diversion. It relieved his mind of party schism and worries incident to activities at Oyster Bay. He had been the guest Thursday night of Gov. Draper at the Ledges, in Milford, and under the Governor's escort made the pilgrimage to his ancestral shrine.

Mendon is only a short ride by auto from Milford, and over much of the way the President proceeded by a route which President Washington traveled 131 years ago after a visit to Connecticut. The people, who came out to meet him in their every-day working clothes, reiterated how his father, ex-Secretary of War Alphonso Taft, made two or three trips in the same localities, and how Alphonso's son was the first President since Gen. Washington's time to pass that way.

Sees Cotton Mill in Operation.

The President left Gov. Draper's residence at 9:30. He and his party went to the Hopedale plant, where the Governor afforded them an insight to the operations of that industrial community. Employees in the head office gave him rousing cheers, the mechanism of the cotton looms with automatically threaded shuttles was explained, and after a tramp through several departments, including the forge, the President started for Mendon.

By this time the rain of the morning had ceased. The first stop was several miles away before a dilapidated red house near the roadside. This was the Davenport house, once occupied by ancestors of the President. It is now deserted and the roof is falling in. Near by is a yellow farm house, known as the Torrey place, where maternal relatives used to live.

A little further on was Founders' Park in Mendon. A brass tablet bears the names of men who settled the town between 1663 and 1700. One of them was Robert Taft, from whom the President traces descent. Robert was a housewright had six tall sons, and built a big bridge across the Blackstone River. The President alighted and for twenty minutes studied this tablet. He read the names there of George Aldrich, from whom Senator Aldrich of Rhode Island sprang; the Rev. Joseph Emerson, from whom Ralph Waldo Emerson descended, and so on through a long list. Tafts young and old began to pour into the public square. All were presented, even to little tots that could scarcely walk. Mrs. Clarence Taft hurried from a neighboring house with her infant in arms. The President was asked to name the latest Taft scion.

Names Taft Baby Robert.

"Yes, I will gladly name him," said the President. He paused a moment, glanced at the bronze tablet, and added:

"I will name him Robert. May he grow up to be a good man and an honor to the family."

Young Robert's grandfather, a little old stoop-shouldered man, wearing rough working clothes, was the first of the local Tafts to be introduced by M. M. Aldrich, an expert in genealogy, who remained with the President throughout the forenoon. Just across the road was pointed out to the President an old-time inn, where George Washington was refused lodging.

A bright lad, in jumpers, pressed his way to the President. He was introduced as Kenneth Taft. The President noted his red head. "We had all sorts in our family," he remarked, laughingly.

The President talked much about the names of the local people of the last three or four generations. He repeated readily that his own line of descent was (1.) Robert, (2.) Joseph, (3.) Peter, (4.) Aaron, (5.) Peter Rawson, (6.) Alphonse. He spent a half hour in the burial grounds looking at the head stones, visited the old meeting house, where he was shown Pew No. 11, which his grandfather purchased at auction for \$100 in the early part of the last century, and then started away for the site of the Robert Taft house. This was reached through picturesque country of natural scenery. The big automobiles were driven through an orchard into a field, flowering with wild caraway, where the President, Gov. Draper, and Luther Taft, another aged citizen, were photographed.

Tavern Where Washington Stayed.

The President next drove to North Uxbridge, through more beautiful scenery and past fruit-laden orchards, to the residence of Miss Sarah F. Taft. Her house is the site of the tavern where Washington finally found supper and lodging. The house is well preserved. It was kept by Samuel Taft. The sign that swung from an adjacent tree was brought forth for his inspection. It was made in 1737, and bore an excellent representation of an eagle. Rats knawed it slightly during the years that it reposed in an adjacent corn barn. Miss Taft invited the President into the house, and showed him the apartments that Washington occupied. As he was departing she entertained him with a ghost story of a military funeral, which her relatives some generations ago thought they saw passing.

There were many other incidents of the day which the President enjoyed greatly. He talked with his kin about many matters of family history, and told how the Davenports, Emersons, Howards, Aldriches, and other families had intermarried. Gov. Draper and Secretary Norton told him that they traced their ancestry to some of these same families.

The drive back to Beverly, after luncheon at Gov. Draper's, began at 3 o'clock and ended at 5:45. The route was different than on the trip out. The President returned by way of Medfield, Dover, Needham, Newton Centre, and Commonwealth Avenue. Toward Boston his car was halted for a time by a great load of hay, and still further on by a herd of more than forty cows that were being driven home for milking. Gov. Draper accompanied him as far as Boston.

THREE CAPTAINS SHIFTED.

**Lantry Sent to Sheepshead Bay—
O'Connor Takes His Place in 51st St.**

Police Commissioner Baker announced yesterday the transfer of Capt. John J. Lantry from the East Fifty-first Street Station to Sheepshead Bay; Capt. John W. O'Connor, to East Fifty-first Street from Leonard Street, and Capt. Charles A. Formosa, from Sheepshead Bay to Leonard Street.

Capt. Lantry, who is a brother of former Fire Commissioner Lantry, has been in command of the East Fifty-first Street Station for several years. There was much comment at Headquarters over this change, but the only official reason that was given for the change was that it was "for the good of the service."

Commissioner Baker left last night to resume his vacation in Vermont. His leave was interrupted by the attack on Mayor Gaynor. He will return on Aug. 31.