

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE
THE CURIOUS AND REMARKABLE CASE OF LUCIUS W. POND

**A Prominent and Respected Manufacturer
of Machinists' Tools in Worcester, Massachusetts**

**An Account of his Disappearance
in 1875**



Compiled from newspaper accounts and written by

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During the night of Friday, October 1, 1875, Lucius W. Pond, a successful and well-respected manufacturer of machinists' tools in Worcester, on an overnight voyage from Fall River to New York on the steamboat *City of Providence*, went missing.

After passengers disembarked in New York Saturday morning, a steward making the rounds of vacated staterooms found room 10 locked, which was highly unusual. The Captain ordered the room unlocked and upon examination, shoes and several items of clothing were found, including a suitcoat. There was no money or items of monetary value, but cards and letters in the coat confirmed that the owner was Mr. Pond, and also revealed the name and address of his sales agent in New York, a Mr. Stebbins. They notified Stebbins, who then contacted a Mr. Joseph P. Hale, who was Pond's brother-in-law by marriage to his sister. A former resident of Worcester, Hale was now a financially successful piano manufacturer in New York. Stebbins and Hale then telegraphed Mr. Pond's son David in Worcester, and, without giving any reason, requested that he come to New York without delay.

Probably thinking it was just a matter of the necessities of business, David took a train that day, and arrived in New York that evening. After meeting with police and officials of the steamboat company, David returned to Worcester Monday evening, along with his uncle, Mr. Hale, bearing unpleasant news for his mother and sister.

Lucius Pond's trip to Boston that Friday morning, according to what he told his wife, Ardelia, had been for the purpose of taking care of a few business matters there and his intention had been to return home that afternoon. In the latter part of the afternoon, however, he had sent a telegram from the city of Fall River to his son David, saying: "Going to New York with gentleman wanting machinery." His presence at the Fall River telegraph office was later confirmed by Worcester police, although the clerk there had no memory of anyone being with him. As was confirmed by the steamship company, Pond boarded the *Providence* for the overnight trip down Long Island Sound to New York.

Apparently, nothing in this sequence of events was taken by the family as being unusual enough to be cause for concern. Presumably, the gentleman wanting machinery was someone Lucius had encountered in Boston. But now, on Monday night, they were learning that not only did he take an unexpected trip to New York, he disappeared along the way. At this point the troubling events were private; the story had not yet come out in the newspapers.

Lucius Wilson Pond had come to Worcester in 1844, at the age of eighteen, from his boyhood home in Hubbardston, and had apprenticed in the shop of Samuel Flagg, one of Worcester's first machine tool makers. Apparently showing great talent and potential in this line of endeavor, he became, only three years later, one of four men, including Mr. Flagg, forming a partnership under the name Samuel Flagg & Co. This company would prove highly successful, operating in several locations over the years, including the Court Mills of Stephen Salisbury II, and in rented space in

William T. Merrifield's new building offering what came to be known as "rooms with power to rent." The great Merrifield building fire of 1854 destroyed the Flagg group's machine shop, along with everything else in its path. Starting over, they located across Union Street before returning to the newly re-built Merrifield building the following year. Lucius Pond was later said to have been very proud of the fact that they had been able to repay every creditor "dollar for dollar."

In the late 1850s, Flagg retired and sold his share in the partnership to the others, and by 1861 Pond had bought out his partners and continued as a sole proprietor under his own name, citing in his advertising that he was the "successor to Samuel Flagg, 1847." He purchased manufacturing space in a building on Union Street at Exchange, later adding on to it, and there made a great success of the firm, achieving an excellent reputation for quality machinery and selling lots of it. His major products were lathes, planers, and other belt-driven tools for cutting, grinding, and shaping parts for the manufacture of machines and other products.



Worcester City Directory, 1870
p.19, advertising section

In Worcester, Pond became widely known and highly respected, and was said to be popular with a wide range of people, not just with the business community. He was considered a pillar of his church, the Laurel Street Methodist, in more or less the standard 19th century manner of being a principal financial contributor. In light of his close association with the church, it is not surprising that Pond was active in the cause of temperance. Like most industrial and commercial leaders, he was a Republican in politics, and he had filled his share of elective offices. He was a member of the Common Council in 1858-59, an Alderman in 1862, state senator for three terms, 1866-1868, and he was mentioned as a possible Republican candidate for congressman or mayor. Pond was also a Director of the Central National Bank at the time of his disappearance.

In 1868, he and his wife Ardelia, their son David, 21, and daughter Sarah, 11, moved into their luxurious new home at 42 Laurel Street, a few blocks uphill of the shop on Union Street. In the 1870 Census they were listed as a family of four with a housekeeper and a servant, Lucius said to hold real estate valued at \$100,000 (which included the machine shop) and personal property of \$75,000. This was more than enough to classify the family as very affluent. David Pond was identified as a "draughtsman." If not already, he would soon thereafter be employed with his father in the machine tools business.

On the whole, Lucius Pond appeared to be doing very well, with everything seemingly in order in his life, with the possible exception of a business setback associated with the recession of the mid-1870s. Pond's machines amounted to capital equipment for the companies that bought them. They

were used to make other items, as, for example, when a lathe (often weighing in the tons) is used to turn wood or iron to be cut or shaved into shapes for use as final or intermediate products. Investment in capital equipment typically slows down quickly and often severely in a recession.

Tuesday morning, October 5, the story still unknown to the press or the public, David Pond and Joseph Hale went to Boston to try to trace Lucius Pond's steps. They found that he had collected about \$2,500 from two clients, but uncovered no evidence that any of his debts had been paid. Otherwise, nothing appeared to be out of the ordinary.

The story broke the next morning in Worcester's two morning papers, *The Spy* and the *Daily Press*. Headlines in the *Spy* read "Mysterious Disappearance / A Prominent Worcester Manufacturer Starts for New York and Disappears." The *Daily Press* also topped its column on the story with "Mysterious Disappearance." That afternoon, the *Evening Gazette* reported essentially the same thing, its headlines also starting with "Mysterious Disappearance." Worcester's fourth paper operating at that time, a weekly known as the *Worcester Palladium*, covered the story in its edition of Saturday, October 9, also under the heading of "Mysterious Disappearance."

Worcester's oldest paper, *The Daily Spy*, was an outgrowth of *The Massachusetts Spy*, which dated back to Isaiah Thomas and his escape to Worcester in 1775 amid the tensions in Boston surrounding the onset of the revolution. A daily version, the *Worcester Daily Spy*, usually known simply as the *Spy*, was launched in 1845. Since 1859 it had been owned, edited, and published by John Denison Baldwin. An 1834 graduate of Yale Divinity School, and a Congregational minister for a number of years, Baldwin got into the newspaper business in Hartford and later Boston, and became prominent as a strong voice of anti-slavery sentiment and proponent of the Free Soil Party. In Worcester he was elected as a delegate to the 1860 Republican convention which nominated Abraham Lincoln, and he served three terms in Congress (1863-1869) where he was a proponent of full (therefore equal) rights for Blacks in the wake of the Civil War. Baldwin was also well-known for his writings in the field of anthropology.

The *Worcester Daily Press* had been established only recently, in 1873, and would survive only to 1878. Published by John A. Spalding, the *Daily Press* served as the voice of the Democratic party in Worcester during this era, which was well before its time. The *Evening Gazette*, published and edited by Charles H. Doe from 1869 to 1896, was the surviving entity of a trail of daily papers dating back to the *Morning Transcript* in 1851. Like *The Spy*, the *Gazette* was Republican-leaning in its politics. The weekly *Worcester Palladium* was founded in 1834 by the well-regarded John S. C. Knowlton, and at this time was published by Charles Hamilton. It would cease publication in February, 1876 upon sale to the *Spy*.

All three dailies gave the story plenty of column space in their accounts of October 6, providing overviews of the events as they were known at the time: that Mr. Pond was known to have been aboard the ship, that articles of his clothing had been found in his stateroom, and that no one had seen him leaving the ship – at least not knowingly. That left more or less everything else to the realm of speculation. As a weekly, the *Palladium* covered the disappearance three days after the others, its column including further elements of the story that came out in the dailies in their Friday editions. The *Palladium* added one item which was not mentioned by any of the dailies, likely

because it was unknown at the time, that "Mr. Pond's life was insured for between \$40,000 and \$50,000."

In Friday's edition, the *Daily Press* gave a ringing endorsement of Mr. Pond, one which might just as easily have come from any of the papers:

Mr. Pond has for many years been identified with some of the most important industrial enterprises of our history; his honorable business career has secured to him the respect of everybody; his social and religious record and connections were such as to command for him the admiration and high personal regard of hosts of personal friends. Thus it is not strange that the whole city have been constantly solicitous, since the intelligence of his strange absence was first made public, for the slightest information concerning their unfortunate townsman.

After promising full and complete coverage of the matter, Mr. Spalding then made a suggestion that had not been heard before:

It strikes us as eminently proper for our city authorities to give evidence of the city's interest in the fate of one of its prominent citizens by offering through the city papers and otherwise, a large reward for information which shall lead to the certain discovery of the fate of Hon. L. W. Pond, or the recovery of his remains if it shall transpire that he has met death by violence or accident.

The *Gazette* noted some of the "talk on the street" as word of Pond's disappearance had spread among the citizenry even before the story had been printed. "It is by no means a secret on the street," the story read, "that the pressure of the hard times had of late greatly embarrassed Mr. Pond.... During the past few months, it is known that he has been seriously disturbed in mind by a pressure of circumstances which might not have at all troubled a less sensitive man." Responses to the mysterious disappearance, according to press accounts, inclined toward the view that Pond was a victim - either of foul play, such as robbery and murder, or possibly what they called "insanity," leading to suicide by jumping into the sea.

"The family attach great weight," the article stated, "to the theory that Mr. Pond has met with foul play..." but the paper concluded that foul play aboard ship seemed unlikely. "It does not appear that there was anybody in the stateroom with Mr. Pond, however, and there was no odor of anaesthetics in the room; Mr. Pond was a powerful man." Mr. Doe of the *Gazette* seemed to prefer the idea that Pond had drowned, whether accidentally or by suicide. "It is the belief of many persons," the *Gazette* continued, "that Mr. Pond was suffering from temporary insanity, and must have thrown himself overboard, but it is not absolutely impossible that he might have been troubled with sea-sickness, gone out for air, and fallen overboard, although the porter does not remember seeing him." Clearly, the *Gazette* was less than optimistic about Pond's survival. The family, needless to say, was less than comforted by this outlook. It seemed at this point to be a choice between Pond's being a victim of foul play and a victim of mental disorders. The *Daily Press* took a similar stance regarding the likelihood of Pond's having been murdered, basing its position largely on the view that Pond's personality and character were not consistent with taking his own life for any reason.

On October 12, there being nothing new to report about the disappearance, the *Gazette* reprinted a column on the Pond matter published the previous day in the *Boston Daily News*, written by its owner and editor, the Rev. E. D. Winslow. A former minister, now having set the ministry aside to take up the newspaper publishing, Winslow said he knew Lucius Pond well, and he used

the column to give his friend a sound character reference and to argue that suicide would have been extremely unlikely. He said he had seen Pond in many and varied circumstances, including some which have “tried men’s souls,” and that in difficult situations Pond had...

... shown himself the quiet, self-contained, cool-headed and sound-hearted Christian gentleman, a man who in the face of any difficulty or fate would fight to the end, and then with quiet heart accept the issue, be it what it might. This was Lucius W. Pond, and no act or thought of his ever contemplated an abandonment of friends and duties by self-destruction.

So if not suicide then it had to be foul play. Rev. Winslow made the case in a convincing manner:

In his room were found his hat, two coats, shoes and necktie. No cuffs were there. His cuffs had a valuable pair of sleeve buttons. No watch, no money, no sleeve buttons, no valuables were left. Robbery and murder are in these facts.

Winslow concluded with “a plea against too hastily casting the charge of suicide upon one who has always been a true man...” His final statement was to call his friend Lucius Pond “one of the noblest of men.”

Aside from the powerful words of praise for Mr. Pond from a close friend, the fact that such a column was printed in a Boston paper says something about the geographic span of his reputation and therefore interest in the case. His disappearance was also considered newsworthy in the *New York Times* and many other papers, in large part because of Pond’s stature as an industrialist. Pond also had machinery on display for sales purposes in a New York showroom.

During these few days since the mysterious disappearance, a representative of the Old Colony Steamboat Company wrote a detailed letter providing all facts known to the company about the Pond matter, addressed to Pond’s agent in New York, Mr. Stebbins, who served as a representative of the family in the present matter. Stebbins gave New York police a photograph and physical description of Pond, plus information concerning valuables which he was carrying, such as his engraved watch, cufflinks, and a stickpin, provided him by David Pond, and he distributed the information widely in that city. The circular described Lucius Pond as “Age 49; height, 5 feet 9 inches; weight, 200 pounds; eyes, very light blue; hair, cut short and quite gray and almost bald; full whiskers, short and gray; wore two sets of entire false teeth.”

A look at the books

Back in Worcester, the ongoing examination of Pond’s business records by Joseph Hale and David Pond was revealing deep indebtedness and a pattern of repeated borrowing to pay off debts, in the manner of “borrowing from Peter to pay Paul.” People in the city to whom Pond owed money and who had not been paid were beginning to come forward. Even Pond’s records themselves were in poor shape, wrote the *Gazette* the following Monday, October 11. “His private safe shows everything at loose ends and notes for large sums, for instance, where he has exchanged, twisted up and tucked into an envelope.” It was learned that Pond had not paid his workers since August 2, that being for the month of July. Charles Doe of the *Gazette* presumed that this would have bothered Pond a great deal... “because the first desire of a sensitive man is to pay what he owes his workmen, even if his larger creditors have to suffer.”

Through a notice in *Spy* the morning of October 7, Hale issued a call for Pond's creditors to meet that morning to discuss the situation. At the meeting, attended by about fifty people, an estimate of Pond's obligations known at the time came to some \$85,000, with the strong likelihood of significantly more being discovered. The group formed itself as a de facto entity with a designated chairman, attorney William Dickinson. Hale and Dickinson recommended that the Pond estate be "taken in charge" by the creditors for the present, "and that they be adjusted as far as possible without incurring the expense of proceedings in bankruptcy or foreclosure of the mortgages."

Mr. Hale told the group that about three years earlier he had been asked by his brother-in-law for assistance, "to which, with the advice of gentlemen of this city, he responded," lending Pond \$60,000 and assuming a couple of other of Pond's financial obligations. As security, he took mortgages on Pond's real and personal (business) properties totaling some \$85,000. Hale offered to sell those mortgages to the creditors group for \$65,000, but nothing came of the offer. From records of the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, it is known that on the next day, October 8, despite what he had said at the meeting about foreclosure and bankruptcy, Hale foreclosed on the four mortgages he held, leaving him the owner of the business property on Union Street and the residence on Laurel. He arranged for David Pond to continue operating the business, at least for the present.

At a second meeting of the group a week later, a report of one of the members gave the approximate net worth of the estate (prior to Hale's foreclosures): total assets of about \$198,000 in real and personal property, subject to mortgage claims totaling about \$148,000, leaving some \$50,000 in random assets, including residential real estate, miscellaneous tools and household items, all of which on forced sale at that time were considered highly unlikely to bring full value because of the ongoing recession. Hence, the finding was something well under \$50,000 in non-liquid assets to cover debts already totaling \$163,000 and expected to reach \$200,000.

On October 22, the estate was placed by the court in bankruptcy, with Mr. Dickinson named as the assignee. Somewhat later, after a great deal more had surfaced concerning Pond's financial status, Mr. Hale purchased the remainder of the estate from the court-appointed assignee, Mr. Dickinson, for \$28,500 (transaction dated December 4, 1875, Registry of Deeds, Book 966 Pages 501-505).

On October 11, the day the *Gazette* described the shortcomings that were being found in Pond's records, it also reported that the "feeling on the street" was already starting to lean toward the belief that Pond was still alive and that there must be some reason for his not wanting to be found. The term *absconding* began to be used to represent the belief that he "took the money and ran." This "theory" of what had happened, as the press called the various lines of speculation, reflected what had been found regarding the state of Pond's business affairs. Basically, the idea was "lots of debt, sloppy records... he has to be up to something." Pond was starting to be viewed more as a scoundrel and less as a victim.

That morning, the *Spy*, having nothing new of significance to report, sought to satisfy its readers' appetites for more on the case by elaborating four "theories" of what had happened. The column sub-header laid it out clearly: "The Case - Is it Accidental Drowning, Suicide, Foul Play, or has he absconded." In a somewhat long, rambling essay, the writer found fault with all of the theories, but

came down on the side of the increasingly popular notion that Pond had absconded – that he had taken the \$2500 and run away from his debts – or, more specifically, from his creditors.

Events in unexpected places

While the case was awash in speculation in Worcester, things were happening elsewhere that would soon become known back home. The reporting of those events reflects the way newspaper publishers in that era read each other's papers and borrowed selected items to reprint in their own, thus spreading news around, in addition to writing their own original columns. Within a short time of the disappearance, a surprising number of newspapers in different cities had become involved in the Pond story.

Upon seeing a note in a New York newspaper to the effect that Lucius Pond, the industrialist of Worcester, had disappeared mysteriously, the *Evening Times* of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, repeated the note in its edition of October 6. Pond was known there by some of the city's industrial leaders, likely customers. That notice led someone who saw it to notify the editor that Pond had been seen in town. Three days later, the *Times* announced that Lucius Pond, the Worcester machinist's tools manufacturer, "had disappeared under very suspicious circumstances," and proclaimed that "It is our duty to announce that Mr. Pond was at Northey's foundry in this city this week."

A business acquaintance of the Ponds in Hamilton sent this information by mail to David Pond in Worcester, who, upon receiving it promptly met with City Marshall Ansel Washburn to discuss the matter. (Worcester in 1875 did not have a Chief of Police; it had a City Marshall.) On the Marshall's recommendation, David Pond hired a Captain James Meech to go to Hamilton to investigate and report back as quickly as possible. Meech was to serve as a private investigator; he was not a member of the police department. The title "Captain" reflected his status as a civil war veteran, and his involvement with the G.A.R., of which he had recently served as Post Commander. At this point there was no evidence of any crime having been committed, and therefore no reason for the police department to dispatch one of its officers.

Meech, 28, was listed in the 1870 census as a machinist by trade, but in view of his recommendation by the City Marshall, he likely had some skills and experience in private investigative work on the side. He left Worcester the next day and arrived in Hamilton early Saturday morning, October 16. With the assistance of a Hamilton police detective, a Mr. McPherson, Meech conducted his investigation and the next day penned his findings in a report to David Pond. He made it clear that Lucius Pond was alive, that he had been seen in Hamilton acting in a strange manner, and that he apparently had left town without staying overnight, about ten days earlier.

In Meech's report, David Pond read a convincing summary of what had occurred in Hamilton, and it made clear not only that his father had been seen there – and thus was alive, which was good news – but also that his pattern of behavior was that of a man not wanting to be found, which was not. Meech's report explained that on October 6, David's father had entered the office of a foundry in Hamilton known as Northey's and inquired about employment. Seeing in Pond's appearance and manner of dress that he looked more like a gentleman, as the term was used in that era, than a machinist looking for work, and thinking he might be joking, Mr. Northey laughed and gave him no reply. When Pond turned to leave, Northey asked if he would like to leave his address, and Pond

replied, "Oh yes," then wrote, surprisingly, *D. W. Pond*. Just then, Northey's foreman, a Mr. Murray, came into the room and Pond quickly exited. "Did you know that man?" Murray asked Northey. When Northey answered "No," Murray replied, "Why that is Pond of Worcester."

"Yes, that is the name he gave," said Northey and handed the slip of paper to Murray.

"Why this man is L. W. Pond, and this is his son's name that he has given," Murray replied.

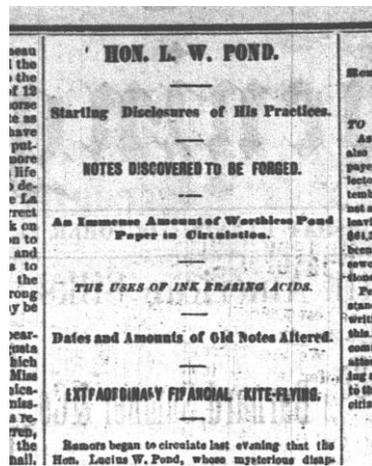
Murray then looked outside and saw Pond walking away, turning a corner, and disappearing from sight. Before eventually leaving town, Pond was seen by at least two other people, one of whom knew him from previous business affairs, as had Mr. Murray. Neither Northey nor Murray had any idea that Pond was considered a missing person. Meech wrote to David that Murray claimed "to have known your father very well, and he is *dead sure* it was he."

Prior to Meech's arrival, the Hamilton detective, Mr. McPherson, had visited the hotels in the city but failed to come up with any indication that Pond had been at any of them. Meech did not do a hotel registry search of his own.

Meech returned to Worcester and informed David Pond of his findings on the 19th or 20th of October. At that time the public still had not learned of the events in Hamilton. Before it did so, another major development broke in the press.

Reasons for absconding

Gazette headlines on October 21 blared the news and virtually outlined the whole story:



Evening Gazette, Oct. 21, 1875

HON. L. W. POND.
 Startling Disclosures of His Practices.
 NOTES DISCOVERED TO BE FORGED.
 An Immense Amount of Worthless Pond
 Paper in Circulation.
 THE USES OF INK-ERASING ACIDS.
 Dates and Amounts of Old Notes Altered.
 EXTRAORDINARY FINANCIAL KITE-FLYING.

The fact that there was discovered to be an "immense amount of worthless Pond paper" meant that the estate of the missing man could not back up the amounts stated on the numerous promissory notes bearing his name that were outstanding. But it was worse than just the quantity of Pond's borrowings. Many of his creditors thought they had lent him considerably less than was being found on the notes, and in some cases they thought they had already closed out those accounts. From the *Gazette* of October 21:

The suspicion of forgery rose from the fact that Mr. Pond's endorsers found coming in on them notes to the amount of double what they had supposed was in circulation - notes of which they had no record and no recollection of signing. Suspicion led to investigation and experiment, and detection followed.

Certain of these notes were examined with the microscope and treated with a chemical preparation. It was found, beyond a doubt, that their face had been removed and rewritten, while the endorsements were genuine. The plan was evidently this. The original notes were made payable at Mr. Pond's office, or without naming any particular bank. It thus happened that when they were paid, they remained in his possession without any marks of cancellation, or anything to show that they were dead paper. It was then a tolerably easy matter to remove the writing on the face with an acid, and write in fresh dates and amounts and add Mr. Pond's own signature. The endorsements on the back were allowed to remain.

Lucius Pond had learned enough about the acid solution in his possession to make clever use of it, but he apparently did not know about nutgalls, a substance found growing on certain oak trees which, in a chemical solution, had the effect of restoring the ink that he thought had been sufficiently removed by the acid. Under the technological onslaught of the nutgalls and the microscope, Pond's scheme had collapsed. Now he was no longer just an apparent "scoundrel," guilty of running from his debts; he was now a suspect in a series of crimes, and as such he was wanted by police - a fugitive from justice.

For the Pond family a lot was happening fast. First came word from Ontario which told them he was alive, but also that he was in hiding for reasons not yet known, but with the lurking possibility of what was being called insanity. Now learning that he had been caught in a scheme of criminal activities, the combination at least made sense - and reduced the likelihood of insanity - but it was hardly comforting news. There was also the possibility, it must be conceded, that the family knew all this already. At this point, however, David Pond was being treated as if fully trustworthy, with not a hint otherwise coming from any of the newspapers. His mother, Lucius Pond's wife Ardelia, was never mentioned in the context of such matters, nor did she seem to be consulted in any way. It was still very much a man's world outside the home, and it was no doubt considered good taste not to drag her name into the fray.

The afternoon of October 25, the *Gazette* broke the story of Pond's being seen in Hamilton, Ontario. It began by quoting from a brief note in the *New York World* of Saturday, October 23, citing a piece in the *Hamilton Times* stating that Pond had been seen there, with considerable certainty. The *Gazette* then proceeded to outline the events of Hamilton as they had been related to David Pond, including the findings of Captain Meech, whom it called "the detective." David Pond himself evidently served as the principal source of the information, unless he authorized Captain Meech to do it in his place, which would have the same effect.

Lucius Pond now being known to be alive, on the run, and a criminal suspect, it was time for Worcester Police to step in and assume the dominant role in his pursuit. In 1873, the department had established for the first time in its 25-year history, the position of detective, and to that position City Marshall Ansel Washburn named officer Ezra Churchill, age 46 and a veteran of only a few years on the force. After working in his original trade of "clicker," a cutter of shoes and boots, in Grafton, Westborough, and Worcester, Churchill had joined the force in 1868 at a relatively advanced age for such a position, and apparently had impressed the command staff with his capabilities for detective

work. When the Pond matter became criminal in nature it was Detective Churchill's case to solve. His first move was to travel to Hamilton to try to learn more than had been discovered by Captain Meech.

Before he left, on October 30, a new circular with a photograph and description of the suspect was sent to cities and other large places around the country, and a reward was offered. While the offer of a reward might have been well known around Worcester, no mention of it was made in the newspapers until a later date.

On or about November 2, Detective Churchill began his search in Hamilton by looking at hotel registries. At the Royal Hotel he found an entry for an *L. Wilson* of Philadelphia, written in what he was confident was Pond's handwriting. Aware that Pond's middle name was Wilson, he concluded that the registry entry likely was Lucius Pond and that he had arrived there on the 4th of October. He also found that *L. Wilson* had checked out the afternoon of the 6th. Finding no further useful information after a week in the area, Churchill returned to Worcester where he continued working the case, although with little to go on except Pond's apparent use of the name *L. Wilson*.

A lull, then a break

From late October into early December, the story was generally quiet in the press, the papers having little or nothing new to add. As a later column expressed it, this probably left some followers of the case to conclude that Pond had "gotten away with it." One exception occurred on Monday, November 1, when the *Spy* ran a column entitled "The Pond Case in the Pulpits," a summary of views of the case heard in five churches in the city the previous day. When the subjects of the sermons planned for Sunday were announced in advance, large turnouts were the result. In general, drawing from summaries printed in the *Spy*, the sermons sounded themes of the fallen man who must pay for his misdeeds and then seek redemption, a sinner seeing the error of his ways and making amends. Nothing in the accounts was otherwise particularly notable but they expressed the prevailing philosophy of the day, firmly rooted in Christian theology, which permeated so thoroughly the social norms brought to the fore by the case of Lucius Pond.

On Wednesday, November 17, some neighbors of the Ponds observed a trunk being loaded and taken away by Pond's teamster at the residence on Laurel Street. Not surprisingly, this was said to have caused some "excitement" among followers of the case, but police at first seemed to show little interest in the trunk. But on Saturday, November 27, Detective Churchill decided to look more closely into the matter and went to Boston to see if he could follow the trunk. He learned there that it had been sent by the Boston & Albany Express Company for pickup by a "J. S. Kidder," and that it had been promptly claimed when it arrived. Churchill then tried other express companies to see if the trunk had been sent elsewhere. Two doors down the street, at the office of the Wells, Fargo & Company Express, he learned that the trunk had been shipped by them to one *L. D. Wilson, Sacramento, California*. When he saw this name Churchill knew he had found the clue he needed to get the pursuit of Lucius Pond back in motion.

The next evening, Sunday, November 28, Detective Ezra Churchill embarked by train for Sacramento. After about two days and nights to get to Chicago, the journey would follow the nation's first and primary railroad path through the "wild west": first to the collection hub for eastern trains going

west, at Council Bluffs, Iowa, then through Omaha, over the plains of Nebraska, across the high point of *Union Pacific* rails over the Rockies in the Wyoming Territory, past the “golden spike” at Promontory Point, and through a pass in the northern portion of the Sierra Nevadas before the final leg to Sacramento.

When he arrived the following Sunday, after traveling a full week, day and night, enjoying the comforts of an early version of a sleeper car, he went promptly to the office of Wells Fargo. What exactly happened there was the subject of some variation in press accounts. What appears to be clear, as was reported by the *Spy*, is that during the week while Churchill was traveling, Worcester police contacted Wells, Fargo in Sacramento by telegraph to inquire about the trunk. They were told, also by telegraph, of course, that it had arrived on the 24th and that it had been picked up by a man who had been waiting for it. With Marshall Ansel Washburn likely calling the shots, police then asked the agent to obtain services of a detective to learn what he could about the man and the trunk, to ascertain, if possible, where he was or where he had gone. Detective Churchill’s first stop would be the Wells, Fargo agency, so it was obvious that he would be brought up to date when he arrived. There were no telephones yet, but they weren’t far into the future. At this time the telegraph was proving its value, a giant step forward in long-distance communications.

Accounts of what exactly happened when Churchill arrived in Sacramento varied somewhat in the local papers when they printed their stories somewhat later. The interpretation that best fits the pieces of newspaper evidence together is that the Wells, Fargo detective learned that the trunk had been picked up by *Mr. L. D. Wilson* and taken to the Western Hotel, and that he had checked out on the 26th and gone to San Francisco. When police back in Worcester had learned this – before Churchill did – they had wired San Francisco police to request their assistance. It is not clear whether Churchill learned what he needed from Wells, Fargo, or he had to ascertain some or all of it himself. Part of the uncertainty might have arisen from the fact that he arrived in Sacramento on a Sunday and may have had trouble getting information from low- or mid-level clerks assigned Sunday duties who were not adequately informed. In any case, after getting a night’s sleep in a hotel bed instead of a bunk in a rolling train car, Churchill took the 138-mile trek to San Francisco the next day.

In San Francisco, the police chief there dispatched a Detective Jones to help Churchill in his quest for Pond, and the two men set out to look for clues to Pond’s whereabouts. That afternoon, they checked hotels, steamboat companies, and other places Pond might have left a clue, but with no luck. Tuesday they crossed the bay to Oakland and some other places, again with no luck. Finally, on Wednesday morning, December 8, Churchill suggested they try the hotel registries one more time, and this time they found something to run with. In the registry of the Brooklyn Hotel, near the steamboat wharf district, Churchill spotted the name *L. Williams*, written in a hand that he felt he knew. So they checked the room registered to *L. Williams* and there they found their man: Lucius W. Pond.

The arrest in San Francisco

The formal arrest was made by the San Francisco officer, primarily because it was his jurisdiction, but also because Churchill didn’t yet have the formal requisition papers that were needed for the legal transfer of the California prisoner to the custody of a Massachusetts officer. The papers were

waiting for Churchill in Sacramento on the return trip, and upon their submission to California authorities, Pond was in Massachusetts custody. After Pond had been booked and incarcerated in San Francisco, Churchill reportedly sent a dispatch to Marshall Washburn saying "I have got him. Shall start back the ninth. Tell my wife." Marshall Washburn's response was to purchase tickets to Omaha to meet them there to assist the detective in his round-the-clock duty of minding the prisoner. One can only speculate, but his decision to go himself rather than send a lower-ranking officer might have something to do with the opportunity to see a good part of the country by train, and at no cost to himself.

With the arrest made, on Wednesday, December 8, 1875, the ten-week saga of Lucius Pond's disappearance and flight had come to an end. And it didn't happen a day too soon. When he was taken into custody at the hotel, the elusive Mr. Pond had in his possession a steamship ticket for Australia, scheduled for departure the next day.

While Detective Ezra Churchill didn't get to make the formal arrest himself, he was there at the scene when it was made, and everything that had happened had been as a direct result of his pursuit. Now it was he who would bring the suspect back to Worcester for trial. The case was by far the biggest of his young career as Worcester's first, and at that time only, full-time detective. In all three daily papers he received commendations for his work on the case. The *Daily Press* said "the whole credit for the affair belongs to Worcester officials," referring mainly to Detective Ezra Churchill. Moreover, it would later be said, in Churchill's obituary notice a quarter century later in the *Worcester Telegram*, that he "left a record of good police work," and that "His name as a detective is best remembered in connection with the famous Pond case." (*Telegram*, January 18, 1902)

The Associated Press in San Francisco picked up the account of the arrest, the Pond matter having gained a degree of interest in places throughout the country, and telegraphed it to its member newspapers the morning of the 9th. The news came too late for the morning papers, but the *Gazette* printed a lengthy column on it that afternoon, mostly recapping the events leading to Churchill's trip to California, along with some editorial commentary. The *Spy* and the *Daily Press* had to wait until the next morning.

None of the papers could have known anything at this point about how Churchill's pursuit was progressing. The *Spy* went a step further than its competitors by (apparently) interviewing Worcester police to learn about the telegraph exchanges with Wells, Fargo in Sacramento, as were described earlier. In a sense, the *Spy's* December 10 account "scooped" the other papers by its description of the police work done by way of Western Union. The big news, of course, was just that Pond had been arrested – nine weeks after the story broke in the dailies on October 6. There wasn't very much for the papers to say about the arrest until the train carrying Mr. Pond and his captors reached Worcester in another week or so. Most of the column inches in the dailies after news of the arrest were devoted to the publishers' varying outlooks on themes of crime and punishment on the one hand and compassion for the fallen man on the other.

Gazette editor Charles Doe spoke of the seriousness of the crimes and the absolute need that they not go unpunished, but he also sounded a theme that had been heard from him throughout the case, that of the element of sadness that lay beneath the story of Pond's crime and now his expected punishment.

Of course, Mr. Pond ought to answer for his crimes, like any more insignificant person. He has done incalculable injury to the city, not so much in the positive loss of dollars and cents, as in the destruction of confidence between man and man, at a time when it was most needed. He has betrayed the confidence of his friends and taken advantage of his high standing in the community to commit a series of forgeries and breaches of trust of the most startling description. It is right and proper that he should reap what he has sown.

At the same time, underlying the feeling of gratification which is now uppermost in the public mind at his arrest, there ought to be and there must be a pity for poor human nature. It will be no pleasant sight, to those who realize its full meaning, to see the once respected merchant, once capable of generous actions, standing in the felon's dock. Those especially, who have been intimate with Mr. Pond, will feel this view of the case, and while they would not lift a finger to shield him from punishment, they will wince as the blow falls.

John Baldwin, in the *Spy* the next morning, took a more vigorous tone of condemnation:

Among the citizens generally there is a feeling of satisfaction that this man who has been guilty of perjury for four years at least, and who has been forging to an almost unlimited extent for nearly two years, is to be brought to justice. He made victims of his relatives, friends and business acquaintances, sparing neither the widow, the orphan or those who have supported him during the twenty-five years he has been engaged in business here, treating the rich and the poor alike by taking from them all he could get, and then asking for more.

Baldwin did not end on any note of pity for the fallen man.

John Spalding at the *Daily Press* fell closer to Doe than to Baldwin in this matter. He began by coming down hard on Pond for what he did, his summary including a sentence which took the religious symbolism so prominent throughout the coverage of the case to a new high: "He has worn the livery of heaven in order that he might better serve the devil." Like Doe, he hit hard first, then backed off somewhat to show some compassion. Pond had not done it for personal gain, he argued, but to save his business. That could be said to be close to being the same thing, but Spalding's point was that Pond was not trying to enrich himself by stealing from his friends, but to "stay in the game" and be able to continue to be the man behind his hard-earned reputation. The time came, Spalding said, when Pond had to make a choice between two alternatives: "to relinquish his business standing and be known as a bankrupt, or yield to the temptation to prolong his business career by the commission of frauds, shutting his eyes to the future." Pond made his choice, Spalding continued, and now he had lost everything. "This view of the matter does not palliate his offense, but it may cause some to look with pity on the wreck which they would otherwise have viewed with contempt only."

Spalding then concluded his editorial with an interesting spin on the topic: "In its earlier comments on the case of Mr. Pond this paper took the most charitable view consistent with reason, and we do not regret having erred upon the side of charity."

Some combination of anger and pity, as appeared in the tones of the three newspapers, undoubtedly lay behind the thinking of the public as well, varying from one citizen to another. Now that the suspect was in custody, there was little left upon which to disagree, other than how severe the punishment should be. In the public mind, as perceived by the editors, Pond had gone from victim, to scoundrel, to criminal suspect, to prisoner. What he did and how he did it were now thought to be known. All that was left was a hearing and presumably a trial, almost surely, they presumed, to result in conviction, and for Pond to serve his time in prison.

In its Sunday edition, December 12, the *New York Times* gave its readers a summary of the Pond case from the time he “mysteriously disappeared” through his arrest. The column ran about fifteen inches, about a third of it consisting of a long quote from the *Worcester Daily Spy* on Friday. The *Times*, like other papers following the case on an occasional basis, naturally based its story, or stories, on the work of the Worcester publishers.

Now the papers had to wait, with everyone else, for the prisoner to be brought back to Worcester, and to justice. It had taken a week for Detective Churchill to get to Sacramento, so that was what could be expected for the return trip.

On December 11 the *Gazette* reported that Pond’s brother-in-law, Mr. Hale, was believed to have taken a train from New York, immediately upon news of the arrest, with the intention of trying to meet with Pond somewhere along the way, possibly in Omaha, which was about half-way. “The object of Mr. Hale’s journey to meet his captured brother-in-law is, of course a matter of conjecture,” the editor wrote, “but the officials here repose the utmost confidence in officer Churchill’s ability to retain his prisoner, and in his integrity to withstand any temptations to be a party to any bought escape.”

Perhaps recognizing that he might be casting aspersions of dishonesty upon Mr. Hale, for which he had no evidence, Mr. Doe ended the piece with a kind of retraction: “We wish distinctly to say, also, that even if Mr. Hale has gone to intercept the party, nobody has any right to say that it was for any other purpose than to take early counsel with his relative as to the best course to be pursued on reaching home.” The only other word published on this matter consisted of a sharp jab to the *Spy*’s chin by the *Daily Press* on December 13. In his “minor matters” column, John Spalding wrote:

The sensational report made in another paper that Mr. J. P. Hale of New York had started for the West to meet his brother-in-law, L. W. Pond, with the view of obtaining a writ of *habeas corpus*, and delaying the proceedings, is entirely without foundation. Mr. Hale communicated with a gentleman in this city on Saturday, and was then at his own home. Most of the other idle stories from the same source are just as unreliable.

Nothing further was reported concerning Mr. Hale’s activities in regard to any train ride out west or in response to one publisher’s knock on another. Within the past few days, Charles Doe at the *Gazette* had been “scooped” by the *Spy*’s account of police communications with Wells, Fargo, and now the *Daily Press* had scored on the Hale exchange.

The prisoner’s return

On December 16, the *Spy* reported a “special dispatch” (a telegram) from Albany stating that Marshall Washburn and Detective Churchill were there with the fugitive in a sleeping car on a *Boston & Albany* train, and that they were expected to depart the station there at 1:40 a.m. and to arrive in Worcester that morning. Unfortunately for the *Spy*, it had to go to press before the train arrived, which was scheduled for 8:30 a.m., but it did publish the dispatch, and this, as it reported the next day, “caused quite a crowd of spectators to gather at the Junction depot on the arrival of the Atlantic express train from the west.”

The train came in on time, and the two officers and their prisoner got off at the Junction depot instead of the Union station, in hopes of avoiding a larger crowd. When Pond stepped off, accompanied by Marshall Washburn and Detective Churchill, some onlookers barely noticed him because of his changed appearance, mainly his clean-shaven face. The *Spy* the next morning said he was “looking well physically, as if his forced vacation had increased his health and vigor, which makes him appear several years younger than when he went away.” Pond was led by officers at the scene to a waiting hack and driven to the jail on Summer Street to be placed in the charge of the Sheriff.

Seventy-five days after his mysterious disappearance on an unannounced trip to New York on a steamship from Fall River, Lucius Pond was in jail in Worcester.

That afternoon, the *Evening Gazette* hit the streets with the the big story of Lucius Pond’s return. The headlines promised a lot of information – “Details of the Arrest, Mr. Churchill’s Adventures in California, the contents of the trunk, and Mr. Pond’s travels – a full account of his wanderings from the first.” That seemed like a lot for the paper to know already, since Pond had just arrived that morning and was promptly escorted to jail. But the paper then proceeded to do exactly as promised, giving details it could not have known without an interview with Lucius Pond, or with the Marshall or the detective. How the *Gazette* got the story was as noteworthy as the story itself, and it began by saying just how it did so.

It was reckoned, and in fact it was quite positively known in various ways that the Pond party would reach Albany at forty minutes after midnight, last night. A reporter of the *Gazette* started to join them in that city in the 4:30 express train, yesterday afternoon, reaching Albany a little before 11 o’clock. In these two hours, our reporter made the acquaintance of the Sergeant of the 2nd precinct... and although at first received with some caution, that officer finally rendered him sufficient assistance.

Pond, the Marshall, and the detective were at that time in a sleeper car which had come to Albany along what would later be called the “water-level route” from Chicago. At this hour they would be sleeping while their car was being attached to a *Boston & Albany* eastbound. The reporter, whose name was never given, as was the norm, had a ticket for Worcester and came aboard.

The reporter, finding the City Marshall’s overcoat hanging on a peg, felt easy, and not caring to disturb their slumbers, turned in for a nap himself, until the train approached Springfield. Here the reporter was awakened by the friendly warning of the porter, and welcomed Messrs. Washburn and Churchill as they stepped out of their state-room, much to their surprise. Soon after, Mr. Pond, who did not appear to be under any special surveillance, got out of the upper bunk, and recognizing the reporter came to him and shook hands with him, with his old warm cordiality.

So from Springfield to Worcester’s Junction station, the *Gazette* reporter got a first-class “scoop”: an interview with the suspect in which the prisoner spoke freely, and apparently there was no problem with the authorities on hand. For Charles Doe it must have been one of the greatest moments of his career in competitive newspaper journalism, and certainly vindication for what had transpired a few days before. Whether by the reporter himself or by Doe, or some combination of the two, the column exuded an air of satisfaction. They didn’t yet have the phrase “gotcha,” but something like it was implied.

The reporter’s account of the ensuing discussion started with Pond’s assessment of his guilt-in-fact and his innocence-of-intent:

Mr. Pond in an opportunity presently afforded for conversation, spoke very freely of his course, and seemed to feel a relief in explaining how it all happened.... [He] freely admitted that he had done very wrong. He explained that he had hoped to tide himself over the present depression in business as he had done before in 1857. Then he would have paid every demand in full. He has done nothing from the hope of gain or in the desire to defraud anybody. He wanted merely to keep up his credit. Believing that he could do this, if he could gain a little time, he had been led to commit a wrong act. The first step led to a second, and so on, until at last he found himself hopelessly involved, and did not know where to turn.

Pond seemed very concerned about what the people back home were thinking about him, and knew they had heard all about his misdeeds.

Mr. Pond's desire seemed to be, without at all excusing himself, that the community ought to recognize that he was not wholly bad, that there were extenuating circumstances, and that his past life ought not to be entirely forgotten.

Time would tell about that.

Mr. Pond admitted that it would have been a thousand times better to have staid [sic] at home and faced the consequences, and said that in that way he might have secured his creditors considerably more than they were likely to get. He was frequently overcome by emotion, and often broke off upon other subjects, in order to regain his composure.

Next came the *Gazette's* account of "Pond's travels," still operating in "scoop" mode. Its account came out first but was not the most complete in terms of the details the reading public so badly wanted to read. The *Spy* and the *Daily Press* the next morning did what was left for them to do. They described the arrival scene at the station, and outlined the basics of the case, including the newly-acquired facts gained not only from the *Gazette's* account the previous day, but also from questions fielded by Detective Churchill in an impromptu press conference (whether or not they had the phrase yet) at the police station that morning after Pond's booking. This was what their readers wanted, of course, even if a first pass on the major part of the story had been done the day before.

The *Spy* noted that in New York, Pond had gone promptly to a barber shop where he got a clean shave, leaving him barely recognizable, especially to anyone who had seen his face only in one of the circulars that had been distributed. He then took the *Erie* Railroad to Buffalo, where he spent one night before going into Canada.

About November 1st, according to the *Gazette*, Pond first communicated with his family, letting them know he was still alive and asking for the trunk to be sent to Sacramento. The *Spy* was somewhat more succinct: "In Sacramento he awaited the arrival of his trunk, which he had sent home for." Such a statement by Pond amounted to an unwitting donation of evidence of an indictable offense on the part of his son or his wife, or both. Regarding the clear reflection of the statement on Pond's family, the *Gazette* had stated the previous week that David Pond was "naturally depressed at the unexpected turn of affairs," that he declined to make any statement or explanation, and that he neither denied nor admitted that he had sent the trunk to his father. Nothing further came of the matter. If charges might have been filed against David Pond for "aiding and abetting," no one apparently was inclined to bring them.

In the final analysis, Pond's request to have the trunk sent to him by his family suggests that as a criminal on the run he was a good machinist's tools maker. For all the importance of the trunk to the successful pursuit and apprehension of the suspect, its movement having provided the key that unlocked the entire case, it turned out to contain little of any real importance – certainly nothing worth all the risk: some clothes, a number of books, some machining patterns, and a few machinist's tools, "by the use of which," wrote the *Daily Press*, "... he hoped to gain an honest livelihood in the country to which he was bound."

On the train ride back to Worcester, Pond received good treatment for a man in his situation. From the *Daily Press*:

Having given his word not to attempt to escape he was not "ironed" during any part of the journey. At Omaha they were met Monday morning by City Marshal Washburn, and the party traveled quietly homeward, with scarcely any recognition by passengers on board the train.

The officers speak in the highest terms of Mr. Pond's gentlemanly deportment on the journey. He has never given the slightest trouble. They have eaten together and slept together all the journey, and not an unkind word has been uttered during the whole time.

Still basking in the glory of its scoop, the *Gazette* in its follow-up column the next day aimed one last small shot at John Baldwin and the *Spy*. Responding to "stories" in circulation – without naming the *Spy* or any other source – said one of the most ridiculous of them was that the *Gazette* reporter had sent the telegraph which the *Spy* had used as its "special dispatch" concerning Pond's arrival. "Of course, he did nothing of the kind," said the *Gazette*. "The *Spy's* despatch was sent by a reporter of the *Spy*, who happened to be on his way West, on a wedding journey." It's impossible to be sure who sent the telegraph, but Charles Doe likely was the one who was grinning, not John Baldwin.

The *Gazette* also responded to something Mr. Doe had heard after the scoop story of the previous day, to the effect that the article had "favored" Pond, to which Doe responded with a spirited defense reflecting his views on journalistic ethics in the case of the train ride interview. It is conceivable that Doe might have seized upon the issue for the very purpose of expounding such views.

The charge seems to us rather absurd. In this, as in all other cases, we aim at a judicial fairness, and our writers in every department understand that they are to give the facts, without fear or favor. ... We are satisfied that our reporter gave a substantially accurate account of what Mr. Pond said, and was evidently glad of the opportunity of saying, and that the appearance of Mr. Pond was described as correctly as it could be in words. We do not know what more could be done. Mr. Pond could not be painted as sullen or triumphant, for he was neither. The reporter might have used a few harsh epithets in writing about him, but such a course would have been uncalled for, if not cowardly, under the circumstances.

At this point that John Spalding at the *Daily Press* weighed in with his most powerful column yet. He began by offering his reflections on the matters of the appropriate response to crimes committed and victims injured on the one hand, and sympathy and compassion for the fallen man on the other.

Everybody deplores the sad developments of the last few weeks... Nobody pretends to say [Pond's] sin does not deserve punishment; yet the circumstances of the case are such as to have excited among certain well meaning people, in his behalf, a sympathy amounting almost to a hope that the claims of justice will not be pressed with their full force against him.

Such a compassionate outlook emanated, according to Spalding, from the view of Pond as such a good man, known for his many compassionate deeds, and yet...

There can be no doubt among men of sound intellect and correct principles, in a question involving the punishment of crime. Transgression of the law must only be followed by the penalty, and the law must be no respecter of persons. Otherwise law loses its terrors, wicked men are emboldened, and society suffers.

So Pond should suffer the penalty of his crimes, a matter in which all three publishers were in agreement, but there was still something bothering Spalding:

We are thinking how many another originator or compounder of fraud, in this city and elsewhere, goes unwhipped of justice, while this man of once-conspicuous goodness, who couldn't face the exposure of his hypocrisy, is hunted across a continent and brought to bay with all the flourish of trumpets which should signal the capture of an arch fiend.

Continuing, and moving across the line into new territory for the Pond case:

We are thinking of the consistency of that law or that public sentiment which discriminates against the method of robbery adopted by Mr. Pond, and in favor of other methods infinitely more despicable and more productive of commercial disaster and ruin. One man manufactures an endorsed note, and upon this paper he obtains a thousand or ten thousand dollars, he thus becomes a forger, and if his crime is discovered he suffers the penalty of forgery and is forever barred from the society and confidence of honest men.

Ten other men – or an indefinite number of other men, for that matter – become debtors through the customary methods of business for ten times ten thousand dollars, though they never possessed a farthing in their own right, and a bankruptcy court gives them full discharge for ten cents, or five cents, or nothing on the dollar. And this trick they may practice over and over and over again.... The law has neither name nor penalty for this fraud that is worse than forgery.

Thus, bankruptcy law was the villain in the piece by Mr. Spalding.

We do not say that all men who avail themselves of the bankruptcy act, or who compromise with creditors for a fraction of their liabilities, are scoundrels or villains. Many an honest man is compelled to such a course; but for every honest failure in business we believe a score could be counted of men or firms whose whole business history has been a systematic effort to incur immense liabilities without the expectation or hope of meeting them.

We have no excuse to offer for Mr. Pond, and do not even "recommend him to the mercy of the court," but we despise the justice which condemns and punishes him while it allows to go scot free the "deadbeats" among us whose operations are practically the same as his....

However strong his argument or compelling his rhetoric, Mr. Spalding's rage against the abuses of bankruptcy law was, in the context of the Pond case, nothing more than a means of calling attention to what he thought to be larger inequities at play in the system as a whole. This was the only politically-charged commentary published during the entire run of the story of Pond's disappearance, return, and appointment with destiny. The argument was not germane to the Pond case, and the subject did not re-surface.

As if Lucius Pond's social standing in the community needed to be pushed any further down, an unfortunate occurrence shortly before his return gave reason for some people to hold him responsible, albeit indirectly, for a man's tragic death. On the morning of December 15, a man was found hanging from a tree on the grounds of the State Normal School on Eastern Avenue. He was

determined to be clearly a victim of suicide. Waldo W. Stevens, about forty years of age, for several years had been employed as Lucius Pond's teamster. Unfortunately, he had invested his savings with Pond in the form of a promissory note, the kind that had become worth only a small fraction of its face value, if anything. Early rumors had it as a substantial sum, accumulated over many years, and Stevens was said to have been depressed recently, presumably at least in part because of the loss of his savings and the fact that his creditors were "clamorous for their money." Neighbors, the *Daily Press* said, were outraged and were blaming Pond, calling him a murderer. The *Gazette*, however, learned from David Pond that the amount had been only \$99, of which \$50 was a "preferred note" (giving him an early claim against any assets to be divided by Pond's creditors) and that Stevens had secured a job in East Brookfield and had already found a place to live in that town. There was no way to know to what extent, if any, the loss of savings had been a factor in Mr. Stevens' depression and decision to take his own life, but his death certainly did not help Pond's reputation on the eve of his return to Worcester as a prisoner.

Pond's day in court

With Lucius Pond now residing in the jail on Summer Street, the story fell quiet for a while in the press. Followers awaited the next criminal session of Worcester County Superior Court. On January 25, the Pond case appeared unexpectedly on the court's calendar, catching the public off guard. A plea bargain had been reached, so the case would not take very much of the court's time. According to the *Spy* the next morning, "... as soon as it became known on the street that the 'Pond case' was before the court the crowd came surging in, and every available inch of space allowed to spectators was occupied." The *Daily Press* gave a colorful description of the courtroom filling with "an interesting looking crowd, gathered in from the highways, byways and slums, who were with some difficulty kept in order by the officers in attendance."

Those lucky enough to gain entrance saw Lucius Pond seated in the "felon's dock," a man long considered one of Worcester's leading citizens and one of its most popular, now fallen to this lowly state. "Mr. Pond bore the gaze of the crowd without flinching," the *Spy* said, but it had to be difficult. The *Spy* also took note of the man seated nearest Mr. Pond, calling him "the repulsive looking Tom Love, who was tried Monday afternoon for an assault with intent to kill."

The grand jury had brought twelve indictments the previous week charging Pond with uttering forged notes, each being a separate and unique incident, and it was known that the prosecution could have presented many more than that. At the advice of counsel, Pond agreed to accept guilty pleas on three of the twelve charges. Before pronouncing sentence, the court allowed time for the defendant's counsel, Col. W. S. B. Hopkins and George F. Verry, the latter a former mayor of the city and by reputation a formidable attorney, to speak on behalf of their client, to be followed by time allotted to the prosecutor, District Attorney Hamilton B. Staples.

The accounts in the three dailies were similar in spirit and in the basic transfer of information from the courtroom to their readers. But in each case the reporter on the scene had been forced to write notes as quickly as possible, presumably in shorthand, which was routine for journalists, and it was not feasible to get all the commentary of the lawyers and the judge exactly as they were

stated. Accordingly, any quoted text has to represent what the paper itself wrote, even when doing its best to say what the attorneys said.

Mr. Verry outlined Pond's long history as a leading citizen of the community, describing him as a good man who had lapsed – not for personal gain but to enable him to keep his business going, “whereby he gave employment to a large number of deserving persons.” He also said Pond would be a strong candidate for a full moral recovery, with no chance of a repetition of his crimes. Verry asked if the judge might consider sentencing Mr. Pond to serve whatever time was required in the county jail in Worcester instead of the state penitentiary.

The remarks of the prosecutor, Mr. Staples, were especially important as a formal representation of the state's view of the seriousness of Pond's crimes, why they were thought to be so important and potentially damaging. The D.A.'s argument in this case in which the guilty plea had already been entered and accepted was in regard to sentencing. He was making the case for more severity of punishment rather than less, and he took some time to make clear why.

Mr. Staples began with a review of the manner in which Pond had perpetrated the forgeries. The new process that Pond used involved a commercial product called “Talmage's Lightning Ink Eraser,” a solution of chloride of lime, which apparently did a good job of covering, if not, eliminating, ink on paper and allowing one to write over the spot. By this process, according to the D.A., as quoted in the *Spy*,

... it is impossible to detect the fraud. The original signature is there, and the endorser swears that is his handwriting, although he has no recollection of the face of the note. This face has been changed, and no man knows when he is safe in holding commercial paper.... When this great crime came to light, the community was startled and appalled. Man lost faith in man and knew not where he was. It required no great foresight to see that business letters, deeds, bank notes, trust companies, brokers and money lenders were at the mercy of this style of forgery....

The effect of this fraud was most disastrous. The mischief went far beyond the mere money face of the forged notes. There seemed to be no confidence one with another. It seemed as if all men were cheats, as if the Christian church was a delusion and filled with knavery. This sad case is only another one added to the long list of melancholy events now so common in this country.

After the D.A.'s explanation of what Pond did and how he did it, he summarized the effect of the crimes on the public. As the Gazette reporter captured his remarks:

We thus see how the influence of this fraud affects the whole community, how the discovery of this new and alarming form of crime should produce almost a panic of fear and apprehension.

He then turned his attention to the extent of Pond's forgeries, not just the number of cases but the way his victims spanned the social spectrum of the community. Pond's forged and unredeemable promissory notes, the D.A. explained, no doubt with a little exaggeration,

... were in the possession of almost everybody; not only in banks, trust companies, and the hands of brokers, but men of all means, widows, the guardians of orphans, poor men who advanced to this man all the accumulations of their toil as with the same confidence with which they would have put it in a savings bank – all had this paper....

The D.A.'s claim that Pond had victimized people from all “walks of life” was being asserted as a fact of significance to the sentencing issue at hand. In other words, it's one thing to defraud the rich,

but another to swindle the poor out of their hard-earned savings. Remarks to that effect also had been made by the various papers ever since the forgeries were discovered.

Finally, the Mr. Staples reached deeply into his bag of hyperbole to summarize the moral implications of the crimes: "It seemed as though men might ask if there was any honesty or virtue left in the world – whether confidence could be reposed in any one – whether the Christian church itself was to be confided in..."

The *Spy's* column ended on an aspect of the case that had been in play since Pond was determined to be a criminal suspect: "He [the prosecutor] hoped that when the case was finally disposed of the community would have no occasion to regret that justice had not been fairly meted out to all alike." As widely and as persistently followed as the Pond case had been, it seemed clear that any hint of favoritism toward the city's privileged elite emanating from that courtroom might not sit well with a significant portion of the public. Pond's crimes were turning out to be more substantial than he had imagined, and any chance that he might be given any kind of minimal penalty seemed itself to be minimal.

After hearing the statements from both sides, Chief Justice Brigham took note of the good nature and commendable history of the defendant, Mr. Pond, and then expounded on what he thought to be the gravely important principle at stake in the case:

There is no reason to believe but that the prisoner is sincerely penitent, and will not repeat the crime. But he has done that which goes to the very foundation of commercial prosperity. In a country like this, when business is conducted so largely on the credit system, any considerable number of acts which go to affect commercial credit as a means of business have a wide influence and exert an extended effect.

All forgeries are regarded by the law as the most criminal offences [sic] against property, for they affect confidence in a most deadly manner, the confidence which is the basis of all business dealing.

Thus, Pond's manner of forgery was not just another property crime; it was one which threatened the functioning of the commercial system itself by undermining the trust that was so fundamental to it. The *Daily Press* described the moment:

During the delivery of the judge's address perfect silence reigned in the court room. Mr. Pond remained with eyes cast down, nor did he once look up. The general feeling was, that these remarks were only prefatory to the delivery of some very severe sentence, and much sympathy was manifested and expressed.

When the judge rose to deliver sentence a stillness of death pervaded the whole room and amidst an almost breathless suspense.

Lucius W. Pond was ordered to rise and hearken unto the sentence imposed by the court. Mr. Pond rose and stood steadily facing the court, showing no signs of agitation.

Justice Brigham pronounced the sentence: six years "at hard labor" on the first count, five on the second, and four on the third, for a total of fifteen years to be served in the state prison, with one day of solitary confinement to be served for each of the charges. In view of the reasoning that preceded the sentence, it was as if Pond got five years for the property crimes and ten years for threatening the stability of the system.

Mr. Pond, according to the *Daily Press*, “received this terrible sentence with a calm air and was apparently less affected by it than were the spectators, who crowded the room.” A few minutes after the sentencing, Lucius Pond, the convicted felon, was removed to the local jail, and within a week or so to the prison in Charlestown, then soon thereafter to the state’s new penitentiary in Concord.

After four months, the end had come for Worcester’s most compelling drama in memory. In its “minor matters” column the next morning, the *Daily Press* stated dryly that “A man was discovered about 7 o’clock last evening who had not heard of the sentence of L. W. Pond. And that man lived in Worcester.”

The *Daily Press* also had more serious comments to make in its final editorial on the subject. On balance, Spalding’s view was that the sentence felt about right. Despite good reason for sympathy for the man, which this publisher too had displayed in a somewhat guarded manner, at stake, and of greater importance, was the ability of the criminal justice system to deal appropriately - firmly - with the offender in such a case.

The only protection of the public rests in the prompt punishment of those who prey upon honest men. ... The certainty of swift and unrelenting punishment is society’s only protection against the depredations of such men.

At the end of its column, the *Gazette* mentioned the results of other cases heard that day. The grand jury’s indictment of Tom Love had been for an assault with intent to kill by use of a rope. “The assault was an atrocious one,” the *Gazette* wrote, “and consisted in the attempt to hang [the victim] with a rope which Love placed round his neck in the form of a slipnoose.” Love was found guilty and sentenced to five years in the County House of Correction in Worcester. Some must have wondered how that compared with Lucius Pond’s sentence of fifteen years in state prison for a property crime. But it had been made clear that Pond’s offense had amounted to an assault on the foundation of trust underlying the operations of the commercial system, and that it was considered more important because of the threat of serious damage to society as a whole.

That same day, Charles Doe wrote his concluding editorial on the Pond matter, once again displaying the sympathy for the fallen man that he had shown throughout the case.

It ought to be considered that the incarceration of Mr. Pond is after all not the worst part of his punishment. For a man of his impulsive temperament, his pride in his character, and his confidence in his strength and ability, it was undoubtedly a crushing blow to be caught hiding ignominiously from justice. It must have been torture for him to be brought to the felon’s dock, in the city where he had lived so long and where so many had loved and respected him.

Doe continued:

... a man occupying such a high position is ... under special obligation to keep himself spotless.... the fall of such a man is terrible.... [and] it is not the loss of liberty, but the loss of reputation, the disgrace, which will cut him to the heart.

Doe then sought to distance himself from any thought that he was excusing Pond’s transgressions, noting that the punishment was good and just and proper. But then he finished the essay in the tone of his choice: “Nevertheless, we frankly acknowledge compassion for the man in his affliction and we are not alone in this feeling. He has sinned greatly, but he has suffered much.”

Pond's conviction and removal to the state penitentiary seemed to lay to rest the four-month drama that had so captivated the Worcester community – or at least a good portion of it. But there was more to come, and one did not have to wait. On the same day as Pond's appearance in court, January 25, the *Gazette* printed another story of forgery by a leading citizen, this time a man of Boston, and one who, like Pond, was well known around town, and had served three terms in the state legislature in the recent past. In a column headed "EXTRA / By Telegraph to the Worcester Evening Gazette," from the Associated Press, it was learned that the Rev. E. D. Winslow, recently of the *Boston Daily News*, whose column in that paper on behalf of Lucius Pond had been reprinted in the *Gazette* on October 12, was now himself the target of an ongoing investigation regarding forged notes, thought to be in excess of \$100,000.

This seemed to be, as the *Gazette* put it, a "startling coincidence." Or was it, people wondered. The idea that Pond and Winslow might have been working together, "in cohorts" in their nefarious deeds, quickly started to circulate. Long-time followers of the case once again could speculate on what had happened and why. The next day, the *Gazette* printed a letter from Lucius Pond, written in jail, disclaiming any knowledge of Winslow's activities. "I wish to state," he wrote, "that neither Mr. E. D. Winslow, nor any other person or persons, had any knowledge or interest in my irregularities, neither did I have any knowledge of or interest in Mr. E. D. Winslow's reported irregularities. The reports in relation to Mr. Winslow are certainly as great a surprise to me as they can be to any one."

The *Spy's* response was to cite examples taken from the *Boston Journal* of patterns of behavior between Pond and Winslow, including endorsing each other's notes, and the like. Nothing was there to prove any link of a criminal nature between the two, but the story cast a shadow of innuendo over Pond as he tried to distance himself from Winslow. Such a shadow, of course, already existed. Charles Doe at the *Gazette* appeared to be mildly irritated, saying that afternoon that...

The *Spy*, still following Mr. Pond with the flaming sword of outraged justice, attempts to throw discredit on the assertions in his communication printed yesterday in our columns. Now, it is a matter which can not possibly concern us whether Pond and Winslow plotted together or not, although it may perhaps be a legitimate object of public curiosity. It is a matter of fact and so can not be settled by debate.

The Winslow story, breaking when it did, meant that as Lucius Pond went off to Charlestown, and soon to Concord to serve his time, a cloud still hung over his head – a small one, perhaps, but a reminder that maybe not all had been discovered and brought out into the open concerning his activities over the past year or two. The story then went quiet in the press, the three Worcester dailies continuing their normal operations as before. The *Daily Press* went defunct in 1878, and the weekly *Palladium* was purchased by the *Spy* and its operations terminated in February, 1876, only two weeks after Pond's day in court.

Two months shy of his fiftieth birthday, Lucius Pond began serving his sentence in February, having already been in captivity for two months. Assuming he earned the customary "time off for good behavior," he could expect to be freed in twelve years, 1888, in his early sixties. In his absence, his son David continued running the machine tools business under his own name, and in 1877 purchased the Union Street property from his uncle, Mr. Hale, for \$65,000 and the assumption of a mortgage for \$33,000. The 1880 census described David as age 31, married, with an 11-month-old

son, residing at Lincoln Square, with a servant in the household, and, of course, as a machine tools manufacturer. His mother, Ardelia Pond, was listed as age 53, married, keeping house, residing on Thomas Street, and living with her was her daughter Sarah, 23, a clerk. Sarah soon thereafter worked with the Worcester Employment Society, which operated a crafts enterprise employing women in need and which became the Worcester Craft Center, now on Sagamore Road. In 1883 Sarah was married and living with her husband on Chatham Street. The census found Lucius Pond, age 53, residing in Concord with a lot of housemates.

A time for redemption

While Lucius Pond served his time in the State Penitentiary in Concord, as virtually everyone thought he must, he was not forgotten back home. Eventually some of his old friends in Worcester began to think about making a bid for his freedom by means of a pardon by the Governor. Beginning in the Spring of 1882, a group comprised of members of the city's commercial and political elite passed around a petition calling for his release and managed to get a good number of signatures, the estimate given in the press being between 200 and 300. Their strategy was to include all of the defrauded creditors they could find who would sign, and to add some well known and respected business, professional, clerical, and political leaders, such as themselves. It was submitted to the Governor in the early Fall.

The petitioners were up against a Governor, John Davis Long (Rep., 1880-83), who was thought to be generally adverse to such pardons, and had granted thus far in his term considerably fewer than had his predecessor. According to the Gazette, "Governor Long has maintained a very conservative attitude throughout the movement, and has held the committee to the closest accuracy in all their statements favorable to Mr. Pond." In early December, a delegation took the petition to Boston and was given a few minutes with the Governor and his Council. Governor Long asked, as the *Spy* told it, "how many of the citizens who had signed the petition would take the trouble to go to Boston," and he suggested that by their presence at a hearing the effect would be much greater than that of a *mere* list of signatures. "The Governor was informed," the *Spy* continued, "that if he would set a day for a hearing, he would be shown how earnest was the request of the petitioners." A date was set: the following week on the 15th of December, in the Green Room at the State House, at 11 o'clock a.m.

More than 200 citizens of Worcester made the trip that morning by train, most of them "leading" citizens. Those in attendance included both of Pond's attorneys in 1876, George Verry and Col. W. S. B. Hopkins; the current Mayor, the Mayor-elect, and several past Mayors; prominent commercial and industrial leaders, including Dale Hale Fanning, Loring Coes, Caleb Colvin, and Osgood Bradley; several members of the clergy; war hero and later police chief Major Edward T. Raymond; and Worcester's leading architect, Elbridge Boyden, among many others. The floor was open to those who wished to speak, and the group was ready. Honorary chairman George S. Barton went first and provided some helpful statistics: of 187 creditors with proven claims, 150 signed the petition, eight were deceased, six were banks or corporations, sixteen could not be found, and only seven refused to sign. Thus, of those victims of Pond's crimes they could find, they achieved a signature rate in excess of 95 percent.

The Rev. Thomas Griffin of St. John's parish said that the indignation directed toward Pond at first had been strong but "he was sure that it had subsided, and that now the only sentiment was one of clemency and a desire for pardon." Further, he added, "the laboring classes respected Mr. Pond, and loved him for his benevolence, and attributed his fall not so much to selfishness as to kind heartedness, and pray for his release." Banker and current Mayor Elijah Stoddard said "the only criticism of him as a business man was that he was too liberal to other people, and too willing to help others...." Speaker after speaker extolled the virtues of the man they wanted to see returned to his home in Worcester. Businessman Theodore Bates seemed to sum it up when he said that "the people of Worcester have forgiven him and now ask for his pardon."

After George F. Verry closed out the list, Governor Long asked if there was anyone present to speak against the pardon. No one answered. He then said he and his council would take the matter under advisement and the hearing was adjourned. The *Spy* said the petitioners were confident they had succeeded, that Lucius Pond would soon be pardoned.

On Saturday, December 23, at 2:50 p.m., in a brief stop by his train at Union Station, Governor Long met briefly with Charles B. Pratt, one of the leaders of the effort to bring Pond back home. The purpose of the pre-arranged encounter was to give him a yes or a no on the pardon. It was a yes.

Early the morning of December 25, Pratt and group chairman George S. Barton went to the state penitentiary in Concord, along with one reporter each from the *Spy* and the *Gazette*. When the four men entered the office of the warden, Lucius Pond was in the kitchen at his usual morning occupation, on this day with other inmates preparing Christmas dinner, he being in charge of the bread. The warden sent a message to have Pond sent to his office and to bring tools needed to work on a defective radiator. A few moments later, Pond knocked on the door, then entered, wearing prison garb with tools in hand, only to see his old friends from home standing there smiling. The rest of that scene is predictable enough.

Before leaving the prison, Pond spent some time saying goodbye and receiving congratulations and best wishes from the friends he had made there. During that time the visitors attended a Christmas entertainment event for the inmates in the chapel, consisting of "songs, readings, character sketches, and piano, xylophone, and cornet solos." The dinner served was described as "profuse," and Pond said it was the first time turkey had been served at the prison and that he had taken "great pleasure in assisting to prepare it." Reporters said he seemed almost sorry to have to miss the dinner.

Shortly before noon, the five men departed and took the "Nashua Road" back to Worcester. In his cell, Pond had been allowed to have a zither and a canary, and he brought them home with him on the train. He also spoke about prison life, focusing on the value of pardons as being conducive to hope and reason for good behavior among most of the inmates. When they arrived in Worcester, they encountered a gathering of about fifty people waiting at the Lincoln Square depot to greet Mr. Pond and welcome him back. An effort had been made to keep the release and arrival quiet in order to allow Pond to return to his wife and family with a modicum of privacy before dealing with crowds of well-wishers, but there had been some leakage. Mayor-elect Samuel Hildreth, who years ago had been Pond's foreman at the shop, took charge and, in the same carriage that had carried

Pond to the depot six years ago, and with the same driver, Lucius W. Pond was taken to his wife and his daughter waiting for him at their home on Pearl Street.

Lucius Pond had now come into the fifth stage of public perception: the sinner redeemed. Throughout the long ordeal he had been transformed in the public mind from leading and highly regarded citizen to victim to scoundrel to criminal to prisoner, and now he was back to good man and citizen.

Little is known about the events of the next few weeks and months in Pond's personal life, being private and not a matter for discussion in the press. What is known, from City Directories, is that in 1883 he went to work as a machinist in the shop of Albert Powell at 140 Union Street, the Merrifield building, only a block away from his old firm, now in the hands, and the name, of his son David. Why he did not return to that shop is unknown - perhaps a matter of issues involving the father and originator of the firm working for his son, but still an unknown which must remain as such.

In 1886, four Worcester investors, friends of Lucius Pond, purchased Powell's company from him, then promoted Pond to the position of Superintendent, their intention being to put him back in a position to do what he did best. The reorganized corporation was renamed the L. W. Pond Machine Company in an effort to draw once again on his good name and reputation in the machinist tools industry. Mr. Pond apparently succeeded in regaining his winning ways, as the company was later said to be doing well, its stock selling "above par." Unknown are whether Pond owned any of the stock, how much he was paid, and whether there was any provisions for his wife Ardelia after his passing. The company, renamed the L. W. Pond Machine and Foundry Company, and relocated to Gold Street, survived until deep into the Depression. When it closed its doors in 1936 it is doubtful that more than a few people in Worcester knew anything about the man behind the name.

In 1888 Lucius Pond's health began to deteriorate, the cause unknown but some kind of internal disorder causing him digestive distress. He kept working as long as he could, but in the Spring of 1889 matters took a turn for the worse. After about a month of being confined to his bed, with no hope of recovery, he died the morning of May 22. He was buried at Rural Cemetery.

* * *

Obituary

Ardelia Pond died in 1899 at the age of 72. At the time she had been residing with her daughter Sarah and her family in their home on Chatham Street. Sarah died in the early 1920s.

In 1883, David Pond incorporated the firm as the Pond Machine Tool Co. for the purpose of selling controlling interest to a larger machinery company in Bridgeport, called Manning, Maxwell & Moore. In 1886, the friends of David's father established the L. W. Pond Machine Co. , virtually next door to the Pond Machine Tool Co. One year later, the parent firm relocated the original Pond operation, the one David had been running since 1875, to Plainfield, NJ. They kept the name Pond Machine Tool Company, probably because of reputational goodwill in the name. David moved with it

to New Jersey as its president. In the early 1890s, he retired from the company for reasons not given, then opened a brokerage in the Wall Street area of New York. In Plainfield he was described as “one of the best-known and wealthiest residents of this city.” On August 4, 1897, David’s wife Annie found him dead of a gunshot wound to the temple, determined by police to have been self-inflicted. He left a widow and two sons in their teens. His body was returned to Worcester for burial at Rural Cemetery.

John Denison Baldwin published the *Spy* until his death in 1883, and was succeeded by his sons John Stanton and Charles Clinton Baldwin. They, along with two sons of John S., continued the paper until 1898 when they sold it to a gentleman from Chicago who held it barely a year before re-selling it. This time the buyer was Charles Nutt, who later became known for his four-volume *History of Worcester and its People*, published in 1919, soon after his death. Nutt continued the *Spy* until he found it necessary to cease publication on May 31, 1904. A disastrous fire in 1902, causing great damage to the press facilities, combined with a long trend of losing ground to the fast-rising *Telegram*, spelled the end for *The Worcester Daily Spy* in the 129th year of its publication in the city.

Charles H. Doe continued publishing the *Evening Gazette* until 1896 when he retired because of an illness, one from which he never recovered. He moved from Worcester to Cambridge, and in 1900 died on a visit to New Brunswick, leaving a wife and three children. Charles Nutt said of Doe that “he was a gifted editor, and made the *Gazette* an excellent newspaper.” (Vol. 2, p. 1109) His obituary notice in his former paper, written by a grateful reporter who said he had learned the profession under him, said that “Mr. Doe belonged to the old school of journalism and did not have the aggressive qualities of the newspaperman of today....” By the “old school” he meant a more genteel style, and that had been apparent throughout Doe’s coverage of the Pond case.

Upon the demise of the *Daily Press* in 1878, John A. Spalding left town and nothing further is known of him. After the sale of the *Palladium* in 1878 to the *Spy*, Charles Hamilton continued his printing and publishing business until his death in 1896, after which his son continued it until 1905.

City Marshall W. Ansel Washburn served in that capacity until his resignation when his term expired in 1892, at which time he became Deputy Sheriff and keeper of the jail on Summer Street. Later he took a less demanding position at the court house where he remained until his death in 1916. His career with Worcester police began at the age of 28 in 1865 as a patrolman. Three years later he was appointed Assistant Marshall and five years after that as Marshall, in which position he served in fourteen of the next twenty years. “In those old days,” according to the *Gazette*, “some members of the police department were appointed by the mayor in return for political favors.” He was a member of the Massachusetts Society of Police Chiefs and was its president in 1888.

Detective Ezra Churchill retired from the police department in 1880, at the age of 53, for reasons unknown. He worked his remaining years in a variety of positions, including salesman at several establishments in Worcester, and some years in the wool trades in a partnership dealing in “shoddy” and rags at Washington Square. He died of heart failure January 16, 1902, the day before his 75th birthday, leaving a widow and four grown children. The notice of his death in the *Spy* was very complimentary concerning his work with the police department, highlighting the capture of

Lucius Pond a quarter-century earlier “after a chase across the continent.” It also noted his role in the capture of a murderer in 1876 in what was described as a very prominent case. Even though he didn’t remain with the department for very long, Ezra Churchill set the bar high for later detectives.

Notices of Ezra’s death mentioned his wife, Myra Bosworth Churchill, his three daughters, and a son. The life of his son, George Bosworth Churchill, merits attention. Growing up in Worcester, he attended local schools, and was admitted to Amherst College where he graduated in 1889. He then taught for three years at the high school; went to Philadelphia where he taught in the William Penn Charter School while taking graduate courses at the University of Pennsylvania, 1892-94; studied at the University of Strassburg, Germany, 1894-95 and the University of Berlin, 1895-1897, where he earned his Ph. D.; returned to the United States and became associate editor of *Cosmopolitan Magazine* in 1897-98; then joined the faculty of Amherst College in 1898, teaching English literature and rhetoric. He became involved in politics, serving as Town Moderator in Amherst, 1905-25; as a member of the state senate 1917-19; and as a delegate to the state constitutional conventions of 1917 and 1919. In 1924 he was elected to the U.S. Congress as a Republican, but served only from March 4 until July 1, 1925 due to his untimely passing at the age of 59.

E. D. Winslow’s career spanned several domains of activity, including the ministry, as a chaplain during the Civil War and as a pastor in several Methodist churches; a number of businesses and speculative ventures in real estate; and the one in which he became known to followers of the Pond case, newspaper publishing. On December 18, 1875, just after the return of Lucius Pond to Worcester as a prisoner, and shortly before his not-so-mysterious disappearance amid publication of evidence of his activities in forgery, Winslow’s home in a suburb of Boston, which he did not own but rented, was destroyed by fire, no one apparently being hurt. The *Boston Herald* noted that “some surprise was created that he had such a stock of expensive paintings on hand. The insurance on his furniture was for about \$17,000.” Imagine that. It was also reported that Winslow had recently sold his interest in the *Boston Daily News*, and that on January 19 he and his family had left town for Washington, D.C., said to be for the purpose of enabling him to get some rest after the stressful events of the fire.

Before long it became clear, on the basis of investigation by a Boston police detective, that Winslow and his family had sailed for Rotterdam, and that he had with him, according to the *New York Times*, quoted in the *Spy*, “a box containing \$200,000, chiefly in gold coin, which he placed in the specie room on the steamer before sailing.” The *Gazette* put a fitting cap on the story: “Brother Winslow is found to have sailed for Rotterdam. The gin is said to be excellent in Holland and there is no extradition treaty.”

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