

**V. EARLY AMERICAN POETRY;  
THE POEMS OF ROGER WOLCOTT,  
1725. POETICAL MEDITATIONS,  
BEING THE IMPROVEMENT OF  
SOME VACANT HOURS**

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V. Early American Poetry; The Poems of Roger Wolcott, 1725. Poetical Meditations, Being the Improvement of Some Vacant Hours by Roger Wolcott & John Winthrop & James F. Hunnewell

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**ROGER WOLCOTT & JOHN WINTHROP & JAMES F. HUNNEWELL**

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V.

EARLY AMERICAN POETRY

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THE POEMS  
OF  
ROGER WOLCOTT, ESQ.

1725



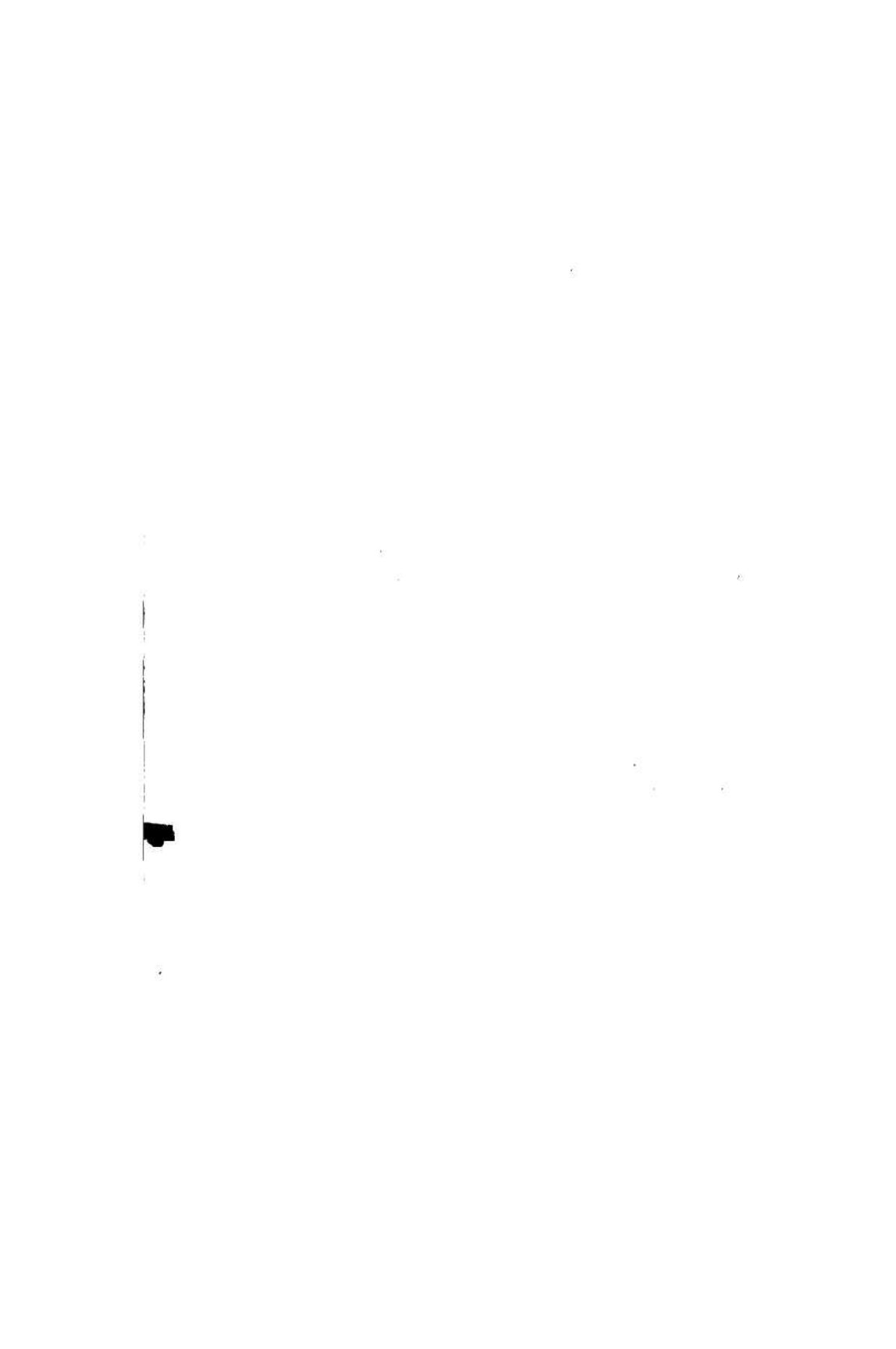
BOSTON  
THE CLUB OF ODD VOLUMES

1898

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SOME IMPROVEMENT OF  
VACANT HOURS, 1725.

**T**HIS Club, reproducing Early American Poems as nearly as practicable in the order in which they appeared, reaches, for the Fifth Volume, the first book of Poetry printed in Connecticut. It was published at New London in 1725. A prose introduction, by the Reverend John Bulkley of Colchester, that fills fifty-six pages, would not properly be a part of the present series, and the reproduction here begins with the verse, all of which is given, page for page and line for line, according to the original. The type is set directly from a copy owned by our associate, Mr. Sumner



Hollingsworth, who has kindly loaned it for this use.

The poet was an honored member of one of the most distinguished families in New England, one remarkable for high character and for eminent position.

Henry Wolcott, its American founder, came from Somersetshire in 1630, and settled at Dorchester, Massachusetts. In 1636, he made his home at Windsor, Connecticut.

Roger, his grandson, author of the poems, was a major-general at Louisburg in 1745, then chief judge of the Superior Court, and, from 1750 to 1754, Governor of Connecticut. He died May 17, 1767, aged eighty-eight.

Oliver, his son, Yale 1747, was a captain in the war with the French, for fourteen years high sheriff of Litchfield County, a member of Congress, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, through ten years Lieutenant-Governor, and, in 1796, Governor of Connecticut. He died at the age of seventy-one.

Oliver, his son, was, from 1817 to 1827, Governor of Connecticut. Thus three generations of the family occupied the highest official position in their native State. Continuing through war and peace prominent in many positions and relations, the family was, among these, also eminent in business affairs.

Frederick, brother of Oliver, twice refused nomination as governor, and for more than thirty years was judge of probate. His son, J. Huntington (1804-91), became a partner in the widely known house of A. A. Lawrence & Co. of Boston. During the Civil War he was active in the New England Sanitary Commission. Noble in person, as in character, he was long distinguished in society and in finance.

Roger, his son, was born in Boston, July 13, 1847. Class orator at Harvard, member of the City Council, and of the Legislature, officer in a great number and variety of organizations, he became Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts in 1894, and in 1896 Governor, by one of the most

magnificent votes ever recorded in the old Bay State.

Look the world around and it will be hard to find another poet whose race has, through five generations, rivalled in good qualities and in position that of Roger Wolcott.

The earlier poets of New England were not Miltons or Drydens, and are to be compared, not with them, but with fellow colonists. If compared with the reverend and learned men who wrote most of our primitive American verse, it will be found that, whatever he lacked in merit, Roger Wolcott stood in poesy relatively as he stood eminent officially among the people around him, and that his work forms a notable part of the earlier literature of our country.

His miscellaneous poems show the religious nature and thought prevalent in his time and region. His chief work relates to the early history of his native colony, especially war with the Indians, and to the Honorable John Winthrop's services in procuring a Charter from Charles II., a long interview with whom is fully described.