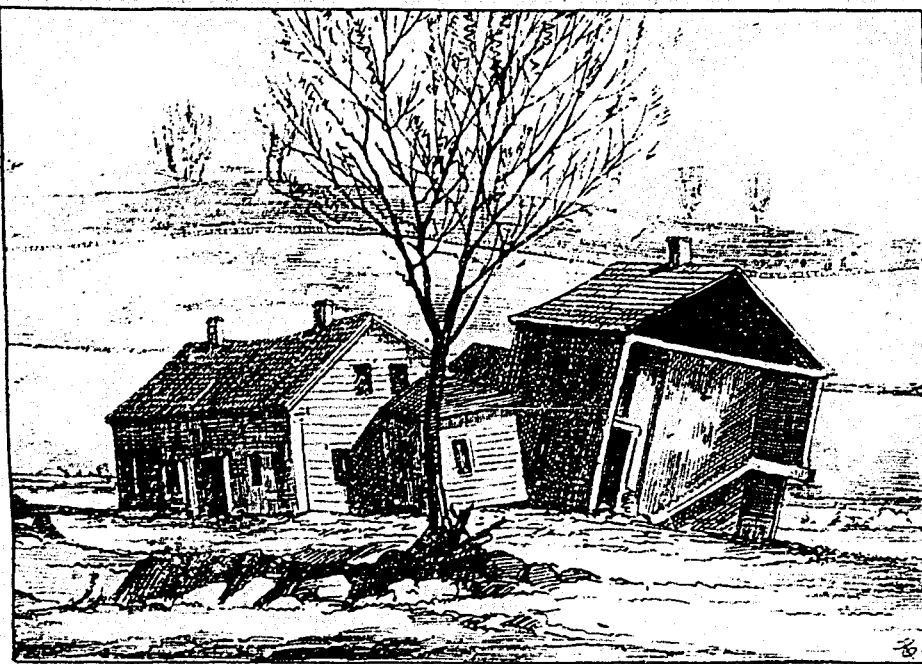


THE GREAT FLOOD IN MASSACHUSETTS.



WORKMEN'S HOUSES OVERTURNED BY THE FLOOD.



PART OF A HOUSE AT LEEDS—THE REST DASHED TO PIECES.

THE WILLIAMSBURG RESERVOIR.

A reporter of the *Springfield Republican* who examined the ruins of the reservoir a few hours after the disaster describes the general aspect as follows:—The eastern section of the reservoir, on which the first break occurred, has disappeared from the top to the base, with the exception of a few rocks at the bottom, almost to the eastern bank. Near the centre of the stream the stone wall which inclosed the iron tube remains almost intact on the upper side, but on the lower side a considerable number of stones have been carried away by the force of the torrent. The western half of the reservoir has suffered less seriously, though even on that side only the extreme portion, where comparatively little of the pressure came, remains uninjured. Much more of the base of the stone wall, however, remains here than on the other side, so that one can walk upon the remains of it to the very centre of the stream. Of the whole extent of the reservoir, as it stood on Saturday morning, it is safe to say that not one-sixth now remains. The feature that most impresses one about the ruins is the smallness of the stone wall when compared with the immense extent of water which the reservoir held. This wall was understood to be eight feet thick at the base. Upon measuring a section of it, however, as it stood intact, some ten feet above the bed of the stream, the reporter found it lacked about three inches of being

six feet across. The upper third of the wall, as one looks across the chasm at what remained on the eastern side, cannot fail to strike the average observer, possessing only the information and judgment of common sense, as seriously lacking in thoroughness and stability. Without applying the tests which experts on such matters will doubtless soon put to it, a spectator from the opposite bank can hardly restrain the judgment of dismay as he views the upper portion of the wall, and the general impression, from an inspection of the wall as a whole, is that it lacked the strength which so great a strain demanded.

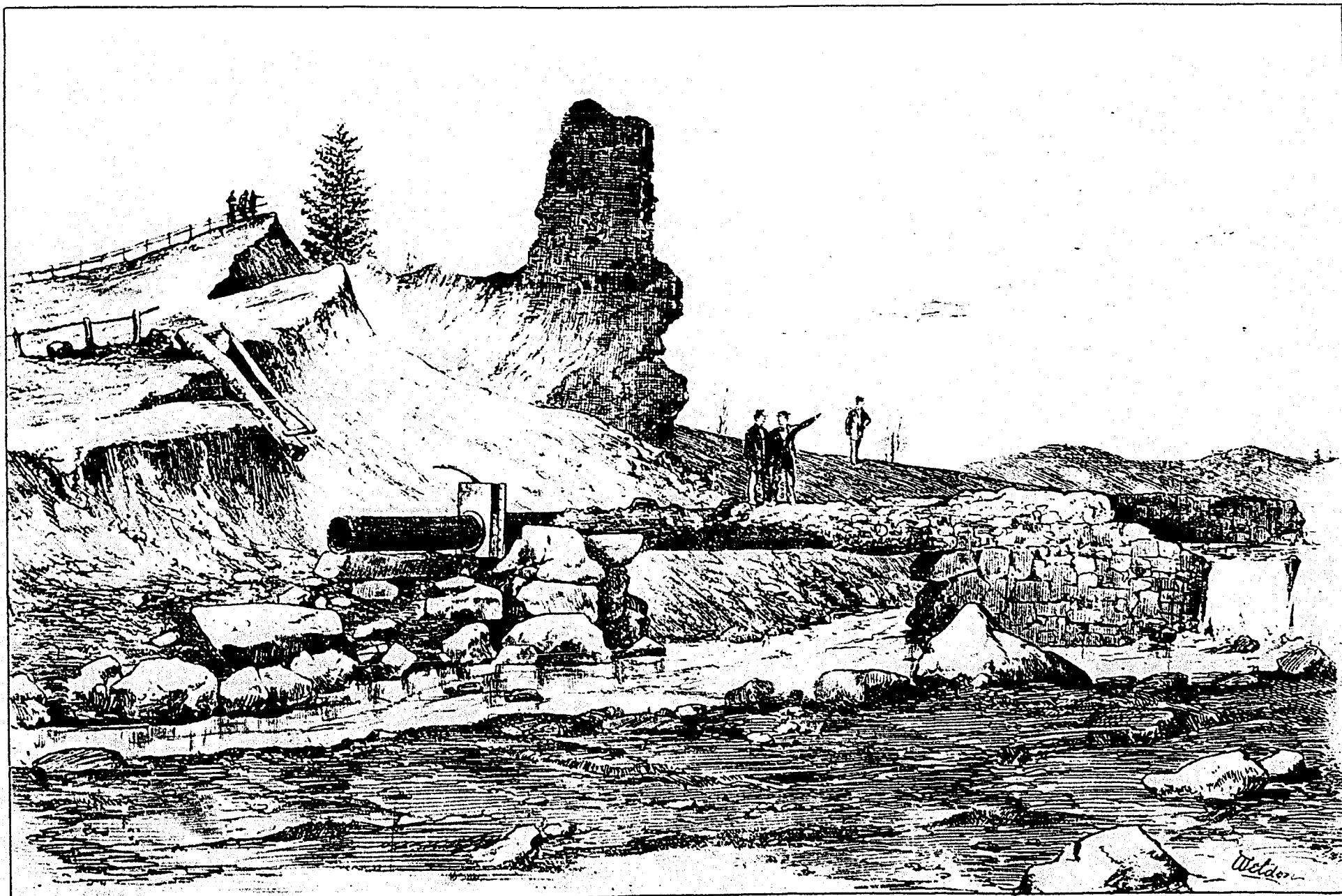
The ill-fated reservoir was one of a system of dams and reservoirs owned by a corporation called the Mill River and Williamsburg Reservoir Company, which included all the manufacturing establishments on the line of Mill River from Williamsburg to Northampton. It was situated on the east branch of Mill River, about three miles from the village of Williamsburg, in the north-eastern corner of Northampton. The stream which supplied it has its rise only about three miles above the reservoir, and, after joining the west branch at the village of Williamsburg, forms Mill River proper, which flows through Haydensville and Florence and empties into the Connecticut River at Northampton.

The reservoir was constructed in the summer and fall of 1865, though it was not filled and used until the following

spring. Emery C. Wells, of Northampton, and Joel Bassett, of East Hampton, were the contractors, and the cost was \$35,000.

A stone wall was first built, which was stipulated to rise from a width of eight feet at the base pan to two feet at the top, which latter was forty-two feet above the bed of the stream.

This wall was contracted to be laid in the best known cement, and the projectors claimed it would be as strong as a single shaft of granite. Enveloping this wall on either side was a mass of earth which sloped down on the water side at an angle of 30 degrees, and on the lower side at an angle of 45 degrees; a lateral section of this earthen support measured about 120 feet at the base, the greater mass of which was on the water side. At the centre of the stream, enclosed in a stone wall, running at right angles to the main wall of the reservoir, ran an iron tube of two feet diameter, for controlling the flow of water, extending of course a few feet beyond this earthen wall, at both extremities of its base. This wall of earth, 120 feet wide at bottom, was sixteen feet across at the top, covering the crest of the stone wall two feet in depth, in order to prevent danger from frost, and along its top furnished a good drive-way. The water never rose quite to the crest of the dam, being kept about two feet below that line by means of a waste way at the western side. The reservoir covered an area of 111 acres, and its average depth was twenty-four feet.



THE REMAINS OF THE WILLIAMSBURGH DAM, WITH THE FLUME.