

This reproduction edition of  
*Bisbee's History of Huntington*  
is dedicated to Nicholas Sattler, in appreciation of his  
contribution to the preservation of the character and  
history, and his support of the arts and culture of the town  
of Huntington.



*This reproduction of Bisbee's History of Huntington was made in the interest of preserving the lore it contains for current and future residents of Huntington and people interested in local history everywhere. While it is not an exact copy in size and format, in making this edition, I have taken the greatest pains to leave the original text unchanged, preserving the linguistic quirks of the authors. I have also tried, with the means available to me, to retain the appearance of the original volume.*

Reproduction Edition  
Published 2001  
By Stephen W. Hamlin  
and the Huntington Planning Board  
Huntington, MA



I HEREBY certify that at a legal town meeting, held in the Town Hall in Huntington, June 17, 1876, it was voted that Rev. J. H. Bisbee, G. Munson, and C. H. Kirkland, be a committee to prepare and publish a history of the Town of Huntington, from its first settlement to the present time.

WM. S. TINKER, *Clerk.*

HUNTINGTON, NOV. 21, 1876.

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IN accordance with the action of the town, the following brief history has been prepared. Meagre and imperfect as it is, it may, perhaps, furnish the starting point for some abler pen, hereafter to delineate it more fully. With all its imperfections, it is hereby respectfully dedicated to the citizens and former inhabitants of Huntington.

December, 1876.

BY THE COMMITTEE.



# History of Huntington.

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THIS is not one of the original townships of the Commonwealth. The larger part of its present territory was embraced in what was called Plantation No. 9. This plantation, in common with several others in the vicinity, was sold at auction by order of the General Court, on the second day of June, 1762; it was purchased by William Williams, for £1,500. October 31, 1765, this town was incorporated and named Murrayfield; the greater part of it is now called Chester. The name was changed by act of the Legislature, February 21, 1783.

June 29, 1773, the eastern portion of this territory was, by act of the General Court, set off and incorporated as a district and named Norwich. In common with other districts incorporated near that time, this had conferred on it "all the powers, privileges, and immunities of a town, that of sending a representative to the General Court, alone excepted." A district thus formed, was permitted to unite with some town in the choice of a representative. Norwich was authorized thus to unite with Chester. The reason for withholding from districts the right to send a representative by themselves, appears to have been a growing jealousy on the part of the crown, lest the popular element, in the government of the colony, should be too strong. Hence, "the governor was instructed to consent to no act for the establishment of a new town in the province, unless by a special clause, it should place a restraint upon the power of sending representatives." On the 23d day of March, 1786, this restriction was extensively, if not universally removed. An act was then passed, providing that all districts incorporated before January 1, 1777, should be towns and

thereafter have the right of representation. The line of separation between Chester and Norwich, as described in the act of incorporation of the latter, is about as definite and intelligible to the present generation, as the testimony of the witness in court, who, in describing the dimensions of a certain stone, said "it was about as big as a piece of chalk." In 1853, a portion of the towns of Blandford and Chester was annexed to Norwich. The reason for this change of boundaries may be found in the fact that a thriving village had sprung up on the corners of the towns of Blandford, Chester and Norwich, on the line of the railroad. The village being in three towns and two counties, police regulations were easily evaded, and the interests of education suffered. As now existing, the township is bounded on the north by Chester and Chesterfield, on the east by Westhampton and Southampton, on the south by Montgomery and Russell, and on the west and south-west by Blandford and Chester. In 1855 the name of this township, was, by act of the Legislature changed to Huntington, in honor of Hon. Charles P. Huntington of Northampton, who aided in securing the annexation of territory. The following is the act: "Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five. An Act, to authorize the town of Norwich to change its name. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

*Section 1.* The town of Norwich, in the County of Hampshire, shall take the name of Huntington.

*Section 2.* This Act shall take effect from and after its passage. This was officially signed by Daniel C. Eddy, Speaker of the House of Representatives, March 2, 1855. By Henry W. Benchly, President of the Senate, March 6, 1855. Approved by Henry J. Gardner, Governor, March 9, 1855, and certified by E. M. Wright, Secretary of State, March 15, 1855. It was accepted by the town, March 26, of the same year.

The territory now composing Huntington, began to be settled about 1760. It was then covered with a dense forest; it abounded in timber, which, at the present time, would be considered valuable; beech, birch, maple, chestnut, pine and oak were found in great abundance. The first settlers of the place were from Norwich, Conn., and vicinity, hence the origin of the name given to their new home. Among the first who located here, the following names are preserved’:

John Kirkland, Caleb Fobes, William Miller, David Scott, Isaac Mixer, John Rude, and Rhoades. John Kirkland resided on “the hill,” where C. H. Kirkland now lives; that place has, from the beginning, been in possession of the family of that name.

Isaac Mixer lived on the place now owned and occupied by Horace Taylor, near Norwich bridge. Caleb Fobes lived a little farther up the river, where Mr. Bradley now resides. William Miller, John Rude, and Rhoades lived several miles still farther up the stream, near the north line of the township; it was in a section long known as Norwich Hollow. William Miller spent his first night in town on a small island near the present school-house in the Hollow. His object, in selecting this lodging-place, was to avoid the wolves which were then numerous. As in other new settlements, so here also, much of the time and labor of the first settlers were devoted to the removal of the forests, erecting dwellings, and making roads. Many of the houses were constructed of logs, rudely placed one above another, with openings at suitable places to admit the light. No special arrangements was needed for ventilation, the spaces between the logs being ample for that purpose.

The first legal district meeting was held July 14, 1773. David Scott was chosen Moderator, John Kirkland, Clerk; John Kirkland, Caleb Fobes, David Scott, Selectmen and Assessors; David Scott, Treasurer; Miles Washburn, Constable. District meetings were first held at the dwelling-house of Caleb Fobes, afterwards at Isaac Mixer’s hotel. The constable was directed to warn such meeting, by

posting up a copy of the warrant at Isaac Mixer's gristmill, which appears to have been located about half a mile, more or less, above Norwich bridge.

This town came into existence as a district, it will be perceived, at an eventful period in the history of this country. Difficulties between the colonies and the mother country had already commenced. The controversy which led to the Revolution, and resulted in the independence of the States, was even then, to some extent waged. The spirit of liberty pervaded the community; here, as elsewhere, it ran high. The patriotism of the inhabitants was aroused. In common with other places, some provision was here early made to aid in meeting the contest. In 1774, the district voted to provide powder, lead, flints and a drum for the use of the district. The same year, Ebenezer Meacham was chosen to attend the congress at Concord. September 23, 1774, at a legal district meeting, the resolves of a county congress held at Northampton were read and considered satisfactory. A committee was appointed to send to the Provincial Congress the sentiment of this district respecting the public distresses of this province. It was also "Voted, that it was proper at this critical day, to form into a military company for learning the art of military, and that Capt. Ebenezer Gear be requested to lead in the choice of officers. A military company was accordingly organized October 6, 1774, by the choice of the following officers: John Kirkland, Captain; David Scott, Lieutenant; Ebenezer King, Ensign. As a precautionary measure, to guard against dangerous persons and paupers, certain individuals were voted out of the district, with the refusal to admit them as inhabitants.

In 1775, it was "Voted to choose a committee, in compliance with the method adopted by the Provincial Congress, and also the same to be a committee of correspondence, and said committee are further enjoined by this body to take all possible methods to suppress disorder, and that every person shall be fairly heard before he is

condemned, that we may enjoy our interest and prosperity peaceably, and live as Christians.” When the war of the Revolution was fairly commenced Norwich furnished, it is believed, its full quota of men. Though the town records are on ‘this point very imperfect; yet from various sources the following names of Revolutionary soldiers are obtained: Halsey Sandford, Stephen Angel, Isaac Coit.

In the early history of Massachusetts, church edifices, being built and owned by the town in which they were located, were used for both secular and religious purposes. They were the places for all public gatherings. Accordingly March 19, 1781, it was “Voted, that town meetings be held at the meeting-house.” This continued to be the practice here until 1841, when it was “Voted to give up the meeting-house to the first parish.” The first district meeting held in it was April 2, 1781. In 1786, the district having become a town, with the right of representation by itself, John Kirkland was chosen representative to the “Great and General Court.” Since that time, the following individuals have been chosen to the same office: Aaron Hall, Jesse Joy, Rev. Stephen Tracy, Samuel Kirkland, Martin Kirkland, Joseph Stanton, Silas Warner, Aaron B. Dimock, Augustus Clapp, Horace Taylor, Lyman Dimock, Francis Harwood, Garry Munson, Rev. Ebenezer B. Wright, William Taylor, Henry Stanton, Thomas Ring, Charles H. Kirkland, E. H. Lathrop, E. N. Woods. The three last named were elected under the district system. Several years the town voted not to send a representative to the “General Court.” Sometimes one was chosen, under instruction to attend or not, as the selectmen should judge expedient. The object in withholding representation, probably was the saving of expense, as each town then had to pay its own representative. Maj. Thomas James Douglass was delegate to the convention that framed the State Constitution in 1788.

Artemas Knight was the delegate to the State convention for revising the Constitution in 1820. Elkanah Ring was

sent to the convention, called for a similar purpose, in 1853.

In 1841, the town having relinquished its right to the meeting-house as a place for public secular business, began to agitate the question of building a town hall. After full and earnest discussion, in which much warmth of feeling was manifested, and many strains of eloquence were uttered, it was voted to erect such a building near Knightville. Aaron B. Dimock, Horace Taylor and Ashley Lyman were appointed a committee to locate and build the house. Efforts were subsequently made to change the location, but without effect; the edifice was completed, and the first legal town meeting held in it was March 21, 1842; this continued to be the place for holding town meetings not only till the annexation of more territory, but even until after the name of the town was changed. Several attempts were made to change the place of meeting. In March, 1860, a vote was carried to hold the fall meeting in Union Hall; this was a room over the village school-house, owned by a company of individuals; it was afterwards destroyed by fire; the meeting was held according to the vote, but several subsequent meetings were held at the town house. Efforts continued to be made for a change; at length in March, 1861, while the snow storm raged without and heated discussion within, it was voted 115 to 70 to hold future meetings at the village; this seems to have been a final settlement of the question.

Meetings were generally held at Union Hall until the destruction of the building by fire, in 1863. The same year a new school-house was erected, by the district, on the site of the old one. Over this, as in the case of the former one, was a hall, built, owned and controlled by an association of individuals; the town appropriated five hundred dollars toward the expense of this, in consideration of which the perpetual right to hold legal town meetings in it was secured. It is hence known as Huntington Hall, or the Town Hall.

In the early history of the town, facilities for communication with other places were very limited; no telegraphs, railroads, or steamboats were then in use. It required several days to perform a journey to Boston or New York; communications from the seat of the national government were at least one, if not two or three weeks on the way, while it required months to carry intelligence across the ocean; mails were transported by horse power and not very frequently or rapidly at that, especially in new country towns. A post-office was early established in the village, which was at that time called Falley's X Roads. The mail was carried by stage, running between Boston and Albany, by way of Springfield; at first it was carried each way twice a week; at a later period it was increased to three times a week. This met the wants of the community then, and was regarded as satisfactory; but at the present day this would be regarded as hardly tolerable. After the completion of the Boston and Albany railroad, the name of the office was changed to Chester Village, to correspond with the name of the station. When the name of the town was changed, that of the post-office was also changed and called Huntington. In the first quarter of the present century, a post-office was established on "the hill," and named Norwich, with William Hooker for postmaster. This was supplied with mail by a carrier passing once a week, each way, between Northampton and Falley's X Roads.

When the war of the Rebellion broke out in 1861, Huntington was found true and loyal. As at the time of the Revolution, the fathers rose up and fought valiantly for freedom and independence, so the sons also volunteered and fought bravely for the maintenance of liberty, and the preservation of the government; at the call of their country they marched forth under the stars and stripes, to suffer, and if necessary, to lay their lives on the altar for the salvation of the nation. With them, as with the fathers, the motto was liberty or death.

Many of them suffered great privations and hardships; some fell on the field of battle, others pined in hospitals and died of disease; others still, returned to their friends and families, with wounds and scars, which attest their bravery, and their attachment to the Union. All honor to their country's defenders. May they and their descendants, to the latest generation, enjoy the fruit of their toil and sacrifices. Such is their love of country and their attachment to the old flag, that if occasion should call for it, they would, no doubt, march to the field again with as much bravery as before. Their former sacrifices and sufferings in behalf of their country, have made it dearer to their hearts than it was before.

The following is a list of soldiers from Huntington, who served their country in the war of the Rebellion.

Joseph Underwood,  
\*Charles H. Gardner,  
Charles Ferry,  
Charles R. Copeland,  
Charles Otis,  
Austin Richards,  
Phineas F. Knight,  
Henry A. Weeks,  
\*Henry W. Strong,  
John Quinn,  
Hiram A. Beach,  
David O. Hannum,  
Daniel F. Knight,  
\*Andrew Lacy,  
\*Henry Gooch,  
Edward N. Smith,  
Lewis Samuels,  
James Coleman,

\*Died in the service

Harvey Porter,  
William C. Filley,  
Frederick Taylor,  
George W. Filley,  
Isaac C. Blanchard,  
John A. Decker,  
\*Calvin Porter,  
\*William H. Decker,  
Hugh B. Laidley,  
\*Timothy Coleman,  
\*Albert Holbrook,  
Henry A. Stewart,  
\*Nelson Knight,  
\*Robert Canfield,  
Asa P. Merritt,  
Edwin H. Coit,  
\*Julian A. Wing,  
\*Albert B. Rude,  
\*Marcus Lyon,  
Caleb H. Stickney,  
Horace N. Weeks,  
Edgar F. Kyle,  
Samuel Rust,  
Willie Allard,  
Calvin Porter, Jr.,  
Ralph Joslyn,  
Jonathan A. Lilley,  
Joseph Stanton, Jr.,  
\*E. H. Chapman,  
Asa N. Elder,  
Levi Phelps,  
Leander J. Beals,  
Charles H. Kirkland,  
\*David H. Colt,  
Henry Beach,  
Marshall O. Fisk,  
\*Isaac C. Drake,  
John Hurley,

Moses W. Hannum,  
Eleazer Bryant,

Of the fatal casualties that have occurred here, only a few can be named, for lack of authentic records. Some sixty years ago, more or less, Oliver Hastings was thrown from a

horse and killed, in the "Hollow," near John Rude's present residence.

William Lindsey, Jr., was thrown from a hand-car on the railroad and killed, in 1841, aged twenty-seven years.

The dead body of Lester B. Latham was found by the side of the highway towards Blandford, in 1842. His gun was lying by the body. It is supposed that he accidentally shot himself.

In 1874, Dea. Henry Stanton was thrown from a wagon-load of logs and killed, in the village.

Rodney Fisk was drowned in attempting to cross the river in a boat, above the Pitcher bridge, in 1873.

Oren Burt was killed by a falling tree.

In 1870, William H. Wells, son of Alonzo Wells, was killed in the Massasoit paper-mill, aged five years.

Several individuals have, in various ways, lost their life on the railroad, whose names and manner of death are not recorded.

A number of human bodies have also at different times been taken from the river, the cause of whose death is not known. It is supposed that some were accidentally drowned, while it is conjectured that others committed suicide. In many of these cases, at least, survivors have been left in doubt and uncertainty; they will probably find no definite solution of the matter in this life, if they do in the next.

In 1844, malignant erysipelas extensively prevailed in some portions of the town; many fell victims to it, and passed away.

Small pox has several times visited the place, but with no remarkably fatal results.

In July, 1819, there was a freshet which might well be called a flood. Nearly or quite every bridge in the town was swept away. Mills floated off in the stream, the dwelling-house of William Lindsey was carried away; other buildings were undermined, and several individuals narrowly escaped with life. It was a time of great sadness

and distress. Other freshets, on a smaller scale, have sometimes done much damage to roads, bridges, mills and dams.

#### INDUSTRIAL.

In the early history of the town, agriculture was the leading industrial pursuit. Men, with resolute hearts and strong arms, removed the forests and cultivated the soil. From the earth they drew their sustenance. Corn, rye, oats and potatoes were the staple vegetable productions for food. Seeds were sown and crops harvested, not as now, by machinery, but by hand. Mowing machines, horse rakes, and various other modern implements of husbandry, were then unknown. Beef, pork and mutton, produced by themselves, furnished them with meat, while from the mountain streams their tables were liberally supplied with delicious fish. What is now the west, furnishing the east with bread and meat, was then a vast wilderness, or broad uncultivated prairie. Instead of depending upon New Orleans, or the West Indies for sugar and molasses, they tapped the maple and drew the sap, from which, by their own labor, they procured a supply for domestic use, and often a surplus to exchange for other necessaries. Flax was a product of much importance in those days; this, together with the wool from the sheep, furnished the clothing for the people. The women manufactured the cloth from these articles, without the aid of machinery propelled by either water or steam power. They carded, spun, and wove the linen and the wool by hand; the great and little wheel, as well as the loom, were found in nearly every dwelling, and all the women knew how to use them; they were better players on these than on the melodeon, and piano-forte. "They sought wool and flax, and worked willingly with their hands." "They laid their hands to the spindle, and their hands held the distaff." Some made fine linen and sold it.

In the spring, long pieces of cloth might be seen spread upon the green grass, which the faithful housekeeper was hourly watering from her sprinkler, to aid in the bleaching process. Thus they ate not the bread of idleness; their families were comfortably, and decently clothed; they felt a degree of pride in being able to say "all these things are the fruit of our own industry." Some other branches of industry were necessarily pursued. The carpenter found employment in the erection of needed buildings, and the blacksmith in making and repairing the rude implements of husbandry. These were mainly of domestic manufacture, and generally coarse and clumsy, compared with those now in use; some farmers made nearly all the tools used by them in their employment. The grist mill was a necessary machine for grinding the grain. Hence, Mixer's mill was early built, and at a later date, another was erected a short distance below the Pitcher bridge. Other branches of productive industry were gradually introduced.

More than half a century ago, Caleb Hannum erected a factory on "the hill," for the manufacture of axes and other edge tools; these were extensively used, and had a high reputation for their cutting properties. After his death, his sons, Caleb W. and Harvey Hannum continued the business for a while at the old stand, and subsequently for several years in the village.

Other parties early commenced the manufacture of whetstones in the northerly part of the town; these were produced in sufficient number, not only for home consumption, but for export. Thus means were furnished to keep the edge tools in working order.

Stephen Taylor had a shop for dressing cloth, near where the Taylor bridge now stands.

Augustus Clapp and Horace Taylor had a similar shop, with a carding machine attached, near Norwich bridge. To these establishments the farmers carried their cloth to be dressed, and made ready for garments. Collins and Wade manufactured cotton sheeting where the Highland mill now

stands; but no great amount of manufacturing was done here until after the completion of the Boston and Albany railroad. Here it may be noticed, that though Huntington is an obscure town in one corner of the county, yet it was the first town in the county favored with railroad privileges. This internal improvement gave a new impulse to business in the village. It drew people from the surrounding hills to the vicinity of the railroad station. Some, indeed, carried on their business farther back; E. and T. Ring, for a number of years, manufactured sleds; wagons, and cabs for children, at Knightville, and A. T. Hancock is still making sleighs at the same place. Parley Hutchins has been, and still is manufacturing wooden bowls on the middle branch of the Westfield river, some two miles from the railroad; but the greater part of the manufacturing has been and still is near the station.

Alfred Copeland manufactured bedsteads, on a liberal scale, for several years; this business subsequently passed into the hands of Benjamin Little and Son.

R. S. Bartlett and L. B. Williams made baskets several years, under the firm of Bartlett and Williams.

Carpenters' and joiners' tools of the first quality have been manufactured by Melvin Copeland. This business, with all modern improvements in machinery, is now carried on by James F. and George M. Lindsey. Their productions have the reputation of being equal, if not superior, to any now in the market.

The manufacture of paper was commenced here in 1853. The mill was built the previous year by O. H. Greenleaf and Lewis H. Taylor, and other stockholders, and was for several years run under the firm name of Greenleaf and Taylor. It was at first employed in the manufacture of paper used for various printing purposes; but for several years past, it has been devoted to the production of fine writing paper. Its capacity is now about a ton and a half per day. At present it belongs to the Massasoit Paper Company, whose

headquarters are at Springfield. It is run under the name of the Chester Paper Company.

In 1868, William A. Little and A. J. Stanton were manufacturing flannel and Marseilles bedspreads. They claim to be the first in this country, to produce this last named article by power looms. They were aided in this work by German operatives, especially a family by the name of Steiger, who had been trained to this work in their own country. Little and Stanton, having been twice burned out, abandoned their business here. Clarence Whitaker erected a factory in 1867, and run it a short time, making cotton yarn; he was also burned out and left the place.

The Highland mill was built in 1870 by a stock company, and run by the same for a short time, when it passed into the hands of Frost and Daniels, who now own it. It is now used for the manufacture of flannel and lap robes of superior quality. In 1875, W. P. Williams erected an axe factory about half a mile above the village, on the main branch of the Westfield river. Other edge tools of excellent quality are also made there. Connected with this is a saw mill and grist mill, run by H. E. Stanton and Myron R. Fisk.

Samuel T. Lyman for several years manufactured tin ware and sheet iron pans for the use of farmers in making maple sugar. That business has recently passed into the hands of Edward A. Allen.

Elisha B. Cole has for a few years past manufactured baskets on an improved plan, for which he has received a patent; he still carries on that business.

E. N. Woods has for many years been engaged in the manufacture and sale of boots and shoes; he is at present in the same business. For several years Charles Pomeroy carried on the same business.

#### EDUCATIONAL.

The educational interests of the town have always been attended to, though perhaps not as extensively and effectively as in some neighboring towns. Still, the intellectual culture of the young has not been wholly neglected. The common school has been the main institution of learning. This was early established. In 1773 the district voted to raise £10 for the support of schools. This sum, however, appeared so extravagant., that at a subsequent meeting, after full and free discussion the vote was reconsidered and the sum reduced to £4. The appropriations were from time to time increased. till in 1797 £100 were raised for this purpose. In 1875, \$2,000 were raised; this is the largest sum ever appropriated by the town for schools in any one year. School districts were early established which, like little democracies, managed their own affairs. Under authority from the town they chose their own officers, and contracted with their teachers who, according to the prevailing custom, were expected to "board round." The boundaries of districts were altered from time to time as the interests of education seemed to demand. The district system continued here until 1869, when by act of the legislature it was abolished throughout the Commonwealth. Since that time all the public schools have been managed by the committee of the town. For a few years Dr. J. H. Goddard, a member of the committee by vote of the Board, took the sole charge of the schools, acting as superintendent; in 1876 the town voted to discontinue this practice. Though the common school has been the main reliance for education, it has not accomplished all that has been done. Private and select schools of a higher order have been frequent and well sustained; these have tended to raise the standard of education in the common schools. Notwithstanding the limited advantages here enjoyed, several individuals have elsewhere obtained a higher education and entered the learned professions, or filled other places of trust and

responsibility in public life. Among these the following may be named:

Edward Kirkland graduated at Amherst College in 1831; he studied law and practiced his profession several years in Brattleboro, Vt., where he died January 6, 1866.

Henry B. Taylor graduated at Williams College; he went into the ministry, and is still living.

Henry B. Lewis entered Amherst College and took a part of the course, when failing health made it necessary that he should leave. He subsequently studied law, and was admitted to the bar in 1854. He is now in the practice of his profession, filling also the office of trial justice in Westfield, Mass.

Homer B. Stevens, a native of this place, fitted for college at Williston Seminary, Easthampton, and graduated at Williams College in 1857. He read law with E. B. Gillett, of Westfield, and was admitted to the bar in 1859. He practiced a short time in Boston and then formed copartnership for law practice with E. B. Gillett at Westfield, where he is at present in the firm of Gillett and Stevens. He is also a trial justice.

Alfred J. Taylor graduated at Yale College in 1859. He is now a successful and prominent lawyer in New York City.

Alfred M. Copeland studied law and practiced a few years in this place. He is now in practice in Springfield, Mass., and is assistant police judge.

Myron A. Munson graduated at Harvard University in 1860. He studied theology at Andover Seminary, and is still in the ministry.

Harvey Porter graduated at Amherst College in 1870. He was valedictorian in his class and is now Professor of Metaphysics, Logic and History in the Protestant College at Beirut, Syria.

Oscar D. Thomas studied at Newton Theological Seminary and is now settled in the ministry in West Springfield, Mass.

Asahel H. Lyman graduated at the Agricultural College in Amherst.

E. N. Woods and A. M. Copeland have held the office of trial justice here. Garry Munson now fills that position.

The following individuals from this place have entered the medical profession: Luke Stanton, Alden Samson, Edward Ellis, Horatio U. Stickney, Charles D. Stickney, Theodore G. Wright, Ellsworth S. Ellis, Harlow Fisk.

From this, as well as from other country towns, many individuals not educated for professional life have gone forth to engage in various business enterprises, who have been successful in their efforts. Among these may appropriately be named Harvey Kirkland, of Northampton, who was for many years register of deeds for the county of Hampshire, and who has held a prominent place in some other departments of business. Several by the name of Falley and Collins and Munson and Kirkland, have, in different places, been prominent business men. Some of them are still in active life in the great centers of business and need no special mention here. When they shall have passed away, history will no doubt do them justice.

The following physicians have practiced their profession here: James Holland, Leonard Williams, Martin Phelps, Caleb H. Stickney, S. D. Brooks, Charles Holland, John H. Gilbert, William Dwight, Noah S. Bartlett, William O. Bell, Charles K. Crossett, Harlow Gamwell, J. H. Goddard, William R. Elder. Present practitioners, J. N. Dickson, E. D. Hutchinson, Milo Wing; E. D. Greenwood, dentist.

Among the lawyers who have practiced their profession here, the following may be named:

Asahel Wright, a native of Windsor, Mass., and a graduate of Williams College in the class of 1803. He afterwards removed to Chester Center, where he died in 1830. He was respected in life and lamented in death.

Samuel Johnson was in practice here many years. He is thus described by a member of the bar: "He was a singular man in his dress and in all his tastes. His hair was long and

uncropped, with a profusion of unguents permeating the mass, the whole brush apparently innocent of a comb, every hair standing, lying and curling independently and as if at war with every other hair of his head; his capacious pantaloons, constructed probably according to his own directions, certainly not by the conception of any possible tailor, his large frock coat, 'with its long flowing skirts, extending itself beyond the dimensions of an overcoat, an immense loosely rolled bundle of white muslin encircling his neck, a narrow outbreak of cotton cloth below the short vest and above the nether garment, betokening a shirt, and to crown the whole an old-fashioned, yellow seal-skin, bell-crowned hat on the top of his head, completed the picture of an object that would have made the fortune of any collector of rare curiosities, or called together a crowd at the museum of Showman Barnum. He was a large, good-looking man of over six feet in height, and more than two hundred pounds avoirdupois, erect in form and dignified in his carriage, stately and formal in his address, deep-toned and deliberate in his utterances, impressing a beholder with the belief that he possessed all the wisdom that he pretended to have and perhaps something more." "On one occasion, he argued a case before the court at the law term; and it was said that the court was divided on the question which was the most remarkable, the lawyer or his argument" He afterwards removed to the West, where he continued the practice of his profession.

Homer Clark had a law office here for a short time. Daniel Granger, now of Chester, A. M. Copeland, now of Springfield, and E. H. Lathrop of Springfield, present district attorney for the western district of Massachusetts, have practiced law here.

For the intellectual improvement of the people generally, Hon. C. P. Huntington made a donation of \$100, to establish a public library, on condition that the town should appropriate an equal amount for the same object. The condition was accepted and the library established; Mr.

Huntington selected the books. Unfortunately this valuable collection of books was destroyed in 1865, by the burning of the building where it was kept.

#### ECCLESIASTICAL.

In the early history of Massachusetts, the word town denoted both civil and ecclesiastical boundaries; every town, at its incorporation became a parish, or religious society ; it so remained until another parish was formed on its territory, when what remained was considered the first parish. The terms town, parish, precinct were early used indiscriminately, for both civil and ecclesiastical purposes; every town was required to support religious institutions; a minister must be employed and public worship maintained. "A division of a town into two or more parishes must be legally and regularly done, by order of the General Court." "Every man in the town, parish, precinct, or district, with his lands, was to contribute for the support of the gospel in the town, parish, or precinct in which he lived, unless specially exempt." If any refused to do this voluntarily, they were compelled by force of law. The statute of 1652 required all towns to be supplied with "a minister, a meeting-house and a parsonage, and all the inhabitants to be taxed for their support." "In case of defect in any congregation, or town, the county court ordered what maintenance should be allowed and issued warrants to the selectmen, to assess the inhabitants to that amount." If a town felt aggrieved by this assessment, appeal could be made to the General Court "In 1800 we have the exact penalties stated, which towns should pay for neglecting to supply good preaching to the people." For neglect, three months out of six, the penalty was from thirty to sixty dollars; if the neglect was repeated, the penalty was from sixty to one hundred dollars; applications of individuals to be set off from one parish to another had to be made to the General Court. These were frequent as late as the

commencement of the present century. In earlier times the applicant had to make out a very strong case before he could gain his object.

Not only were all the inhabitants made to aid in supporting religious institutions, but they were also required to attend public worship, under legal penalties for neglect of the same. A fine of five shillings was, at one time, the penalty for absence on the Lord's day, Fast day, or Thanksgiving. The statute respecting absentees was modified in 1791, but not repealed until 1835; our fathers thus seemed to regard the morality and religion taught in the Bible, as necessary, not only for individual welfare, but as vitally essential to the stability and prosperity of the State; they hence aimed to make this the foundation of all their institutions. Such being the public sentiment, and such the legal enactments, the inhabitants of that part of Murrayfield, embraced in the limits of Norwich, were, before the division, made to help support the religious institutions of Murrayfield; being required thus to contribute, they claimed also the right to have a voice respecting the place of public worship. Hence after the settlement of Rev. Aaron Bascom as the minister of Murrayfield, in 1769, to the time when Norwich was incorporated as a district, there was much warm discussion of this subject, and some unholy feeling manifested. It was at length decided that Rev. Mr. Bascom should preach one-third of the time at Mixer's tavern, near Norwich bridge, and the remainder of the time at the center. This arrangement appears to have continued about three years; but it was unsatisfactory, and attended with considerable friction. This subject had, perhaps, as much influence as any other, in bringing about a division of the town.

After the incorporation of Norwich as a district, in accordance with law and usage, the inhabitants of that territory must assume the responsibility of supporting religious institutions by themselves. This they accordingly did. In 1773, the year of their incorporation, it was voted at

a legal district meeting, to raise £10 for the support of the gospel; preaching services were held for a time at private houses— those of John Kirkland, Caleb Fobes and Ebenezer King being the more common places of worship. A church was organized in July, 1778, composed of the following named persons: William Miller and Elizabeth, his wife, Samuel Knight and Betsey, his wife, Thomas Converse and his wife, John Kirkland, Samuel Warner, Joseph Park, Jonathan Ware, John Griswold, Edward Bancroft and others whose names are not preserved. The following clergymen assisted at the organization of the church: Rev. Messrs. Jonathan Judd, of Southampton, Jonathan Huntington of Worthington, and Aaron Bascom of Chester. The Congregational polity was adopted, with the system of faith embraced in the Westminster Assembly's shorter Catechism. This is now known as the First Congregational Church of Huntington. John Kirkland and Jonathan Ware were the first deacons appointed; for some time after the organization of the church, the pulpit was supplied by different individuals, whose stay was transient.

The first settled pastor was Rev. Stephen Tracy, of Norwich, Conn., and a graduate of the College of New Jersey, in the class of 1770; he was installed May 23, 1781; the town voted him, as compensation, a yearly salary of £40 for five years, then to increase £4 annually until it reached £50; they also gave him a settlement of £100; this sum was exclusive of his salary. It was the custom of the parishes or towns, in those days, to give the minister something to commence with; he was thus able to own at least a comfortable residence, if not a good farm. In 1797, it was voted to raise £90 for Mr. Tracy's salary, including his fire wood. Not many years after his settlement, difficulties arose between the pastor and the people; what was the cause of these, or in what particular forms they were manifested, does not appear from the records.

It seems probable, however, that it was something in connection with the payment of salary; but whatever was the ground of complaint, dissatisfaction continued to increase, until it became so extensive that it was deemed advisable to dissolve the connection.

This was accomplished January 1, 1799. As ministers were in those days, usually settled for life, it was customary when one was dismissed by request of the parish, to pay him something in consideration of his removal, and loss of employment. It was not as easy then, as at the present day, to step immediately into another parish. But in 1798, it was voted that the town wish not to give Mr. Tracy anything at his dismissal; at the same time they made this proposition; that they would leave it to indifferent men, mutually chosen by each party, to say whether the town shall give him anything, or he them. He continued to reside in the town many years after his dismissal.

Rev. Benjamin R. Woodbridge was the second pastor. He was a native of South Hadley, and graduated at Dartmouth College in 1795; he was ordained and installed October 17, 1799; he was settled on condition that when two-thirds of the parish desired a change, he should leave; any condition of this kind was unusual in those days; it was regarded as endangering the stability of the ministry, the permanence of the pastoral relation, and the prosperity of the churches; it was probably suggested in this case, by the difficulty experienced in the removal of Mr. Tracy. Mr. Woodbridge lived a life of celibacy. A brother and sister, also unmarried, resided with him; these three constituted the family.

There is a tradition, no doubt well founded, that the minister was once engaged to be married to a daughter of his predecessor; but another man supplanted him and took her to wife; to add to the grief of the heart-stricken pastor and make his cup still more bitter, he was called to perform the marriage ceremony; the wedding scene is described as in a high degree sensational. He was dismissed June 28,

1831, and removed to South Hadley where he spent the remainder of his days.

The third pastor was Rev. Samuel Russell, a graduate of Dartmouth College in the class of 1821; he was installed September 3, 1832, and dismissed January 1, 1835. He died the 27th day of the same month; in his last sickness he requested his family neither to attend his funeral, nor make any preparation for it on Sunday; he wished to have them follow the example of the disciples, when the body of the Master was in the tomb, and spices had been prepared for it, and rest "the Sabbath day according to the commandment."

Rev. Alvah C. Page, a graduate of Amherst in 1829, was installed the same day that Mr. Russell was dismissed, and by the same ecclesiastical council. He was dismissed July 20, 1836.

The next pastor was Rev. Ebenezer B. Wright, a native of Westhampton, and a graduate of Williams College in 1814, Andover Theological Seminary in 1817. He was installed February 23, 1842, and dismissed in 1848; he was subsequently employed several years as chaplain, in the State almshouse in Monson. He afterwards retired to this place, where he died August 19, 1871.

Rev. John R. Miller succeeded Mr. Wright; he was a native of Williamsburg, Mass., and graduated at Union College, Schenectady, in 1844, in the same class with Governor A. H. Rice. He was installed the day that his predecessor was dismissed, and dismissed December 19, 1853. He was subsequently pastor of the Congregational Church in Suffield, Conn., for several years; he at length returned to Williamsburg, where he died November 2, 1869, aged 51 years.

Rev. J. H. M. Leland was settled. June 15, 1854, and dismissed November 13, 1855. He now resides in Amherst, Mass., and is a deacon in the First Church.

Rev. Henry A. Austin was the next pastor; he was born in Becket, and graduated at Union College in 1847; he was

ordained and installed November 6, 1856, and dismissed July 20, 1859; that church has had no settled pastor since; different individuals have occupied the pulpit, as stated supplies. Among these may be named Edward Clarke, William E. B. Moore, F. Hawley, E. S. Tingley; the present acting pastor is Rev. C. W. Fifield. That church has thus lived almost a century, and has enjoyed the regular preaching of the gospel the whole time.

There have been seasons of prosperity and days of adversity; causes, beyond their control, have drawn away population from that locality, so that their numbers have been much diminished, with no prospect of an immediate increase. Changes of centers of business and more fertile lands in the western portion of our country, have here, as in many other places, drawn many away from the home of their fathers. The number of members January 1, 1876, was seventy-six.

The first church edifice erected in this town, was on "the hill," a few rods east of the one now used by the First Congregational society. It was located near where the school-house now stands; it was a one story building, rudely constructed, unsightly in exterior, and uncomfortable within; the adornments of modern times were wanting; but it answered for purposes of devotion; the prayers and praises there were as acceptable to God, as though offered within marble walls, beneath a gilded spire. The date of the erection of this house cannot be ascertained.

The second church edifice was built in 1790. There were, at that time, wide diversities of views about its location; the inhabitants of the north and west parts of the town, claimed that it ought to be more centrally located than the former one was; many meetings were held to settle the question, much eloquence was displayed, and a large amount of bad feeling developed. It was finally decided to build where the present edifice stands, and it was voted that some of the disaffected might be released from paying their proportion of the expense. The building erected was a plain

two-story edifice, without any steeple; a porch on one side formed the entrance below, with a stairway for the gallery; the pulpit was on the side opposite the entrance; over the pulpit was suspended a large sounding-board; galleries were on three sides, 'with seats for the singers in front, and pews in the rear for the young people; the pews on both floors were square pens, with seats on at least three sides; no man claimed to own a pew; the people were annually seated according to age by the selectmen of the town. It was used in the coldest weather, without any heating apparatus, except the foot-stoves of a few old ladies; these were sometimes passed around the pew for the benefit of all its occupants; the knocking of men's boots together, to keep the feet warm, often made considerable clattering.

The present edifice occupied by that church was built in 1841; it is in modern style, with steeple without and suitable means of heating within; it was dedicated February 10, 1842. Rev. E. Davis, D. D., of Westfield, preached the sermon on the occasion.

In the first quarter of the present century, (date not ascertained,) a Methodist Church organization was formed in what is now Huntington village. It was then called Falley's X Roads; meetings were held in the school-house. The preachers were mostly itinerants, called circuit siders, sent out by the conference; among their preachers we find the following names: Rev. Messrs. Cyrus Culver, Moulton, Lewis, Robbins, McLauth, Father Taylor, William Taylor, William A. Braman, Clark, Dayton, Marcy and Cook. In 1836 a church building was erected; it stood on the line of Blandford and Chester; when new territory was annexed to Norwich, it came within the limits of that town; this house was built by the voluntary subscriptions of people of different denominational preferences, with the understanding that the majority should decide by what denomination it should be occupied; the Methodists had the control of it for a series of years, but it was never legally conveyed to their church authority. Subsequently it was

occupied alternately by Methodists and Congregationalists; more recently it has passed into the possession of the Baptists, who now occupy it. Though built by subscription, many of the subscribers subsequently took the value of their subscription in pews, which they held by legal right; these were from time to time conveyed from one individual to another by deed. This house has several times been remodeled, and is now convenient and comfortable for worship; it answers the purpose, not only for Sabbath services, but also for evening meetings during the week.

The Second Congregational society was legally organized, by the choice of officers, January 12, 1846. The object of this organization is thus stated by those who formed it— “To support public worship and permanently maintain the various institutions of Christianity, to advance the cause of evangelical religion and sound morality, and for the attainment of such other objects, and the promotion of such other interests, as are generally contemplated by similar organizations.” This declaration of their object was signed by Edward Taylor, and twenty-six others, some of whom remain to the present time, though the greater part have passed away, either by death or removal. They had, at that time, no separate church edifice of their own, but as they had an interest in that built by subscription, in common, and then occupied by the Methodists, they used that a portion of the time.

The question of building an edifice of their own was at length agitated. November 18, 1847, the society, at a legal meeting, voted to build a house for public worship and to try to raise \$2,500 for this purpose; this sum then seemed large; but they went forward with their enterprise until it was crowned with success; the whole cost of that building was about \$4,000; but with open hearts and liberal hands, the expense was met. This house answered their purpose for public worship until January 12, 1863, when, unfortunately, it was consumed by fire, together with the school-house and Union Hall standing near it. Not

disheartened by this disaster, the society immediately resolved to erect a new edifice on the site of the one destroyed; a vote to this effect was passed only twelve days after the fire; the same year the edifice now used was built at an expense, including bell and furniture, of about \$7,000. This building was used for a few years, not only for public worship on the Sabbath, but for evening meetings also, during the week. Though admirably adapted to the wants of the people for Sabbath services, it was still not as appropriate to some other exercises; there was a felt necessity for some more convenient place for prayer-meetings and social gatherings; to supply this lack, Miss Julia Taylor made the parish a donation of \$1,500 to aid in building a chapel; other sums were also contributed for this purpose. The building was erected in 1869; the whole expense, including land and furniture was not far from \$2,000. It is happily adapted to the object for which it was built; it stands a perpetual monument to the memory of Miss Julia Taylor; though dead, she still speaks. May her salutary influence be perpetuated to the end of time. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

The Second Congregational Church was organized August 26, 1846; it was composed of twenty-eight members most of these united by letter from other churches- some by profession. The following clergymen assisted at the organization: Emerson Davis, Ebenezer B. Wright, John H. Bisbee, Edward Clarke, Francis Wariner.

So broad and catholic were the views of the first members of this church, so kind and tender their feelings towards Christians of other church organizations, that the clergyman who was appointed to address them, was specially requested to be careful not to say anything which would in the least, reflect unfavorably upon any other denomination, or imply any hostility, or antagonism to any branch of the household of faith.

The council which organized the church, at the same time and place, ordained Rev. Perkins K. Clark to the work

of the gospel ministry, as an evangelist. He supplied the pulpit for several years, preaching a part of the time at Chester; until they had a church edifice of their own, they worshiped in what is now the Baptist Church, the Methodists occupying it half the time. The first deacons appointed were Melvin Copeland and Edward M. Taylor.

December 27, 1853, Rev. Townsend Walker, having received and accepted a call, was installed pastor of this church; he was from Monterey, a graduate of Williams College in the class of 1839; he remained pastor until August 2, 1865, when, in a state of feeble health, he was regularly dismissed. He was subsequently settled in Goshen, Mass., where he died, in the pastoral office, July 31, 1873, aged sixty-one years.

After his dismissal at Huntington, the pulpit was supplied one year by James A. Bates, a returned missionary.

Rev. John H. Bisbee was the second settled pastor of this church; he was installed April 10, 1867; he was a native of Chesterfield, Mass., and graduated at Union College in 1831; he studied theology at the Seminary in Auburn, N. Y. He previously labored in the pastoral office five years in Middlefield, and twenty-eight years in Worthington. He is still pastor of this church.

Since the organization of this church, two hundred and twenty-seven additional members have been received, making a total of two hundred and fifty-five. But so many have been the removals by death and dismissal, that the present number is but ninety-nine; these changes are adapted to remind the living that "here have we no continuing city."

A Baptist Church was organized in Chester, June 23, 1812, composed of twenty-six members. "The same day, Samuel Otis and Joseph Stanton were ordained deacons, by prayer and laying on of hands." The following clergymen assisted in this service: Rev. Bennett Pepper of Southwick, Rev. Asa Todd of Chesterfield, Rev. Amos Kingsley of

Becket, Rev. Abraham Jackson of Hinsdale. Their church edifice was originally at Chester Center; subsequently it was removed to North Chester; the meeting-house was their usual place for public worship; but the records show that they frequently held their services in the vicinity of Norwich bridge, and occasionally at Falley's X Roads, or Chester Village, now Huntington. The reason for this may, probably, be found in the fact that quite a large number of their influential members resided in or near these places. Rev. John Grant was their first pastor; he was succeeded by Rev. Samuel Abbot; the next regular pastor was Rev. Silas Kingsley, a native of Becket, whose ministrations continued twenty years or more. This church, as a body, has passed away, its members having been gathered into other organizations.

A Baptist Church was gathered in what is now Huntington Village, in 1852; it was composed of members from different localities, especially from the church previously existing in Chester. At a meeting held for the purpose, the following resolution was adopted:

“Resolved, That we, John Green, Joseph Stanton, Leartus Porter, Eli F. Cady, Sarah P. Clark and Laura Porter, after prayerful deliberation, and relying on the Great Head of the church for divine wisdom and supports do now, this seventh day of October, A. D., 1852, in the fear of God, declare ourselves a visible Baptist Church, in the faith and fellowship of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in Chester Village, Mass.”

In November of the same year, Rev. John Green was invited to become their minister; this invitation was accepted. Joseph Stanton, who had for many years served as deacon in the church in Chester, was elected to the same office in the new organization; this office he held until his death, which occurred in March, 1870; in 1855, it was voted that this be called the Huntington Baptist Church; between 1854 and 1864, several preachers were employed; among these may be named William Goodwin, Samuel Allard, \_\_\_\_\_ Wheeler, \_\_\_\_\_ Hopwood.

Rev. Horatio L. Sargent was called to the pastorate, December 26, 1864 ; he continued his active labors until May 6, 1866, when, on account of failing health, he was, by vote of the church, kindly released; a few weeks after this, he died, universally beloved and lamented by his church and congregation. He was succeeded by Rev. S. Hartwell Pratt, who commenced his labors in August of the same year; he was a native of Wales, in Massachusetts, a graduate of Brown University, and of the Theological Seminary at Rochester, N. Y. He resigned his pastorate in 1867, and is at present settled over a church in Lowell, Mass. The next pastor was Rev. E. A. Goddard; he was a native of Boston, and was educated at Harvard University; he was first settled in Stamford, Vt., from whence he came to this place; he closed his labors here in 1873; since that he has been settled in Palmer; he was succeeded, for a little more than a year, by Rev. Daniel Rogers, who was educated at Madison University; he is now laboring as a missionary in the Indian Territory. Rev. S. D. Ashley, of Becket, next received and accepted a call, and commenced his labors June 1, 1875; he is the present pastor of the church. He is a son of a clergyman, and a native of Porte Mattoon, Nova Scotia; he received his classical education at Middleton, Mass., and at Yantic, Conn., and studied theology with an elder brother. The present membership in this church is one hundred.

All these churches have passed through various scenes; they have had times of prosperity and dark days of adversity; they have had seasons of refreshing, when many have been added to their numbers, and they have had seasons of declension, when the love of many waxed cold; all have cause of thankfulness for blessings received, and of humiliation for duties neglected, and privileges disregarded; they may well unitedly say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Trusting in his aid for the future, they need not be discouraged nor dismayed; they may

confidently persevere in the work given them to do, till their mission is fully accomplished.

The construction of the Boston and Albany railroad, and the consequent increase of manufacturing industry, introduced a new element in the population. Previously, the inhabitants had been almost exclusively native Americans, and in religion, Protestants; but the increased demand for labor brought in many foreigners to fill important positions in some industrial pursuits; a large proportion of these belonged to the Roman Catholic Church; in accordance with the universal practice of that denomination, arrangements were promptly made for occasional public religious services; these began to be held about the middle of the present century; the officiating priests, according to their custom, were appointed by the bishop, and conducted their worship on the Sabbath, at stated seasons,—usually once a month. Having no church edifice, they have hitherto occupied the Town Hall which is still their place of meeting. With some residents of neighboring towns who unite with them, they now have quite a large congregation.

Each of the churches now existing here, has had, and still maintains a Sunday-school, where the children and many adults gather every Sabbath day, to receive moral and religious instruction; in this institution as well as from the pulpit, each church teaches in accordance with its own views of doctrine and duty. The most extensive religious freedom is thus practically enjoyed.

The following persons are at present engaged in mercantile business here:

E. N. Woods, manufacturer and dealer in boots and shoes; also dealer in groceries and Yankee notions.

Edward Pease, Myron L. Church, Alonzo Wells, dealers in dry goods and groceries.

Chester A. Dewey, dealer in hard-ware and furniture.

Edward A. Allen, dealer in stoves and tin-ware.

E. H. Cross, druggist.

Martin Pease keeps a meat market.

Joseph Lefleur keeps a hotel.

Daniel Woodbury, watchmaker and jeweler; also agent of the American Express Company.

The following is the list of those holding the more prominent offices of the town for the year 1876:

William S. Tinker, Clerk and Treasurer.

Elijah N. Woods, David Smith, Alonzo S. Sylvester, Selectmen, Assessors, and Overseers of the Poor.

Benjamin P. Brown, James D. Beach, George M. Lindsey, Constables.

John J. Cook, Edward Greenwood, Austin T. Hancock, A. S. Sylvester, William P. Miller, Ira Higgins, School Committee.

Other officials: George M. Lindsey is Deputy Sheriff for the counties of Hampshire and Hampden.

Edward Pease is Post-master; Charles M. Lindsey is Railroad Station Agent.

#### CONCLUSION.

We have thus passed, very briefly, over the history of this town during the first century of its existence. This labor has been vastly more difficult and arduous, than it otherwise would have been, on account of our inability to obtain reliable information on many important points; it is greatly to be regretted that the records of the town in the earlier years of this period, are not more full, so that more definite knowledge might be had of the early settlers and of their doings. There is also just cause for complaint that some of the later records are not more definite and complete; many important facts are either through neglect or carelessness entirely lost, or left in such obscurity as to be wholly unintelligible. Possibly some of these defects

might, at the present day, be supplied, so as to be serviceable for the future. The full, fair record of births, marriages and deaths is often of great importance to individuals and families, and indeed to the whole community. The little that has been gleaned from the records of the past may be of some service to the present population of the place, and to future generations.

Brief and imperfect as is the history here written, it contains many lessons of valuable instruction; these will naturally be suggested to every reflecting mind. A century passed! How brief, and yet how marked with changes! How many have been the mutations in this little township! "Our fathers, where are they"? Three generations have already passed away. The names of a few of these are so recorded as to be preserved; the multitude are already forgotten by the living; even the name of many has perished. So will it soon be in the case of those now in active life; in the past have been joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, connections formed and sundered; schemes have been formed and frustrated, plans laid and broken; expectations have been disappointed and hopes have been blighted. "The thing that hath been is that which shall be." The present and the future may be expected to resemble the past. We live and labor among the graves of preceding generations. From their dust we reap our daily bread; others will soon tread upon the clods that press upon the bosoms of those now living. While we cherish the memory of those who have preceded us, let us practice their virtues, avoid their errors, and not only thankfully accept the legacy which they have bequeathed to us, but according to the best of our ability make improvements upon the same. Then shall we leave to our successors a richer inheritance than we have received from our predecessors, and they will have occasion to rise up and call us blessed. Though dead, we shall speak, and our influence will be salutary. We may thus give practical lessons of instruction to generations yet unborn.

**POSTSCRIPT**

January 12, 2001

I decided to reproduce this volume more or less on a whim. I had referred to the original copy of Bisbee's at the town library while researching an ancient road issue a year ago, in my role as Planning Board Chairman. The book was an invaluable resource in a general way, though not helpful for the subject at hand. The condition of the obviously well-used copy concerned me though, as it was held together with tape and string. There has been very little

published documenting the history of Huntington. I felt that it was important to preserve the original copy for the archives, and equally important that the contents of it be made readily available to the public.

I set about to scan a photocopy of the original text into my computer, run it through my OCR (*Optical Character Recognition*) software, and format it and “spell-check” it in my word processing program to end up with the product you are reading now. As I did this, I was struck by the immense contrast of this one series of actions, compared to the task of producing the original volume.

In 1876, Rev. Bisbee would have had to write out the text longhand with a pen charged from an ink bottle. The typewriter was years away from invention and decades away from availability on a large scale. The fountain pen hadn't been invented. The type would have been hand set at the publishing house or the printer. Of course this completely ignores the research and all the choices and editorial decisions about what should and shouldn't be included. But, once the research was done, the mechanical process of putting it to paper, in a form that could be widely disseminated, would have taken several different people days or weeks to accomplish. I was able to do the same job in one day in my home office.

This observation isn't intended to sound smug or superior. I take no credit for the ability that technology has made available to me. I am constantly amazed by feats of engineering that have been accomplished with little more than men's (and women's) backs and brains. I have gazed in wonder at the Chester/Becket keystone arches and the Hoosac Tunnel, all of which were built not long before the publication of this book. Sadly, while these are monuments to feats of skill with (by modern standards) primitive tools, they also represent a level of value of human life that would be intolerable today.

The Huntington of today is a much different place than it was in Rev. Bisbee's time. The hillsides, which were

stripped bare of woods in 1876, are today reforested with most of the same species that the Reverend described having been here at the time of settlement, in 1760. The manufacturing industry that was thriving here in 1876, is completely gone, leaving only stone works as reminders. The residents of Bisbee's Huntington lived, shopped and worked locally - a trip to Westfield was an extravagance. They would be amazed at the distances that we travel, without a thought, to go to work or the mall.

I think that, despite these differences, the people of nineteenth century Huntington would adjust readily to the town, as it is, on the cusp of the third millennium. The nucleus of the town has largely been preserved by the residents of the intervening years. The railroad still runs through town with a regularity that nonresidents find surprising. Bisbee's townspeople would be pleased to find so many familiar names preserved through lineage or place names. Stanton Hall, Gardner Park and many road and bridge names memorialize people of that time or their family members.

I hope that readers of this edition years in the future will look on us kindly, that they will be pleased with the stewardship of my own generation of their birthright. I pray that we will have left them a town that demonstrates an understanding and respect for its heritage and its place in the natural and the political world. May future generations look with pride at the fruits of the indomitable spirit and vitality of the current residents of our town.

Stephen W. Hamlin