

**FACTS RELATING TO THE
HISTORY OF GROTON,
MASSACHUSETTS. VOL. II**

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Facts relating to the history of Groton, Massachusetts. Vol. II by Samuel Abbott Green

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SAMUEL ABBOTT GREEN

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TO THE
HISTORY
OF
GROTON, MASSACHUSETTS

BY
SAMUEL ABBOTT GREEN

VOL. II

*Gather up the fragments that remain,
that nothing be lost*

GROTON:

1914

51



University Press:
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

TO
The Memory
OF
DR. JOSHUA GREEN
— FOR MANY YEARS A RESIDENT OF GROTON —
AND HIS WIFE
ELIZA LAWRENCE GREEN
— A NATIVE OF THE TOWN —
THESE PAGES ARE INSCRIBED BY
THEIR ONLY SURVIVING SON

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE first volume of this work is "The Natural History and Topography of Groton." The articles in this volume relate to the general history of the town, and for that reason a new title is given to it.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1914.

FACTS RELATING TO GROTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

GEORGE SEWALL BOUTWELL.

GEORGE SEWALL BOUTWELL was a native of Brookline, Massachusetts, where he was born on January 28, 1818. He first saw the light on a farm then under the charge of his father, and owned by Dr. John Phillips Spooner, which now forms a part of the extensive grounds of the Country Club in that town. He was the second child of Sewall and Rebecca (Marshall) Boutwell, another son of the same name having been born on January 1, 1816, who died on September 27, 1817. When he was two years old his parents removed to Lunenburg, the former home of his mother, where he was brought up on a farm. In after-life he filled more distinguished public positions than ever fell to the lot of any other citizen of Groton; and his neighbors always took a just pride in his political promotions. He was easily accessible to all classes of people, and his counsels on the every-day affairs of life were often sought and freely given. He was a man of great shrewdness of mind with a temperament decidedly judicial, and his advice was highly valued by those seeking it. At the time of his election as Governor of the Commonwealth Mr. Boutwell was the youngest person who had ever held the office.

Three years after Governor Boutwell's death, some of his friends and admirers caused a tablet of white marble to be placed over his grave in the Groton Cemetery; and the occasion was followed by appropriate exercises on May 15, 1908.

The tablet is simple and unpretentious, and bears this inscription:

In Memory of
George Sewall Boutwell
Jan. 28, 1818
Feb. 27, 1905
Governor of Massachusetts
Representative and Senator of the United States
Secretary of the Treasury
Illustrious
Citizen, Patriot, Statesman
Consistent, Brave and Devoted Friend
of Human Liberty.

The tablet is five feet in height, three feet in width, and ten inches in thickness.

The exercises began with placing flowers on the grave by the George S. Boutwell Woman's Relief Corps, No. 49, Auxiliary to the G. A. R., the George S. Boutwell Post, No. 48, Ayer, Department of Massachusetts, G. A. R., and the E. S. Clark Post, No. 115, Groton, Department of Massachusetts, G. A. R.; and the singing of Sir Henry Wotton's "The Character of a Happy Life" by a choir of boys from the Groton School.

The exercises were then transferred from the cemetery to the Town Hall, where letters of sympathy and regret were read from the President of the United States, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Speaker of the National House of Representatives, and other distinguished citizens.

The poem on the occasion was by William Roscoe Thayer, of Cambridge, and is such a just tribute to the many excellent qualities of Mr. Boutwell's character, that I am prompted to reprint it in these pages.

TO BOUTWELL.

I marvel not that Youth,
Impassion'd for the Truth,
Cleaves but to her, as bridegroom to his bride;
Recks neither praise nor blame,
Heeds not the lure of fame,
Knows that her smile were worth the world beside.

But when in Age I find,
 Young courage and young mind,
 And eyes that see their morning vision clear,
 Like him but lately dead,
 Who after four-score led
 Our battle-charge, I marvel and revere.

Thou gav'st him life, O State,
 Who wert assigned by Fate
 The noblest task of all the modern years:
 To clear a little space
 Where conscience should have place
 To worship God, and men with men be peers;

A clearing by the sea
 Where none should crook the knee
 To king or pope or other man-made lord;
 A haunt where peace might dwell
 With folk who lov'd her well,
 But still for Duty's sake would draw the sword.

Beloved State, and true!
 Thy blessed gospel flew
 Throughout the West and loos'd the Old World's chains;
 Thy thoughts like lifeblood run
 Thro' ev'ry loyal son
 Who feels the stir of freedom in his veins.

He was thy son! he heard
 In youth thy puissant word
 And prov'd the obligation of thy breed;
 Obey'd thy civic call,
 Rose high, nor fear'd to fall
 Confessing thine instruction by his deed.

His laurel'd name shall stand
 With theirs that sav'd the Land
 When mad Rebellion shook our cornerstone;
 His courage never quail'd
 His counsel never fail'd
 Till Discord ceas'd and Wrong was overthrown.

To shine in such a strife
 Were crown enough for life;
 The newer labors to new hands belong;
 But when the younger brood
 Set bad instead of good,
 He rose, again a youth, and smote the wrong.