

**HISTORY OF MONTPELIER: A  
DISCOURSE DELIVERED IN THE  
BRICK CHURCH, MONTPELIER,  
VERMONT, ON THANKSGIVING  
DAY, DEC. 8, 1842**

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History of Montpelier: A Discourse Delivered in the Brick Church, Montpelier, Vermont, on  
Thanksgiving Day, Dec. 8, 1842 by John Gridley

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**JOHN GRIDLEY**

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DISCOURSE DELIVERED IN THE  
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HISTORY OF MONTPELIER:

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN

THE BRICK CHURCH, MONTPELIER, VERMONT,

ON

THANKSGIVING DAY, DEC. 8, 1843.

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BY REV. JOHN GRIDLEY,

Pastor of said Church.

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REMEMBER THE DAYS OF OLD, CONSIDER THE YEARS OF MANY GENERATIONS: ASK  
THY FATHERS, AND HE WILL SHew THEE; THY ELDERs, AND THEY WILL TELL  
THEE.—Deuteronomy, 32: 7.

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Montpelier:  
E. F. WALTON AND SONS.  
1843.

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1857, me 1.

Gift of

Samuel L. Green, M.D.,  
of Boston.

(Class of 1851.)

## DISCOURSE.

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INQUIRY is eminently an attribute of the human mind. HISTORY OF  
MONTPELIER,  
Introduction. It is early developed, in childhood; and instead of being satisfied by ascertainment, in the various periods of life, it gathers strength by exercise, and pushes on from one step to another—from one object to another—with greater or less vigour, while consciousness endures. This is by no means to be rebuked, when directed in proper channels; for it is lawful and right, and God invites us to it, by the wonders of his works, providence, and grace.

There is no object more interesting, about which to institute Inquiry, than a history of the past; and certainly none more replete with particulars, that can be made definitely the subject of it. We may be delighted in the contemplation of what *IS TO BE*,—and dwell upon the visions of the future, as rapturously as our faith in their reality will permit; still, the study of the past instinctively dignifies Inquiry, and crowns it with the greater satisfaction, because *IT HAS BEEN!*

In meeting you, on this our anniversary of special praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, I have selected a subject for your entertainment and instruction, somewhat unusual and dry,—though I flatter myself one which will accumulate interest in the consideration

HISTORY OF  
MONTPELIER.

## Introduction.

of it, because it so intimately concerns yourselves; for I doubt not you will honor my reasoning, when I maintain, that what concerns us, should not fail to interest us. The subject to which I allude, is the early settlement and growth of the town in which we live, comprising mainly a period of half a century.

In detailing this history I shall state such facts as have come to my knowledge from various sources of information, believed to be authentic, whether found in the public records, or in conversation with aged individuals and others.

Condition of  
the state.

Before proceeding directly to the subject I have announced, it will be proper to take a hasty glance at the political affairs of Vermont, at the period when the town of Montpelier\* was granted by charter to the original proprietors named in the instrument.

## 1777.

The territory, now the state of Vermont, was for a long time previous to 1777 the subject of a fierce dispute between New Hampshire and New York, and the settlers on the territory,—New Hampshire and New York claiming each, a part, or all the territory as being under its jurisdiction, while the Vermonters themselves struggled against the claims of both. The war of the revolution, which commenced in 1775, was felt severely in its ravages, on our northern frontiers, and upon lake Champlain, and the country bordering it; and the then territory of Vermont shared largely in the sufferings and dangers incident to the war. As a community, they assured Congress they were willing to bear their proportion, whether of men or treasure, that

\* The city in France named Montpelier, the capital of Heralat—five miles from the sea on a declivity,—as has been suggested by a gentleman of this village, probably derived its name from two Latin words, *monti* and *pellor*—meaning, to be driven back to the mountain.



the defence of the country might call for ; but at the same time insisted against the claims of New Hampshire and New York. This state of things continued until the winter of 1777, when a convention of delegates, which had previously met in July and September of 1776, in Dorset, according to their adjournment met at Westminster, January 15th of this year, and on the next day published to the world a Declaration of Independence,—that they were “a free and independent Jurisdiction or State,”—to be forever thereafter called, known and distinguished by the name of NEW CONNECTICUT, alias VERMONT. This act of firmness and decision, gave increased strength to the position heretofore assumed by the inhabitants of Vermont, and “evinced the wisdom and boldness of her statesmen.”

HISTORY OF  
MONTPELIER.  
1777.

Declaration  
of Independ-  
ence.

Numerous grants and charters had been made of towns, in various parts of the state, long before the time of which we are now speaking.\* Several towns had been organized in the now county of Washington, viz. Berlin, Middlesex and Waterbury, and a still larger number had been chartered in the county, when a grant was made, by the Governor and Council and House of Representatives, of this town, to Timothy Bigelow and others, as follows.

1780.

Grant of the  
charter.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
21ST OCTOBER, 1780.

“The committee appointed to take into consideration the ungranted lands in this state, and the several pitches on file in the Secretary’s office, &c., brought in the following report, viz :

\* Very little was done toward the settlement of Vermont, previous to 1760. From that year the population of the state began to increase with considerable rapidity. In 1761, no less than sixty townships of six miles square were granted on the west side of Connecticut river.

HISTORY OF  
MONTPELIER.

1780.

"That it is our opinion, the following tract of land, viz : lying east of and adjoining Middlesex on Onion river, and partly north of Berlin, containing 23040 acres, be granted by Assembly unto Col. Timothy Bigelow and Company by the name of MONTPELIER.

[Signed,] PAUL SPOONER, Chairman."

"The aforesaid Report was read and accepted, and Resolved, that there be, and hereby is granted unto Col. Timothy Bigelow and Company, being sixty in number, a township of land by the name of MONTPELIER, situate and lying in this state, bounded as follows, viz : lying east of and adjoining to Middlesex on Onion river, and partly north of Berlin, containing 23040 acres. And the Governor and Council are hereby requested to issue a grant or charter of incorporation of said township of Montpelier, under such restrictions, reservations, and for such considerations, as they shall judge best for the benefit of the state."

"SATURDAY, IN COUNCIL, 21ST OCTOBER, 1780.

"The Governor and Council, to whom was referred the stating the fees for the grant of land made this day by the General Assembly of this state, having had the same under consideration, have stated the fees aforesaid, at Four hundred and Eighty pounds for the said Land, being one Township by the name of Montpelier, in hard money, or an equivalent in Continental Currency ; to be paid by Col. Timothy Bigelow, or his Attorney, on the execution of the Charter of Incorporation on or before the 20th day of January next.

Cost £480.

"£480. Attest, JOSEPH FAY, Sec'y,"

A charter was subsequently made out and signed by Thomas Chittenden, Governor, and countersigned by Thos. Tolman, Deputy Secretary, dated August 14th, 1781, to Timothy Bigelow, named in the grant, and the following persons associated with him, viz: Ebenezer Waters, Ebenezer Upham, Elisha Wales, Elisha Smith Wales, Joel Frizzle, Bethuel Washburn, Jno. Washburn, Elijah Rood, Thomas Chittenden, George Foot, Elisha Smith, Jedediah Strong, James Prescott, Jacob Brown, Gideon Ormsby, James Mead, John W. Dana, Timothy Brownson, Gideon Horton, Matthew Lyon, Sam'l Horsford, Ithamar Horsford, Wm. Smith, Jacob Spear, Jonas Galusha, Mary Galusha, Noah Smith, Moses Robinson, Moses Robinson Jr., John Fasset Jr., Jonas Fay, Abiathar Waldo, Thomas Tolman, Timothy Stanley, Joseph Daggett, Ira Allen, Lyman Hitchcock, James Gamble, Alanson Douglass, Adam Martin, the heirs of Isaac Nash, Jonathan Bruce, Howell Woodbridge, James Bruce, Henry Walbridge Jr., Joseph Fay, Wm. Goodrich, Sybill Goodrich, Thomas Matterson, Amos Waters, David Galusha, Jacob Davis, Ephraim Starkweather, Shubell Peck, Jacob Davis Jr., Thomas Davis, John Ramsdell, Issachar Read, Isaac G. Lansingh, Ebenezer Davis, Levi Davis, Asa Davis, Ebenezer Stone, and Samuel Allen.

HISTORY OF  
MONTPELIER

1781.

Original pro-  
priators.

By the charter there were five rights set apart and reserved for the following uses, viz: one for a seminary or college, one for county grammar schools in the state, one for the settlement of a minister in the township, one for the support of the gospel in said town, and one for the support of common schools. Each proprietor was to build a house, at least eighteen feet square, on his right, and cul-

Rights re-  
served, &c.