

**THE COMMEMORATIVE SERVICES OF THE
FIRST CHURCH IN NEWTON,
MASSACHUSETTS, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF ITS FOUNDATION, FRIDAY, SUNDAY AND
MONDAY, OCT. 30, NOV. 1 AND 2, 1914**

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The commemorative services of the First church in Newton, Massachusetts, on the occasion of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its foundation, Friday, Sunday and Monday, Oct. 30, Nov. 1 and 2, 1914 by Various

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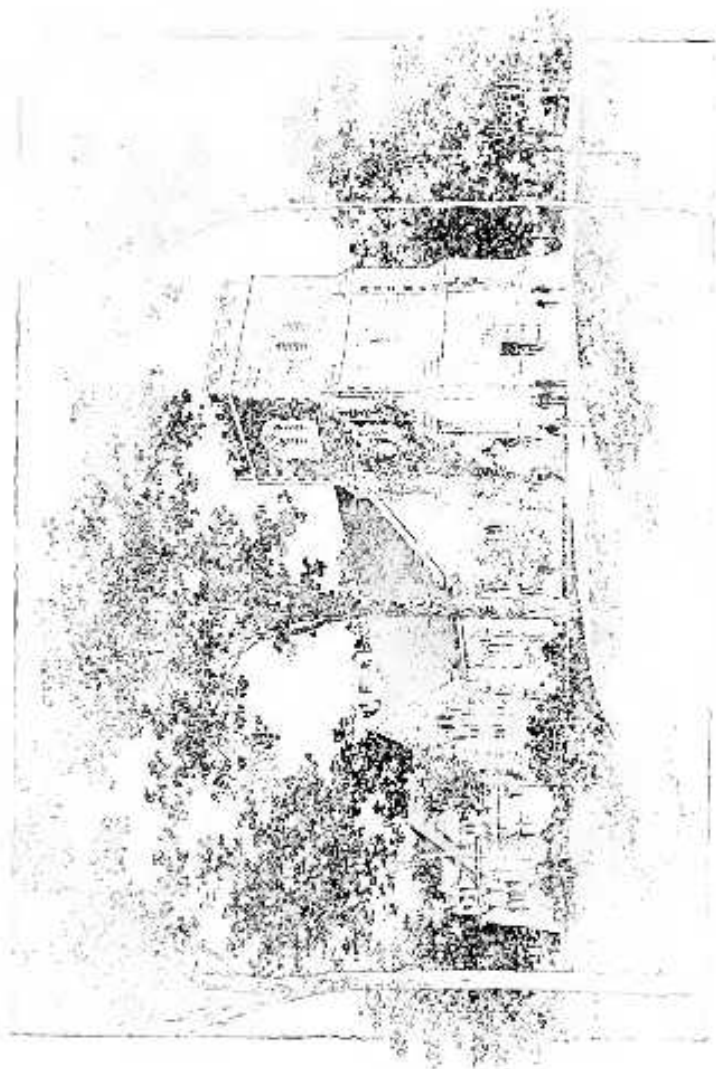
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FIRST CHURCH IN NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
CEN. 186 AND HAZARD SQUARE, NEWTON CENTER

THE
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OF
THE FIRST CHURCH IN NEWTON
MASSACHUSETTS

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OF ITS FOUNDATION

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HISTORICAL NOTES

NEWTON was originally a part of Cambridge, and called Cambridge Village. Religious services were instituted in 1654, and the first meeting-house was built in 1660. In 1661, by an act of the General Court, the people were relieved from paying rates in Cambridge. The First Church was organized July 20, 1664, with eighty members—forty men and forty women. Until 1780, when the First Baptist Church was formed, a period of one hundred and sixteen years, it was the only church in the town. Cambridge Village was set off from Cambridge and made an independent town in 1678, under the name of Newtown, later abbreviated to Newton.

The house of Rev. John Cotton was burned in 1720, and that of Rev. Jonas Meriam in 1770. The church records were thus twice destroyed and imperfectly restored from memory. The first bell was the gift of Federal Street Church, Boston, in 1810.

The Sunday-school was organized in 1816 in a little red schoolhouse on Homer Street with twenty scholars. Dea. Elijah F. Woodward was the first superintendent, and held the office for thirty years. The enrollment now is four hundred and eighty-seven.

Fifty-seven members of the church fought in the Revolutionary War, out of a total male membership (in 1776) of seventy-eight. Twenty from the congregation were volunteers in the Civil War.

The church was incorporated in 1895. The present membership is six hundred and two. The parish includes three hundred and seventy-five families.

Six meeting-houses have been erected, in 1660, 1698, 1721, 1805, 1847 and 1904. The first was built in the old

cemetery on Centre Street. The second, nearly opposite, on land now included in the estate of Mr. Joseph L. Colby. The third, after long discussion, on the present site, selected by a Committee of the General Court, to whom the matter was referred for decision. The present building was designed by Shepley, Ruan and Coolidge, and erected by Horton and Hemenway. The cost was \$107,100. The furnishings, provided by the ladies of the parish, cost \$5,000 additional, and the organ, installed in 1905, \$10,000 more. The total value of the church property is about \$150,000. There is no debt.

The other Congregational Churches in the city were established as follows: Second Church (West Parish), West Newton, 1781; Eliot Church, Newton, 1845; Auburndale Church, 1851; North Church, Nonantum, 1866; Central Church, Newtonville, 1868; Newton Highlands Church, 1872; Union Church, Waban, 1911.