

**AN ADDRESS AT THE  
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
IN HARDWICK, MASS.:  
NOVEMBER 15, 1838**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649348350

An Address at the Centennial Celebration in Hardwick, Mass.: November 15, 1838 by Lucius R. Paige

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**LUCIUS R. PAIGE**

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*Dec. 28, 1838.*  
AN

ADDRESS

AT THE

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

IN

HARDWICK, MASS.

NOVEMBER 15, 1838.

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By LUCIUS R. PAIGE,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY IN CAMBRIDGE.

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CAMBRIDGE:

METCALF, TORRY, AND BALLOU.

1838.

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## PREFACE.

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This Address was prepared under many disadvantages, and may seem unworthy of publication; yet I do not feel at liberty to refuse a compliance with the request of my fellow citizens, at whose desire it was written, and whose patience was so laudably manifested during its delivery. It has no literary pretensions, except as a statement of facts; in this point, I have used the utmost caution to secure correctness; and I think no essential error will be detected. The materials have been gathered from various sources. My acknowledgments are particularly due to John P. Bigelow, Esq., Secretary of State, and the gentlemen connected with his office, — to Doct. Joseph Stone, Town Clerk of Hardwick, — and to the several Clergymen of that town, — for access to documents under their charge, and facilities in pursuing my investigations.

Hardwick is situated on the western border of Worcester County, midway between New Hampshire and Connecticut, and seventy miles from Boston. It contains about 20,000 acres of land, which is well described by Whitney, in these words: — “The face of the town is rather rough, hilly, and uneven; although there are no very great and remarkable hills. The soil is, in general, deep, loamy, and very fertile. The lands produce all kinds of grain in sufficient plenty for the inhabitants; but they are best adapted to grass and pasturage. Here vast quantities of butter and cheese are made, and most excellent beef fattened for the market. All kinds of fruit trees flourish here.” — *Hist. Worcester County*, p. 175.

The population has been nearly stationary, — large numbers emigrating annually. The following table exhibits the number of inhabitants at seven different periods.

1764	1010	1820	1836
1791	1725	1830	1885
1800	1727	1837	1818
1810	1657*		

There are in the town a sufficient number of grist-mills, saw-

\* In 1801, a portion of the town was taken off at the incorporation of Dana.

mills, and shops of various mechanics, to supply the wants of the inhabitants. From the "Statistical Tables" published by order of the General Court, for the year ending April 1, 1837, I extract the following additional particulars, respecting this town.

"Boots manufactured, 5000 pairs; shoes, 5000 pairs; value of boots and shoes, \$14,500; males employed, 20; females, 8.

"Tanneries, 2; hides tanned, 1500; value of leather tanned and curried, \$5250; hands employed, 6; capital invested, \$4500.

"Paper Mills, 2; stock manufactured, 55 tons; value of paper, \$5600; males employed, 6; females, 2; capital invested, \$3000.

"Manufactory of Chairs and Cabinet Ware, 1; value of chairs and cabinet ware, \$1000; hands employed, 2.

"Plough Manufactory, 1; ploughs manufactured, 150; value of same, \$900; employing one person.

"Straw Bonnets manufactured, 300; value of same, \$500.

"Palm-leaf Hats manufactured, 75,000; value of same \$15,500."

As these facts in regard to the size, situation, description, inhabitants, and productions of the town, have no special connexion with its history, I assign them a place in the preface. In the Appendix, other facts are inserted, which perhaps may be interesting to the inhabitants of the town.



## A D D R E S S .

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### FELLOW CITIZENS:—

Your Committee of Arrangements have requested me to address you on this very interesting occasion. I know not how I can more acceptably, or with more propriety, perform that service, than by presenting a brief historical sketch of the Town of Hardwick. To such a sketch, — imperfect indeed, yet the best which I could prepare in the brief time allowed, — permit me most respectfully to ask your attention.

In one respect, this was a frontier town when it was settled by the English. A line of towns, extending across the Province, had been established on Connecticut River; but with this exception, the whole country on this side of Hudson River was then a wilderness; and on a direct line to Quebec or to Montreal, there was not a single English settlement. Yet the power of the Indians had been previously crushed to such an extent, that the inhabitants of this Township were never molested by them.\*

Indeed, I am not aware that even before the settlement of this town, more than one battle was fought between the English and the Indians, on any spot afterwards embraced within its territory. On the 2d of August, 1675, Captain Edward Hutchinson, of Boston, Captain Thomas Wheeler, of Concord, about twenty armed horsemen, and several of the principal citizens of Brookfield, were attacked and defeated by a party of Indians, at a place called Meminimisset, and described as being eight or ten

\* For a single exception, see Appendix, under the name of Eleazer Warner.

miles northwest from Brookfield. The party, when attacked, were attempting to pass between a hill on the east side, and a swamp on the west, so that they could only ride in single file. For reasons\* which I have not now time to mention, I am satisfied that the place thus described is less than a mile south of the present residence of Colonel Stephen Fay, in New Braintree; and this place, you are aware, has been within the territorial limits of Hardwick.

In this battle, eight men were killed, including three inhabitants of Brookfield. Others were mortally wounded. Among them was Captain Hutchinson, who died at Marlborough on the nineteenth day of the same month, and was there buried. He was son of the famous Ann Hutchinson, and ancestor of Governor Thomas Hutchinson. Captain Wheeler also was wounded, but rescued from death by the heroic exertions of his son Thomas, who himself was very severely wounded. The father thus relates the matter:—"He endeavored to rescue me, showing himself therein a loving and dutiful son, he adventuring himself into great peril of his life to help me in that distress; there being many of the enemies about me, my son set me on his own horse, and so escaped a while on foot himself, until he caught an horse whose rider was slain, on which he mounted, and so, through God's great mercy, we both escaped." †

The English, who survived the conflict, fled to Brookfield. The Indians pursued, invested the town, and in a few days destroyed every building in it, except the fortified house. The settlement was entirely broken up, and the town was abandoned for several years. Although this battle was not attended by the loss of many lives, yet as it led to results so important in the history of our early settlements, I have thought it pardonable to notice the fact that it occurred on a spot, once a part of our territory.

This township was purchased of the Indian proprietors, more than one hundred and fifty years ago. By a deed, dated December 27, 1686, "John Magus, Lawrence

\* Some authorities are quoted in Appendix, A.

† N. H. Hist. Coll. ii. 9.

Nassowanno, attorneys to Anogomok, Sachem of the tract of land called Wombemesisecook, James and Simon, sons and heirs of Black James, Sachem of the Nipmug country, for divers good causes and considerations, — especially for and in consideration of the sum of twenty pounds current money of New England," conveyed to "Joshua Lamb, Nathaniel Paige, Andrew Gardner, Benjamin Gamblin, Benjamin Tucker, John Curtis, Richard Draper, and Samuel Ruggles, of Roxbury (Mass.), a certain tract or parcel of land, containing by estimation, twelve miles long, north and south, and eight miles wide, east and west, situate, lying, and being near Quabaug, commonly known by the name of Wombemesisecook."\*

The bounds of this tract of land are vague and indefinite, like those in Indian deeds generally, of like ancient date. They are expressed thus:—"Bounded southerly upon the land that Joseph Dudley, Esq. lately purchased of the Indians, easterly the southermost corner upon a pond called Sasagookapaug, and so by a brook which runneth into said pond, and so up northerly unto a place called Ueques, and so still northerly until it meets with a River called Nenameseck, and westerly by the river until it comes against Quabaug bounds, and joins unto their bounds, or however otherwise butted and bounded," &c.†

It would be difficult, if not impossible, at the present day, to trace these lines, except the single one formed by Ware River, then called Nenameseck. It is evident, however, from the Proprietors' Records, that they claimed from Rutland (now Barre), on the north, to the Chickapee River on the south; embracing besides Hardwick, almost the whole town of Ware, the northeasterly corner of Palmer, and so much of Warren as lies north of the Chickapee River.

The original proprietors seem not to have made this purchase with an expectation of immediate profit. There is no evidence that they made any effort to settle this Township (or Leicester,‡ which they purchased about

\* Variously written, Wombisecook; Wambemesisecook; Wombemuncuck.

† The Deed is inserted in the Appendix, B.

‡ It appears by an instrument dated February 25, 1718, recorded in the Middlesex Registry of Deeds, B. xvii. p. 27, that the original purchasers of