

**THE GIDDINGS FAMILY: OR, THE
DESCENDANTS OF GEORGE GIDDINGS, WHO
CAME FROM ST. ALBANS, ENGLAND, TO
IPSWICH, MASS., IN 1635. WITH A RECORD OF
OTHERS OF THE NAME NOT YET TRACED. ALSO
A SKETCH OF PROMINENT PERSONS
CONNECTED WITH THE FAMILY**

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MINOT S. GIDDINGS

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BY

MINOT S. GIDDINGS,

OF NEW MILFORD, CONN.

HARTFORD, CONN.:

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"The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven
Are shining on the sad abodes of death
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.
So shalt thou rest,—and what if thou shalt fall
Unnoticed by the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny.
So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan that moves
To the pale realms of shade, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

PREFACE.

From the most ancient times mankind has been more powerfully moved to heroic and noble deeds by the thought of the fame that should live after them than by any other consideration.

It is a familiar saying that "blood will tell;" men are proud to own blooded horses or cattle, yet speak as though it were a credit not to know the name of their grand-parents; entertaining the notion that they need no personal record of themselves outside their family circle. Yet the knowledge of a record of worthy ancestors must induce a good life and promote virtuous and honorable character, and bind families and kindred with a sacred tie.

If diseases are hereditary, so must traits of character be; and how often are predominant traits of character transmitted from one generation to another.

In an oration on the life of Gen. George H. Thomas, Garfield said, "Each human being possesses forces and qualities that may date back centuries and find their origin in the life and thoughts and deeds of remote ancestors,—forces, the germs of which, enveloped in the awful mystery of life, have been transmitted silently from generation to generation; each new life is thus heir of all the ages." Blaine, in his eulogy of President Garfield, said that, "Garfield was proud of his blood, and delighted to dwell on the traits of his ancestors."

Within the past few years genealogical inquiries have been pursued in this country with more interest and perseverance than

formerly, and many associations are awakened as we trace the lines of an ancient family branching out in various directions, recalling memories of many who long since have passed away. Such is the perishable nature of all things human, that facts, however important, are liable to become lost, or involved in great obscurity, by the lapse of time. "Man passes away; his name perishes from record and recollection; his history is as a tale that is told, and his very monument becomes a ruin;" therefore, from the moldy records and manuscripts of former days have been brought to light many valuable incidents in biography and genealogy and placed beyond the grasp of oblivion.

We have faithfully endeavored to trace the history of our departed Fathers for nearly two and one-half centuries, and have taken unalloyed pleasure in contemplating the scenes of the buried past, and tracing the faintest record of our early ancestors, and from their life and character striven to draw some inspiration to help us lead a noble life and perform well our part on the earthly stage.

It is not yet a year and a half since the writer was inspired with the idea of trying to collect a record of his family, with no expectation, however, of having it printed so soon, but intending to preserve and add to it from time to time, until a more complete account should be gathered; but, being requested last autumn by the writer of the history of New Milford to prepare for that work an account of that portion of this family which had resided in this vicinity, the thought occurred that I might interest the family and call out more information by publishing what should be obtained at the time that history was published. With that end in view, the first circular was issued and sent to every one of the name whose address could be obtained, and the amount of information it brought was surprising.

It was soon found necessary to enlarge the proposed work, and, since material has been constantly accumulating, there has

been some delay in publishing. It has been beneficial to the work, although the increased cost is greater than anticipated, and the price charged for the book will not, on account of the limited sale of such a production, pay the expense.

I am aware this history is very incomplete, but hope the knowledge it contains will inspire members of the family to make further research and complete the lines begun. Some of the names and dates of the earlier members of the family were obtained from defaced records which may be erroneously spelled or copied, and in a work containing so many names and dates it is almost impossible to prevent errors; and then dates on family records and tombstones sometimes disagree, and those who have transmitted records by letter have not always given the dates twice the same; but, where they have disagreed, those that came from the most reliable sources were chosen.

The most unwearied pains has been taken to have the genealogy attain a high state of perfection in point of accuracy, and all who observe an error of whatever nature will confer a favor by informing the author without delay. I shall also be glad to have forwarded to me any further information respecting this family. Should any of the members or friends of the family visit England, it is hoped they will take special pains to obtain information respecting the English history of the ancestors of the first of the name here, and communicate it to the author. It may be thought advisable, after a few years, to publish another volume of additional history, as this family is much more numerous than many suppose; therefore, additional record will be welcome and carefully preserved for that purpose.

While actively engaged in commercial pursuits, I have collected most of the facts and dates here given, by correspondence with distant members of the family, by searching town and church records, visiting cemeteries, and obtaining inscriptions on tombstones. Ancient history and family genealogies have been