

**THE MARBLE BORDER OF
WESTERN NEW ENGLAND: ITS
GEOLOGY AND MARBLE
DEVELOPMENT IN THE PRESENT
CENTURY, VOL. I, PART II**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649343805

The Marble Border of Western New England: its geology and marble development in the present century, vol. I, part II by Middlebury Historical Society

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MIDDLEBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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CENTURY, VOL. I, PART II**

THE
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OF

WESTERN NEW ENGLAND.

*ITS GEOLOGY AND MARBLE DEVELOPMENT
IN THE PRESENT CENTURY.*

PAPERS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE

MIDDLEBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

VOL. I. PART II.



PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
1885.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1885, by R. WAINWRIGHT,
in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

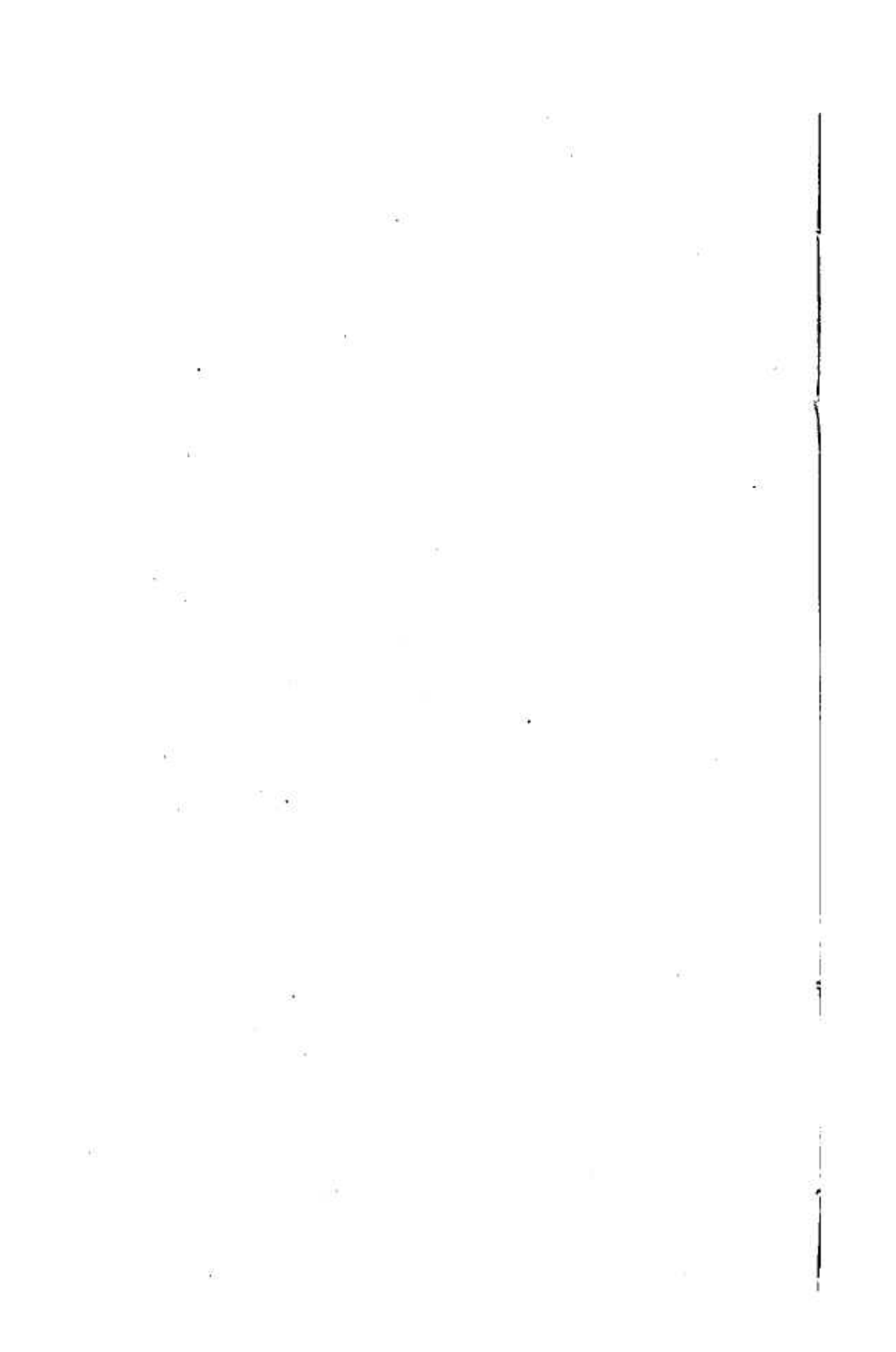
REGISTER COMPANY, PRINTERS,
MIDDLEBURY, VT.

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Tuttle
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01-29-41/11/11



MIDDLEBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

THE MIDDLEBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY was organized November 27, 1843, its members having in view, as a specialty, the cultivation of New England and American history, and the promotion of an interest in that department of intelligence in the community. There were at first but nine gentlemen associated, which number was very soon increased, by election, to twelve, all residents of Middlebury, the plan of action being simply that of a literary club. Its officers were a president and secretary, the latter also treasurer and curator of collections. The officers first chosen were Hon. Samuel Swift, president, and Philip Battell, Esq., secretary, who were continued in office until 1846, when Rev. Benjamin Labaree, D. D., was chosen president, and George S. Swift, Esq., secretary. A standing committee of two members besides the secretary was constituted for all general purposes not otherwise provided for. New members were elected from time to time from the town and vicinity, honorary members in Addison County, and corresponding members out of it. Meetings were held monthly, or quarterly, as seemed expedient, at which historical papers were read and discussions held, the former with some collections of manuscripts and curiosities being preserved. In February, 1847, a project was adopted to procure the preparation of town histories of all the towns of Addison County, with a view to their publication as soon as prepared. A special committee was constituted for this object, by whom historians were selected in each town, and commissioned by a circular from the society minutely defining the comprehensive work to be done. The appointments were accepted or others made. and an interest in the design was extended in

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the towns. Eight or ten of such histories were prepared and reported. Of these, four in a complete form and of high merit were published, chiefly by the towns interested and by local subscription. The first was that of Middlebury, with a preliminary historical account of Addison County, introductory to the series, by Hon. Samuel Swift, in 1859. The History of Salisbury, by John M. Weeks, Esq., followed in 1860; that of Shoreham, by Rev. Josiah F. Goodhue, in 1861; that of Cornwall, by Rev. Lyman Matthews, in 1862. Histories of Orwell and Bristol were also prepared, by Hon. Roswell Bottum and Hon. Harvey Munsill, of which the former was published in 1880. The society has sustained since 1843 an annual celebration of the landing of the Pilgrims, regarding the Plymouth colony as the starting point of New England history and its character as typical of American civilization. The plan of organization of the Society is still maintained. In 1843 it was the nineteenth of the historical associations in the United States, as recognized by the Department of Education in 1876, when the number had increased to eighty, many of them representing with distinction their relations to the country and urging an active emulation upon others in the interests they serve. The present officers of the Society are :

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| HON. JOHN W. STEWART, | | <i>President,</i> |
| PHILIP BATTELL, Esq., | | <i>Secretary,</i> |
| PROF. EZRA BRAINERD, | } | <i>Standing Committee.</i> |
| RUFUS WAINWRIGHT, Esq., | | |

•• The insignia of the Society associate it with Middlebury, in a view of its landmark hill, Chipman Hill, from the south, painted by C. Rogers in 1845, with an indication of Vermont—the star that never sets—from the crest of the complete device, brought within the compass of the seal. The latter was engraved by Weed, Parsons & Co., of Albany, N. Y.; the map of the border—drawn by Prof. Brainerd—by Charles Van Benthuysen & Sons of the same city.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE attention of the Middlebury Historical Society was called to the history of the marble industries of New England by a question which had arisen in the town as to the inventions in the mechanical arts which might be claimed for its citizens, and be honorably inscribed upon a tablet to be placed as a memorial in the new Town Hall. The relation of Middlebury to the subject had been conspicuous among its local industries in all the more active period of manufactures here, sustained for more than a third part of the present century, and a claim had arisen, in circumstances to invite a degree of popular interest, that its success was to be traced to the indigenous invention of its principal processes here, adopted by the founder of the business at Middlebury, and afterwards diffused and made effective in universal use. The character of a claim of so high pretension could not be indifferent to any persons interested in the honor of the town, nor the proposal to give it a public sanction of the kind, depending on historical evidence, be indifferent to any whose attention was habitually attracted to historical questions. The subject was therefore referred to a member familiar with topics of industrial interest, Professor H. M. Seely, formerly secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, for examination. At the next succeeding meeting of the Society, January 26th, 1884, an article was read by Professor Seely, presenting an elaborate review of the subject so far as historical authorities were immediately accessible, and so far disposing of the question before the people that the article was committed to the standing committee of the Society for publication, in such form as they should prefer. The publication was made in the