

**ANNALS OF CHICOPEE STREET:
RECORDS AND REMINISCENCES
OF AN OLD NEW ENGLAND
PARISH FOR A PERIOD OF TWO
HUNDRED YEARS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649448807

Annals of Chicopee Street: Records and Reminiscences of an Old New England Parish for a Period of Two Hundred Years by Clara Skeelee Palmer

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Cover @ 2017

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CLARA SKEELE PALMER

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CHICOPEE STREET CHURCH.
Dedicated January 4, 1886.

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ANNALS OF

CHICOPEE STREET

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OLD NEW ENGLAND PARISH FOR
A PERIOD OF TWO HUNDRED
YEARS

EDITED BY
CLARA SKEELE PALMER

CHICOPEE
MASSACHUSETTS
MDCCCXCVIII

1898!

TO
THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF
THE OLD FIFTH PARISH
THIS RECORD
OF TWO HUNDRED YEARS
IS DEDICATED

ANNALS OF CHICOPEE STREET

1675-1875

THE first settlers in Chicopee were Japhet and Henry Chapin, and their brother-in-law, Rowland Thomas. Japhet and Henry were sons of Dea. Samuel Chapin, one of the early settlers of Springfield. Rowland Thomas had married his daughter, Sarah. Dea. Samuel was an intelligent, energetic Christian man, and we soon find him influential and prominent in the affairs of the town and the Province, as well as in the church. His social position is shown by the edifying record, that in the Meeting House,—

“Goodwife Chapin is to sit in the seate along with Mrs. Glover, and Mrs. Hollyocke.”

There is one tradition that Dea. Chapin was of Welsh origin, and another that he was of Huguenot family. Some color is given to the latter tradition by the name of his wife, Cicely, a name found in early French families.

An old writer has said, “God sifted three kingdoms, that He might plant the finest of the wheat in New England.” From whatever clime or province these sturdy ancestors of ours came, their history

shows that they were in truth of "the finest of the wheat."

As the early records are imperfect, it is difficult to determine the exact date of the first settlement in Chicopee; but a host of well-preserved family traditions bear witness to the evidence of grants and deeds, that by 1675 Japhet and Henry were living in homes of their own. Japhet's house was on the bank of the Connecticut River, in Chicopee Street, on land now (1898) owned by Mr. Charles E. Baker, and northwest of his house. The cellar hole of Japhet's house and the old road leading to it remained until within a few years. Henry's house was near the west end of what is now Exchange street in Chicopee Center. Rowland Thomas lived near Henry.

The first grant of land in Chicopee was in 1659:—

"One farme Given to Mr. John Pyncheon, Lying over Chicuppy river, with the Islands of s^d River, below the plaice called the wading plaice with the Medow on the South side, also a Swamp betwixt the Medow and the River; this farme is by us bounded viz., to run up the Grate River, Northward to the Brook called Willomansett, so up the brook to a foot parth y^t goes to Squannungunick and to follow the parth that goes to Squannungunick to the mouth of Chick-uppy River."

The first mention of a road is in 1665:—

"Nathanell Ely and Rowland Thomas, Committee.

"A Highway Over Chickuppy River, should Goe above the Islands, about 20 Rods, whair the Indian Common Wading Plaice is, or still higher on this side of the River. It is to goe near Rowland Thomasses."

In 1662 Mr. Pyncheon deeded a part of his farm to Samuel Chapin. Later we find grants of land from John Pyncheon to Japhet Chapin, one of two hundred acres, one of twelve, and one of fifteen, all lying "north of Chickuppy River, and east of Connecticut River," and all bordering on land which Japhet already owned. This makes probable the accepted tradition that Dea. Samuel had some time before deeded his land to Japhet.

Henry seems to have bought his land directly from Mr. Pyncheon. In 1659, we find him bargaining for 200 acres "on ye north side of Chickuppy River, half of ye upper Island, and five acres of mowable meadow." For this he is to pay "twenty pounds in wheat at current prices at four several payments," five pounds each year for four years. Although he lived on the south side, he owned land on both sides of Chicopee River. Some of this land remains in the families of his descendants to-day.

Mr. Theodore L. Chapin of Chicopee Street seems to be the only one now living on land directly inherited from his ancestor, Henry; but Edward and Charles Chapin, and probably Mrs. Naomi Chapin Ward, on the Granby road, own land which came to them from