

**CELEBRATION OF THE ONE
HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE INCORPORATION
OF WESTMINSTER, MASS.**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649030859

Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Incorporation of Westminster, Mass. by
Charles Hudson & William S. Heywood

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Cover @ 2017

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CHARLES HUDSON & WILLIAM S. HEYWOOD

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CELEBRATION
OF THE
ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE INCORPORATION OF

WESTMINSTER, MASS.

CONTAINING AN

ADDRESS, BY HON. CHARLES HUDSON,
OF LEXINGTON;

A

POEM, BY MR. WILLIAM S. HEYWOOD,
OF MILFORD;

AND THE OTHER

PROCEEDINGS AND EXERCISES CONNECTED WITH THE OCCASION.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN & SON, 42 CONGRESS STREET.
1859.

WS 135-10.7.5

1860-2013

Hotchkiss

Mr. Charles Knicker

of

Learn

Westminster, November 25, 1859.

Hon. CHARLES HUDSON :

Dear Sir,—Agreeably to a vote of the Inhabitants of the Town, passed at a legal meeting, we respectfully request a copy of the Address prepared by you for our Centennial Celebration, that it may be published for distribution among the inhabitants of the town. Permit us to express the hope, that you will comply with our request.

Very respectfully, yours,

BENJAMIN WYMAN,
WILLIAM S. BRADBURY,
JOEL MERRIAM, Jr.,

Committee of Publication.

Lexington, December 1, 1859.

GENTLEMEN :

Your kind note of the 26th ultimo has been received; and I do not feel at liberty to deny a request coming, as it does, from the Inhabitants of a Town with which I am connected by so many pleasant associations. But I wish to embrace this opportunity to explain the character of the Address. I am sensible that it differs from most Addresses on such occasions. I was fully aware that an Address, more popular in its character, could be prepared with much less labor, and would be better adapted to the mere *conversabilities of the day*. But being apprised in advance that it would be printed, and distributed among the Inhabitants of the Town, I chose to give it the character of a History, rather than that of an Oration. Great attention is paid, at this day, to historical and genealogical research, in every part of the country; and great efforts are made to procure Town Histories, and thus preserve the perishing papers and fading traditions connected with our early settlements. As no full History of your Town has been written, and as many facts could now be collected which in a few years will be irrevocably lost, I have purposely given to my Address a historical and genealogical character, believing that that would be the most profitable in the end, though perhaps less pleasing at the time. I have been more full in the genealogy of the early families than of the later; because the people now living can more easily supply the omissions in the later families, than in the families of the earlier settlers.

I am, gentlemen, very respectfully,

Your obedient and humble servant,

CHARLES HUDSON.

BENJAMIN WYMAN,
WILLIAM S. BRADBURY,
JOEL MERRIAM, Jr., Esqrs.,

Committee of Publication.

NOTE.

WESTMINSTER was incorporated as a District, October 20, 1759. That day would have been selected for the Celebration, but the adjoining town of Princeton was incorporated the same day, and it being understood that they would celebrate on that day, it was thought expedient to select some other day, so as to avoid all interference. Consequently, the 6th of October was selected for the Celebration at Westminster.

A D D R E S S .

W^e have met here to-day, not to honor the living, but to revere the dead. And, though we rightfully rejoice in the present, we glory in it as the result of the past. I stand here, to-day, to speak for the past; and, in the name of that past, I welcome you to these hills and vales, made fruitful by the toil of your fathers; to these rivulets, which watered and fertilized their meadows; to these delightful landscapes, which cheered and gladdened their hearts; to this Hill, where they knelt in devotion, and to yonder valley, where their remains rest in peace.

I am certain that the joys of this day will be heightened by a recurrence to days gone by,—by pleasant memories of the scenes of your childhood, and by the fond recollections of the mothers who bore, the fathers who protected, and the friends who surrounded you. The present is but the offspring of the past; and filial gratitude requires that we should, at stated times, turn our attention to what has gone before us. And surely it is not too much to turn aside from the bustle and business of life once in a Century, and contemplate our origin as individuals and as a community.

The causes which led to the settlement of New England, the landing of the Puritans upon these shores, the sufferings they endured, and the fortitude with which they bore them—their love of education, their attachment to civil liberty, and, above all, their ardent devotion to the great principles of religion, “are known and read of all men,” and need not be repeated here.

Two hundred years ago, this section of the Commonwealth had been traversed only by the red men of the forest; but they were then friendly, and were in a manner under the protection of the

Massachusetts Colony. For, on the 8th of March, 1644, at a Court held at Boston, Cutshamekin and Squaw-Sachem Masconomo together with Nashacowam and Wassamagoin, two Sachems near the great Hill of the west, called Wachusett, came into the Court, and, according to their former tender to the Governor, desired to be received under the protection and government of the Colony.

The covenant then entered into included all the Indians between the Merrimack River and Taunton, and so embraced those who had wandered about the Wachusett. The ceremony of receiving them consisted in teaching them a few of the great principles of the Christian religion and the ten commandments. When they were told that they must not swear falsely, they answered, in their simplicity, that they "never knew what swearing an oath was." And when they were told that they must not work on the Lord's day, they innocently said, "it was a small thing for them to rest on that day, for they had not much to do on any day; and therefore they would forbear on that day." The Chiefs were received with great and solemn parade. They presented the Court with twenty-six fathom of wampum, and the Court gave each of them a coat of two yards of cloth, a good dinner, and to each of them a cup of sack at their departure; so they went away joyfully.

But while they were in quiet possession of the country north of the Wachusett, and manifested no unfriendly disposition, Philip, the bold and daring Chief of the Wampanoags, was, in 1675, plotting the extermination of the English settlements. Calling to his aid various tribes, and being joined by the powerful Narragansets, he became the terror of the Colonists. Massachusetts, Plymouth, and the neighboring Colonies, in order to resist the formidable force of this wily and daring Chief, ordered out most of the effective men in their respective dominions. This war, which lasted only about a year, was one of a most fearful and sanguinary character. Villages were burned, families were massacred, and all the barbarities of savage warfare were inflicted upon the inhabitants. And, while the women and children were exposed to all the horrors of the tomahawk and scalping-knife, of immediate destruction, or hopeless captivity, the poor soldiers in the field suffered incredible hardships from a winter campaign in unexplored forests and dismal swamps, exposed at all times to the midnight surprise or secret ambush of an insidious foe, practiced in all the arts of guile, and in every species of cruelty and torture. This war cost New

England the loss of six hundred men, and about the same number of dwellings laid in ashes by the ruthless savages.

Owing to the poverty of the Colonies, these soldiers, the brave defenders of the English settlers, were, at the time, but poorly rewarded for their services. After the lapse of more than half a century, the surviving soldiers belonging to Massachusetts, and the representatives of those who were sleeping with their fathers, petitioned the Legislature for further remuneration. Whereupon, the General Court, on the 15th of June, 1728, Resolved,

“That Major Chandler, Mr. Edward Shove, Major Tileston and Mr. John Hobson, be a Committee, fully authorized and empowered to lay out two tracts of land for townships, of the contents of six miles square each, in some of the unappropriated land of the Province; and that the said lands be granted and disposed of to the persons, whether officers or soldiers, belonging to this Province, who were in the service of their country in the Narraganset war, or to their lawful representatives, as a reward for their public service; and is in full satisfaction of the grant formerly made them by the Great and General Court; forasmuch as it is the full intent and purpose of this Court, that every officer and soldier who served in said War, shall have a compensation made him over and above what wages and gratuities any of them have already received:

“That public notice shall be given in the News Letters, and advertisements be posted up in every town in the Province, notifying all persons that have served, and were in that fight, and the legal representatives of those deceased, that they give or send a list of their names and estates to this Court, at their next fall session; and when such list is completed by a Committee then to be appointed by this Court, the Grantees shall be obliged to assemble in as short a time as they can conveniently, not exceeding four months, and proceed to the choice of a Committee to regulate each propriety, who shall pass such orders and rules as will effectually oblige them to settle sixty families at least, in each township, with a learned orthodox minister, within the space of seven years, from the date of this grant: *Provided nevertheless*, if the said Grantees shall not effectually settle said number of families in each township, and also lay out a lot for said settled minister, one for the ministry, and one for the schools in each of said townships, they shall have