



*Anniversary exercises  
commemorating the 187th ...*

William Lorison Walsh

US 13202.10.17

**History of the  
First Parish  
Church.....**

**Brookfield, Massachusetts**

**By Rev. William E. Walsh**

Compliment of L H R Gass  
Brookfield

# Anniversary Exercises

Commemorating

The 187th Anniversary of the  
Church, and the 150th  
of the Precinct



Held in the First Parish Church

October 16 and 17, 1904

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The  
History and Programs  
are herewith published  
by the Parish

US 13202.10.17

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SPENCER:  
W. J. HEFFERNAN—LEADER PRINT  
1905.

## NOTE

At the annual parish meeting held in March, 1904, it was voted to properly observe the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the church and a committee was appointed to make suitable arrangements.

In preparing the history it was discovered that while it was the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the third precinct, it was the one hundred and eighty-seventh anniversary of the church.

That instead of its being the third, it was the first church of Old Brookfield, organized October 16, 1717.

Signed,

ARTHUR F. BUTTERWORTH,  
FRANK E. PROUTY,  
LAWRENCE T. NEWHALL,

Parish Committee.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness to the following persons:

To the clerks in the State Library, State House, Boston.

To Mr. A. C. White, clerk of the Parish Church, West Brookfield, in allowing me to freely examine the early records of said parish.

To Mr. A. F. Butterworth for notes and information concerning professional and business men who have been connected with this parish.

To Mr. L. H. R. Gass for notes and information concerning men of the parish who served in the Continental army.

To Mr. William E. Cook for notes and information concerning families now connected with the parish, and who have been so connected for four or more generations.

To Rev. B. M. Frink of West Brookfield, for information concerning certain ministers who served the settlement prior to 1717.

WILLIAM L. WALSH.



REV. WILLIAM L. WALSH

# HISTORY OF THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH

BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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## BEGINNINGS

Under date of May 20th, 1660 the following appears in the records of the General Court of Massachusetts.

"In answer to a petition of several inhabitants of Ipswich; this court judgeth it meet to grant the petitioners six miles square or so much land as shall be contained in such a compass, in a place near Quaboag pond, provided they have twenty families there resident within three years and that they have an able minister settled there within the said term, such as this court shall approve; and that they make due provision in some way or other for the future, either by setting apart of lands, or whatelse shall be thought meet for the continuance of the ministry among them."

This record of the General Court indicates the requirement everywhere in New England that to hold a settlement, a ministry, that is to say a church, must be maintained. This requirement to provide a religious institution was no hardship to the people of this particular settlement.

From first to last the records show, not only a desire, but a firm determination to worship God in the prescribed form. Where the ministers were obtained, and how often during those first few years, the people enjoyed the privileges of the sanctuary, there is no means of knowing. That they did preserve religious services among them is proven by the favor of the General Court, which thirteen years after the first date incorporated the settlement of Quaboag into the town of Brookfield. And moreover during those years a church was built.

Some writers have claimed, that between the years 1667 and 1674 two ministers served this First church as regular pastors. Certain it is that a church had been built.

This church, with the settlement, were destroyed by the Indians by fire on August 4, 1675. Some of the inhabitants were killed and the rest fled to places of safety. But the lands were too fertile and the location too desirable to surrender. And so these sturdy pioneers returned to their homes probably as early as 1685, and on the 25th of October, 1692, in a petition to the General Court they speak of "speedily having a minister of God's word amongst us."

The year 1698 appears to mark the beginning of a continuous church and ministry, when twenty pounds were voted from the public treasury "toward the support of an Orthodox minister for one year, to commence from the time of the settlement." From that time until 1715 the yearly grant of twenty pounds was made "for the support of the ministry," always provided that the minister employed should be "approved by the ministry of the neighboring towns." There was no meeting-house, but services were probably held in the fort, for in the General Court records, the minister is spoken of as "the chaplain of the garrison."

In the latter part of the year 1715 the inhabitants, with the consent of the managing committee, voted to build a meeting-house in same place where formerly the meeting-house was built. On the fifth of April, 1716, Mr. Thomas Cheney was invited to become their minister, and on the 16th day of October, 1717, the First church of Brookfield was regularly organized with Mr. Cheney as it pastor.

Fifty-seven years of dependence upon the General Court, of disappointment, of earnest endeavor, of passionate longing—and now a church, all their own, equipped and officered according to ecclesiastical usage. I doubt if we can appreciate the joy of that day. It was more to them, infinitely more than any other earthy thing. It was intense satisfaction to intense souls. The provisions made for Mr. Cheney's living were, for the time, exceedingly liberal. It is evident that they did not intend him to worry over the material things of life, or to be enticed away by some more generous parish.

"Voted to give Mr. Cheney for his salary, fifty-two pounds yearly for three years and to raise forty shillings a year until it comes to seventy-pounds and then to stay."

"Voted to build him a house and barn according to

the dimensions he has given, Mr. Cheney providing glass, nails and iron."

"Voted to break up fence and 'fitt' to sow eight acres of land."

"Voted to get Mr. Cheney twenty-five cords of wood yearly, his life time."

"Voted to give Mr. Cheney each man one day's work for six years.

"His house and barn to be built in four years, always provided Mr. Cheney be our ordained minister."

And Mr. Cheney did stay, until death severed the happy pastoral relations thirty years after they had been established.

## FORMATION OF WESTERN

During this long period the town enjoyed increasing prosperity; there was a continuous gain in population and wealth. "In the year 1747 the southwestern corner of Brookfield, with parts of other towns was incorporated and called Western"—now Warren.

## THE SECOND PRECINCT

So strong had the parish become that in 1748, the town being without a minister, the people living in the northeastern part petitioned for a separate parish and on the 29th day of March, 1750, the General Court granted the request, designating the new society as "The Church of the Second Precinct." Mr. Eli Forbush became the minister of this second precinct, remaining till 1775, when he was dismissed at his own request. He was succeeded by Mr. Joseph Appleton, who died in office 1795. Mr. Thomas Snell succeeded to the pastorate in 1798 and was the pastor when the precinct became an independent town.

## THE DIVISION OF THE FIRST PRECINCT

In the first parish Mr. Elisha Harding succeeded Dr. Cheney, having been ordained and installed September 13, 1749. His pastorate was not a happy one. The trouble seems not to have been with the minister, except in his inability to guide or influence the people in their differences. The number of inhabitants had not only greatly increased, but homes had been builded to the extreme southeastern

limit of the precinct. Foster's hill was no longer the residential centre. In the attendance upon church service many were obliged to travel from the southeast, from two to eight miles. In fact the residents at the west end of the parish, who were accommodated by the location of the meeting-house, were at this time comparatively a small minority and they paid but a small portion of the expense; a portion amounting to only fifteen pounds, ten shillings and nine pence, one farthing, while the minister's salary alone amounted to sixty-four pounds.

There was need of a new meeting-house. All felt this need and they were unanimous in the decision that it should be erected. The question as to where it should stand was literally a "burning question." For about three years the matter of building was delayed, during which time many spirited meetings were held, each side trying to bring the other to its way of thinking. That so small a minority as forty could restrain so large a majority as seventy-five or thereabouts for so long a time, is not, under the circumstances, strange. Mr. Jedediah Foster resided in the west end of the parish and hence was a leader in the minority. He was a man of strong personality, having great influence, not only among his fellows, but also with the General Court. The majority, though strong in numbers, did not wish to oppose him too strenuously.

For the location of the new meeting-house, there were three "spots" under consideration.

First—A few desired to build on or near the place where the old house of worship then stood and where the first one formerly stood, viz. Foster's Hill.

Second—A few more, notably those who lived in that west neighborhood, wished to build on the "lawn" near the site of the present Congregational church.

Third—The majority, residents of the east end, extending through to the Spencer line, declared for "the height of land near Seth Bannister's," the place known to us as the "Mall." And here the parish, November 20, 1753, voted to build. At this meeting no provisions were made for building.

<sup>Dec.</sup> On January 31st, 1753, the following petition was received by the parish committee:

"To the Honorable Committee of the first parish in Brookfield,

"Gentlemen:—We the subscribers humbly pray that you would forthwith call a meeting of the inhabitants of said parish, to see if they will proceed to build a meeting house on the height of land near Seth Bannister's, where said parish voted to build one and to act in the premises in that matter as they shall think proper, and by so doing you will oblige your humble petitioners.

"Signed, Jonathan Jenins, Benjamin Walker, Josiah Partridge, Jabez Upham, Nathan Hamilton, Moses Hastings, Obediah Cooley, Joseph Bannister, Amos Hamilton, Phinehus Walker, William Olds."

In response to this petition a meeting of the parish was called to take action, but on the question being raised it was decided that the meeting had not been legally called. Sixteen days later, however, January 31st, 1754, it was "voted that Dr. Jabez Upham, Capt. Thos. Buckminister Elisha Rice, Nathan Hamilton and Jacob Abbott be a committee for arranging with Seth Bannister about the land and to build the new meeting-house according to vote. Voted to raise one hundred pounds to carry on said building. Voted to build a meeting-house fifty-five feet long, forty-five feet wide and twenty-three feet in height."

Evidently no time was lost in carrying out these instructions for on the fifteenth and sixteenth days of April of the said year, 1754, the frame of the new house was raised and by vote of the parish Rev. Elisha Harding, minister of the parish, began preaching in the new meeting-house September 16th and continued to do so thereafter from Sabbath to Sabbath. At the same meeting that this action was taken the parish voted also "to tear down the old meeting house and to use the material for enclosing and finishing the new." And according to the General Court record this was done.

On October 16th of that same year the parish at a regular meeting voted to assess the inhabitants for the minister's salary, sixty-four pounds. The next day October 17th, a petition headed by Mr. Jedediah Foster was sent to the General Court as follows:

First to restrain the said parish from collecting the said tax.

Second, to see if the parish might not be equally divided.

As a result of this petition, and for the purpose of settling the questions in dispute, the General Court appointed and sent to Brookfield the following committee:

From the Council, John Cushing and John Quincy Esquires, and from the House of Representatives: Col. Winslow, Col. Otis and Mr. Haywood.

Acting upon the report of this committee the General Court divided equally the parish (not including the second precinct) into two precincts. The west part was made the first precinct and the east was made the third precinct and then the court record (of which I have a certified copy) goes on to state "That all the inhabitants of the lands which by this act are made the first precinct and all the inhabitants of those lands which by this act are annexed to the second precinct, be, and hereby are, and shall forever thereafter be exempted from paying or contributing any part towards the charges and debts that have already arisen by reason of the building the new meeting-house, which has lately been erected in said town, on the lands by this act made the third precinct in said town, any of the votes of the late first precinct notwithstanding; and that all the materials of the old meeting-house, which was lately standing in said town, now taken down, be equally divided between the said three precincts, and that all the ministerial revenues arising from all and any lands lying in any part of the said town of Brookfield, heretofore sequestered to the use of the ministry in said town, shall be always hereafter equally divided between the said three precincts."

This act was passed on the seventh of November, approved by Governor Shirley, becoming a law on the eighth of Nov. 1754.

These records show: first, that the west section was now created the first precinct and the east created the third. as previous to this time the north had been created the second; second, they show that the new-meeting house had been erected on land now lying in the third precinct; third, that the old meeting-house had been legally torn down, and fourth, that the act of the legislature was an arbitrary one, as law always must be rather than an interpretation in his-

tory—since it declares—“Any of the votes of the late first precinct notwithstanding.”

For the historical situation we must depend ultimately upon the acts of the men who did the work recorded at the time of their action. That record is clear and indisputable, viz:

On the 20th day of November they “voted to build the meeting-house on the height of land near Seth Bannister’s.”

On the 31st day of January they appointed a committee and appropriated money for the building.

On the 16th and 17th days of April the frame was raised. On the first day of September the time was set for discontinuing services in the old meeting house, viz. September 8th and when services should begin in the new house, viz. September 15th. At that time the parish also instructed the parish minister to hold services of worship in the old house as ordered and in the new and thereafter from Sabbath to Sabbath. At the same time it was further ordered that the old house be torn down and the materials used in finishing the new.

All in the years 1753—4 the records of the General Court prove how effectually these votes were carried out.

In view of all the facts my conclusions are: First, the west end is and has been the first precinct, and while the General Court could and did give to the east end the old town name of Brookfield, the historic events which must ever be associated with the sacred spot known as Foster’s Hill, could not be given with it. They always have belonged and must continue to belong to the west. The law cannot change history or declare it null.

Second, In like manner the parish church built and left in the third precinct, together with the minister and people who remained and their successors, have been, are, and ever must be, the First Parish Church of Brookfield, organized October 16th, 1717.

### NEW FIRST PRECINCT

The first precinct was now without a meeting-house or a minister. The first legal meeting was held at a private house December 11th, 1754. On January 22nd, 1755, they voted to build a meeting-house and on October 7th, 1757

they called Mr. Joseph Parsons, who became their settled minister.

### THIRD PRECINCT

In the third precinct, the present town of Brookfield, the Rev. Elisha Harding, minister of the church, continued to hold services in the new meeting-house and to exercise his pastoral functions until May, 1755, when by mutual consent the relations were severed. Between that time and May 24th, 1758, when the Rev. Nathan Fiske was installed pastor, services were regularly held, for which the sum of 140 pounds was appropriated.

From the time of the separation each precinct supported without assistance its own church, all working together in administering the town's affairs harmoniously. In 1812 the second precinct and in 1848 the first precinct were duly incorporated as separate towns under the names—North and West Brookfield respectively. The third precinct was continued under the old name and act of incorporation.

Following the division, the ministry, *i. e.* the public lands, were equally divided among the three precincts and all the affairs pertaining to the several interests were amicably adjusted.

The first parish church, now situated in the third precinct, proceeded to carry on its work as it had heretofore done. This work was made easy from the fact that it had the minister, the church building and all the equipments belonging to them. It only remained for them to choose the regular parish officers at the first of the new year and to appropriate the necessary money for finishing the church and paying the minister from the 8th day of November, 1754, to which time his salary had been paid by the late first precinct. The first parish meeting after the division was held at the meeting-house November 23rd, 1754. On January 30th, 1755, the annual meeting was held at the meeting-house when the necessary moneys for parish purposes were appropriated and the parish officers elected, viz: Elisha Rice, moderator, Amos Hamilton, clerk, and Elisha Rice, John Green and John White, parish committee.

## PARISH MEETINGS

Parish meetings have been called in the name of various institutions. Until 1766 the warrants for holding meetings directed to some particular constable began with this formula: "These are to require you to notify and warn all the freeholders and other inhabitants of the precinct." From then until 1776 it read always, "In His Majesty's Name." Then it read "In the Name of the People of Massachusetts Bay," "In the Name of the Government and People of Massachusetts Bay." Beginning December 21st, 1780, it was, "In the Name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts" and so it continues to be.

## SCHOOLS

The subject of schools hold a prominent place in the parish records. As early as 1726 public provision was made for the rudiments of education. In 1728 "voted to build one schoolhouse between Tucker's old place and the new country road where it comes across Coy's brook." In 1746 the committee was instructed to provide a place for a "grammar school" and that "school dames be employed in the summer time." In 1754 reference is made to a "reading and writing school." In 1768 a schoolhouse was built in each precinct and so on till the town assumed complete charge of the matter.

## LIBRARY

A library is first mentioned April 21st, 1830, when Otis Twichell was by vote of the parish made librarian. This library was created for the use of the parish in 1829 and in due time it contained 127 books. While there were certain restrictions it was practically a public library. Hence it was the first public library of the town. The management, the raising money for the purchase of books and the housing of the books began and remained to the end of that chapter, a part of the regular parish business. The committee on library consisted of Hermon Stebbins, Emmons Twichell, Ebenezer Prouty and the librarians were Otis Twichell, Emmons Twichell, Noah Robinson, Henry E. Prouty, Parker A. Rice, each of these gentlemen serving by re-election several years.

That the purpose was knowledge, rather than spiritual culture is proven by the record of a certain addition, viz: "Voted that the library committee accept of Amos Crosby, the Family Encyclopedia, instead of Spark's sermons."

(The record book containing date of organization, by-laws, list of names and catalogue of books is in possession of the parish, recently presented by Mrs. Hackett of Worcester.)

## BURIAL OF THE DEAD

The church has always been foremost in caring for the dead and so it has been in Brookfield.

The burial ground was not regularly marked till 1756 when five acres of the ministry land were laid out and a stone wall laid between that and the county road. It was in the third precinct, but used by all the townspeople more or less. Probably it was the first burial ground, that fact deciding its location. The Rev. Thos. Cheney, first minister of the parish, lies buried in this cemetery. The record is not quite clear but probably when the first and second precincts became separate towns, the exclusive control passed to this parish.

During a long period previous to 1853 the parish not only directed the affairs of the cemetery but provided all equipment and superintended all burials. The parish committee had charge of all funerals. The parish hired and paid a man to "dig and fill the graves," provided the carriage, afterward the hearse, and hearse house, the harness for the horse, the burial cloth, etc., but on March 7th, 1853, at a meeting of the parish it was voted "that the parish relinquish its rights in the burying ground, that is so far as the fencing, improving, ornamenting, care and superintendence is concerned, to the town of Brookfield on such conditions as the parish committee shall think right and proper."

## MUSIC

The first recorded effort to improve the singing is dated 1797, when it was voted to build singers' seats and spend twenty dollars for instruction and for many years at different times the parish has maintained instruction in singing. Thus for more than one hundred years this church has laid emphasis upon the desirability of good singing.

The first mention of a musical instrument is under date March 11, 1850, when Mr. Artemas Knowlton was given thanks "for his constant and very skillful performance in making music on the double bass in the choir of the Unitarian society during the past year." This "double bass" was part of an instrumental orchestra, which had been in use for several years before 1850 and continued to be used for some four or five years later. It was not only a supplement to the singing, but also to the reed instrument called "the seraphine." The advent of this "seraphine" is not dated, but it is known to have been presented to the parish by Messrs. Otis Hayden and Abraham Skinner near 1840 at a cost of \$150. In April 1857 these same gentlemen presented the society with a pipe organ costing \$850. They also gave on March 17th, 1870, a Mason & Hamlin organ for the use of the Sunday school, the choir for their rehearsals and for social purposes. This instrument being damaged by fire, it was replaced by the piano now in the vestry of the church, purchased by the parish.

The last instrument put into the church was our present pipe organ, used for the first time in public worship April 5th, 1895.

## OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Stoves for purposes of heating were first set up in the church in January, 1822, by private owners, who supplied also the necessary fuel and care. In a single year this luxury of heating became a necessity and has since then been provided by the parish. Coal was first used as fuel in 1858.

December 15th, 1778, "it was voted to build a steeple, to buy and hang a bell."

December 11th a clock was given and it was voted to set it up so that "the face could be seen from the north and south sides of the steeple."

The pews which had been owned by private individuals were deeded back to the parish as a free gift April 16th, 1866 and the last reference to pew rents is under date, April 1st, 1887.

Collections to make up a deficiency are first mentioned April 1st, 1834 and they are still in fashion.

The first ushers chosen by the parish were Messrs. Wm. S. French and J. B. Gass, March 23rd, 1867.

### ORGANIZATIONS

The Sunday school is not mentioned till about 1850, although it was organized many years before that.

"The Ladies' Sewing Society" is mentioned about the same time and was re-named "The Ladies' Social Society."

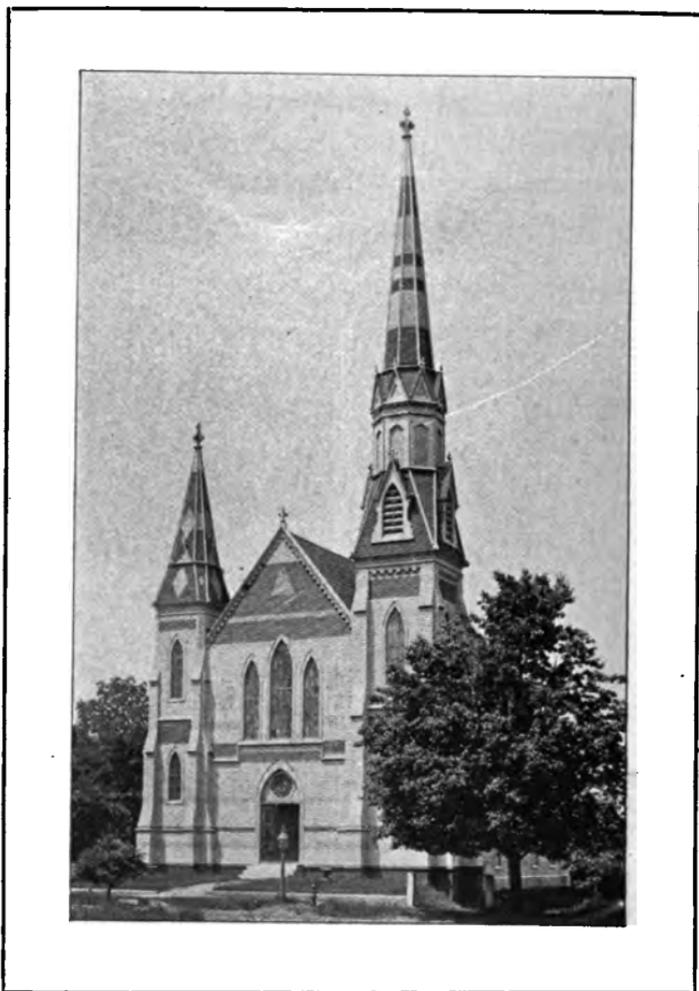
On May 1st, 1883, "The Women's Auxiliary Association" was organized and that gave place October 14, 1891, to "The Unitarian Charitable Society," now "The Ladies' Charitable Society."

Various other organizations are noted, including "The Young People's Dramatic Club", "The Young People's Guild," "The Lend-a-Hand Club," "The Young People's Society." I have no doubt that there were others of which, unfortunately, no record has been kept.

### OPINIONS DIFFER

The Rev. Nathan Fiske, after a most happy pastorate of more than forty years died in office November 24th, 1799. He was succeeded by Rev. Micah Stone March 11th, 1801. For several years conditions were comparatively harmonious, but Mr. Stone was not tactful and as time passed an increasing number of his people were alienated. Besides this, the new interpretations of religion spreading through New England about that time caused dissatisfaction with his teaching, greatly weakening the society over which he ministered. On January 29th, 1827, he was asked by the parish to resign his pastorate. In favor of this motion the vote stood forty-one yeas, twenty-five nays, and Mr. Stone was regularly notified by the parish clerk. He agreed to the request on condition that he be informed of the reasons.

The reasons were given in writing, in substance as I have stated. The matter was amicably adjusted, Mr. Stone accepting a bonus of \$100 with the privileges of a pastor until he could be regularly released by an ecclesiastical council. In return for these favors he consented to the formal dissolution of his civil contract and the immediate surrender of his pulpit, the pulpit being supplied by the parish from Sunday to Sunday. Thus Mr. Stone's relation to the parish was peculiar. He was not the minister,



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL (UNITARIAN) CHURCH,  
BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

but was the pastor, that condition continuing until the settlement of Rev. George R. Noyes October 31st, 1827, a period of nine months. Following the settlement of Mr. Noyes many members of the parish withdrew, forming "The Evangelical Religious Society in Brookfield." Soon after the formation of this new society the question arose as to the ownership of "the plate or vessels of the communion table." In the famous decision of Chief Justice Shaw, the first parish was declared to be the rightful possessor.

### BRANCH CHURCHES

From this old parish many church societies have been organized and set apart for religious worship. The first to so organize was the church of the second precinct, now North Brookfield, formed March 29th, 1750.

The second was the church of the first precinct, now West Brookfield, established November 8th, 1754.

Third, the Baptist church, situated in the east part of the parish, incorporated in 1800.

Fourth, the First Universalist church, situated in the Podunk district, 1812.

Fifth, the Second Universalist, called "The Second Universalist church in Western and Brookfield," organized very soon after the First.

Sixth, the Methodist' church was established in 1826.

Seventh, the "Evangelical Religious Society" was organized in 1827 and the meeting-house was builded very near the old parish church.

The eighth was the Catholic church, St. Mary's, which bought the first parish meeting-house in 1867, moved it to its present location, fitted it up and still occupy it. From this church two branches have been organized, occupying houses, one at East and the other West Brookfield.

Thus ten churches have been formed from this old society, all of them except the First Universalist at Podunk in prosperous operation. At Podunk a Union Chapel Society has taken the place of the First church there, the pulpit being supplied by neighboring ministers. There were two reasons for these additional churches.

First, convenience of attendance. The distances of travel were great, occupying much time and being wearisome. As the inhabitants increased in number and pros-

perity, it was but natural that they should organize places of worship convenient of access.

The second reason was a matter of conscience. The people were a thinking people, strong in their religious convictions, willing to make any sacrifice that they might worship God, as seemed best to them.

Almost from the formation of the third precinct the First church was liberal in its theological conceptions of religion. The Rev. Micah Stone in his historical address delivered to the Evangelical church in Brookfield March 11th, 1851, said:

“Although there was a fraternal union existing among this connection of ministers, there was at the same time an undefined line of distinction pervading the body, which discriminated them as Orthodox, and those professing more liberal sentiments. Of the later class Dr. Fiske was generally regarded.” Dr. Fiske died in November, 1799. Mr. Stone continues: “They, the church, afterwards applied to me to preach as a candidate \* \* \* they gave me a unanimous call to settle with them in the ministry, regarding me as harmonizing in religious sentiments with their former ministers and with themselves in the liberal views of Christianity.”

Dr. Fiske was settled in 1758 and Mr. Stone in 1801, so this church was looked upon as a liberal church and those who held conservative, or strongly Calvinistic opinions were ill at ease, seeking a more congenial fellowship when circumstances made it possible. Undoubtedly these two reasons, “convenience and conscience,” caused the many withdrawals and the multiplication of new churches. Those who remained with the mother church, however, were just as thoughtful and conscientious and indeed uncompromising as those who went out, and when Mr. Stone had been found disappointing theologically, he was dismissed. The Rev. George R. Noyes, a pronounced Unitarian, was settled and the church became affiliated with the Unitarian movement at the time of his settlement October 31st, 1827; and so she has continued till now, the name Unitarian first appearing on the parish records April 8th, 1824.

### MEETING-HOUSES

The meeting-houses builded have been five in number.

The first was erected on Foster's Hill sometime prior to 1675 and it was burned by the Indians with the settlement on August 4th of that year. After the re-settlement of the town about 1685 and for about thirty years, religious services were probably held in the fortified building known as "Gilbert's Fort," and in a dwelling house near there—afterwards called the "town house," subsequently the residence of Rev. Thos. Cheney. The second meeting-house was builded on the ground where the first had stood in 1715-16. It was forty-five feet in length and thirty-five feet in width. The last service of worship held in this building was on the 8th day of September, 1754, and it was torn down to finish the new meeting-house by vote of the parish passed September 1st, the same year. The third meeting house was built in 1754, the frame being raised April 16th and 17th. The first service of worship held in this new house was by vote of the parish, conducted by the parish minister September 15th, 1754. Thus it will be seen that not a single service was omitted, the minister preaching in the old meeting-house on September 8th and in the new on the 15th of the same month and year. This meeting-house was builded by votes of the parish, passed "November 20th, 1753" and "January 31st, 1754 on the height of land near Seth Bannister's." It was fifty-five feet long, forty-five feet wide and twenty-three feet high. On the 15th of December, 1778, it was voted to completely repair and paint the meeting-house, to build a steeple, buy and hang a bell." A clock, the gift of Mr. Cheney Reed, Esq., was in 1812 placed in the tower. In 1816 (April 11th voted) the steeple was repaired and the bell recast. The fourth meeting-house was erected on the same spot as that upon which the third had stood in 1836. The first parish meeting held in the new house is dated April 10th, 1837.

A large portion of the funds necessary to building was given by people out of town. Among these subscribers were Samuel May, (father of our Rev. Samuel May, late of Leicester,) Phineas Upham, King's Chapel, all of Boston, and the Rev. George R. Noyes, society of Petersham. I also find the inevitable "Ladies' Subscription."

A deduction by the contractor of \$164.28 indicates the value of the old meeting-house. The whole cost of the new church was \$3,383.81. In this new church there was pro-

vided what was called a "basement," sometimes the "town-house" and after April 13th, 1840, the "vestry."

The money necessary to finish this "basement" was subscribed by a number of members who became stockholders. All moneys received from rent went to them until the full cost had been paid. And the janitor was instructed to let said basement for no immoral purpose, except on the authority of the parish committee.

On March 1st, 1840, Abraham Skinner, John P. Robinson and Otis Hayden representing the society and stockholders, leased the said room to the town of Brookfield for twenty years at thirty dollars per year. During that time the said basement or vestry was used for all town purposes, including that of a public hall.

During the summer of 1849 the meeting-house was moved to the place where the present house now stands, the land having been purchased from Luther Stowell and Henry D. Fales. ("The height of land near Seth Banister's," upon which the meeting-house had stood, was presented to the town of Brookfield in 1904 on condition that it be put in proper condition within three years and forever put to public use.) In 1827 the building passed into the hands of our Catholic brethren who moved it to its present location, since using it for public worship.

The fifth and present meeting-house was erected on the spot where now it stands, in 1868, the full cost being \$19,339.82. And it was dedicated free of debt March 11th, 1869. Since then the front of the house has been altered and the inside decorated at a cost of about \$1,600. The bell now in use cost in addition to the old one \$1,300.50. And the parsonage was purchased Oct. 1871 for \$3,930. During the building of this meeting-house, a very pleasant thing occurred viz., the Methodist and Evangelical churches each tendered to this society the use of its meeting-house. The offer from the Methodist people, being first received, was gratefully accepted, and the accommodations were most satisfactory. It was a very gracious act and was keenly appreciated.

## MINISTERS

Previous to the organization of the parish church in 1717, the names of six ministers are recorded as having

served the parish. Rev. B. M. Frink of West Brookfield believes them to have been settled as pastors. They are: Rev. John Younglove, Rev. Joseph Smith, Rev. Geo. Phillips, Rev. William Grosvenor, Rev. John James, Rev. David Elmer.

The Rev. Thomas Cheney was ordained and installed October 16th, 1717 and died in office December 11th, 1747—30 years, 2 months.

Rev. Elisha Harding was settled Sept. 13th, 1749, resigned May 8th, 1755—5 years, 8 months.

Rev. Nathan Fiske settled May 24th, 1758, died in office Nov. 24th 1799—41 years, 6 months.

The Rev. James Averill accepted a unanimous call June 30th, 1800, but died on the day set for his installation.

Rev. Micah Stone settled March 11th, 1801. Ministerial relations severed by agreement March 11th, 1827, and the pastoral relations severed October 31st—26 years.

Rev. George R. Noyes settled October 31st, 1827, resigned September 30th, 1834—6 years, 11 months.

Rev. Seth Alden settled November 1st, 1835, resigned March 31st, 1845—9 years, 5 months. According to the record he was greatly beloved.

Rev. William B. Greene settled Nov. 1st, 1845, resigned March 31st, 1851—5 years, 5 months.

Rev. Sylvanus S. Hunting settled October 1st, 1852, resigned August 1st 1858—5 years, 10 months.

Rev. R. D. Burr settled Nov. 1st, 1858, resigned April 30th, 1862—4 years, 6 months.

Rev. Edward I. Galvin settled May 1st, 1863, resigned about May 31st, 1867—4 years, (Mr. Galvin was the first minister to whom the parish granted a vacation, according to the records.)

Rev. D. Allen Russell began his labors about June 1st, 1867. Though repeatedly and unanimously called, he never accepted a settlement, probably owing to ill health, and retired from service about April 1st, 1870—3 years, 10 months.

Rev. A. Judson Rich settled September 1st, 1870, resigned December 1st, 1879—9 years, 3 months.

Rev. Henry H. Woude settled April 1st, 1880, resigned July 1st, 1884—4 years, 3 months.

Rev. Samuel Hamlet settled October 1st, 1885, resigned September 1st, 1888— 2 years, 11 months.

Rev. L. Walter Mason settled April 1st, 1889, resigned October 31st, 1892—3 years, 7 months.

Rev. William L. Walsh, the present pastor, has served since June 18th, 1893—11 years, 4 months.

## COVENANTS

So far as I know there have been four Covenants of membership used by this parish.

The first, adopted October 16th, 1717, reads as follows:

“ You do now in the presence of the Great and Holy God, the elect angels, and this assembly of witnesses, enter into a solemn and perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten, never to be broken.

“ You sincerely and cordially give up yourself to that God, whose name is Jehovah; taking God the Father to be your God and Father, God the Son to be your only Saviour and Redeemer, God the Holy Ghost to be your Sanctifier and Comforter.

“ You submit yourself to Christ and accept Him as the Prophet, Priest and King of your soul, the Great Head of the Church, and the only Mediator of the Covenant of grace; promising that by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, you will keep the covenant of the Lord inviolably; that you will cleave to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith and gospel obedience and will endeavor to reform your life as to all known sin, whether open or secret, will live in the conscientious discharge of all duty toward God and man; walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly; that you will endeavor that the inward temper of your mind be conformed to God's will and word; and that you will follow the excellent example which Christ has set you for the rule of your life.

“ You also give up yourself to this church in the Lord; and freely covenant and bind yourself to walk as a regular member of Christ's church, to obey them that have rule over you in the Lord; to read God's word, and to live in the practice of *social* and *secret* prayer, and in diligent attendance on the word preached, and ordinances administered: relying on the grace and all sufficiency of Christ, which are sufficient for you—you promise to walk accord-

ing to what you now know, or shall know to be your duty.

“Do you sincerely and cordially consent to the covenant now proposed?”

“We then receive you as a sincere disciple of Christ, and a member of the same church with ourselves, promising, so long as God shall continue you among us, to watch over you with meekness and brotherly love; and may the Lord add to the numbers and graces of His church, and finally bring us all to join the general assembly, and church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven. Amen.”

The second covenant was adopted October 13th, 1827.

“In the presence of God and these witnesses you offer yourself for admission to this Christian church. You regard this transaction as a profession of your belief in the one only living and true God, as a testimony of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and the appointed Saviour of the world; and as an acknowledgment of the sacred scriptures containing a revelation of God to man and as containing a perfect rule of faith and obedience.

“You design to commemorate the ‘Author and Finisher of our faith’ in the way which he has appointed, resolving by the help of divine grace to live in obedience to His commandments and hoping, through the mercy of God, to obtain everlasting life.

“In humble and grateful reliance upon God for pardon of sin, and for assistance in the performance of your duty, you solemnly take upon yourself the enjoyments of the Christian profession.

“You promise to walk with this church while you have opportunity, in a regular attendance upon Christian ordinances, in the exercise of Christian affection and in submission to the discipline of the church, so far as it shall appear to be your duty. This you profess and promise.

“Answer, ‘I do.’”

“I then in the name of Jesus Christ and in behalf of this Christian church, declare you a member (or members) of the same, and in full communion with ourselves.

“We welcome you to our Christian love and fellowship.

“We wish upon you ‘grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.’ We

promise to watch over you for your good, to counsel and assist you whenever there shall be occasion, and to regard you with all that tenderness and affection which your relation to us now justifies and enjoins.

“ We will endeavor to be faithful to each other and to our common Master; to be helpers of each other’s spiritual joy, and promoters of each other’s spiritual welfare; striving together for that eternal weight of glory which is promised in the Gospel as the reward of patient continuance in well-doing.

“ We will endeavor to walk worthy of our high vocation and to adore the doctrine of God our Saviour; and when death shall dissolve those interesting ties which now unite us as a church, may we be found prepared to join ‘ the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven.’ ”

A third covenant is entirely without date, but its language marks it as decidedly modern. It is a covenant, not a pledge.

“ Having received as a precious inheritance, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we the undersigned, pastor and people, parents and children, constituting the Church of Christ in Brookfield, unite in the expression of the following sentiments:

“ First, the Christian church with its ministry, worship and the ordinances of the Lord’s supper and baptism; and with all the moral and spiritual influences that come by the hearty reception of Christian truth promised by Jesus Christ, is a school of which Christ is the teacher and life. And all the members are learners of him, and its great use is to lead us to him that we may be participants of the blessings of that Kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy.

“ Second, we believe in the authority of God’s Word wherever revealed, and cherish the *revelation* of the one only living and true God, our heavenly Father, in the dispensation of love and wisdom by Jesus Christ, His Son.

“ God is love. God is a Spirit. Our Father who art in heaven.”

“ Third, we believe it to be our duty as human beings, to aim at that high Christian culture and perfection of character by repentance and the remission of our sins,



"THE HEIGHT OF LAND NEAR SETH BANISTER'S"

known in the gospel as a spiritual birth; to do good as we have opportunity; to deal justly and mercifully with all; to cherish an humble spirit; to maintain a sacred regard for the rights and interests of all mankind; in brief, to keep the two great commandments of Christ requiring love to God and man.

“Fourth, believing in the essential unity of the true Christian church as represented by persons of all denominations of Christians, we claim for ourselves the sacredness of personal conviction in all matters of faith and practice, and the sanctity of the individual conscience, and we grant the same to others. While everyone judges for himself what is right, no one should presume before God, to dictate to another what he *must* or must *not* believe to secure for himself the Christian salvation.

“Fifth, may we live agreeably to the laws of God, and die in the hope of a glorious immortality.

“Sixth, any person sincerely uniting in this confession and covenant, shall be a member of this church by subscribing his name thereto, and shall be entitled to all the privileges of the same, while maintaining a reputable moral character.

“Seventh, water baptism may be administered to all desiring to receive it, and in the manner which they choose, but it shall not be regarded as an ordinance *indispensable* for church membership. Children may be baptized when their parents desire it. This covenant is proposed to all persons desiring to be Christians.”

The fourth and last covenant under which this old parish church has worked, adopted about 1890 and now in use, is to my mind, the most simple, comprehensive and complete of any church covenant I have known. It is as follows:

“In the love of the truth, and in the spirit of Jesus Christ we unite for the worship of God and the service of man.”

## GIFTS

No pen will ever be able to record all the gifts to this church. For fifty years prior to her organization in 1717 the people of old Quaboag gave unstintedly for the establishment of a church of God among them, and generously

did the General Court assist. From then till now the loyal supporters have given year after year the best they had themselves. "And greater love hath no man than this."

Many gifts, however, have been recorded in the parish records and it is a most pleasant task to speak of them here.

The first gift recorded is that of Mrs. Mary Dodge, widow of Mr. Ephraim Bartlett, who gave the beautiful and valuable communion service made by Paul Revere at a cost of \$500. It was presented to the parish in 1768 and has been in constant use since then, a period of 136 years. I need not say that it is most sacredly cherished, carefully and safely kept. In connection with this service the Rev. A. Judson Rich, during his pastorate presented other vessels needed in administering the sacrament; and these too are highly cherished and carefully kept. (The old pew-ter plate in use prior to 1768 is still in possession of the parish. And since there is no reference to this plate either as purchase or gift in the records, they being complete since the division in 1754, indicates that this English stamped plate was the one used in the old meeting-house on Foster's Hill.)

On April 24th, 1854, the following appears: "Voted, that the thanks of this society be presented to the ladies of the sewing society for their earnest and timely efforts in procuring funds for obtaining cushions for the pews and a carpet for the church and for aiding in various ways in repairing and ornamenting the same."

"Also that the thanks of the society be tendered to the Rev. William B. and Mrs. Anna B. Greene for their present of a pulpit and book case."

"Voted that the thanks of the society be presented to Silas C. Herring Esq. of New York, for his present of a beautiful communion table, and that they duly appreciate this expression of his liberality to the place of his nativity."

"Voted that the thanks of the society be presented to Mrs. Aaron Kimball for the present of two chairs."

"Voted that the thanks of this society be tendered to Otis Hayden Esq. for his present of a clock; and we assure him, that as long as it is kept wound up and ticking, this society shall not run down."

On the 30th day of August 1856 Mr. Abraham Skinner

and Mr. Otis Hayden presented to the society a fine new pipe organ, costing \$850.

Previous to this they had also given a reed instrument, called a seraphine, for the purpose of aiding the church singing.

On March 17, 1870, these same gentlemen presented the church with a "Mason and Hamlin organ, for the use of the Sunday school, the choir at their rehearsals, and for social meetings generally."

At the same time the Young People's Dramatic Club presented a set of furniture, including a carpet for the parlor of the vestry.

On April 15th, 1873, a gift of \$5,000 as a bequest from Otis Hayden Esq., and on the 13th of July, 1875, a like bequest from his friend, Abraham Skinner Esq., was received.

August 9, 1893, there was reported a bequest to the parish from Mr. Washington Tufts, which netted to the trustees for the society, \$6,500.

On the death of Mr. Alfred Rice, who died April, 1893, the executors of his will paid to the Sunday school \$100, and on the death of his wife, Frances M., who died September, 1897, the excutors of her will paid the Sunday school \$50.

On December 10th, 1894, the proposition of a gift was made by Mrs. Alfred or Frances M. Rice, of \$500 towards a new organ for the church; later Mrs. Rice increased this sum to \$1,000. For the new organ other gifts were solicited and many received, from one cent given by little children in the Sunday school to \$100. Altogether these gifts amounted to \$2,143.53 and the old organ was sold for \$200 more. The beautiful organ now in use is the result and Mrs. Rice lived to see and hear the new instrument which came through her generous gift.

On February 24th, 1899, Mrs. John P. Robinson of Boston, who had given \$100 toward the new organ, and whose husband had been prominently identified with the society for many years, presented the parish her check for \$5,000.

March 27th, 1900, a gift was received from the estate of Mr. Albion D. Parks and his sister, Miss Frances H. Parks, of \$3,000, it being their expressed wish while living.

The gift was made through their executor, Mr. L. H. R. Gass.

The two framed mottos now hanging in the vestibule of the church, "The Five Points of Unitarianism" and "Our Covenant," were presented to the church early in 1904 by Mrs. Leonard Laffin.

Other pictures and articles of furniture have been given from time to time by interested friends, whose names are not recorded. We thank them all. Surely it is good to speak of these things and to warm our hearts in the sunlight of such noble generosity. The loving, loyal spirit prompting it all, not only inspires and encourages the workers today, but the gifts themselves vastly increase the efficiency and usefulness of the church. And no monument, so lasting or beautiful can anyone erect, as the bestowal of gifts which help to insure the permanency and power of the institution established for the worship of God and the service of man.

Our people have not only been generous with the church, their generosity extends to the town also. The beautiful gateway at the entrance to our cemetery, was the gift of Messrs. Abraham Skinner and Otis Hayden. The Public Library building and the "Common" were gifts of Messrs. Seth Bannister, senior and junior—hence the names, "Bannister Common," "Bannister Memorial Hall." The library funds came from Judge Pliny Merrick, and so we have the Merrick Free Public Library. While the land upon which the building stands was given by Mrs. Olive C. Felton. Mr. Washington Tufts gave the watering trough at the church corner and Mrs. Alfred Rice the drinking fountain.

## LIFE'S BUSINESS

In the affairs of the world the men of this parish have filled a large place. In no department can a complete list be given. But in the professions we find as lawyers Jedediah Foster and Pliny Merrick, both of whom became judges, presiding over Massachusetts courts. Heman Stebbins, brought into prominence by his connection with the suit at law, through which the communion service before mentioned was recovered.

Then there have been Amos Crosby, Henry Clifford, George H. Mellen, Louis F. Hyde, Edgar J. Rich, Ralph W. Bartlett, Arthur F. Butterworth, Warren T. Bartlett and Louis H. Butterworth.

As doctors of medicine, there have been: Francis Foxcroft, Henry Gilmore, John A. Homain, Henry E. Wilson, who for a time supplied the pulpit of the church, Jabez Upham, Mrs. Edward I. Galvin, wife of the parish minister, Merrick Bemis, Ransom Shephard, Lawrence T. Newhall and Nelson E. Nichols.

As ministers: Jesse A. Penniman, Fitz Henry Bemis, John Clifford, H. Sumner Mitchell.

In the struggle for independence the town was often called upon for soldiers and supplies. For these, each precinct assumed a share, taxing the people accordingly. The first mention of the war was in 1777 and in 1780 the parish voted to raise for this purpose 9,583 pounds and later 6,797 pounds more. From 1781 to the close of the war eleven meetings of the parish were held and various small sums of money were voted to pay for clothing and supplies for the army. To mention the names of those who enlisted for service from this parish would be to give the names of nearly all of the men capable of military duty.

Of those who served in the army and also as parish officers, the following are recorded: Elisha Hamilton, Jesse Abbott, Benjamin Haywood, Ephraim Cooley, Elias Staples, Josiah Hamilton, Ithaman Wright, Benjamin Felton, Joel Abbott, Tilly Brigham, Moses Jennings, Benjamin Rice, Joseph Richardson, Phineas Slayton, Josiah Hobbs, Phineas Upham, Gad Williston, John Cutler, Jabez Crosby, Seth Bannister, Joseph Reed, Nevewson Hastings, Nathan Richardson, Thomas Hincer, Josiah Hincer, William Hincer Sr., and probably there may have been others not recorded.

Thomas Henshaw, Simeon Draper, Ebenezer Prouty, J. B. Gass and George H. Dean have been innkeepers.

As merchants, traders, etc., we find the names of Abraham Skinner, Otis Hayden, S. H. Moulton, Dwight Hyde, Samuel Hyde, Charles B. Carpenter, Henry V. Crosby, Thomas Warner, John W. Livermore, Emmons E. Chapin, E. B. Gerald, George W. Oakes, Henry E. and L. D. Prouty, George C. Converse, Horace May, Levi Davis,

Hiram P. Gerald, Walter E. Gerald, Eli Converse, George H. Coolidge, Jesse Hobbs, Oscar Holcomb, Henry T. Matthewson, Henry F. Crosby, Edward B. Phetteplace, Lucius E. Estey, George H. Chapin, John E. Hobbs, Henry W. Irwin, R. G. Livermore.

Among the manufacturers there have been: John P. Robinson, Aaron Kimball, Emmons Twichell, Emmons W. Twichell, George E. Forbes, George L. Twichell, Henry Twichell, Tyler Mossman, Levi Davis, Henry L. Butterworth, Samuel and Alvin Hyde, Alfred Rice, Elisha Webb, William H. Moulton, Dwight G. Tucker, and so in other trades and useful occupations the men who are now or have been connected with the parish, have taken their places in the busy world, in most cases being leaders in action as in thought and with a fair degree of success.

### OLD FAMILIES

The early records of the parish furnish but little information concerning the different families. No marriages, births, baptisms, or deaths are recorded, only the names of officers and committees with the business done, briefly stated. Like all the old sturdy industrious pioneers, they were from the ordinary walks of life and the stones and monuments in the village cemetery record their history. Of the old families now represented in the parish the Jennings family is probably the oldest. They came from Hatfield in 1695 or 1696; two boys were killed by the Indians in 1710 and one, Joseph, served on the building committee of the meeting-house erected in 1715—16. Moses Jennings was elected a precinct officer in 1758 and his descendants are Mrs. Marcia Baslington and her granddaughter, Miss Caroline. In all five generations have been connected with the parish.

Although not now represented among us, so far as we know, the Bannister family ought to be mentioned. They were very prominent for many years after 1710 and Seth Bannister was the first janitor, holding various other offices at different times, including moderator, clerk, etc.

The Rice family settled in the town in 1714, being farmers. Elisha was the first moderator and member of the precinct committee after the division in 1754. Parker A. was for many years a deacon in the church and the village

blacksmith. The descendants now connected with the church and parish are Deacon Charles F. and family, his son Charles A. and family, the same being represented by his son Ralph F. and Mrs. Eugene Gadaire, Mrs. Claude H. Laffin, her daughter Alice Rice, Henry W. Rice, Mrs. Dwight Hyde, Charles O. and Alice Blanchard, altogether seven generations.

It is uncertain when the Brigham family settled in town. In 1722 Jonathan of Marlboro purchased a tract of land containing one thousand acres on the south side of Quaboag river. Later his son James settled on this farm, which still remains in the family. His name appears in the records of December 12th, 1758, representing him as a pew holder in the meeting-house. There are many references to the family after this, notably in the name of Frederick, as parish clerk. Five generations in direct line are recorded, represented in the parish now by Joseph, and Andrew A. with his sons, Norman O., Frederick L. and his granddaughter, Edna L. Pond.

Jabez Crosby was the first of the family bearing that name settled here. He was active in parish affairs as deacon and treasurer for many years, having been elected in 1759. Five generations have been identified with the parish and each generation has furnished a deacon, treasurer, trustee, clerk or committeeman. The present representatives are: Henry V. Crosby, his son, Henry F., Miss Harriet R., Mrs. E. E. Chapin and Mrs. Levi Davis.

The Hobbs family are descended from John, who with his brother Josiah, came from Weston, located in the Pondunk district and joined the church during the pastorate of Rev. Nathan Fiske, who also came from Weston. John and Josiah were active men in the church and both deacons. Four generations in all have been connected with the church, the present representatives being Albert C. Hobbs, Eliza R., Myra A. and Lewis E.

The name of Hastings is not recorded until 1795, although men bearing that name were undoubtedly connected with the parish. In 1753 Moses Hastings was one of the petitioners, who desired the third meeting-house built "on the height of land near Seth Bannister's, where the parish voted to build." Six generations of the family have been represented, though not all bearing that name, the name

being merged in that of Mellen. The Mellen family also has four generations to its credit. The present representatives of both the Hastings and Mellen families being Walter B. Mellen and his son Henry L.

The brother of the Rev. Thomas Cheney was the head of the Cheney family, four generations, having been connected with the parish covering a period of over 180 years, the present representatives being Mrs. John Prouty, her son, Frank E. and his daughters, Sarah, Helen and Florence Francis. This family also descended on the paternal side, counting four generations from Elliot Prouty, one of the most active and efficient men in the society.

In 1753, the name of William Olds appears attached to the petition for the new meeting-house to be set on the "height of land" etc., and for many years the name of Olds is frequently found. The present descendants are Mrs. Leonard Laffin, her son Claude H., and his daughter, Alice Rice, in all five generations.

The name of William Hencher is recorded in 1759, as one of the precinct committee, a position held for several years. In 1809, the name was changed to Henshaw (probably the original name) and in six generations the family has not lacked representatives in the parish. The present descendants are Mrs. Elizabeth M. Johnson, Lorenzo Henshaw, his son Harris, his son Raymond M., and his daughters, Nellie Mildred and Marion Christine.

The Walker family furnished the parish with one or more officers each year for many years. There have been five generations; the present descendants are Mrs. O. F. Eaton and her daughter Sadie M.

The Gerald family are descended on the maternal side from Ebenezer Prouty, a staunch supporter of the parish in his day. There have been four generations, the present representatives being Hattie L. Gerald, Walter E. and his son, Raymond Emulus.

There have been four generations of Butterworths under that name. As descendants of the Brighams, it is one of the oldest families. The present representatives are Arthur F. Butterworth, chairman of the present parish committee, his sons, Henry L. and Stuart P.

The name of Hamilton has been a prominent one in the parish, during the early years one of the most promi-

nent. Today we have no one bearing that name, but there have been four generations and Miss Ella M. Bartlett is a representative.

The Twichell family is descended from Martin, who served the parish officially as early as 1822. In the affairs of the parish this family has played a large part and played it well. In all five generations have been connected with the society. The present representatives are: Mrs. ~~Elmira~~ *Elmira* M. Forbes, George L. Twichell, his daughter, Mrs. Charles L. Vizard, her sons, LeRoy S., Robert S., her daughter, Ruth S.; also Emmons W. Twichell and his son, Lowell.

There are also four generations of the Hyde family, Robert H., Walter A., his son, Alvin Manning and daughters, Margaret and Alice, also Mrs, Dwight G. Tucker.

The Giffins count four in generations, the representatives being Mrs. John W. Livermore, her son, Robert G., his son, John W. and Mrs. Walter B. Mellen *her son, Henry L.*

The Richardsons have only four generations. But like some of the other families, they are so far apart that the number does not at all represent the period of membership, or the extent of loyal service. The present representatives are Henry Richardson and his son, William A. Dr. Ransom Shephard was the head of that family and his descendants are his son, Albert A., his daughter, Mrs. George C. Woodard and her children, Dorothy E., Philip C., George R. and Robert P.

These families have all been connected with the parish four generations or more. They have borne the burden and heat of the day, and with those who have come in later years from other fields of labor, are still the reliable help. By their labors, the world has been made brighter, happier and better.

*When'er a noble deed is wrought,  
When'er is spoken a noble thought,  
Our hearts in glad surprise  
To higher levels rise.*

*Honor to those whose words and deeds  
Thus help us in our daily needs,  
And by their overflow  
Raise us from what is low!—LONGFELLOW*

# ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM

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OF THE

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# FIRST PARISH CHURCH

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BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

1717

1754

1904

## THE MESSAGE

BROOKFIELD, MASS., OCT. 10, 1904

DEAR FRIEND :

October sixteenth, seventeen hundred and seventeen, the First Church of Brookfield was organized.

In direct descent our church has come to us from this ancient organization.

One hundred and eighty-seven years of service in this old town are now completed, and in commemoration she sends a greeting to all her children.

You are one of this honored family. Can you not join in observing this important epoch in our history.

To this end we most earnestly request your attendance at all or either of the anniversary services indicated in this message.

Yours in remembrance,

WILLIAM L. WALSH,  
 LOUIS H. R. GASS,  
 WALTER B. MELLEN,  
 HENRY V. CROSBY,  
 ALICE BLANCHARD,  
 MARTHA HYDE TUCKER,  
 ELLA M. BARTLETT,

*Committee.*

## ORDER OF SERVICES

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1904

MORNING SERVICE AT 10:45 O'CLOCK

Old Home Service, with communion

EVENING, 7:00 O'CLOCK

Service of Recognition

Addresses by	{	Rev. Frank L. Masseck,	- -	Spencer
		Rev. John Baltzly,	- - -	Hudson
		Rev. James C. Duncan,	- -	Clinton

MONDAY, OCTOBER 17

MORNING, 9:50 O'CLOCK

Organ Prelude—March from Rebkah	Barnby
Mr. H. C. Mullett	

Address of Welcome

Mr. A. F. Butterworth, Chairman Parish Committee

Historical Address

Rev. William L. Walsh

Hymn

Address

Rev. A. J. Rich

Organ Postlude—Grand Chorus	Guilmant
Dinner	

AFTERNOON, 2:00 O'CLOCK

Organ Prelude—Grand Chorus	McMaster
Quartette—"It is High Time"	Barnby

Lord's Prayer (Repeated by all)

Address—"The Holy Catholic Church"

Rev. Charles F. Dole, Boston

Hymn

Address

Rev. A. J. Rich

Quartette—"God is Love" (By Request)	Shelley
Organ Postlude—"Cum Sancto"	Mozart

EVENING, 7:30 O'CLOCK

Organ Prelude	{	a. Offertory in D Minor	Batiste
		b. Andantino	Lemare
		c. Pilgrims' Chorus	Wagner

Quartette—"Cantati Domino" (By Request) Buck

Scripture Rev. William I. Lawrence, Winchester, Mass.

Quartette—"Crossing the Bar" (By Request) Neviu

Prayer

Rev. William I. Lawrence

Hymn

Address—"What it ought to mean for a Church to be in a Community 187 years"

Rev. Thomas R. Slicer, New York City

Quartette—"The King of Love" (By Request) Shelly

ANNIVERSARY HYMN

BY REV. A. JUDSON RICH

*Our Fathers' God, whose wealth of Love  
Enwraps the circling worlds as one,  
Look down upon us from above,  
As humble followers of thy Son.*

*We bless Thee that thy fostering care,  
For century and a half doth live,  
And crowns with good this vineyard fair  
Whose Faith and Hope and Love survive.*

*Be with us as in joy we meet,  
Our Faith triumphant o'er our fears,  
Grateful thanksgivings to repeat,  
And courage strong for future years.*

*May hallowed memories of the past  
Kindle our souls with love anew,  
With deeds that time and death outlast,  
Fruits of religion's vision true.*

Benediction—"God be with you till we meet again"

(All Sing.)

Organ Postlude—War March of Priests

Mendelssohn

US 13202.10.17  
Anniversary exercises commemorating  
Widener Library 005844454



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