

A
HISTORY
OF
THE COUNTY OF BERKSHIRE,
MASSACHUSETTS;
IN TWO PARTS.

THE FIRST BEING A
GENERAL VIEW OF THE COUNTY ;
THE SECOND, AN
ACCOUNT OF THE SEVERAL TOWNS.

BY GENTLEMEN IN THE COUNTY,
CLERGYMEN AND LAYMEN.

Field, Oliver & Co.

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MARCH 16, 1921

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, To wit: }
DISTRICT CLERK'S OFFICE.

L. S. BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-third day of April, A. D. 1829, in the fifty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, David D. Field, of the said District, has deposited in this Office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:—"A History of the County of Berkshire, Massachusetts; in Two Parts The first being a General View of the County; the second, an Account of the several Towns. By Gentlemen in the County, Clergymen and Laymen."—In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act entitled "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, an Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints."

JNO. W. DAVIS,

Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

A HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF CLARKSBURG.

BY REV. JOHN W. YEOMANS.

WHEN Col. William Bullock measured out the grant which bears his name, he was compelled, in order to complete his complement of 23,040 acres, to extend it round Bernardston's grant. He intended to reach to the line of Vermont; but not knowing precisely where it was, and careful not to lose any part of his grant by going into that state, he stopt a mile short of the line, and proceeded westward 4 or 5 miles along the north line of Bernardston's grant and Adams. The part of of Bullock's grant which lies north of this grant and town, and west of Monroe, together with the gore which separates it from Williamstown and Vermont, now constitutes Clarksburg.

The settlement of this tract was begun in 1769 by Capt. Matthew Ketchum, his son Matthew and his cousins Epenetus, Daniel, and Samuel. These came from Long Island. Nicholas Clarke and his brothers Aaron, Stephen and Silas, came in about the same time, from Cumberland, R. I.

The town was incorporated March 2, 1798. The act of Incorporation thus describes its boundaries. "Beginning at the north-east corner of Williamstown, and thence running east on the line between this Commonwealth and the state of Vermont, 7 miles; thence south to the line of Bernardston's Grant about 2½ miles, thence west on said line to the east line of Adams," (this distance it is believed is about 2 miles) "thence north on said line to the northeast corner of Adams,"

(about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile) "thence on the north line of Adams to the east line of Williamstown, thence north on said line to the first mentioned boundary. Accordingly Clarksburg is seven miles long from east to west and from $2\frac{1}{4}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide from north to south containing 10,400 acres.

It received its name as is supposed from the numerous families of Clarks that settled there. The petitioners desired to have it incorporated by the name of *Hudson*, from a man of that name, who was supposed to have been the first that cut a tree in the town, but who was not known to have continued there more than one or two months. Hudson's brook still bears the name. Why the name inserted in the petition was altered, the petitioners never knew.

The surface of this town is uneven and the soil hard and stony. About two thirds of the town lies on the Hoosic and Bald mountains. The mountain land is cold and rocky. It is well covered with valuable timber, the east part with oak and chesnut, the west with spruce and hemlock. Between the mountains, the soil is good for grazing, affording a suitable proportion of arable land to accommodate the inhabitants, and adapt the farms to the production of dairies and wool. Indian corn, except when occasionally cut off by premature frost, yields a supply for the inhabitants. Wheat in some spots grows tolerably. Rye, oats, potatoes, flax, can be successfully cultivated in every part of the town, except on the steep or rocky parts of the mountains. In common seasons the inhabitants supply themselves with all these articles, and occasionally have some to spare.

Clarksburg produces for the market small quantities of butter, cheese, and wool; but its principal commodity is lumber, considerable spruce and hemlock timber is brought to Adams and Williamstown. There are four saw-mills in the town, which are kept in operation a large part of the year. A corn-mill, with one pair of stones, was built some time before the incorporation of the town, but has long been out of use, and is now in a state of decay.

The north branch of the Hoosic river runs through a part of Clarksburg. Besides this there are two streams,

commonly sufficient for saw-mills, which fall into the north branch within the limits of Adams. One of these is Hudson's brook.

There are now in the town 68 families comprising 403 souls.

Clarksburg is divided into four school districts. The two most populous have schools about 7 months each in a year. In one lying on the east mountain, embracing a few scattered families there has never been a school. The school fund arising from the sale of ministerial and school lands in Bullock's grant, yields an income of about 18 dollars annually.

The Ketchum and Clark families, who first settled in Clarksburg, were Baptists. About 14 years after the first settlement, the inhabitants of the unincorporated lands, in what is now Clarksburg, and Stamford, Vt. united in building a house of worship, nearly on the line of the States. The walls were built of spruce logs peeled, and the bark constituted the roof. It was used in the summer for two or three years.

About the same time there was a revival of religion. Twenty six belonging to Clarksburg joined the Baptist church at Cheshire Four Corners. A preacher was sent among them by the church to which they belonged ; but his exceptionable character prevented his usefulness and he was soon discharged.

In 1799 a second revival occurred under the preaching of one Dyer Stark, a Baptist, who came to labor in Stamford. A church was formed of persons belonging to Stamford and Clarksburg, called the first Baptist church of Stamford and Clarksburg. It numbered about sixty members. Those, who united with the church in Cheshire in the first revival, had by this time died or removed from the place. Near the same period a Methodist class was formed in Clarksburg and Stamford, embracing 37 members. In 1809 a Baptist preacher by the name of Paul Himes, who came to live in Stamford, held occasional meetings in Clarksburg, and some religious excitement prevailed. There are now living in Clarksburg 12 persons, who belonged to the above mentioned church ; and 16 who were members of the Methodist class. There is only one Congregational professor of religion in the town.

There has never been stated and regular preaching in Clarksburgh for any considerable time. The people have sometimes assembled on the sabbath, for prayer and conference, in their central school-house, and occasionally an evening lecture has been attended among them by a neighboring minister. Several families are now in the habit of attending meeting on the sabbath with the different congregations in the north village of Adams.

The principal families have burying places on their own grounds in some of which their neighbors are permitted to bury. The central and most frequented cemetery belongs to the Clarks.