

16/10/1

IN THE BEGINNING - DEERFIELD

Dedham and the Pocumtuck Grant. By Mildred F. Tumay,

Chapter 1

The Reverend John Eliot, a young man in 1631, arrived in Boston from old England. He began the study of the Indian language and also began to teach the Indians the way of the Christian Church. Mr. Eliot soon learned that his Indians went from place to place and were therefore very difficult to teach. So he tried to gather them in a village by themselves. He chose a place called Nonatum Hill in the town of Newton, Mass. Later, he moved his Indian village to Natick in 1651. In 1650, the first Indian Church in Massachusetts was organized. Aftersome time, this land was surveyed and found to be land belonging, by rights, to the town of Dedham.

In 1663, the court allowed the town of Dedham eight thousand acres of land in any convenient place or places where it could find a place free from former grants. A man told one of the selectmen that there was good land about twelve miles from Hadley. Some men went to look over this land. They came to Pocumtuck, or Deerfield. On their return they reported that they found the land that they were looking for, and that it was very good. They advised the Dedham people to acceptthis land. They said it was very good for farming and had a fine river and beautiful trees.

When the town heard the report of its committee it immediately appointed six persons to go to Pocumtuck and take the 8000 acres allowed them at that place. Captain John Pynchon, of Springfield, was employed by the town to purchase those lands from the Indians. He received four deeds from the Indians. Dedham gave ninety-four pounds, ten shillings, for the land.

In 1670 the owners of Pocumtuck met at Dedham. There were 26 of them. The meeting voted to employ an 'artist' to lay out the lots to assign to each proprietor to present a correct plan to the town of Dedham. A committee of three persons was appointed to give instructions to the artist to designate the place for a town; to determine where the meeting house should b built; to locate the church officers' lot, and to make a fair assignment of lots to the proprietor.

Joshua Fisher was the wise agent of Dedham. He laid out his own fertile land first as his pay for the work of assigning the property. 750 acres of this land was given to him and his helpers. The rest of the land was held in common, the land owners of Dedham in 522 shares, called "cow commons". There shares were sold, until in 1670, 31 persons owned this land. Grants were made in order to induce people to come to this land as settlers. The number of Cow commons became 557, but all of these people did not come to live on their land. Samuel Hinsdale, a Dedham man, came to the valley and was living there in 1669. He was followed by Samson Frary in a short time and Godfrey Nims was supposed to have been the third settler on these lands. "This is the beginning of Deerfield, which is celebrated for its rich meadows formed by the junction of Deerfield River with the Connecticut."

The Indians who lived in this part of the Connecticut Valley at this time of its settlement by the English, were the Agawams at Springfield, the Woronokee at Westfield, the Nonotucks at Northampton and Hadley. The Pocumtucks at Deerfield and the Squakeags at Northfield. Of these, the Pocumtucks were the most powerful and the Nonotucks were their allies.

Three of the deeds to these lands may be seen in the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association Museum at Deerfield.

After the Revolutionary War the occupations of the people of the Valley changed. Commerce commenced to be more prominent. The settlers began raising cattle for export and long droves would be raised and driven eastward to the markets. At this time brood corn was a large product for sale. In 1796, boats bringing merchandise began to come up the Connecticut River to Cheapside; canals were built; warehouses established, and many commodities were loaded on old boats to be floated down the river to Hartford. To bring the boats back upstream long poles and oars were used and this was a very hard task. Not until about 1826 did they have the use of steamboats.

Eastward from the houses in the villages, home lots extended to the hill. Westward the houses went to the river. Each family had also its share of good garden land in the meadow and a pasture on the mountainside with a wood lot. The divisions of the meadow-land were called cow-commons. Every family kept cows. The boys of the families drove them each night and morning in to be milked and back to the pastures. The village green, or common, was surrounded by a white two-rail fence with large square topped posts. Water was brought by wood pipes from springs on the hill. Everybody went to one church or meeting house until 1838. Later tobacco and onions became the main crops and these are probably the largest crops grown in the valley to-day.

As early as 1682, a few settlers had become possessed of land in the part of Deerfield that is now Greenfield. In 1686 the present Main Street had been decided upon as the place to build the houses of the settlers who had been granted twenty acre lots. Home lots of four acres each, for building purposes had been laid out on this street, although the plan of the village street was not recorded until 1749. The home lots were afterward increased to eight acres.

Joseph Petty was the man for whom Petty's Plain was named. He moved to Northfield. He was a soldier in one of the wars. John Nims was the oldest son of Godfrey Nims. John Nims' son, Thomas, settled in Greenfield and was the ancestor of the Nims family of Greenfield. He was sent to Canada with a party under charge of Lt. Samuel Williams, son of the minister John Williams, in 1712 to bargain for the return of the remaining captives in exchange for a party of French prisoners who returned to Canada with them. Mr. Williams and 57 other captives sailed from Quebec on Oct. 25, 1706. They landed in Boston, Nov. 21, 1706. As soon as the news of Reverend Mr. Williams' return to Boston reached Deerfield the people wanted him to return as their minister again.

As early as 1732, Deerfield voted to employ a "school dame at Green River, which shall be paid per scholar, four pence per week." In 1736 the Greenriver people had become so confident of their ability to manage their own affairs that they petitioned Deerfield to be set off into a separate parish. In December, 1750 it was voted to allow the people of Green River a school master for two months, provided they could find a suitable room for the school. A year later Deerfield voted that Green River have school three months in the winter season, and that preaching be provided on that side of the river when it would be difficult for the people to attend at Deerfield. That probably meant during the winter months. A schoolhouse was probably built that year, for Deerfield, in the spring of 1752, passed a vote "to allow the people living at the 'Farms' the liberty of the schoolhouse on Sundays if they would supply their own fuel." Green River Street is our Main Street of to-day in Greenfield.

After a number of years, Green River, as Greenfield, was called, on June 1753 was set off as a separate town. Cheapside was at that time owned by two men; Timothy Childs, Jr. and David Wells and that district was to become at this time a part of Greenfield. At this time the town took the name of Greenfield instead of Green River as it had been known. On July 3, 1753 the first town meeting was held and the officers were chosen at this time to govern the town. The whole section of country, now the Towns of Greenfield and Gill, was called

by the people of Deerfield, Green River.

Some of the names of our streets and sections of our town have come down through the years just as they were first named. Most of them were named for the men who first owned the property when it was apportioned out into farms. Nash's Mills section where North Parish School is now was named for Daniel Nash, a member of the first board of selectmen, and owner of the mills at that place. Silver Street was named for a counterfeiter's den which was supposed to be where this street led. It was said somewhere "in the woods." was the den. The North Central part of the town was early known as Log Plain, which was named for the large pine there. Lampblack Road got its name from the manufacturing of lampblack in that section for the making of paint. Factory Hollow was at one time a place of considerable importance in the industries of the town. Cheapside was known under that name as early as 1689. The name of Cheapside came from a section in London behind St. Paul's Cathedral near the Thames River.

After records of the towns were kept people could better see the growth of the various settlements. On February 1. 1792, a young man by the name of Thomas Dickman came from Boston, who was a printer. He set up his shop in Greenfield and printed the first newspaper in that town. He called it the 'Impartial Intelligencer'. This paper is now our town paper called the Recorder-Gazette. The combined population of both Greenfield and Gill together was about 1500. What was sold in Greenfield on that date and succeeding dates tells us much concerning the town. We read of general storekeepers who dealt in dry goods, groceries and New England rum which could be exchanged for all kind of produce. William Wait advertized for a beginner to work with him in the cooper's trade. Obed Wells wanted a runaway apprentice returned to him. Zenas Severance is a tailor and makes buckskin breeches. Hall & Taylor made nails. Jared George and Roswell Wells made brick a few rods west of Nash's Mills. Levi Page announce that he had established a line of stages from Springfield to Dartmouth, New Hampshire.

In the town records we read that Calvin Grennell & Richard E. Field are carriage makers in 1820. That Mrs. Polly Tripp, Warwick, was indicted by the Grand Jury as a common scold, as recorded on April 19, 1821. On November 23 of that year George Grinnell delivered an address at the opening of the first bridge over the Deerfield River at Shelburne Falls. On January 23, 1822 a bill for the establishment of the Franklin Bank - now the First National Bank - passed the legislature. On June 8, 1822 there was a great fire on Federal Street - William Wilson's blacksmith shop, R. E. Field's wagon shop, George W. Mark's paint shop which was over Mr. Field's store burned. And under that same day that J. & G. B. Parder sell at their cotton factory in Greenfield, cotton yarn from size No. 5 - 20 and also sheeting, shirting and ticking. William Wilson and John J. Pierce manufacture plows, and have their Franklin Furnace running, just below the Green River Mills. Another fire was reported on Federal Street on December 16, 1826. In all eight buildings burned. The local paper reported that "Owing to the great exertions of the Fire company, with only one engine, assisted by the inhabitants in the vicinity, both men and women, the progress of the fire was arrested.

On September 30, 1828, Issac Newton opened his new hotel - the Mansion House, a three story building, 64 by 49 feet, a cellar underall. Ell 68 feet long, two stories high; contains a hall 46 x 49 feet, 8 parlors and 50 rooms. On January, 1830 the census of the village school district, population 677, makes 306, females 371; families 94. In April 2, 1838, a new school district was formed called Nash's Mills. In November 1845, W. T. Davis extended Davis Street north to the present location to Pleasant Street, then east to School St., calling the new street by its present name. That portion of Chapman Street

between Allen and Silver Street was accepted as a town way. On May 24, 1849 W. T. Davis built the west half of the Mansion House Block.

The soldier's monument was dedicated October 6, 1870. It stands on the village common and is a memorial to the soldiers of the Civil War that went from the town. It is made Aberdeen granite from Scotland. The base is six feet and eight inches square, and the shaft rises to a height of twenty-seven feet. It is surmounted by a bronze eagle with poised wings, in the act of seizing and destroying serpents that have made their unwelcome presence in the eagle's nest, symbolical of the rebellion and the successful effort of the national government to suppress it.

On November 6, 1857 the Chapman High School building was dedicated. Conway Street was opened to Main Street on or soon after April, 1864. On April 21, 1869, the water is so high in the Deerfield River that it sets back over the Russell dam in the Green River so that William Sheldon came from Deerfield to Greenfield in a boat. In August, 1870 two items of interest: J.E. Lyon is building a block on Main Street, Odd Fellows Block. This was in August and on that same year in December the new road from Silver Street to the lower suspension bridge is opened. In November of 1874 the appearance of the English sparrow was first noticed.

While we have seen many names of the old families written in the histories of Greenfield, it is interesting to see what some of the first names of thers people were. The name of Captain Roger Clapp's children were, Samuel, William, Eliphalet, Waitstill, Preserved, Experience, Hopestill, Wait, Thanks, Desire, Thomas, Unite, and Supply. Zelotus and Elon Banio became manufacturers of agriculture tools in New York State. Mehuman Hinsdale was one of the very early names being the first white child born in Deerfield. Many names were chosen from the Bible - Moses, Matthew and jonathan. One of the minister's names was Erastus.

Chapter 10

It is supposed that Eastavan Gomez, in 1525, was the discoverer of the Connecticut River, but the Dutch from the New Netherlands first laid claim to its shores for settlement. Men from Plymouth, upon information obtained from the Dutch, first opened trade with the Indians living in that section. One historian says that when the Dutch heard that the Pilgrims had opened trade with the Indians on the Fresh River they quickly gathered men and materials and built their little fort called "Good Hope" at Hartford, that they might be first to claim priority of settlement. But they had hardly finished their fort when Plymouth men made their appearance, and even though the Dutch threatened them they moved on up the river and built their trading houses.

For a very long time the "Long River" had been the highway of the Indians who traveled on it in their bark canoes. When the settlers were almost starving in 1636 the Pocumtucks loaded fifty canoes with corn and carried them by boat to Windsor, Hartford, and Agawam. William Pyncheon owned a boat which he used on the river. He was the licensed fur dealer in this vicinity and for every skin he had to pay a fee, so it was necessary for him to keep an account of all his shipments. This was the main business for many years from this section east. Later much produce was taken down the river and sent around Cape Cod to Boston. After the Revolutionary War a cheaper means of transportation was needed and so to make the distance shorter several canals were built.

Before the steamboats on the River, the Flat bottomed boats were pushed with poles, or when the wind was from the south they made use of sails. By July, 1831, there was "regular and certain" steam boat service between Hartford and Greenfield. (Cheapside.)

Around 1900 a new industry rose by which the river was made a highway for transportation of millions of logs to the sawmills established along the banks of the Connecticut. Many men were employed. It was very hard work and a man who was able to stand on the logs in the middle of the river in a jam had to be very skillful. After supper, which was cooked in camp, the men gathered to tell stories and listen to an accordin or banjo. They went to bed early since they must be up at five o'clock the next morning to work.

The bridges built in the early days were not put out of reach of high water. The abutments were usually made of logs and so the bridges often were in need of repair. In 1787 the new highway from Deerfield to Greenfield was laid out on the higher land east of the meadows. John Williams was granted the privilege of maintaining a ferry east of the meadows. John Williams was granted the privilege of maintaining a ferry where the Cheapside bridge is now. The old ferry at Pine Hill was abandoned.

The first bridge built over the Connecticut River was at Walpole, New Hampshire in 1784. In 1812 there were bridges at Hartford, Enfield, Springfield, Northampton, Hatfield, Sunderland, Montague, Fall River, Brattleboro and Westmoreland. Two bridges were built over Fall River in 1697. In 1798 a new bridge was built at Country Farms over the Green River. Again, in 1891, another was built at the same place.

In December, 1801, the town meeting voted to build a bridge over the pond near Nash's Mills. In May 1817, the town meeting voted to build a new bridge on on the Shelburne Road - The Newton Bridge at the end of Main Street.

Greenfield built another bridge in 1947. The 1947 Town Report says: "Work was started on the Montague City Bridge replacing the old covered bridge structure swept away by the floods of 1936." When completed this bridge will benefit many people living in East Greenfield and Montague City as well as those in surrounding towns.

ROADS

The first road, which was nothing but a bridle path for many years, was from Deerfield, northward. It ran just east of the elevation known as "Pine Hill", crossing the Deerfield river near the north end of the hill, and kept along the east side of Green River to the grist mill. Main Street, as is shown by the plan upon the records was laid out in its present shape in 1749, but reference is made to a road in Northfield as early as 1723. In 1760, it was voted by the town to lay out a road from the meeting house spot, (Trap Plain) to the proprietor's road. This is what is now known as Silver Street, and was built also from the meeting house, east to the Gill Road, or Northfield Road, as it was then called. Previous to 1760, the only roads in town were the one from Deerfield, one from the west end of Main Street to Country Farms and one from the same place to Colrain.

This story has been told about one of the pioneer woman living at the time of the War of 1812. Her name was Mrs Rhoda Shippee. She was famed for her ability as a housewife and nurse and is said to have traveled to her neighbors on snow shoes to give needed help. But this is the story: Her husband came home one day and told her that he had enlisted in the war. She went out and clipped fleece from a black sheep and a white one; she carded the wool by hand and spun it on her old spinning wheel, wove it on a hand loom and cut and made the trousers before her husband left for Boston the next day. She had no dark thread, so she drew white thread over the bottom of the dinner pot until it was dark enough for her purpose.

About 1830 two men began the manufacture of wagons and sleighs in Colrain.

Cooking stoves came into use in 1813 and iron plows in 1824, and Colrain made them both.

At the Red Mill on the branch, the late Fred E. Purrington carried on a successful manufactory of boxes and his mill furnished power for the first electric lights in Colrain. They were on till midnight, but at that time Mr. Purrington turned off the power and went home to bed. If anyone was giving a party, or there was a public association needing electricity, he would keep it on till one o'clock, but not later. Some times he forgot this agreement and then there was a scramble in the dark for lamps. This was one of the real problems in those days.

In every home the dye tubs could be found and women mostly did this work. Indigo blue and butternut brown were the most common colors, but some women acquired great skill in making and using vegetable dyes and making a particular dye was kept a secret in one family. Soap making was an important work on every farm.

The women usually made the candles which furnished light for the long winter evenings. They were of two kinds - the mounded and the dipped tapers.

Natick means "A place of God's providing."

Charlemont and Chickley Alp was purchased by two men, Chickley and Keyes.

History and tradition are at variance as to who was the first white man to settle in part of Deerfield which was afterward the town of Greenfield. Mr. Willard ascribes this distinction to a Mr. Brooks, who was granted twenty acres of land on the Green River, in 1696 and he locates his dwelling on the site of the house on Washington Street which has been called the "Old Bakery". But Mr. Sheldon, in his Deerfield history, says that Lt. Pomeroy was granted a home lot and seven cow commons, March 30, 1682, which were located on Green River, and that he built thereon in 1696. the first house ever erected in the section of the town which became Greenfield. Some years ago, Mr. Joseph Miller, then living below the hill at West Main Street discovered a well on the land east of his house of which the oldest inhabitant had no knowledge. He believed that Pomeroy's log house was once near by. Pomeroy was prominent in the affairs of Deerfield at its settlement and was on the board of selectmen. It is a singular fact that none of his descendents nor any family bearing his name, as for that matter, are now residents of Greenfield and this is true of other early settlers of this region.

The southern boundary of the township, or the line between Deerfield and Greenfield was a question of contention and discussion at the time of the incorporation of the new town. It was finally settled by a committee of disinterested men, Col. Oliver Partridge of Harfield, Dr. Samuel Mather and Dr. Ebenezer Hunt of Northampton.

- 1835 First survey for Troy and Greenfield R. R. begun.
Dexter Marsh first calls the attention of scientific men to the footprints found in the stones near Turners Falls.
- 1836 Agitation begun for the annexation of Cheapside.
First deposit made in Franklin County Savings Institution.
- 1837 First Unitarian Church built and society organized.
Hope Street laid out.
- 1840 Population 1,756.
Town Hall on Federal Street, now known as Fireman's Hall.
- 1843 First fire company organized.
- 1845 Pocomtuck Lodge of Odd Fellows founded.
Greenfield and Northampton steam railroad chartered.
Davis, Franklin, and Pleasant Streets opened.
"Owing to a break in the Holoke dam an unusual quantity of shad were caught in Montague."
- 1846 Daguerreotype rooms opened by Dr. Joseph Beals.
Steam cars began running to Greenfield on the G. & N. R. R..
Newton Place opened.
- 1847 Elm trees on Franklin Street set out.
Town by-laws adopted.
Mansion and American Houses named.
- 1848 First Cattle Show.
Troy & Greenfield Railroad incorporated.
Wells Street opened.
- 1849 Present Episcopal Church built.
Franklin County Bank chartered.
Second Court house built.
Fire District organized.
First message received by the Electric Telegraph: Major H. Tyler, operator.
Olive Street opened.
Railroad extended to Brattleboro, Vt.
- 1850 First exhibition of the Franklin county Agricultural Society.
Population, 2,580.
Fifteen hundred dollars appropriated for schools.
- 1851 Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad opened to Greenfield.
Green River Cemetery dedicated,
Union Street opened.
- 1852 First Baptist Society organized.
- 1853 Chapman and Maple Streets opened.
- 1854 Town Hall dedicated and named Washington Hall.
First year of the High School; Luther B. Lincoln, Principal.
Devens, Grove, Conway and Park Streets opened.

- 1855 First Baptist Church built.
Library Association organized.
- 1856 Jail and House of correction built.
Indignation meeting held to denounce the outrage committed upon
Senator Charles Summer.
- 1857 High School built on Chapman Street.
- 1858 Congress Street accepted.
- 1859 Town voted to subscribe for three hundred shares of the capitol
stock of the T. & G. R.R.
- 1860 Illuminating gas introduced.
Population, 3198.
- 1861 News of the firing upon Fort Sumpter received April 14.
First war meeting held the 20th. Greenfield Guards, Co. G. 10th
Regiment, M.V.N. left for the war in November.
- 1863 The railroad bridge at Cheapside burned by the oponents of the
draft in July.
- 1864 First National Bank, succeeding the Franklin county Bank.
- 1869 Greenfield Savings Bank chartered.
Prospect Hill School for Young Ladies founded.
School districts abolished.
- 1870 Present church for the Second Congregational Society dedicated.
Soldier's Monument erected.
Edwin E. Day Post G.A.R. organized.

First Memorial Day services held.
Glen water brought to town.
Church of the Holy Trinity built.
Population, 3,589.
- 1871 \$1,363 subscribed for and went to the sufferers from the great
Chicago fire.
First Governor of Massachusetts elceted from this town,
William B. Washburn.
- 1872 High School building on Pleasant Street erected.
- 1873 The great fire on Main Street, July 3rd.
- 1874 First United States Denator from Greenfield, Washburn.

- 1875 Packard National Bank chartered.
- 1876 Rural Club organized.
Greenfield selected by the state Board of Education to represent by its work the country schools of the State to the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia.
- 1877 Old Town Hall on Federal Street leased to the Fire District.
- 1878 Library Association Building erected.
Great temperance revival, under the leadership of Francis Murphy.
- 1880 Free Public Library Started.
Galleries and scenery put in Washington Hall.
Fort Square Accepted.
Population, 3,903.
- 1881 German Methodist Church built.
Maple Street to Federal opened. Garfield Street laid out.
- 1883 Leonard Street accepted.
- 1884 Davis Street and School Street extended.
- 1885 Present Methodist Episcopal Church built. Brick schoolhouse on the extension of School Street built.
Walnut Street accepted.
- 1886 Stone-crusher purchased and this town began macadamising its streets.
James, Allen, George, Orchard, and Pond Streets accepted.
- 1887 Town lighted by electricity.
- 1888 Interstate Mortgage and Trust Co. chartered.
Power Court and Power Square accepted.
The great blizzard of March 12 - 14th.
- 1889 New By-Laws adopted.
- 1890 Odd Fellows Hall dedicated.
The tower of the Holy Trinity Church erected.
Highland Avenue Park bought.
North Street accepted.
Population, 5,252.
Appropriated for schools, \$15,600
- 1891 Greenfield Club incorporated.
Franklin Street extended to Maple Street.
Chestnut and Sanderson Streets accepted.
Voted to pay for labor at the rate of \$3.75 per day of nine hours labor.
- 1892 Remarkable hail storm in June.
Grade crossing on Clay Hill abolished.
Lincoln Street accepted.
- 1893 Riddell Street accepted.
Superintendent of Schools appointed.
- 1894 Memorial to First Church on Silver Street erected.

- 1895 Electric railroad to Miller's Falls opened.
 High School on Federal Street built.
 Pierce Street School built.
 Franklin County Public Hospital founded.
 Pumping Station on Green River established.
 Fire - alarm system put in.
 Iron Bridge at west end of Main Street built.
 Haywood, Cleveland and Shattuck Streets accepted.
 Appropriation for schools \$22,950.
- 1896 Cheapside annexed.
 School committee increased from three to nine members.
 Philips and Beech Street accepted.
- 1897 Masonic Block erected.
 Columbus and Newton Streets accepted.
- 1898 Public kindergarder opened.
 Brick School at Four Corners built.
 Laurel Street accepted.
 Company L. of the Second Regiment, M.V.N. leaves for the Spanish War.
- 1900 Population, 7,927.
 First tree warden elected.
 Building at the corner of Main and Hope Streets bought for the use
 of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.)
 Spring Terrace and Charles Street accepted.
- 1901 Brick School on Davis Street build.
 New Almshouse built.
 Munson Street accepted.
- 1902 Electric railroad opened to South Deerfield.
 First "Old Home Week" celebrated.
 Second Baptist Church built.
- 1902 High School building on Federal Street destroyed by fire.
 Unitarian Parsonage built.
 Voted that the minimum wages for labor for the town should be \$1.75
 per day of eight hours.
- 1903 High School Building rebuilt.
 Electric Railroad extended to Northampton.
 Meridian, Myrtle, Quincy, Holly, Kenwood, and Forrest Streets accepted.
 Appropriated for the schools, \$41,850.

These are additional notes to be included in Old Deerfield, Greenfield
 green note book.

Fourth teacher's please add immediately before mislaid.

P.S. Of Course these dates are not to be memorized, They are given to
 use for reference.

Mildred F. Tumay,
 Visiting Teacher.