



FREDERIC P. WELLS.

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PREFACE.

Seventy years ago, in the autumn of 1831, Rev. Clark Perry, then pastor of the Congregational church in this town, delivered an historical address embodying the results of the inquiries which he had made among the oldest people as to the early events of the settlement of the town, and the period of the Revolutionary War.

He lamented that all who had borne an active part in those events had been allowed to pass away without any pains being taken to gather from them the full particulars of those years, and that in consequence of that neglect, the time had passed when a complete history of the town could be written.

A period precisely equal to that which had elapsed since the first white men wintered in the Coös Country, to the date of Mr. Perry's address, has passed since his time, and it would seem useless to attempt, at this late date, what could not be properly done seventy years ago.

Yet the attempt has been made to gather the annals of the town, and the result is now submitted to the considerate judgment of those most interested in its history.

It is to Rev. Clark Perry that we owe the preservation of so much relating to our early years. He interested himself in the days of old, and imparted to others somewhat of his enthusiasm.

After Mr. Perry went away, Mr. David Johnson took up what was to him a most congenial task, that of collecting the papers of his father, Col. Thomas Johnson, and he thus preserved, incidentally, much of our early history.

Of the collections of Mr. Perry and Mr. Johnson, Rev. Grant Powers had the full use in preparing his historical sketches of the Coös Country, in 1846. Had Mr. Powers realized the interest which would one day be attached to all the memorials of those early years, he might have been more accurate in his statements, and have given honor to all to whom honor was due. But he allowed his own prejudices and those of others to influence the narrative; he neglected, for reasons well known to himself, to mention many of the most prominent men in Newbury and Haverhill, and, as a result, his work, while graphic and interesting, is unreliable as a history of either town, and is chiefly remarkable for what it does not say.

The present volume, made possible through the public spirit of the town as shown by its votes in the annual meeting of 1898, and the

succeeding years, is an attempt to complete the work which Messrs. Perry, Johnson and Powers began. For the editor it has been the labor of many years, and many of the incidents which it relates were given him by people, now long dead, who could remember the Revolutionary War.

In its preparation all accessible sources of information have been drawn upon, and material enough for several such volumes has been found, so that the task has been one of selection and condensation.

That it is free from errors would be to claim what no history ever was or will be, and that its publication will bring to light facts which may modify some of its statements is probable. But it preserves much that would, otherwise, soon pass into oblivion, and its value will increase as the years go by.

It has been prepared amid the labors and cares of farm life, and at a distance from any reference library or collection of archives, and much more might have been gathered, had the editor more leisure for the task.

And for the absence of much that might be interesting in anecdote and reminiscence he may be allowed to plead his total loss, for almost thirty years, of the sense of hearing.

If this volume keeps the memory green of the noble men and women who have lived in Newbury; if it conveys to the present and future generations some idea of the trials and privations which their ancestors endured; if it makes clearer to them the struggles and self-denial through which the institutions of the town were built up, the labor and cost of its preparation will not have been in vain.

The study of those years past should make us more contented with the present. It is easy to view the past through rose-tinted spectacles; it is not so easy to comprehend the hard conditions of life in those days.

It is well for us if we can learn to say with Chaucer:

"It doth mine heart good,
That I have had my world as in my time."

The grateful acknowledgements of the editor and his readers are due to those citizens by whose influence the town was induced to undertake the publication of this volume, and to the various town officials who have aided in the work. A list of those in Newbury who have communicated a fact or a record would be a census of half its population.

The editor desires to mention several gentlemen whose kind assistance has been of great value in its preparation:

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F. P. W.

NEWBURY, VT., January 6, 1902.

HISTORY
OF
NEWBURY, VERMONT,

From the Discovery of the Coös Country
to Present Time.

WITH GENEALOGICAL RECORDS OF MANY FAMILIES.

By FREDERIC P. WELLS,
IN BEHALF OF THE TOWN.

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