

ANNALS OF BROOKFIELD
FAIRFIELD COUNTY
CONNECTICUT

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AND
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BROOKFIELD, CONN.

1929

the Housatonic River at Derby, Conn., in 1870, shares of stock being sold for good prices at New Milford. Shad were caught in a seine, which was about as long as the width of the river and as wide as the river was deep. *Falls Mountain*, with its Indian romance, will always remain sacred to local Indian history.

The Indians of western Connecticut were tributaries to the *Mohawks* of New York State, and annually paid their dues to the New York tribe, of whom they stood in terror.

The Indians traveled narrow footpaths three feet wide through the native forests of Connecticut, and continually burned over the forests, thus keeping them clear of underbrush. It is said that the forests when first entered by the English settlers were very beautiful indeed, the trees were of great size with very little undergrowth to impede the traveler.

Indians were very numerous in the town of *Woodbury*, especially near that part of ancient Woodbury called *South Britain*.

Pomperaug was the sachem of the Pootatuck Indian tribe when the settlers arrived at Woodbury, Conn. He had a fortress on "*Castle Rock*" and gave his name to the beautiful valley and to the river *Pomperaug* which enters the Housatonic River about one mile southeast of the bridge over the Housatonic at Sandy Hook. The ancient name of Woodbury was *Pomperaug*. The principal village of the Pootatucks was about one mile north of the Sandy Hook bridge in the present town of Southbury, Conn. Pootatucks sold three fourths of their lands in southwest Southbury and removed to the tribe at Wyantenuck, that is, New Milford, at the Great Falls.

Shepaug, a sagamore of the Pootatucks, gave his name to the picturesque river Shepaug, which enters the Housatonic River about four miles above the great bridge at Sandy Hook.

Cockshure was an Indian brave of the Pootatuck tribe at Woodbury; he owned an island in the Housatonic River, called "*Cockshure's Island*," later known as "*Hubbell's Island*" from Peter Hubbell who owned it and to whom the Court granted the right to keep a "ferry" at the north end of the island in 1730. This island was located one third of a mile north of the bridge at Sandy Hook, Newtown; it was plainly visible from the bridge until the erection of the *Stevenson Dam*, after which the island was submerged. Cockshure was the Indian who deeded to my thrice-great-grandfather, Stephen Hawley, the tract of land, four hundred acres, called the "intervale," or "*Hawley's Plain*," near Southville in 1739. I have this deed in my possession bearing the Indian's "mark," an arrowhead. Cockshure calls himself of the Indian Plantation at Woodbury, Conn.

Cockshure had previously deeded to Stephen Hawley over seven hundred acres, "for the town of New Milford," below *Lovers' Leap* on the east side of the Housatonic River.

CHAPTER III.

THE PARISH OF NEWBURY INCORPORATED IN 1754 BECAME THE TOWN OF BROOK- FIELD, CONN., IN 1788.

As early as the year 1700, or earlier, white settlers were beginning to appear in this vicinity and rude dwelling-houses were constructed in the southwestern section of the present town of Brookfield, which was then a part of the town of Danbury, settled in 1684.

Newtown was settled in 1705, New Milford in 1707 and those sections of Brookfield which were at that early period a part of these towns appear to have been occupied a little later than the Danbury portion.

Previous to 1743 the community here had become so numerous as to desire church privileges of their own, as it was very inconvenient for the heads of families to ride from eight to ten miles to attend Sabbath services at one of the three towns, Danbury, Newtown and New Milford. Some of the more prominent families here erected "Sabbath-Day Houses" near the church at Newtown. These were small one-room affairs to which these families might resort for warmth in winter and to partake of a midday lunch between the morning and afternoon services. In some instances families traveled from eight to twelve miles on Saturday that they might be present on the Sabbath at the Newtown church services. Caleb Baldwin, Jr., Lieut. Joseph Smith of Whisconier Hill and Jeremiah Northrop built "Sabbath-Day Houses" at Newtown in 1740. For a considerable period of years, an annual petition was sent to the General Assembly asking that a parish might be incorporated here. The petition was opposed for many years by the Newtown Church. In 1752 church privileges were granted to the settlers here for five months each year, from September to March, and bounds for a parish were agreed upon. In 1754 the General Assembly granted the petition of the memorialists, and the "Society or Parish of Newbury" was duly incorporated and the bounds remained as fixed two years previous. The name of the parish originated by combining the first part of the names New Milford and Newtown with the last part of Danbury. The early Sabbath services were held in the homes of the people here until 1757, when the First Congregational church was erected.

The inhabitants of *Newbury Parish* managed their own society affairs, but for military service her male citizens were enrolled either at Danbury, New Milford or Newtown until after the Revolutionary War or until 1788.

There are no Indian deeds in the town clerk's office at Brookfield for the reason that the territory included in the parish of Newbury (later the town of Brookfield) was not *deeded* to the settlers here by the Indians. New Milford gave the southwestern part of her township, known as the "South Farms," namely, eight and one half square miles, to form the northern half of Newbury; Danbury contributed three and three fourths square miles, which constituted the southwestern part of Newbury; and Newtown gave six square miles of her land, known as "West Farms or Whiskenere," for the south and southeastern section of Newbury Parish.

These three parcels of land, aggregating about 11,380 acres and defined by bounds set for the parish by the General Assembly, remained the same when Newbury Parish became the town of Brookfield. The area is now 12,749 acres.

The ancient boundary line between the towns of New Milford and Newtown crossed our present village street near the Congregational parsonage, and just south of the present Episcopal church. The northern half of Newbury therefore lay within the town of New Milford, which was in Litchfield County; that portion of Newbury on the south of the boundary was within the town of Newtown; while the western part of Newbury, south of the Samuel Sherman farm, was included in the town of Danbury, which was in Fairfield County.

NEWBURY PARISH PETITIONERS.

Men who petitioned the General Assembly on May 2, 1743, to be made a society, called Newbury Society (eleven years before it was granted), were:

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Caleb Baldwin, Jr. | Joseph Murray |
| Abel Barnum | John Nearing |
| Daniel Barnum | John Noble, Jr. |
| Isaac Barnum | Jeremiah Northrop |
| Josiah Bollit | Thomas Picket |
| Ebenezer Bostwick | Joseph Ruggles, Sr. |
| Robert Bostwick | Joseph Smith |
| Henry Botsford | Benjamin Stevens |
| Benjamin Dunning | Benjamin Stevens, Jr. |
| David Dunning | Stephen Stockwell |
| Stephen Hawley | Richard Waring |
| Benjamin Lyon | |

**BROOKFIELD INCORPORATED MAY, 1788, AND FIRST TOWN
MEETING HELD JUNE 9, 1788. COL. SAMUEL CANFIELD,
MODERATOR.**

The Parish of Newbury became the town of Brookfield, and was incorporated in May, 1788. The town was named for the first minister, the Reverend Thomas Brooks, who came from England and was pastor of the First Congregational Church here for forty-two years, from 1757 to 1799, at which time he died. The town was called Brooks-field or Brookfield at the date of its legal incorporation. Newtown opposed the petition of Newbury to be made a town as late as 1772, and considerably retarded the date of incorporation. In 1781, at a special town meeting held at Newtown, it was voted that "this town will not oppose the inhabitants of the Parish of Newbury at the General Assembly May next in their effort to secure town privileges." In 1785 Newtown again voted to withdraw opposition, stating: "Considering ye difficulties ye Parish of Newbury labors under in lying in three towns and two counties (Fairfield and Litchfield) we have no objection, nor shall we oppose them at ye General Assembly in their memorial for town privileges."

The northern part of Brookfield, which was in Litchfield County, was upon petition to the General Assembly annexed to Fairfield County.

TOWN LIMITS AS FIXED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The northeast boundary line of Brookfield begins at the Housatonic River, at the northeast corner of the late Capt. John Warner's farm (a few rods south of the bridge which crossed the Housatonic and which was carried away by freshet in 1918), and running westerly, passes thirty or forty rods north of Levi Warner's barn on Powder Hill to the Gallows Hill Cemetery, and passing through it continues west until it intersects the New Fairfield line; thence running southwardly on the New Fairfield line to a certain stone marker at the lower end of Beaver Brook Mountain (a little below the White Turkey Inn); thence running easterly to the south end of Bound Swamp to Stony Hill line (the ancient parochial bound of Newtown); thence in a straight line east to a monument at the southeast corner of Capt. Richard Smith's garden on Whisconier Hill (below Timothy Reardon house); thence to the Great River (Housatonic) at the "riding place," which is 120 rods north of the mouth of Pond Brook, where it enters the Housatonic; thence northerly on the Housatonic River to point of beginning.

The families of the early settlers came from *Milford, Stratford, Norwalk*, a few from *Wethersfield* and one family at least came from *Old*

Hadley, Mass. The pioneer families bore the names of Bostwick, Baldwin, Blackman, Bradley, Brooks, Benedict, Barnum, Camp, Dunning, Dibble, Hawley, Hurd, Merwin, Murray, Northrop, Noble, Peck, Ruggles, Smith, Sherman, Star, Stevens, Wildman, Wheeler, Warner and others.

EARLY CITIZENS OF BROOKFIELD IN 1788.

The names of 214 adult male citizens of Brookfield (formerly the Parish of Newbury) who presented themselves before the first town clerk, Elijah Starr, when the town was incorporated, for the purpose of recording their "*Ear Marks*" (marks on domestic animals and cattle that were allowed to roam at large, by which their owners could identify them, said "marks" being duly recorded in a book).

This list has been carefully transcribed from the town record book.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Blackman Ebenezer, June 11, 1788. | Beecher Raphael, May 27, 1793. |
| Baldwin Jared, June 11, 1788. | Barlow Daniel, May 27, 1796. |
| Baldwin Thaddeus, June 20, 1788. | Baldwin Joel, June 7, 1796. |
| Bunnell Job, June 18, 1788. | Buckingham Silas, June 22, 1798. |
| Burrit Josiah, June 12, 1788. | Camp Abraham, June, 1788. |
| Brush Joseph, June 12, 1788. | Camp Nathan, June 23, 1788. |
| Bostwick Benjamin, June 21, 1788. | Clark Oliver, June 30, 1788. |
| Brown Samuel, June 30, 1788. | Curtis F., July 1, 1788. |
| Blackman Niram, July 2, 1788. | Curtis John B., July 1, 1788. |
| Baldwin Tibbels, July 2, 1788. | Curtis Ephraim, July 7, 1788. |
| Bostwick Levi, July 4, 1788. | Chase Isaac, Oct. 13, 1788. |
| Barnum Ezbon, July 4, 1788. | Camp Levi, Dec. 24, 1789. |
| Barnum Isaac, July 4, 1788. | Camp Hezekiah, June 4, 1791. |
| Baldwin Amos, July 4, 1788. | Camp David P., Dec. 7, 1791. |
| Bennit David, July 28, 1788. | Camp John, Apr. 2, 1793. |
| Benedict Nahum, Dec. 23, 1788. | Camp Asa W., May 30, 1856. |
| Barlow Nehemiah, Feb. 16, 1789. | Dunning John, June 18, 1788. |
| Bristol Israel, Feb. 16, 1789. | Dunning John, July 3, 1788. |
| Booth Abel, June 10, 1789. | Dunning Jeremiah, July 2, 1788. |
| Buckley Luther, March 24, 1790. | Dunning Jared, July 2, 1788. |
| Benedict Francis H., June 17, 1790. | Dunning Liverius, July 10, 1788. |
| Bradley Nathan, Nov. 15, 1790. | Dibble Ezra, Jr., July 25, 1788. |
| Buckingham Curtis, Dec. 8, 1790. | Dibble Ezra, July 25, 1788. |
| Booth Philo, Apr. 21, 1791. | Dunning Reubin, Jan. 6, 1789. |
| Brooks Rev. Thomas, May 9, 1791. | Dunning Wolcot, May 15, 1789. |
| Beecher Jonathan, Jan. 11, 1793. | Davis George, June 10, 1789. |
| Baldwin Henry, Jan. 11, 1793. | Dibble Levi, Nov. 15, 1790. |
| Bristoll John, Apr. 2, 1793. | Dunning Michael, Jan. 30, 1793. |

- Dibble David S., April 22, 1822.
 Foster David A., June 18, 1824.
 Foster C. Timothy, May 2, 1837.
 Gray Isaac, Jan. 5, 1835.
 Gun Joseph, June 18, 1788.
 Gun Abel.
 Gregory John, Jr., July 3, 1788.
 Gray Isaac, July 4, 1788.
 Gregory Mr. John, Nov. 5, 1790.
 Hawley Nehemiah, June 10, 1788.
 Hawley Isaac, June 4, 1791.
 Hawley Liverius, Dec. 5, 1788.
 Hawley David, May 20, 1797.
 Hawley Daniel, May 24, 1816.
 Hurlbut David, June 10, 1788.
 Hoit Daniel, June 21, 1788.
 Hull Abraham, June 23, 1788.
 Hamlin David, May 17, 1791.
 Hamlin Elisha, July 11, 1791.
 Hatch Joseph, July 27, 1797.
 Hubbell Merrit, Sept. 4, 1798.
 Hamlin Rufus, June 19, 1801.
 Jackson Daniel, July 1, 1788.
 Jackson David, July 13, 1788.
 Jackson Gershom, Sept. 12, 1788.
 Jackson Ephraim, Sept. 8, 1788.
 Keeler John, June 9, 1788.
 Keeler Nathan, June 11, 1788.
 Knowles Elizer, June 12, 1788.
 Keeler Ralph, June 28, 1788.
 Lewis Beach, July 1, 1788.
 Lewis Abner, Nov. 11, 1800.
 Lewis Walker, Mar. 4, 1797.
 Lake Benjamin, July 18, 1788.
 Lockwood Isaac Sen, May 16, 1789.
 Lobdell Daniel, Jan. 11, 1791.
 Lobdell Lewis, May 4, 1791.
 Merwin Samuel, June 10, 1788.
 Merwin Samuel, Jr., June 12, 1788.
 Merwin Isaac, Sr., June 10, 1788.
 Merwin Levi, June 19, 1788.
 Merwin Andrew, June 10, 1788.
 Merwin Nathan, June 30, 1788.
 Merwin Philo M. D., July 22, 1788.
 Merwin Isaac, Jr., Dec. 9, 1788.
 Morehouse John, July 2, 1788.
 Morehouse E., July 2, 1788.
 Merwin Nehemiah, July 4, 1788.
 Morehouse James, Aug. 12, 1797.
 Morehouse Daniel O., May 12, 1828.
 Matthew Sherman, Nov. 18, 1817.
 Northrop Joshua, June 11, 1788.
 Northrop Enos, June 11, 1788.
 Northrop David, June 10, 1788.
 Northrop Ezra, June 18, 1788.
 Nearing John H., June 18, 1788.
 Noble Jesse, June 18, 1788.
 Northrop Isaac, June 10, 1788.
 Nichols William, June 26, 1788.
 Northrop Waite, July 1, 1788.
 Nearing Henry.
 Nearing Joseph.
 Northrop Drake.
 Northrop Joseph.
 Northrop Amos.
 Northrop Amos, Jr.
 Northrop Andrew, Sr.
 Noble Elnathan.
 Noble Curtiss.
 Noble Cyrenius.
 Northrop John.
 Northrop Joshua, Jr.
 Northrop Asa.
 Osborn James, June 24, 1788.
 Osborne Israel, July 2, 1788.
 Osborne David, Aug. 31, 1789.
 Osborne, Lewis, May, 1799.
 Olmsted Joseph, July 2, 1788.
 Peck Amiel, June 11, 1788.
 Peck David, July 1, 1788.
 Peck Henry, Jan. 14, 1796.
 Peck Henry Esq., June 23, 1788.
 Peck John, July 1, 1788.
 Peck Julius, July 1, 1788.

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| Peck Zerah S. A., May 1, 1819. | Starr Joseph, June 23, 1788. |
| Palmer Ammi, May 23, 1789. | Summers Mark, June 23, 1788. |
| Rood John, July 18, 1788. | Starr James, June 30, 1788. |
| Ruggles Timothy. | Star Elijah, July 31, 1788. |
| Ruggles Ashbel. | Starr Czar, July 1, 1788. |
| Ruggles Samuel. | Stevens Joseph, July 1, 1788. |
| Ruggles Abijah. | Sturdevant Timothy, July 5, 1788. |
| Ruggles Benjamin A. | Sturdevant John, July 5, 1788. |
| Ruggles Eli. | Starr Gideon, July 22, 1788. |
| Ruggles Isaac W. | Sherman Zadock, Nov. 10, 1788. |
| Ruggles Eldad. | Sherman Rufus, May 21, 1789. |
| Ruggles John. | Sherman Samuel, Dec. 26, 1791. |
| Ruggles Joseph, Jr. | Sherman Andrew, July 30, 1795. |
| Ruggles Comfort. | Starr John, May 12, 1789. |
| Ruggles. | Starr Eliud, Apr. 21, 1792. |
| Ruggles Azor. | Starr Asher, Feb. 7, 1794. |
| Ruggles Salmon. | Seeley Gideon, July 19, 1813. |
| Ruggles Robert Bostwick. | Taylor Andrew, Dec. 12, 1788. |
| Ruggles Alfred, Jan. 30, 1794. | Treadway John, June 10, 1789. |
| Randall Asa N., March 4, 1797. | Tomlinson Joseph, Oct. 12, 1791. |
| Stevens Ajah, June 10, 1788. | Tomlinson Joseph B., May 19, 1796. |
| Stevens Daniel, June 10, 1788. | Turrell Elijah, Oct. 21, 1801. |
| Stevens Joseph, June 10, 1788. | Taylor Abel S., Dec. 22, 1824. |
| Stevens Joseph, Jr., June 10, 1788. | Thorp Nathan B., June 14, 1812. |
| Stevens Hezekiah, June 18, 1788. | Veal John or Vail, July, 1788. |
| Stevens Hezekiah, Jr., June 18, 1788. | Warner Lieut. Martin. |
| Smith Capt. Joseph, June 18, 1788. | Warner Benjamin K. |
| Smith Abel, June 18, 1788. | Wheeler Amos. |
| Smith Capt. Richard, June 18, 1788. | Wheeler Daniel. |
| Smith Ebenezer, June 30, 1788. | Wood Doctor Preserve |
| Smith Sherman, July 1, 1788. | Wildman Libeus. |
| Smith Joseph, Jr., Dec. 9, 1788. | Warner Solomon, Sr. |
| Smith Ralph, Jan. 6, 1789. | Wildman Jonathan. |
| Smith Joseph, 3rd, Feb. 25, 1790. | Wheeler Eli. |
| Smith Eli, March, 1790. | Plat Jesse. |
| Smith Zalmon, Dec. 28, 1792. | Wildman, Ira. |

ASSESSORS' LIST, A TRANSFER.

In 1788 the following persons on the assessors' list at New Milford, southern part, were transferred to Brookfield assessment list, as they lived or owned property within the territory given by New Milford to constitute the north part of Brookfield town:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Tibbals Baldwin | John H. Nearing |
| Samuel Baldwin heirs | Elnathan Noble |
| Thaddeus Baldwin | Jesse Noble |
| Edward Beech | Andrew Northrop |
| Jonathan Beecher | Joshua Northrop |
| Josiah Burritt | Waite Northrop |
| Francis Burritt | Isaac Northrop |
| Robt. Bostwick | Wm. Nichols |
| Albert Barlow | Israel Osborne |
| Amarillis Barlow | James Osborne |
| Mitchel Barlow | Joseph Olmstead |
| Enoch Buckingham | Richard Olmstead |
| Sarah Camp | Henry Peck Esq. |
| Levi Camp | David Peck |
| Deacon Abraham Camp | Amiel Peck |
| Theophilus Comstock | Ammi Palmer |
| Achilles Comstock | Joseph Ruggles, Jr. |
| Thomas Cushing | Comfort Ruggles |
| Ephraim Curtiss | Artemus Ruggles |
| John Dunning | Benj. Ruggles |
| Benjamin Hawley | Timothy Ruggles Esq. |
| Nehemiah Hawley | Ashbel Ruggles |
| Liverius Hawley | Samuel Ruggles, 1795 |
| Isaac Hawley | James Starr |
| Isaac Hawley, Jr. | Elijah Starr |
| Clement Hubbell | John Starr |
| David Jackson | Rufus Sherman |
| David Keeler | Samuel Sherman |
| Ralph Keeler | Hezekiah Stevens, Jr. |
| Jonathan Keeler | David Smith |
| Andrew Lake's heirs | Jehiel Smith |
| Isaac Lockwood | Joseph Smith |
| Samuel Merwin | Thomas Smith |
| Samuel Merwin, Jr. | Joseph Tomlinson |
| Andrew Merwin | John Veal |
| Nathan Merwin | David Wakelee |
| Isaac Merwin | Samuel Wakelee |
| Levi Merwin | Amos Wakelee |
| John Morehouse, d. 1803 | Martin Warner |
| Joseph Nearing | Solomon Warner |
| Henry Nearing | Daniel Warner |