

**212TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDIAN
ATTACK ON HATFIELD, AND FIELD-DAY
OF THE POCUMTUCK
VALLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, AT
HATFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS,
THURSDAY, SEPT. 19TH, 1889**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760573553

212th anniversary of the Indian attack on Hatfield, and field-day of the Pocumtuck valley memorial association, at Hatfield, Massachusetts, Thursday, Sept. 19th, 1889 by Chester M. Barton & Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association . & Daniel White Wells

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Cover @ 2017

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**CHESTER M. BARTON & POCUMTUCK VALLEY
MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION . & DANIEL WHITE WELLS**

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Indian Attack on Hatfield,

AND FIELD-DAY OF THE

Pocomtuck Valley Memorial Association,

AT

HATFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS,

Thursday, Sept. 19th, 1889.



NORTHAMPTON, MASS.:
GAZETTE PRINTING COMPANY.

1890.

Committee of Arrangements.

Town Committee.

S. G. HUBBARD, CHAIRMAN,
E. A. HUBBARD,
W. H. DICKINSON,
D. W. WELLS,
THADDEUS GRAVES,
C. M. BARTON, COR. SEC'Y.

P. V. M. Asso. Com.

REV. E. BUCKINGHAM,
JAS. M. CRAFTS,
J. JOHNSON,
SETH B. CRAFTS,
S. G. HUBBARD.

Address of Welcome by Thaddeus Graves.

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, and members of the
Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association.*

Gentlemen:—I deem myself fortunate to have been selected to extend to you on behalf of the town of Hatfield the cordial right hand of welcome, for we are aware that it is owing to your tireless vigilance and zeal in a great measure that these memorial services are held here to-day. You are an institution known and honored, not only throughout this valley but the entire state, both for what you are and what you have done. You have labored incessantly, in season and out of season, to encourage and promote careful research into old records, to the end that the scattered threads of local history might be gathered and rescued from oblivion, and that all relics and materials linking us to the past should not only be preserved from destruction, but rendered sacred. You have so elevated and instructed public sentiment that the removal or destruction of an old landmark like the old house at Deerfield would be no longer possible. You have established at Deerfield a large and highly interesting and instructive collection of curiosities, a perpetual monument to the patience, perseverance and industry of those who have by untiring effort brought it to its present state of perfection. We bid you God-speed in your noble enterprise, and trust that in the coming years you may succeed in imbuing this realistic age with something of your own spirit, leading its attention from the present and its enjoyments to fix it upon the past, its labors, trials, and sacrifices.

We welcome you, Ladies and Gentlemen, our daughters and sons, who have gone from us to settle elsewhere, and who have

now come back to celebrate with us this anniversary. We thank you for your presence and support, and trust in the future we shall be able to enjoy more of your society than we have done in the past. We bid you welcome home, at the same time assuring you that the heart of the old mother has never changed toward you, but has ever followed you lovingly in your wanderings, glorying in your successes and taking pride in your prosperity.

We have, Ladies and Gentlemen, a historian by whom the events of the day we celebrate will be thoroughly and ably related at length, and with no intentions of encroaching upon his department, I still feel it not inappropriate for me, at the very opening of these ceremonies, to place before you in few words, the prominent incidents attending the Indian Massacre of Sept. 19, 1677, and the subsequent rescue of the Captives, that you may the better understand and appreciate what will follow.

Two hundred and twelve years ago to-day, on a hazy September morning, the good people of Hatfield were engaged in their usual occupations, the men had gone into the south meadow to cut and stack the ripening corn, while their wives and daughters having finished their ordinary work were busy preparing dinner for the men whose return was expected at the usual hour of twelve o'clock. The children of which there was a goodly number, were either playing about the doors of the humble dwellings or watching their mothers at their work. All was peace and security, no thought of danger disturbed even the most timid. A picture of more secure and tranquil enjoyment can hardly be imagined, when suddenly all is changed and the security and happiness that has prevailed in this little village is rudely broken by the fierce war-whoop of the savage as fifty armed and painted warriors who had crawled noiselessly down through Pudding Lane and finding nothing to oppose their progress burst suddenly through the gate separating the lane from the main street. They entered the northern part of the town, not then enclosed within the protection of the palisade that did not extend quite as far north as the present residence of Silas G. Hubbard. In a moment all was terror and the wildest confusion. The Indians quickly shot or dispatched with the tomahawk those who sought escape by flight, the rest were taken prisoners, the houses and barns devoted to the torch and a scene of wanton destruction followed. A portion of the band went

north to destroy the homestead of Benjamin Waite, a noted Indian scout and fighter, who then lived on the site now owned by Jno. Knight, burned his buildings took his wife and children captives and hastened to join the main body of their friends. The men returned hurriedly from the field, warned of danger by the clouds of smoke that rose from the ruined village. As they approached the town an ominous silence more oppressive even than the shout of triumph seemed to enfold the devoted town. Upon entering the street the full extent of their misfortune burst upon them, for familiar as those rugged pioneers of this early settlement were with the Indians and Indian warfare the whole scene was at once present to their minds and they expected what upon search they found, the smouldering ashes of houses and barns, thirteen mutilated bodies of the slain and the rest, seventeen in number, gone into captivity, borne to the almost trackless wilderness by a wily, relentless and cruel foe. But who were they who had so suddenly come so suddenly gone to leave such utter desolation behind them? None could answer. Were they Mohawks from the west or some of the Northern Indians? None could tell. That night a meeting of citizens was held within the palisades, a little body of stalwart men and the whole matter was fully discussed. As a result of this meeting Benjamin Waite visited Albany and there ascertained that the raid was not made by the Mohawk Indians. About this time one of the captives, taken by this same band from Deerfield, made his escape, returned to Deerfield and came thence to inform the citizens of Hatfield that their friends were in the hands of the Northern Indians who were taking their captives to Canada. Another meeting was now held, an appeal was drawn up to the Governor of the Commonwealth for assistance. Two men were selected to place this appeal before his Excellency. Both men great sufferers from the raid, both in the prime of life. One distinguished for his prowess, Benjamin Waite a noted Indian scout and fighter, familiar with the woods, the Indians and their habits and methods. A man of great endurance and fertile in expedients. The other a man of great discretion, Stephen Jennings, a thoughtful silent man but resolute, persevering and patient, over whom obstacles had no influence save to increase his determination. These two men were wholly unlike in appearance and character but admirably fitted to work together,

each supplying the lack of the other. The inhabitants showed their wisdom in their selection. About the middle of October, nearly a month after the slaughter, these two humble farmers clothed in the rough garb of their calling and the times, armed with nothing but their trusty guns, turned their backs upon the little village to travel a hundred miles on foot through rough paths and wooded lanes to Boston.

In due time they placed the appeal before the Governor, but a treasury at that time never too full, had been depleted by the frequent calls to ward off Indian incursions and fight constantly for existence with the numerous savage tribes that surrounded them, and the Governor informed them with regret of his inability to give them pecuniary aid but gave them instead a letter of recommendation and credit. The kind hearted Governor further pointed out the dangers of the way, the well nigh insurmountable obstacles to be overcome by these two rough farmers before reaching Canada, through an almost unbroken wilderness, traversed only by bands of hostile Indians, and of the futility of their journey should they reach their destination, seeking captives from enemies with neither money nor valuables to give in exchange. But they had determined to go to Canada if they went alone, and selected upon consultation the route west of the Hudson river as being safest since it took them away from and around the shorter path travelled by their more bitter enemies. Bidding the Governor farewell they travelled to Albany one hundred and fifty miles on foot and thence twenty miles to Schenectady, but here the obtuse but suspicious Dutch authorities seeing as they imagined in those way-worn travellers some great danger to the state, arrested and sent them prisoners 150 miles down the river to the city of New York and delivered them to Governor Andros, a shrewd, keen man, who saw at a glance the mistake of his Dutch assistants but not desiring to make it too apparant, and being much occupied for some weeks, he neglected these humble men and allowed them to be retained as prisoners. But the matter being later urged upon his attention he set them at liberty and gave them a letter of protection. Armed with which they travelled backward 150 miles to the point where they were arrested, here they procured two guides, a Frenchman and an Indian to pilot them over the unfamiliar way northward. The Frenchman soon deserted them. The Indian conducted