BRADFORD.

This town was taken from Rowley. Its first name was called Merrimac. After that it was known by the name of Rowley Village. In 1673 it was incorporated by its present name. The lands of this town were granted by the general court to Rev. Ezekiel Rogers, first minister of Rowley, and others. In 1658, a committee of Rowley laid out tracts of land for the Rev. Samuel Phillips, John and Robert Haseltine, widow Mighill, widow Hobson, Thomas Kimball. Joseph Jewett, Joseph Chaplin, John Simmons, Abraham Foster, Jonathan Hopkinson, John Eastman, James Dickinson, and Maximilian Jewett, had lands granted them. These divided the lands in various proportions in 1671, and were most of them the first settlers of the town. Bradford is very pleasantly located on the south bank of the Merrimac. The length of the town is about six miles, and from one to two and a half miles in breadth. It contains about 10,000 acres of land. The surface is uneven and the soil varied. Much of it is of the first quality, especially the upland, which is verdant amidst the droughts of summer. Many of the hills are considerably elevated, from which are fine views of rural scenery. There are extensive forests of oak, walnut, pine and maple, with beds of peat, that afford a supply of fuel for the inhabitants. The ponds in the town are well stocked with pickerel and perch. Salmon in small quantities are yet taken. Shad and alewives are taken in great abundance from the river. A handsome bridge of three arches connects this town with Haverhill. The width of the river is about 800 feet at the lower part of the town, but narrower at the upper part. The depth of water at low tide is from four to five feet. There are serious impediments to navigation, resulting from the short turn in the river and the shoals between the chain ferry and Haverhill; but hulls of vessels built at Bradford and Haverhill, of the burthen of 400 tons, have passed down, while those of 90 or 100 tons have come up loaded. The scenery on the banks of the Merrimac, between this town and Haverhill, is exceedingly beautiful. Shipbuilding is now almost totally abandoned, as easier labor and more profit is derived from the manufacturing of boots and shoes, of which it is estimated that about 360,000 pairs are made annually. The village in Bradford, on the opposite side the Merrimac from Haverhill, contains about 30 dwelling-houses and a church. Bradford is 30 miles N. of Boston. Population, 2,275.

Bradford Academy, in the west parish, was established in 1803. Its location is on an elevated site, and commands a delightful view of the surrounding country, comprising the entire villages of Bradford and Haverhill. The names of Mrs. Judson and Harriet Newell, who were pupils in this school, will not soon be forgotten by the Christian world. This academy is extensively known, and has been generally attended by a large number of pupils. Merrimac Academy is located in the east parish, and was established in 1821, and is in successful operation.
At the time of the Indian wars the people were much alarmed for their safety, and fortified three houses; but they were not much molested by the savages. The following is from a discourse delivered by Gardner B. Perry in 1820. He says:

"I have found but one record of any violence experienced from them. This is contained in a note attached to one of the town books, by Shabad Walker, who was the town-clerk. He observes in this note that Thomas Kimball was shot by an Indian, the third of May, 1676, and his wife and five children, Joanna, Thomas, Joseph, Prescilla and John, were carried captives. These, however, he observes in another note, returned home again the 13th of June, the same year. The house in which Mr. Kimball lived, stood on the road leading to Boxford, the cellar of which may still be seen. "It is traditionally reported," continues Mr. Perry, "that the Indians who committed this violence set out from their homes near Dracut with the intention of killing some one in Rowley who they supposed had injured them, but finding the night too far spent, they did not dare to proceed farther, and so revenged themselves on Mr. Kimball. There was also a Mr. Nehemiah Carlton shot from across the river, at the time of the attack upon Haverhill; and it is said, further, that one of the workmen employed in felling timber on the Haverhill side of the river was also shot. Besides these I have heard of no particular injury received from them.'

The first burial in the east parish burying-place was in 1723, Mrs. Martha Hale. The following is taken from the foot-stone:

"If you will look it will appear
She was the first buried here."

The most remarkable occurrence ever witnessed here was a great freshet in 1818. The snow had been melted by a violent rain, which rushed down the valley of the Merrimac with great fury, tearing up the ice, which was nearly two feet thick, with the noise and convulsions of an earthquake; driven into immense dams, it rolled and flew about in every possible direction on its way to the ocean. The river was raised 21 feet above common high-water mark. The country around was inundated, and in many houses the water was from two inches to five feet in depth. The ice was driven far upon the land, and pyramids of fragments were thrown up above the level of the flood. Buildings were removed and destroyed, cattle and sheep were drowned, and ruin spread on all sides.

Mr. Penny says, in his historical discourse, "that the eels go up the river the beginning of May in a ribband or stream of about a foot wide upon the average, and three or four inches in depth, and every year in the same course. They are from two to six inches in length, move with considerable velocity, and continue to pass along without interruption for about four days. Almost an inconceivable number must pass during this time." They are said to be from the ocean, and are said to pass into the ponds and brooks connected with the river.

The first Congregational church, located in the west parish, was organized in 1682. The first pastor was Rev. Zachariah Symmes, who was settled in 1682, died 1707. He was succeeded by his son, the Rev. Thomas Symmes, in 1708, who died in 1725. The Rev. Joseph Parsons succeeded Mr. Symmes, and was settled in 1726, and died in 1765. The next was the Rev. Samuel Williams, who was settled in 1765, and resigned in 1780. His successor was
Rev. Jonathan Allen, who was settled in 1791. The sixth pastor was the Rev. Ira Ingraham, who settled here in 1824, resigned in 1830. The seventh pastor was the Rev. Loammi J. Hoadly, who was settled in 1830, resigned January, 1833. His successor was the Rev. Moses C. Searle, who was settled in 1833, and resigned in 1834.

The second Congregational church, in the east parish, was formed in 1728. The Methodist society was established in 1832.

HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS,
BEING A
GENERAL COLLECTION OF INTERESTING FACTS, TRADITIONS,
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, ANECDOTES, &c.,
RELATING TO THE
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES
OF
EVERY TOWN IN MASSACHUSETTS,
WITH
GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTIONS.
ILLUSTRATED BY 200 ENGRAVINGS.

BY JOHN WARNER BARBER,
AUTHOR OF CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS, ELEMENTS OF GENERAL HIS-
TORY, &c.

[The Seal of the State of Massachusetts.]

(By the sword he seeks peace under Liberty.)

WORCESTER:
PUBLISHED BY WARREN LAZELL.
1844.