

## WRENTHAM.

THIS town was originally included within the limits of Dedham, and was set off in 1661, when there were only sixteen families. It was incorporated in 1673. There was no church formed here till 1692, when Rev. Samuel Mann, the first minister, was ordained. Mr. Mann preached to the few families here in a comparative wilderness, but, in consequence of Philip's war, in 1676, they were obliged to abandon their settlements for more than four years. When they returned, they prevailed upon Mr. Mann to accompany them. He shared with them all their difficulties and privations, left a numerous posterity, and died in 1719, in the forty-ninth year of his ministry. He was succeeded by Rev. Henry Messenger, who continued in the ministry nearly 32 years. Rev. Joseph Bean was the next minister; he was settled in 1750, and died in 1784, and was succeeded by Rev. David Avery, who was dismissed in 1794, and died in Virginia. Rev. Elisha Fisk was his successor. The *Second Church* and Society in *North Wrentham* were formed previous to the instalment of Rev. John Cleveland, in 1798; he continued pastor for more than sixteen years in North Wrentham, and died in 1815, aged 65. He was succeeded by Mr. Field, who continued pastor about three years, and then resigned. Mr. Thatcher was his successor, and was ordained in 1823. In 1830, Mr. Thatcher and a part of the church seceded, and formed themselves into "a distinct and separate church." The Baptist meeting-house was built in 1767; the north meeting-house was completed in 1804.

The first English inhabitant in Wrentham was one Mr. Shears. In Mr. Bean's Century Sermon, preached in 1773, it is stated that the town was named *Wrentham*, because some of the first settlers were from a town of that name in England. The first English person born in the town was Mehitabel Shears, daughter of Samuel Shears. The first person buried in the town was an infant son of John Ware, Feb. 10th, 1673. In Philip's war, after the inhabitants had left the town, the Indians burnt all the houses but two; these were saved, it is stated, on account of persons having the small-pox in them, of which fact the Indians, by some means, became acquainted. After the Indian war was over, the following persons had their names affixed to an instrument engaging to return.

Eleazer Metcalf,	Eleazer Gay,	Samuel Man,	James Mosman,
Robert Ware,	Daniel Whright,	John Ware,	Joseph Kingsbury,
William Macknech,	Samuel Fisher,	Nathaniel Ware,	Samuel Shears.
Daniel Haws,	John Payne,	Cornelius Fisher,	
John Aldiss,	Benjamin Rocket,	Michael Willson,	

Wrentham is a pleasant village, consisting of about 40 or 50 dwelling-houses, a Congregational church, a bank, and an academy. In the cut the church is seen on the left; the Wrentham Bank is the first building standing northward. Day's Academy, in this place, was incorporated in 1806. Population,



*Western view of the central part of Wrentham.*

2,817. Distance, 15 miles from Dedham, and 27 from Boston. The central part of *North Wrentham* is about 4 miles distant from the place represented in the engraving. There are 4 churches in the limits of the town, 3 Congregational and 1 Baptist. In 1837, there were 4 cotton mills, 2,252 spindles; 315,000 yards of cotton goods manufactured; value, \$68,000; males employed, 50; females, 38. One woollen mill; cloth manufactured, 12,745 yards; value, \$12,745. Straw bonnets manufactured, 35,126; value, \$77,815. Boots manufactured, 10,155 pairs; shoes, 150 pairs, valued at \$18,675. Boots manufactured, 200; value, \$8,000; hands employed, 13.

The storm of the 23d of September, 1815, raged here with violence; many buildings were damaged, some thrown down, and great injury was done to the forest trees. In Rev. Mr. Fisk's sermon, preached in 1823, he says: "One fact has been noticed, and it may be proper to mention it, what the effect of this tempest was supposed to have on wells of water.\* It is probable, however, that not the wind, but the earthquake, produced the change." "The wind blew with great violence from the south-east, from eight or nine o'clock in the morning until noon; after that hour it began to subside."

The following inscriptions are copied from the grave-yard in this place:

In memory of the Rev. Mr. JOSEPH BEAN, pastor of the 1<sup>st</sup> church in Wrentham, who died Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>. 1784, in y<sup>e</sup> 66<sup>th</sup> year of his age.

Near half an age with every good man's praise,  
Among his flock y<sup>e</sup> shepherd passed his days.

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\* The effect on the water which Mr. Fisk refers to is that the depth of water in some instances varied after this storm; also that wells which had previously furnished *soft water* have ever since produced *hard water*.

The friend, y<sup>e</sup> comfort of y<sup>e</sup> sick & poor,  
 Want never knocked unheeded at his door.  
 Oft when his duty call'd disease and pain  
 Strove to confine him, but they strove in vain.  
 All mourn his death; his virtues long they try'd.  
 They knew not how they lov'd him till he dy'd.

In memory of Mr. Ebenezer Hawes, who departed this life April 19<sup>th</sup> 1812, in the 91<sup>st</sup> year of his age.

Of no distemper, of no blast he dy'd,  
 But fell like autumn fruit that mellow'd long,  
 E'er wonder'd at why he no sooner dropt;  
 Fate seem'd to wind him up for fourscore years,  
 Yet restless ran he on ten winters more,  
 Till, like a clock worn out with eating time,  
 The wheels of weary life at last stood still.

In memory of Mr. Benjamin Day, who died Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>, 1816, aged 90 years and 8 months. He was distinguished for industry, economy, justice, benevolence and piety. He was the principal benefactor to Day's Academy, and gave a fund for the support of the communion-table. His other deeds of charity were numerous; while he has gone to his rest his usefulness continues.

My dust lies here, my better part's above,  
 And lives, so I, not Death, the Conqueror prove;  
 What I possess secures me what's to come,  
 My clay shall be refined and sent for home.

Hic jacet corpus domini LUDOVICI CORNETTE armigeri Gallici exercitus Gallici nobilis. Obiit octavo Martii 1788, sue ætatis quadragesimo sexto.

[Here lies the body of LEWIS CORNETTE, Esq., a nobleman of France, and an officer in the French army. He died on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, 1788, in the 46<sup>th</sup> year of his age.]

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## PLYMOUTH COUNTY.

PLYMOUTH COUNTY contains the oldest settlement in New England, and was a separate colony till the appointment of Sir Edmund Andross as governor-general, in 1685. In this year, the colony was divided into three counties, Plymouth, Barnstable and Bristol. In 1692, it was permanently united with the colony of Massachusetts. There are no rivers of much importance in the county; the principal streams are North river, which flows into Massachusetts bay, and several branches of Taunton river. There are no elevations of sufficient height to receive the name of mountains. The surface of the county is generally level, and though there is some fertile land, sandy and unproductive tracts prevail to a great extent, particularly in the southern part. This county has some foreign commerce; but its shipping is principally engaged in the fishing business and coasting trade. Ship-building is a very important branch of business, there being more persons in this business than in any other county in the state. The value of vessels built for five years preceding 1837 was \$2,061,440; hands employed, 1,432. The manufacture of boots and shoes is carried on to a great extent. Iron ore is found to some extent. The following is a list of the towns, which are 21 in number.