

F 104
.B2 L37
Copy 1

Barkhamsted Centennial,

1879.

Poem,

By MRS. EMMA CARTER LEE,

AND

Address,

By WALTER S. CARTER,

DELIVERED AT THE

Centennial Celebration,

AT BARKHAMSTED,

Litchfield County, Connecticut,

SEPT. 10, 1879.

F104
B21.37

U. S. GOVERNMENT
PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

BARKHAMSTED CENTENNIAL,

1879.

The town of Barkhamsted, Litchfield County, Connecticut, celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of its organization, by appropriate ceremonies, September 10th, 1879. Hon. Hiram Goodwin, of Riverton, presided, and Hiram C. Brown, of Riverton, delivered an address of welcome. William Wallace Lee, of Meriden, formerly of Pleasant Valley, delivered the historical address; Prof. Samuel Henry Lee, of Oberlin College, read the poem, written by his wife, Mrs. Emma Carter Lee, formerly of Pleasant Valley; and Hon. Monroe E. Merrell, of Hartford, formerly of "The Hollow," delivered the oration. Impromptu speeches were afterwards made by Walter S. Carter, of New York, formerly

of Pleasant Valley, Rev. Lemuel Richardson, of Port Jefferson, New York, formerly of Pleasant Valley, William Wallace Lee, of Meriden and Rev. Luther H. Barber, of Bolton, formerly of Riverton. A poem was also read by E. W. Jones, of Winsted, formerly of the "East Mountain." Many letters were also read from natives of the town residing in different parts of the country. The exercises were of an exceedingly interesting character, and passed off to the entire satisfaction of the thousands of sons and daughters of the town, who had gathered together on the occasion.

NOTE.—The following poem and address are printed, the former in response to many requests for its publication, and the latter solely for the eye of one citizen of Barkhamsted, whose sight is better than his hearing.

W. S. C.

346 Broadway, New York, October, 1879.

P O E M,

By Mrs. EMMA CARTER LEE, Oberlin, Ohio.

Sweet Tuuxis, singing through the vale these hundred
years,

We come to thee to aid our song to-day;
We come with faltering steps and crowding fears;
Accompany these words with tuneful lay,
So all may feel God's blessing by the way.

Only a little span of time, these hundred years,
To thee, fair river and eternal hills;
But oh! to us who live in smiles and tears,
The way seems long; each spirit thrills
As the strange distance all our vision fills.

As once a cross was placed by waysides, here and
there,
For travelers to rest awhile and pray,
So we, far up this road of history, drop our care
And pause to look, to worship, while we say
Thank God for birthright in this town to-day.

We come from far and near ; four generations here
Touch hands, and yet not one of all the throng
Broke soil, or felled a tree in that lone natal year ;
Not one saw heaven's pure light, or heard the song
Of waters swelling through deep woods along.

On yonder hill, on mossy stones their names we trace ;
Good names—the aged here to-day will tell
Of father brave and strong, of mother's gentle grace,
How some were soldiers, serving country well,
Those long, dark years that o'er the new homes fell.

Oh! let us read it o'er, that old historic page,
Count on the flag the thirteen stars again,
Our morning stars, whose light flashed down the
nation's age,
Illumining the way for Freedom's reign ;
Our grandsires bought sweet peace by strife and
pain.

A blest inheritance of liberty they gave,
Which children's children sacredly have kept,
Not without cost ; we mourn afresh to-day our brave
Who quickly shouldered arms, when treason swept
The old flag down, and o'er it foully crept.

One moment only ; yet to plant it firm and high,
Took years of bloodshed, and we gave our best,
Who throwing hopes away, for country went to die,
A sacrifice upon her altar blest ;
No more the stain, or cry of the oppressed.

The dear old flag, whose stars now shine from sea to
sea

Around that central group—a glorious host—
It waved a hundred years ago for people free ;
It waves to-day, and 'tis no idle boast,
Our flag in all the world is honored most.

A hundred years ago, the world in darkness lay,
Great spaces intervened, and ways were few ;
Crowned Science brings the far-off near to-day :
The Master's words are showing sweet and true ;
Go teach all nations, love as I love you.

Our grandsires felt these words in Whitfield's burning
zeal,

And Wesley, too, apostle to the poor ;
Now 't is an age of missions, service is the seal
Of true nobility, and riches moor
In Christian channels, where the good is sure.

But now from larger things we turn our eyes
To native hills, to mounts that touched the skies
We thought as children, to these azure streams
Whose music haunts us oft in midnight dreams
And steals a soothing note, where hurrying feet
And weary hearts press down the crowded street,
And you and I, with temples whitening fast,
Burdened with cares, look back upon the past
And say 't was well, that childhood fresh and free,

4

'Mid vales and upland, where each chestnut tree
Held more of promise than our banks to-day,—
'T was well to climb the rocks, through woods to stray,
Study the miracles of Nature's way,
Gather the berries, mingling work with play.

'T was well we found such golden fruit and fair
Upon the tree of knowledge, spreading where
The river flowed, or on the hillside green :
Oh! gladsome school days, like a silvery sheen
Of cloud, the faces long forgot float by
And names come back ; our teacher's eye
Again seems on us—teachers kind and true—
Able, “ they builded better than they knew.”
Those gentle ladies in the summer time,
And noble men in winter's frosty rime,
When all young life beat quick, and rushed to school
With such a tide of frolic, every rule
Swept down, until a firm and patient hand
Uplifted, guided all the noisy band
In ways of duty, till the task was done,
And o'er the old rude seats the lowering sun
Sent floods of light ; then forth with song and shout
We thronged all ways, proclaiming school was out.

Our feet may wander through cathedral aisles,
In statued halls, and glorious pictured miles,
And bring some little treasures home to keep,
Which thief may take, or fire may o'er them sweep ;
But, oh ! these pictures wrought into the heart
Like tapestries, are ours ; a royal part

Of life itself, that naught can take away :
And as we give the hand-shake here to-day
And look into the faces, light will fall,
Renewing light, and we shall see them all,
Each in its setting of the golden years,
Some shrined as marbles veiled in misty tears,
But everywhere God's loving work appears.

The old church of the century ! picture rare
Among our treasures, do you see it there
Spireless upon the hill ? with spreading oaks
Upon the sloping green, where all the folks
In summer Sabbath noons talk staid and low,
While groups of children wander to and fro,
Wishing their good clothes were for Monday too,
Or they could sit up-stairs as singers do
Close to the viol, or those pews so high
By upper windows, watch the clouds go by,
Or hear the birds, for sermons were too long,
And e'en the deacons' heads seemed far from strong ;
Uplooking to that pulpit quaint, above,
Where stood a saintly one with father's love
For all the flock who came from miles around
There to be fed, no calling bell to sound ;
Oft cold, but crowded every square-fenced pew,
Whose paneled sides Time's painting only knew.

God's tabernacle ! Do you remember how
The chrisms of baptism fell upon your brow
Down by the altar, when the feast was spread,
The solemn hush o'er all in breaking bread ;
The aged group, the poor beneath the stair

So crushed in spirit, while the song and prayer
Closed o'er the whole as incense on the air ?
Oh! let us linger by the sacred place ;
Here souls were born, and blessed showers of grace
Came down and watered all the thirsty land ;
While anthems swelled and hallelujahs grand
Filled all the house, with grateful, glad acclaim
To Him who sent the Pentecostal flame.
Here, too, close by, they laid their dead away
In mother Earth, till resurrection day ;
So " beautiful for situation," see
The valley's grace, the great hills' majesty.
Here in this presence still your hurried feet,
Take soulful rest, and gather strength to meet
The coming days that hasten on so fleet.

We cannot trace the changes time has made :
Things have their rise and fall ; 't is first the blade
And then the ear, then in the ear full corn,
Fulfilling well the promise of the morn ;
And yet not all fulfilled, till scattered wide
Impelling other growths ; so here beside
The dear old hearthstones,—planted long ago,—
We miss the young and strong ; they're gone to sow
By other waters : crowded pews no more ,
Though sweet bells call to worship o'er and o'er,
In newer temples ; altar fires are dim :
But blessed all who stand and wait with Him,
Who stand and wait, thrice blessed wait with prayer
For loved ones on the toiling fields, out where
The need is sorest ; count no loss to-day
If of this old town's children you can say

Good men and women striving for the right,
No matter whether here or there, God's sight
Is not like ours. He sees the ripened grain
Upon its thousand fields, and guides the wain
Home to its garner with a glad well-done,
For you who gave the seed. The town begun
A hundred years ago in lonely wild,
Where roamed the deer, and lurked the forest child,
Grew strong and full upon the granite hills,
Nerved with a vigor like her gushing rills,
And overflowed, until to-day her bound
Is not by mount or stream. We look around
And see her children—men and women all,
Who 've come with joy, as to a mother's call.
Is not the old town large as measured, so
May we not keep it ours where'er we go?
And link our work with those who 've gone before,
Who sing the "Harvest Home" on heavenly shore,
Their toil all ended, rest forevermore?

A hundred years! we stand before the serried line
And see how small a space we have to fill;
No room for pride—the stars long ages shine
And rivers flow—this mortal life grows still
And leaves of dust a handful on the hill.

So small are we, and yet God's greatest work we know:
The years are for us, all the good of earth;

In His own image made, this life, so brief below,
Grows into fullness of immortal birth—
Heir to a royal crown of priceless worth.

The children of these hills, we bow our heads to-day
With gratitude for all the century's light ;
The children of a King, we lift our hearts and pray,
While the last moments take their silent flight,
And the new century opens on our sight.

Oh! may the blessings of the hundred years gone by
Fall like a mantle on the years to be ;
Our children better live, while we beyond the sky
Find native air, a childhood full and free,
A sinless home through all eternity.

ADDRESS,

By WALTER S. CARTER, of New York.

Mr. President and Fellow-townsmen :

I'm afraid if I should make a speech now, I might find such a state of things as Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes is said once to have found. A man arose in the middle of his lecture and walked out; but upon dissecting him, he was found to be so full that he could n't hold any more. However, I presume you'll not expect much of a speech from me. Orators and poets are not found in one small family. So you'll be content, I've no doubt, if I have merely an off-hand talk about old times with you.

It has been suggested that I speak for New York, Illinois and Wisconsin. I'm sorry for those states if I am to be the only spokesman they have on this occasion, though I have lived in them all. My life, by the way, has been somewhat like that of the young lady who was asked where she was

born? "I was n't born any where," said she, "my father is a Methodist minister." I did n't stay long, however, in Illinois or Wisconsin; they were well enough, but they labored under one great disadvantage—they were too far from Barkhamsted. Accordingly I removed to New York, which is more fortunate. There I am content to abide.

And first of all let me say, I'm glad to be here, to join with you in celebrating the foremost event in the history of the town which gave us birth. It was not an easy thing for me to come; important interests claimed me elsewhere; but I said to myself, law-suits can—as they generally do—wait; the Barkhamsted centennial I am afraid can't. So I came, and I repeat, I find it exceedingly good to be here.

And now there's so much to be said, I hardly know where to begin. I think I'll lay down this fundamental proposition to start with: Barkhamsted's a good town to be born in. It may occur to you that this is not a particularly new idea; that if I've nothing else to say, I might have stayed at home and attended to that law-suit; but still I want to say it, right here and now. Suppose some one, who was able to live where he pleased, was looking for a place of residence, where would he naturally go? Somewhere, of course, where there was pure air and water, fertile soil, running streams, lovely valleys, rugged mountains, good schools and churches, and an intelligent and industrious population; and have n't you all these? I've been to Minnesota for its air, but I never found purer air than I breathed for seventeen years upon your

hill-sides. I've drunk Apollinaris and German seltzer, but I never drank as good water as I used to drink at a spring that formed the source of the little brook that ran through my father's farm. I've fished in many waters, but I've never seen finer trout than I've caught in Beaver Brook, nor more slippery eels than I've pulled out of Farmington River. I've seen pleasant valleys, but the only one worth the name to me is the little village over between the mountains yonder. I've scaled many a high mountain, but I never felt so much up in the world as I did one day in 1844, when we fired a cannon from the top of the mountain there, over the election of Polk and Dallas, to the profound disgust of my uncle, Deacon Virgil Taylor. I was once a member of the Board of Education in the city where I lived, but I never saw a better school than the old "Green" school in the days when Elisha Johnson, whom I see, and Seymour Cornish, whom I'd like to see, kept it. I ought, at any rate, to speak well of it; it has been the educational bridge that has carried me safely until now. In my law-firm in New York we have four graduates, two of Yale, one of Princeton and one of Barkhamsted. I've had Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia and Wesleyan graduates for my clerks, but never one from Barkhamsted—partnerships we keep for those. I was once invited to attend a meeting of the *alumni* of Wesleyan University. I could n't go, but sent a telegraphic regret somewhat as follows: "Present my compliments and regrets to President Foss and assure him of my cordial appreciation of Wesleyan

University, though myself a graduate of that more renowned institution of learning, Barkhamsted college for both sexes." I've heard many eloquent sermons, but the most eloquent one I ever heard was by Elder Creagh, at a five o'clock meeting down in the "Valley" school-house. I've been much interested in Sunday schools, but I was never so interested as I was the day I attended my first one, down in the old church by the burying-ground yonder. I recollect I went home and ran bawling around the house:

Amos Beecher
Is my teacher.

I suspected then that there was a good deal of undiscovered and undeveloped poetry lying around loose in our family, but I never felt quite sure of it until to-day. I've heard much good singing, but it seems to me the best chorus I have ever heard was the day "Priest" Hazen, as we used to call him, was installed. There was James Tiffany, with his bass, and William Tiffany, with his bass-viol. I recognize the latter now, though the player has grown old faster than the instrument, these thirty-five years. And there was Hannah Tiffany and I don't know how many other Tiffanys, and Warren Taylor, and Grandison Wilder, and many others whose names (but not whose voices) have gone from my recollection. Corydon Taylor's tune, "Louvan," is sung in every land under the sun and will be sung forever. I've seen fertile soil, but that of Barkhamsted, for some crops,

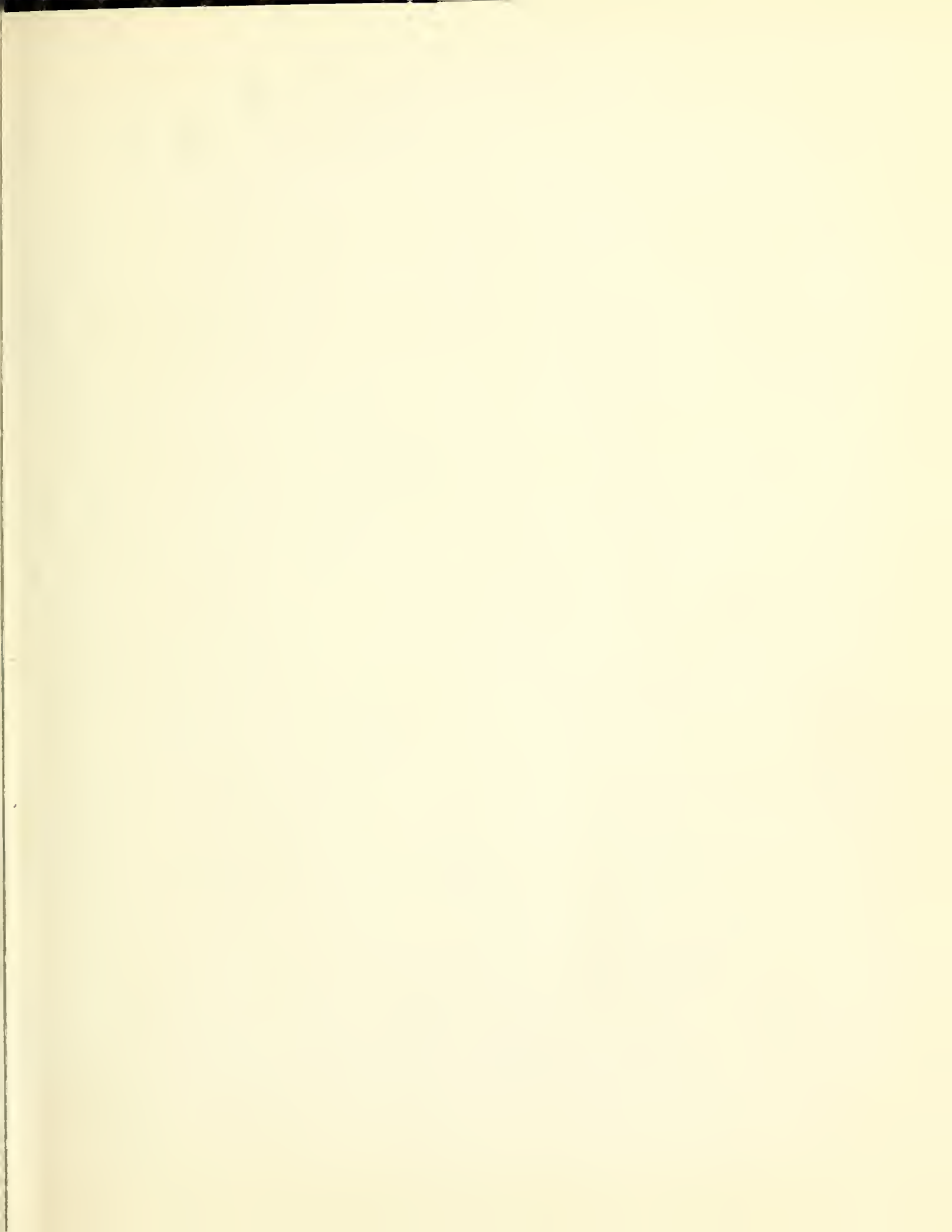
is easily the best in the world. It certainly has raised more lawyers to the square acre than any I have ever heard of. Twenty-five years ago, also, it produced better watermelons than any place I have ever known. Those raised by Deacon Hart Doolittle were especially excellent. Indeed, I greatly preferred them to those grown by his neighbor, Mr. Evits Carter. I wish I could say as much for Deacon Doolittle's pumpkins. The watermelons, I repeat, taken internally, were very good; the pumpkins, on the contrary, taken externally—applied as I once knew one to be—forcibly to the pit of one's stomach, were very bad. Our Butler was an unfaithful servant that time. I ought to say, just here, that I've always felt a trifle unkindly towards the Deacon, that once, when I was seeking to test the quality of his melons—simply that I might intelligently testify to their excellence on this centennial occasion—he should have assailed me as he did, chasing me through the Farmington River at the imminent peril of my health. But the spirit of forgiveness has been growing on me meanwhile. I have forgiven Deacon Doolittle. I hope he has done the like by me.

We have with us to-day—a sort of son-in-law of the town—a distinguished Professor of Political Science in one of the great colleges of the country. I venture to say, however, that if he could have been here twenty-five or thirty years ago, when sundry of our fellow-citizens, of somewhat mixed descent, were impounded, over the Sunday before the

Spring election, in a Hitchcockville ball-room, preparatory to being escorted to the polls on Monday, he would have learned some things in political science that he never acquired at Yale, has never taught at Oberlin, nor found in any of the books on that subject. Professors Reuben Pinney, Cornwell Doolittle, and Lyman Hart could have taught him a few things, I'm sure.

A distinguished statesman predicting, recently, the early revival of business, said he expected to see such prosperity ere long, that even inland towns would aspire to become seaports. I congratulate you in advance. When that time comes how can it be otherwise than that you become a great commercial center? You have a light-house, more widely known than that of Eddystone, already built. Let Barkhamsted's most distinguished son, the representative of your second district in Congress and a member of the Committee of Ways and Means, not forget the possible increase of government revenue from this source.

As it was difficult, there were so many good things that could be said, to know where to begin, so now I find it equally difficult to know where to stop. But I see around me many from whom you will want to hear, and for them I gladly make way. My last words to my native town on this her centennial day, shall be those of Rip Van Winkle in the play: "Here's to your good health and that of your family. May they live long and prosper."



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 008 810 862 0

