In the Pilgrim Way

The First Congregational Church, Marshfield, Massachusetts 1640-2000

Linda Ramsey Ashley ❖ Marshfield, Massachusetts ❖ 2001

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The Centuries

The centuries look down from snowy heights
Upon the plains below,
While man looks upward toward those beacon lights
Of long ago.

Through all the changing cycle of the years
One mighty hand is seen,
Which builds up empires from our toil and tears
Of what hath been.

It tenderly enwraps each sun and star,
Warmly enfolds each soul,
And all the years are one that seem afar,
And earth with man and heaven make up the whole.

From *What Saxon! and Other Poems*
By Rev. Daniel Irving Gross
Minister 1908-1911

Picture on the cover: (from postcard)
Broughton, George Henry, *Pilgrims Going to Church.* 1867.
Original Oil on Linen 24" x 52"
Owned by the New York Historical Society, Henry Luce Center for the Study of American Culture.

Oh, Beautiful for Pilgrim Feet
Whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness.

The 1600's – Pilgrim Landing and Establishment of New England

Background in England and Holland

To understand the history of the church in Marshfield, one must begin in England, then move on to Holland, and then cross the ocean on the ship *Mayflower*.

We will not go into the roots of Protestantism, beginning with Wycliffe in the 14th century, the reformation brought about by Martin Luther John Calvin, and others. But the Reformation Movement is at the heart of what we now call the Congregational Church[1], and the origins of this particular congregation in Marshfield, Massachusetts.

We will not detail the events that brought Henry VIII to separate the church in England from the Roman Catholic Church. But we do know that during his reign and in succeeding years persecution and execution was visited on both the Catholic and the Protestant Churches, and their devout followers, depending upon who was on the throne and which church was currently in favor.

Henry's daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, in an attempt to satisfy both sides to some extent, established the official Church of England, or Anglican Church.

But for many Protestants, the Anglican Church was still too close to Catholicism. These people, called generally the Puritans (though there were many different groups and no central leadership at this time), wanted to "purify" the Church of England by scrapping the Prayer Book in favor of the Bible, simplifying the ritual, and observing the Sabbath strictly. They also wanted to change the hierarchy of church governance, giving more power to the local congregations, but keeping a central church government.

Under the broader term "Puritans," there was a more radical group known as the Congregationalists, who wanted completely self-governing churches, each church formed by a solemn covenant entered into by the "visible saints" (those who confessed their faith and swore to the covenant.) The Congregationalists let each congregation choose its own pastor and officers, but both the Puritans and the Congregationalists still professed membership in the Anglican Church.

Within the Congregationalists was an even smaller and more radical group known as the Separatists who wanted to make a clean break with the Anglican Church and form a new and separate church. Obviously, in a time when to take a religious stand was also to take a political position, the Separatists were unacceptable, almost to the point of treason, since the King or Queen was the head of the Anglican Church. It is interesting that these people were not all in the same place, but were found all across England, apparently having come to the same conclusions from the teachings of pastors coming out of colleges, particularly Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where the faculty taught the Separatist views. Small groups found warrant for these "gathered churches" in Matthew

[1] For a discussion of these roots, see Cutler, Ralph H., Jr. "Sublights on the Puritans and Pilgrims," *Mayflower Quarterly,* Nov. 1984, pp.161-169.

18:20, "for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"

One of these churches was gathered by covenant in the village of Scrooby in 1606. They met on Sundays in the home of the postmaster, William Brewster, for Bible study and prayer, led by the pastor, John Robinson

King James, who took the throne in 1603 upon the death of Queen Elizabeth I, and whose name is now revered with the King James Bible[2], said of the dissidents, "I will make them conform, or I will harry them out of the land!"

Therefore, after many trials, both literal and figurative, the little band removed to Holland, and eventually to the town of Leiden. There they found relative religious freedom. However, some found it hard to make a living, they were concerned that their children were losing the English language and customs, and they feared that if Spain captured Holland the inquisition might be visited upon them.

> *I persuade myself, never people upon earth lived more lovingly, and parted more sweetly than we, the Church at Leyden, did. Not rashly, in a distracted humor; but, upon joint and serious deliberation, often seeking the mind of God, by fasting and prayer: whose gracious presence we not only found with us; but his blessing upon us from that time to this instant: to the indignation of our adversaries, the admiration of strangers, and the exceeding consolation of ourselves*
>
> Edward Winslow

The little group was able to find financing from "merchant adventurers" – we would call them venture capitalists today – to back a colony in the New World. With the money, they arranged for two ships to take them across the ocean. But after leaving England and enduring the miseries of two weeks, the smaller ship, the *Speedwell*,was close to sinking, and they had to turn back. When they finally set sail again, on the *Mayflower*, some people had to be left behind, though some of them eventually came to Plymouth on later vessels.

Aboard ship were 102 passengers, but only fifty-one of them were Separatists. They called themselves "Saints." The other half were "Strangers," – hired hands, indentured servants, and others who came for their own reasons. None of them called themselves "Pilgrims," a term found in Bradford's History, "They knew they were pilgrims," but not popularized until almost two hundred years later. They knew they were travelers for a religious cause, but neither they nor anyone else referred to them that way.

> *…So they left the goodly and pleasant city, which had been their resting place near twelve years; but they knew they were pilgrims, and looked not much on those things, but lifted up their eyes to the heavens, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits.*
>
> William Bradford, *Of Plimoth Plantation*

[2] It should be noted that the Separatists, in total opposition to King James, did not accept the King James Version of the Bible. They used the Geneva Bible, published in Switzerland.

Plimoth Colony

The name Plymouth was not given to this place by these colonists, but had appeared earlier on a map drawn by John Smith, better known for his association with Jamestown, Virginia. Whether or not Cape Cod and Plymouth were the intended destination of the Mayflower passengers has been debated, but Plymouth was where they chose to establish their Colony, in December 1620.

Upon arrival at Cape Cod, their number was still 102, but one man had died and one child, Oceanus Hopkins, had been born. While they were anchored at Cape Cod, another baby was born, Peregrine White. He is credited with being the first child of European descent born in New England.[3] His family was among those who settled Marshfield and he eventually became a member of this church.

During the first horrible winter, half the passengers and half the crew died. By spring, only five grown women were left, with the help of some teenaged girls, to care for the many children in the colony. One of those surviving women was Susannah White, mother of the newborn Peregrine and his two year old brother, Resolved. One of the women who had died was the wife of Edward Winslow. In May 1621, Susannah White and Edward Winslow were married, and thus she became the first mother and the first bride in Plymouth.

The surviving male "Saints" assumed the leadership of the colony, and, of course, of the church, as they had the same objective. Edward Winslow, apparently a natural-born negotiator, is given considerable credit for establishing good relationships with the Native Americans, especially with their leader, Massasoit. This good relationship continued almost fifty years, until after the death of Massasoit in 1661.

Before leaving the ship, the men of the colony, both Saints and Strangers, signed an agreement establishing a "body politic" for their governance. This agreement, later called the Mayflower Compact, was a plantation[4] covenant, a form later used in Connecticut and other colonies. Because it was first, it is often called the basis of American democracy, since it established the tradition of government based on the consent of the governed. Under its provision, John Carver was the first New World governor chosen by free people in a free election. In Plymouth, the governor was elected each year. William Bradford and Edward Winslow both served as early governors, with up to four assistants.

In 1630, a Puritan group, led by John Winthrop, sailed into Boston Harbor with a fleet of ships, and by sheer numbers and better finances soon overshadowed Plymouth Colony. They formed a colony called Massachusetts Bay Colony. These two colonies existed side-by-side until 1692, when Massachusetts Bay absorbed Plymouth Colony to form the Colony of Massachusetts.

While Plymouth authorities often conferred with Boston's leadership, the two colonies were no more alike than they had been in England.

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[3] There had been English children born in the Carolinas and in Virginia, and French and Spanish in areas now part of the United States.

[4] Not to be confused with the Southern use of the word plantation. This refers to planting a colony.

The dark, somber clothing often associated with the Pilgrims was actually more the dress of the Bay Puritan colonists. In Pilgrim inventories are found red waistcoats, purple cloaks, and embroidery.

Both colonies are credited with coming to American for religious freedom, but it was for themselves, not for others. Winthrop and the Bay Colony leadership treated those who differed much as they, themselves, had been treated in England. Quakers were usually fined or "warned out" of Plymouth, but in Massachusetts Bay they were whipped or even executed.

No one was ever tried in Plymouth Colony for witchcraft; indeed the only related trials were of people who had accused another of being a witch.

Generally, it seems, the residents of Plymouth had more fun and saw the world as much less grim and threatening than the residents to the north.

It is significant, however, that the Puritan Churches in Massachusetts Bay Colony were established in the same way as those in Plimoth Colony, by covenanting together a congregation. Both colonies, then, had Congregational Churches.

Establishment of Green's Harbor

By 1630, the population of Plymouth Colony had grown beyond the capacity of the fields surrounding the town of Plymouth to sustain the people and their animals. By necessity, the families were allowed to establish farms beyond the bounds of the town. This included Duxbury, Green's Harbor[5] (also called Rexham), Scituate, and other places. In the beginning, however, it was expected that the householders only stay in these outposts as necessary to supervise their crops, and that they leave servants to oversee the property. The reasoning was to continue to maintain control over the group "for the common good." This would help ensure safety against Indian attack, promote fellowship among the citizens, allow laws to be enforced, encourage sharing of food and other resources, and most of all, to ensure attendance at church. But times were changing, and men like Miles Standish, John Alden, Edward Winslow, and others were chafing to move to their own land and "get on with their lives."

Governor Bradford relates this time:

> …The people of the Plantation began to grow in their outward estates, by reason of the flowing of many people into the country, especially into the Bay of the Massachusetts.
>
> …The church must also be divided, and those that had lived so long together in Christian and comfortable fellowship must now part and suffer many divisions. First, those that lived on their lots of the other side of the Bay, called Duxbury, they could not long bring their wives and children to the public worship and church meetings here, but with such a burthen as, growing to some competent number, they sued to be dismissed and become a body of themselves. And so they were dismissed about this time, though very unwillingly. But…it was thought best to give out some good farms to special persons that would promise to live at Plymouth, and likely to be helpful to the church or commonwealth, and so tie the lands to Plymouth as farms for the same…And so some special lands were granted at a place general called "green's Harbor, where no allotments had been in the former division, a place well meadowed and fit to keep and rear cattle … But alas, this remedy proved worse than the disease; for within a few years those that had thus got footing there rent themselves away, partly by force and partly wearing the rest with

[5] Named for William Green, brother-in-law of Merchant Adventurer, Thomas Weston. He established a fishing trade on the Duxbury shore. (Hager, *Marshfield,* p21)

importunity and please of necessity, so as they must either suffer them to go or live in continual opposition and contention.[6]

Governor Bradford was not optimistic about this change in the authority of the colony, particularly as it would affect the established church: "This I fear will be the ruin of New England, at least of the churches of God there, and will provoke the Lord's displeasure against them."[7]

By 1633, there was enough activity around Marshfield that several men, including John Shaw and Mr. Gilson,[8] were undertaking to enlarge the passage between Green's Harbor and the sea. Edward Winslow was one of the early settlers, probably for a while returning to Plymouth in the winter and to attend church as required, but gradually establishing himself and his family as residents of Marshfield. By 1636, William Thomas and his "Welsh gentlemen" had arrived; by 1639 Nathaniel Thomas, son of William, was appointed to "exercise men at arms;" and on March 2, 1640, Marshfield, formerly called Green's Harbor and Rexham, was granted the status of a town.

Establishment of the First Parish Church in Marshfield.

There are no separate records for this congregation from 1632 until 1696. Any primary information can only be found in Marshfield town records, in the records of other churches, or the records of Plimoth Colony, and secondarily in other published works.

In the records of the First Church in Plymouth, under the date 1632 and written in the margin, are found these words:

> In the beginning of the church of Marshfield was the second church of God that issued out of the church of Plymouth.

Those who have seen the original record say that the note appears to have been written no earlier than 1657, so it may or may not be correct. Technically, it probably was not, since there was apparently yet no authorized church there. In a letter written in 1634 from Scituate, James Cudworth lists all the churches then established, and does not mention Marshfield. But perhaps there was something going on that he was not aware of, and that is the unauthorized activity of Mr. Edward Winslow who certainly served some congregation as an unauthorized minister. Perhaps the residents of Marshfield, then, did consider themselves a congregation, separate from Plymouth, before the official establishment of that church.

Edward Winslow, one of the most educated men among the Marshfield settlers, and a man who always did what needed to be done under the circumstances, apparently served that function as he, and presumably the congregation, saw necessary, even though they went afoul of the established church in England (which, by definition, the Separatists certainly did.)

In 1634, Mr. Winslow made the third of four trips back to England to plead the case of the colony in several matters before the "Councell bord, ...which he did to good

[6] Bradford, William, *Of Plymouth Plantation,* p254.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Neither identified.

effect." His arguments were "accepted with most of theire lordshipps and hee was heard Sundry times by them…But this Crossed both Sir ffardinandoe Gorges[9] and Capt. Masons and the Archbishopp of Canterberrys[10] ends by them aimed att." [sic]

The result of the concerns of the three men mentioned was that they accepted his arguments for the colony but began to question whether or not he had, as it had been reported to them, been acting as a minister without authority.

> To which Mr. Winslow Answared That somtime wanting a minester hee did exercise his Gift to healp the edification of his bretheren when they wanted better meanes which was not offtens.
>
> Then about Marriage which hee alsoe Confessed that having been Called to place of Majestracy hee had sometimes married some, and further told thire Lordshipps, tht Marriage was a Civill ordinance And he found noe wher in the word of God, that it was tyed to minnestry, againe they were Nessessitated soe to doe; having for a longe time together att first noe minnister; besides; it was noe new thinge for hee had bin soe married himselfe in holland, by the Majestrate [11] in theire Statehouse but in the end, to be short, for these and such like thinges the Bishope by vehement Importunitie procured theire Lordshipps Consent to his Comittment; soe hee was Comitted to the fleet and lay there 17 weeks (or thereabouts) before hee Could Gett a Releasment and this is the end of this Petition and this business.[12]

Thus Edward Winslow bravely confessed that he had, indeed, served as minister, and had also married couples,[13] acting in his capacity as a magistrate elected by the colony. As he explained, this was the belief of the Separatists, that marriage was a civil and not a religious rite.[14] What is not clear is whether he performed these functions in Marshfield, or only in Plymouth.

This was not a trivial charge. King Charles I was still firmly in power, and it was yet eight years before the beginning of the English Civil War. People had been beheaded, mutilated,[15] or imprisoned for such. Archbishop of Canterbury Laud was relentless in his pursuit of anyone who deviated from his strict interpretation of the rights of the clergy and the relationship of the church to the power of the King. But for his audacity, Winslow was, surely to his relief, merely held in England for seventeen weeks before he could resume his perilous journey back across the ocean to Marshfield. And if, indeed, Winslow served as a minister to a little flock in Marshfield before 1634, then he probably began when he moved there in 1632.

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[9] Ferdinandoe Gorges had a vested interest in the colonies. He was an original investor in Plymouth Colony. By grant, he claimed most of what is now Maine and New Hampshire and was a sworn enemy of Massachusetts, which finally paid him for that land.

[10] William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, infamous enemy of Puritans and Separatists.

[11] It is interesting that he mentions his first marriage in Holland, but not his second marriage in Plymouth, almost certainly by magistrate. The best explanation is that he did not want to incriminate William Brewster who surely performed the ceremony and already had a “criminal record” as a dissenter.

[12] First Church of Plymouth records.

[13] Bradford (which see, p. 86), confirms that the colony considered marriage to be a civil matter, basing this view on the "laudable custom of the Low Countries" (Holland, whence they came), and particularly on a law passed there in 1590. He also specifically mentions that the first marriage in the colony was performed in this way, and that marriage, we know, was of Edward Winslow and Susanna White. Willard Thomes, of this congregation, has discovered that Edward Winslow performed the wedding of his ancestors.

[14] John Alden also performed marriages as a magistrate in Duxbury, and this was the custom for many years in the colony.

[15] Laud’s favorites were slitting the defendant’s nose, or cutting off his ears, if he was allowed to live. His deeds were not forgotten. He was beheaded by the Puritan government under Cromwell.

This Church of Marshfield (above Called Greensharbour) was began and afterwards Carryed on by the healp and assistance (under God) of mr. Edward Winslow: whoe att the first procured severall Welsh Gentlemen of Good note thirther with mr Blinman a Godly able Minnester whoe unanimously Joyned together in holy fellowshipp or att least were in a likely way therunto, but some desentions fell amojngth them which Caused a p'rteing; Not longer after and so the hopes of a Godly societies, as to them was; frusterated; Not long after those that went from Pllymouth (with that Godly Gentleman mr William Thomas) keeping up a Comunion; It pleased the lord to send unto them a faithfull and able preacher of the Gospell Named Mr. Edward Buckley whoe was Chosen theire pastour and: officiated in tht place very profittabley divers yeers; but att last hee left them and went to a place called Concord in the Government of Massachusetts.[16]

About that time or a little before that the Church of Duxburrow became a distinct body from the Church of Plymouth; the Towne of Scittuate began and severall of the Church of Plymouth Repaired thither and seated them selves there.[17]

Once again, Bradford expresses his dismay over the changes taking place among the colonists and within the Plymouth church:

And thus was this poor church left, like an ancient mother grown old and forsaken of her children, though not in their affections yet in regard of their bodily presence and personal helpfulness; her ancient members being most of them worn away by death, and these of later time being like children translated into other families, and she like a widow left only to trust in God. Thus, she that had made many rich became herself poor.[18]

Today the First Parish of Duxbury cites 1632 as the date of establishment, but it is a Unitarian Church and whether it can be considered "the same church" is a matter of debate. And James Cudworth also did not include Duxbury in his list of 1634. The Scituate church to which he refers removed to Barnstable in 1639 and the current North Congregational Church was established in 1842. The First Parish Church in Scituate, Unitarian since 1845, was established in 1826.

The original First Church of Plymouth counts 1620 as its establishment in this country, and its origins in Scrooby, England, in 1602, and subsequent removal to Leyden, Netherlands, in 1607, as actually predating any Congregational Church in this country. Once again, we meet the debate about whether a Unitarian Church is a continuation of the original.

[16] First Church of Plymouth Records. Here I have kept the original spelling as shown in this edition, except that I have substituted the "v" for the "u" in those places where a "v" would appear today.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Bradford, p334.

The Church of the Pilgrimage, founded by that name in 1851, can make a claim to be the oldest, since one of the churches combined to form it was the Third Pilgrimage Church which claimed to be the continuing remnant of the original 1620 organization.[19]

All this is subject to all manner of interpretation, but it does appear that if one defines the "oldest church" as one, out of the original Pilgrim congregation, with the earliest date that has continued to be a Trinitarian Congregational church, then Marshfield is that church. There are others in Massachusetts, notably Salem, that were established by the Puritans soon after their arrival in 1630, and may predate the Marshfield Church. However, these are Puritan Churches, not Pilgrim.

The Ministry of Richard Blinman - ca 1640 – ca 1642

The Minister:

Richard Blinman was born in Chepstowe, Co. Monmouth, Wales, and baptised February 2, 1608. He was the son of William and Jane Morgan Blinman. He received his A.B. degree from Oxford in 1635/6[20] and sailed to the New World soon thereafter.[21]

Unidentified sources have noted that "Mr. Blinman was a 'godly and able man' [who] was not well received by the austere Puritans[22] of Marshfield, who compared him to a 'piece of new cloth in an old garment.' " With a degree from Oxford, he was a learned man, but "may have been in advance of his times" or too liberal for his audience.

Mr. Blinman and his group moved on to Cape Ann where he served as the first pastor at the church in Gloucester until 1648. Then he was in New London (1650-57) and New Haven (1657-58), Connecticut, and in Newfoundland (1659), before going to Bristol, England, where he died between April 13 and July 26, 1687.[23]

Mr. Blinman was married to wife Mary, and had sons Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Azarikam, and Nathaniel, and daughters, perhaps Hannah and Margaret.[24]

The Church:

It appears that Mr. Blinman had arrived in Plymouth Colony from Wales with a group that included William Thomas, about 1636. Several people from that group, including Thomas and Blinman, decided to move to the new Marshfield community, joining Edward Winslow and others who were already there. Mr. Blinman was apparently an ordained minister or the Plymouth leaders would not have considered him "an able

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[19] Taylor, Richard H., *The Churches of Christ in the Congregational Way…* appendix.

[20] The dates marked with a "/" between two years refer to those before 1753, when England (and thus the colonies) changed from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. Eleven days were lost, and the beginning of the new year was changed from mid-March to January 1. For example, George Washington was born on February 22, 1731 "old style," but February 11, 1732, "new style."

[21] Weis, Frederick, *The Colonial Clergy,* p.34. Weis says he sailed in 1640, but it was probably earlier.

[22] As we have seen above, the "pilgrims" were not technically Puritans, but Separatists.

[23] Ibid.

[24] *Pioneers of Massachusetts,* p55

preacher." They were surely glad to have an ordained minister, because not even Edward Winslow would presume to serve communion.

While some have placed Mr. Blinman's[25] association with this church beginning about 1642, it may have been somewhat sooner, probably almost immediately after his arrival in New England. Surely a man of his education would have been put to task immediately. And, as we have seen, the good Mr. Winslow had suffered enough for the lack of a minister in Marshfield. Ebenezer Alden said in his notes, without citation, that Mr. Blinman had been ejected from his church in England (for following the Separatists and not the established Church of England), and had been invited by Governor Winslow to come to Green's Harbor. While Thomas and Blinman may not yet have had homes in Green's Harbor, they might very well have been involved with the community and church there. The Plymouth Court set apart a tract of land for the support of the ministry in Marshfield in 1640. The minister was noted to be "Nehemiah Smyth or some other " indicting that Mr. Smyth was not a certainty. That same year Nehemiah Smyth married the daughter of Thomas Bourne, who in 1637 had received a grant of land in Marshfield. But nothing else is said about Mr. Smyth, and it is more likely that Mr. Blinman was the beneficiary of the minister's allotment. Nehemiah Smith lived in Plymouth County, but is not known to have preached until he moved to Connecticut in 1653 and became a minister in New London.[26]

The Plymouth County records (V2, p37) note that, on March 2, 1640, "it was enacted that Green's Harbor shall be a town with the name Rexham, now Marshfield, and shall enjoy all the privileges of towns." Some, including Ebenezer Alden, have suggested that the name Marshfield might have been recommended by Mr. Blinman since Marshfield, England, is in Monmouthshire, whence came Mr. Blinman. But Mr. Blinman came not from England but from Monmouth, Wales (admittedly right on the border with England), and Marshfield, England, is in Wiltshire, not Monmouthshire. However, there is a Marshfield, Wales, not far from Monmouth, and with a topography not unlike that of the Green Harbor area. If the name was in use as early as 1640 (and the records were actually written at the time), then perhaps it is a further indication that Mr. Blinman had begun his ministry by the time the town was founded.

On January 7, 1641, the Court of Assistants of the Colony granted William Thomas, gentleman, a tract of some twelve hundred acres of land (the amount of land indicating his perceived value to the colony) in “Greenes Harbour” and soon thereafter he began his house on that property. There is no record that Mr. Blinman ever had a house of his own, so he may have lived with Thomas or others, deriving his upkeep from the ministerial lands.

William Thomas, upon his death in 1651, was given a gravestone in the burying ground, describing him as "One of the founders of New Plymouth Colony." This recognizes the fact that, while he was not one of the passengers on the Mayflower, indeed he, his wife, and his son did not arrive until about sixteen years later, he was one of the Merchant adventurers who had backed the expedition and plantation as early as 1624.[27]

While the original Pilgrims were Separatists, we will see that Edward Winslow eventually threw his lot with the Puritans in England, and Mr. Blinman’s successor was

[25] It was not the custom of Separatists to refer to the minister as "Reverend."
[26] Weis, *Colonial Clergy*, p190.
[27] Thomas, *Remarkable High Tories,* chap. 3.

definitely Puritan. The effect probably was that this church was stricter and more likely to impose sanctions on those who did not attend meetings, etc., than the other churches out of Plymouth.

Presumably the first church meetings were held in homes, but as more families settled in the area, and town business had to be attended to, a meetinghouse was built. While the court had set aside land to support the church, William Thomas set aside a portion of his adjoining land for a meetinghouse and the cemetery. This small, plain, thatch-covered structure is said to have been close by the present location of the Winslow Cemetery, called in the records the "old Bury Ground." A description of this and subsequent buildings follows in another chapter.

The earliest burials, like weddings, were simple expediencies, not formal religious rites. Even in established Plymouth there were no monuments to mark the graves of the deceased, only, perhaps, a simple fieldstone. In Duxbury it was said that the first sermon preached at a funeral was for that of Jonathan Alden in 1697, more than sixty-five years after his venerated parents had established their home there, and certainly there is no proof of where they may have been buried. Until the establishment of the Bury Ground, and even afterward, most people were simply buried on or near their own property, with a few friends and family members accompanying the body. It was not until the middle of the 18th century that the Congregational Churches routinely held funerals.

The Bible was not read in the early services of this congregation, nor for another one hundred years. The families probably each owned a Bible. It would have been the Geneva Bible, first published in Switzerland in 1560, and certainly not the King James version, authorized by the very King who had harried them out of England. The Geneva Bible was significant because it was the first to have text divided into verses as well as chapters. One edition was called a “Breeches” Bible, because in it Adam and Eve are said to have used leaves to make themselves “breeches.”[28] That English families owned and read Bibles was part of the legacy of the reformation movement, since the Catholic Church had assumed that only the clergy should read and interpret scriptures, and to ensure that the common person did not have access, the Bibles were published in Latin.

The Ministry of Edward Bulkeley - 1642 – 1656

The Minister:

Edward Bulkeley[29] arrived in New England in 1635, about 22 years of age. He had been sent ahead to prepare the way for his father, the Rev. Peter Bulkeley of Odell, Co. Bedford, England.

Peter Bulkeley was a descendant of an ancient and honorable family, a graduate of St. John's College, Cambridge, and a man of some means. But he had crossed the establishment, as had others associated with the Puritans and Separatists, and had found it wise to leave England. By this time his first wife and the mother of his first eleven children had died. He and his second wife and three children (by her he later had four more children) actually were able to slip out of England under assumed names and by switching places with other people, so that their leaving would not be noticed by the

[28] Genesis 3:7. The King James Bible says, “aprons.”

[29] There will be two spellings of Bulkeley in this chapter, but this is apparently the way he spelled it.

authorities. Peter Bulkeley began his New World ministry at Concord, Massachusetts Bay Colony, then nothing but unsettled wilderness. (The first night he spent in a hole dug in the ground.) He continued there until his death in 1658/9. His biography was written by none other than the Boston Puritan leader, Cotton Mather, who credited him, among other things, with endowing the library of "Harvard-College with no small part of his own." Mather further says that he was conscientious "…to a degree of scrupulosity, particularly in his avoiding all novelties of apparel, and the cutting of hair so close (thus the Puritan "roundhead")." Had he been asked "whether he had strickly kept the Sabbath?" he would have replied, "Christianus sum, intermittere non possum" – "I am a Christian - I cannot swerve from duty." Further, he was, as a preacher, "Quo Nemo tonuit fortius," – "Than whom no one thundered louder."

Edward Bulkeley, the oldest of Peter Bulkeley's children, had been educated at St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, England, and then was trained for the ministry by this model Puritan pastor, his father. His ordination took place in Marshfield in 1642/3, his first church ministry. Traditionally, he is considered the first minister of the Marshfield Church, perhaps because he was the first after the town was established.

When the Stuarts were overthrown in England, and the Puritans came into power, the Bulkeley men must have been tempted to return to England and reassume their place in society there (Edward's first cousin, his mother's nephew, was Sir Thomas Allen, Lord Mayor of London), but recognizing that others had also staked their lives and fortunes on this new country, they remained.

In 1648, the Congregational Churches of Plymouth Colony and those of Massachusetts Bay Colony joined in a loose union after a conference in Cambridge that produced the Cambridge Platform. Thereafter, ministers moved back and forth between the colonies and there was cooperation between churches.

On the death of his father, in 1659, Edward Bulkeley was installed over the Church in Concord. Since there is a period of time, between 1657 and 1659, when he is not shown as minister either in Marshfield or Concord, he might already have been assisting his father. He remained in Concord until his own death fifty-three years later, aged eighty-two. The last year, being infirm, he was pensioned by his church, but could preach or not, as he chose. By tradition, he is said to have been lame and of a feeble constitution, but was greatly praised for his talents, acquirements, irreproachable character, and piety. His death was noted in the diary of Judge Sewall.

The wife of Edward Bulkeley was named Lucian and it appears she was from Plymouth County, but her surname is not known. She had a daughter from a previous marriage, Lucy (Mrs. John) Lake. Edward and Lucian had five children, three of whom were probably born in Marshfield, including John who was buried there in 1655.[30] Their daughter, Anne, married John Clarke and was the great-grandmother of Massachusetts patriot and governor, John Hancock.

[30] *The Descendants of Peter Bulkeley,* pp 92-113.

The Church:

The expenses of the town, including the church, were paid by a system of taxes or assessments, to be set by men appointed to be "raters." This varied according to the expenses to be met, the raters then determining the amount to be raised and how much each inhabitant would contribute. This was in addition to the rates exacted by the Colony. Those who did not pay were brought to court, as anyone who does not pay taxes today would be.

Even after more than twenty years of relatively harmonious relations with the Native Americans (for which Edward Winslow could take much credit), there was still a constant fear and very real danger. At the Town Meeting of September 27, 1643, it was voted to have a "constant Watch" in "four several quarters." "There is probably imminent danger to the whole body of the English in this land." Four watches were to be maintained:

1. House of Edward Winslow, himself to have charge.
2. House of William Thomas, Nathaniel Thomas to have charge.
3. House of Thomas Bourne, Josiah Winslow to have charge.
4. House of Robert Barker, William Brookes to have charge.

These were the strongest houses, located from Winslow's in the South to Barker's in the North, and to them the inhabitants of the town were to flee upon hearing of any danger from the Indians.

Further, "That on the Sabbath days these guards to be continued, and that the rest of those that are liable to bear arms bring them to the place of worship, and in case any return from hence to take their arms with them."

"That James Pitney, Mr. Thomas' family, and Mr. Bulkeley's [the minister] be under Lieut. Thomas." This would refer to John Thomas, who had come to Marshfield as a servant to Edward Winslow and was not related to William Thomas. John Thomas' wife was Sarah, the daughter of James Pitney. They owned property near the parsonage, on the road now called Parsonage Street.

By 1644, it was decided there should be a moderator chosen at the beginning of each town meeting to conduct the business of the day. William Thomas, already serving as an Assistant to the Governor in Plymouth, was chosen that day, to be the first moderator. Hoping to promote attendance and order, it was also decided to assess fines on all who arrived late (6 pence per hour), failed to attend (18 pence), disturbed the meeting, or left before dismissal. Among the first offenders was William Thomas' son, Nathaniel, who did not appear at the time of the meeting.

Mr. Bulkeley was, presumably, the first married minister, and had two children and a step-daughter when he arrived in Marshfield. However, the parish (and the town, they being the same entity at this time) apparently did not support him to his satisfaction. This caused enough complaint and misunderstanding that in 1655, the court in Plymouth sent John Alden and Miles Standish to admonish the people of Marshfield to "contribute to the maintenance of the minister…that there be no just cause of future complaints…that the minister may carry on comfortably in dispensing the word of God."

Edward Winslow, who might have been expected to settle disputes such as this, was still living, but for the last nine years of his life he was away from Marshfield on

Colony business, and would not have been available. That the court sent Alden, then Assistant Governor, and Standish, then Treasurer of the Colony, and both venerated "first comers," indicates the importance the court ascribed to this situation. William Thomas, who might also have been diplomatic, had died in 1651.

Three years before, the town of Marshfield had been admonished by the courts because they had not built stocks and a whipping post. Apparently they were in no hurry to do so, because on the same page of the record sending Alden and Standish, the town is, contrary to order, still without those methods of justice. Nor do they have a pound for stray animals. The behavior of the citizens must have been exemplary at this time. Most of the penalties were fines for relatively minor offences.

Kenelm Winslow, another of Edward's brothers who came from England after him, was put under bonds and, "failing to find sureties," was imprisoned in Plymouth for saying of the Marshfield Church, that "they are all liars." That such a prominent man in town affairs could find no one to go his bond in this case indicates that his remark had offended most of the people in town.

In 1651, John Rogers was fined 5s for "villifying the ministry." That was actually not much of a fine, considering that about the same time Ralph Smith was fined 20s for "lying about seeing a whale."

Mr. Bulkeley left, apparently, in the summer of 1657. In the Town Meeting of August 13, 1657, "…Some of the inhabitants have voted to make choice of attorneys to maintain and defend their right about the house and land that Mr. Bulkley [sic] late lived in, which was built by part of the now inhabitants. And they have voted that Capt. Josiah Winslow, Josiah Winslow, Sr., and Lieut. White, [31] or any two of them, shall prosecute by suit at law or otherwise as they shall see cause for the recovery of the premises.

On December 6, 1661 (two years after he had left) "the inhabitants have agreed to pay the final 4 pounds and 10 shillings, the residue of the whole sum that is due from the Town of 100 pounds" for the house and lands that he sold to the town. But that was not the end of it. In September, 1668, eleven years after Mr. Bulkeley had left Marshfield, the "Town Meeting requested Major Josiah Winslow and Anthony Snow go to Concord to make a full issue of the accounts with Mr. Edward Bulkley [sic] about the payment of the houses and land and that they shall be answered their just charge relating to the premises." On April 12, 1669, the final settlement was made - a "bill of three pounds to be paid to Mr. Bulkeley in corn or cattle at the latter end of the summer." It is curious that each entry mentions "houses," so there may actually have been two houses involved, complicating the issue, or it might simply mean a dwelling and outbuildings.

By 1657, the need for another, probably larger, more centrally located meetinghouse had been recognized. The town approved the location, on land owned by Timothy Williamson, but the actual building was delayed and it is not clear exactly when it was completed. However, later that year repairs were approved for, presumably, the old building.

Timothy Williamson, though his life was relatively short, was an influential early settler of Marshfield. Unlike Winslow and Thomas, he was not given large tracts of lands as grants, but apparently bought his own acreage. His influence was probably derived from the fact, as he stated in a deposition before John Alden in 1668, that he was part of

[31] Capt. Josiah Winslow and Capt. (Peregrine) White, are son and step-son of Edward Winslow. Josiah Winslow, Sr., is Edward's brother.

the entourage of Edward Bulkeley himself. Though he may have been a few years younger that Bulkeley, he apparently left England with him, perhaps as a companion, or even as a servant. This would indicate Puritan ties, as Peter Bulkeley would have been extremely careful of Edward's traveling companions. Timothy Williamson married in Marshfield, 1653, Mary Howland, whose father, Arthur, was a brother to Pilgrim John Howland.[32] Timothy and Mary Williamson were apparently happily established in Marshfield and did not follow Mr. Bulkeley when he left for Concord.

In England, as a result of the English Civil War, Puritans under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell defeated the King's forces. In 1647, King Charles I was captured, and he was beheaded in 1649. This was a stunning change. While the Separatists and the Puritans were not identical, their roots and ultimate goals were similar. They would no longer fear the power of the established church over their endeavors, either in England or in the New World.[33]

In 1624, 1631, and 1634, the indomitable Edward Winslow had crossed the seas back to England to argue the cause of Plymouth Colony in the courts of England, and to seek support from financial backers. In 1646, he made his final trip, and participated in the final events of the Civil War. This took courage, surely beyond the call of duty either to the colony or to his beliefs. He never returned to America or his family. After nine years, he, serving Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell, went to the West Indies in the campaign to take those islands from the Spanish. He died there, and his body was consigned to the sea.

In 1651, Edward Winslow's only son, Josiah, took his fiancé, Penelope Pelham, to England so that they could be married in St. Bride's Church, the same in which Edward Winslow had joined the Separatists, and so that his father could attend. Susannah Winslow did not go along. The young couple and his father all had their portraits painted in London, and the portrait of Edward Winslow is the only portrait of a Mayflower Pilgrim painted from life.[34] An etching taken from the portrait is found in the first chapter of this book. The paper in his hand, long assumed to be, perhaps, the charter of Plimoth Plantation or perhaps his commission from Oliver Cromwell, was recently found to read, “From your loving wife, Susannah.”

In the early Marshfield Church, there were two services each Sunday. The sermons, from this time and for at least one hundred years, were long, perhaps two hours each. All people in town were expected to attend, even if they were not “members” of the church. In the very earliest days, only the members, or “communicants,” could sit; all others except the ill and infirm, stood around the walls. Communion was held after the second service during this period. The congregants sang hymns, at this time from the *Ainsley Psalms*. Further discussion will be found under a chapter entitled, “Music.”

[32] *Mayflower Descendant*, Jan. 1927, pp73ff

[33] There was a period after the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 that dissenters were persecuted, but there was no longer any heart to persecute people so severely, and it eventually ceased.

[34] The original now hangs in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth, MA. Copies of all the portraits may be seen in the Isaac Winslow House, Marshfield, MA. Penelope's wedding shoes, after a long separation, were recently united and are on display at Pilgrim Hall.

The Ministry of Samuel Arnold - 1657 – 1693

The Minister:

Samuel Arnold was born in England in 1622. His background and education are not known. He had arrived in Sandwich, MA, by 1643, then served as minister at Yarmouth, MA. The town paid the expense of the "removal of himself and family" to Marshfield. Soon afterward, six cows were purchased for him, so that the ministerial farm did not lie unimproved. Mr. Arnold's salary at first was £40 per year, in semi-annual payments of corn, cattle, butter, or English goods.

Samuel was a strict puritan-type, demanding attendance at church and deference to the minister. He had no tolerance for Quakers, and continuously hounded Arthur Howland, brother of the Mayflower passenger John Howland, and his son, Arthur Howland, Jr. (brother to Mary Howland who had married Timothy Williamson) He also had a long-running feud with Nathaniel Thomas, son of William Thomas, over access to the ministerial lands.

After a ministry of thirty-five years at this church, Samuel Arnold died in Marshfield on September 3, 1693. In his will, dated August 19 of that year, he made bequests to his wife Elizabeth and sons Samuel and Seth, his grandchild Elizabeth, and Isaac Holmes, and daughter Elizabeth's children. His divinity books in folio he left to his son Samuel, and a great Latin book to Mr. Rowland Cotton. What his relationship to Rowland Cotton was is not known; however, Rev. Cotton's grandson, Thomas Browne, became minister in Marshfield in 1759.

Samuel Arnold was buried in the old bury ground, now Winslow Cemetery. The town paid the expenses of his funeral.

Samuel Arnold, Jr., settled in Marion (Rochester) in 1684, and was ordained as a minister in 1703. He died in 1708/9, age 57.

The Church:

About the time that Samuel Arnold was installed as minister, the new (2nd) meetinghouse was completed, on land granted by Timothy Williamson for the purpose, and including land granted by Anthony Snow.

Shortly after Mr. Arnold arrived in Marshfield, the “house formerly called, Mr. Bulkeley’s” was struck by lightning. John Phillips, Jr., who was then occupying that house, was killed. A jury was impaneled to “site upon the corpse” and determine the cause of death. [35] That jury included the leading citizens of the town. A few years later, in a terrible coincidence, Phillips’ brother and step-mother were killed when lightening struck the chimney of another house. John Phillips, Sr., therefore, lost two sons and his

[35] Yentsch, Ann, et al. *Plymouth Colony Probate Records 1620-1692*. Doc. Set 135.

wife by lightening in separate incidents. This was so remarkable that the ministers in Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, including Increase Mather, corresponded about it, attempting to divine the meaning.

By 1665, the town was not paying Mr. Arnold on time, because the townspeople were not paying their "rates." Maj. Josiah Winslow and Mr. Kenelm Winslow were appointed to "see to the gathering in of the rate for Mr. Arnold that it may be paid in season and to see to the arrears." Later that year, at a specially called meeting, it was agreed that Mr. Arnold would continue to receive forty pounds per year, but that "only that such men that are in actual communion with the church shall be rated toward the said sum one third part more than others of the same estate are rated. Hereunto the church did particularly concur with the rest of the town."

This is a significant change, and indicates that the town was growing, and that all the new residents were not in "communion" with the church and did not want to be charged the same "rate" for the upkeep of the minister.

In 1666 and 1667 the town had difficulties paying for powder to defend the town as well as providing Mr. Arnold's stipend.

In 1663, Thomas Bird left a legacy of twenty shillings per annum for maintenance of the communion table. This was to be paid by one Anthony Dodson of Scituate, to whom Bird left his two houses, but whose relationship is not known. Not only was Mr. Dodson responsible for the payment, but his heirs "forever." The Dodsons had no idea how long "forever" can be. Since little was required for that purpose, for the next ninety years the principal continued to grow. Bird's legacy was frequently mentioned in the records, with different men being appointed to oversee the amount and receive the payments from the executors, occasionally having to resort to legal means. Finally, they called for payment of the entire sum, "in silver money, in the middle of winter, which put the executor to a great deal of trouble as silver money was very scarce."[36]

The church and town was also taking responsibility for the care of the poor. The Edward Bumpers (Bumpass) family seemed most in need, and is frequently mentioned in the records. Citizens were required to give him corn and provide housing. In 1663, four men were appointed to care for his welfare, with the instruction that they might possibly house him with families for one month at a time. In 1665, Hannah Bumpers, his daughter, was placed with "Robert Sprout for to be his servant for three years…" and at the end of that time the Town "will receive her if it be required." Though this family was needy, apparently the people were fond of them. It was not uncommon for undesirable families, or those not able to support themselves, to be "warned out," or told to leave town.

In 1868, the town confirmed a grant of land, dated 1663, "for Mr. Samuel Arnold and his heirs forever." That land had been laid out by Maj. Josiah Winslow, Joseph Beadle, and John Dingley, and was next to the land of Maj. Holmes and Joseph Rose. After discussion, the town settled on Mr. Arnold "…all the lands above mentioned according to their former grant, reserving only a narrow strip or sponge of it lying on the easterly side of the cart path that goeth from Mr. Arnolds toward the meeting house which they determine shall lie common unto the Town's use."

The trouble collecting the rates for the ministry continued so that in 1672, the rule was changed again so that "the whole town shall jointly pay to Mr. Arnold's rates as they pay all other rates, without any disproportion betwixt the Church and the town."

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[36] Ashley, Linda R., *Your Affectionate Pastor,* p71.

A new house was built for Mr. Arnold in 1678. Presumably this time there was a solid agreement between the town and the minister so that there would be no question that the town would own the house when Mr. Arnold was no longer minister.

In 1686, the town decided to build a barn on the ministerial land:

> Whereas Mr. Arnold our minister is necessitated to build a barn on the ministry's land, & not knowing when it shall please God to take him hence, it was agreed & voted by the inhabitants, none dissenting, that this town shall pay to his executors or administrators what the barn shall be worth at his decease to be prized by indifferent men.[37]

That Timothy Williamson's dwelling was close by the meeting house, is indicated by his appointment in 1665 to "make ye fire and keep ye meeting house clean for the following year & to have thirty shill[ings]." In 1673/4 "Libertie is graunted by the Court unto Timothy Williamson to keep an ordinary att Marshfield for the entertainment of strangers for lodging, victualing, and drawing and selling of beer." This is the first mention of a public house of lodging and food in Marshfield, and was probably located on the site previously occupied by the Post Office, and now several businesses, adjacent to the current Church building.

To the surprise of many, Snow Road in Marshfield does not refer to white precipitation, but to Anthony Snow, another of the early Marshfield settlers. He received one-half of the Thomas Prence Grant in 1649, including part of what is now the cemetery and much of the area called "Webster Square." He also had good "Pilgrim" credentials, having married Abigail, the daughter of Pilgrim Richard Warren. He was active in church/town affairs and donated a barrel of beef toward the purchase of Mr. Bulkeley's parsonage.

Selectmen are first mentioned in the Town Meeting of February 14, 1665. This would indicate that the town had grown large enough that it was unwieldy and inconvenient to have all the freemen making all the decisions, and so certain men were selected to represent them. These were Lt. Peregrine White, Ensign Mark Eames, Joseph Beadle, Thomas Doggett, and Anthony Snow.

It has often been said that "in those days" a man who was not a member of the church was not allowed to vote and participate in town affairs. That this was not the case here is proven by the fact that Peregrine White did not become a member of the church until May 22, 1698, when he was in his seventy-eighth year.[38] The requirement was that the vote was restricted to those who had been granted by the town the status of "freeman." The concept of "freeman" was of longstanding in England, and was carried into the colonies. However, the exact qualifications are not clear and probably varied from time to time and from place to place. There was, no doubt, an age requirement, and the person surely was expected to be of "good character." There was no church membership requirement in Plymouth Colony, though there was in Massachusetts Bay Colony, where laws and requisites were more stringent.[39] Since each man was, however, put to vote, some of the voters may have used church membership as a personal criterion. The King's Charter of 1692, decreeing that possession of land, not church membership,

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[37] Richards, Lysander S., *History of Marshfield,* p83.
[38] Ashley, Linda R., *Your Affectionate Pastor,* p72.
[39] Stratton, Eugene Aubrey, *Plymouth Colony,* p146-7.

was the qualification for voting, was effective in Massachusetts Colony after the two colonies combined.

In October 1670, the town voted to make pews for the meetinghouse, as well as make repairs to the building. This surely refers to the growth of the town and the need for more seating. It may be that at this time the arrangement of the interior of the church was changed to the familiar "pews facing the pulpit" rather than "benches around the communion table."

It is hard for us to imagine living for fifty years under the very real threat of Indian attack, yet that was the reality of Plymouth Colony. While there had been friendly relations between the colonists and the Native Americans under Massasoit, the settlers were never able to let their guard down. After 1661, when Massasoit died, concern began to grow. His son Metacomet, known by the English as King Philip, was concerned by the growing numbers of colonists, and angered by the loss of lands his people had always freely hunted and lived upon. When his brother, Wamsutta, known as Alexander, died, he blamed the death on the English, and in 1775, Philip declared war on both Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay.

In the end, one out of every ten men in New England was killed. Per capita, this is the costliest war ever fought in American history, and it was a very real threat to every man, woman, and child on both sides. Many communities were so decimated the inhabitants had to leave. By some chance, Marshfield was never attacked, though Plymouth and Scituate were. Some suggest that Philip still remembered the kindness of Gov. Edward Winslow toward his father and chose not to disturb this community. Yet it was Winslow's son, Josiah Winslow of Marshfield, who led the Colony's forces against Philip, and there is some indication that Philip blamed the Winslows specifically for the death of his brother.

There are many references to the war in the Town/Church records. Again there were garrisons arranged in the town, and rates were established for powder, ammunition, soldiers, and "masters of garrisons." It was voted in 1676 that the families of any soldiers wounded in going against the "Indian enemy" shall be cared for by the "whole town." The next month the Town voted "264 pounds to defray the cost of the war."

Philip's wife and at least one child were captured and sold as slaves to the West Indies, some say on the instigation of Marshfield's Rev. Arnold. Philip, already disheartened by the loss of his family and others, was killed in 1676, and the war gradually ended. Twenty-six Marshfield men officially fought, and at least ten were killed in the conflict.[40] One of those killed was Timothy Williamson. He was past sixty years old and could surely have avoided service, but marched with his neighbors to the fight.

The Sabbath Day was strictly kept in Marshfield, and in Congregational Churches generally, through the 17th and 18th centuries, and inhabitants of the town were also expected to respect the church and the minister:

> 1671: John Low of the Town of Marshfield for profaning the Lord's day by servile labor & contemptable words being minded of that abuse, the court fined 40 shillings or to be whipt

[40] Others were Thomas Little, John Barrows, John Low, John Eams, Joseph Phillips, Joseph White, Samuel Bump, John Brance, and __More.

> 1675: William Wood of Marshfield for speaking contemptously of Mr. Arnold on the Lord's day in Feb. last, as appears by evidence was sentenced by the Court to sitt in the stocks 2 hours the next training day at Marshfield.[41]

Plymouth Colony had continued to struggle as an entity, while Massachusetts Bay Colony prospered. In 1691, William and Mary of England granted a new charter combining Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colonies and adding Martha's Vineyard, to form the Colony of Massachusetts. After seventy-one years, Plymouth Colony ceased to exist.

The ministry of Mr. Arnold was not without controversy. William Thomas, 2nd charged Mr. Arnold with teaching rank blasphemy. The General Court (in Plymouth), on examining the sermon, declared it pure orthodoxy, and censuring Mr. Thomas for great arrogance, cautioned him to "carry more soberly." The enmity between Mr. Arnold and Nathaniel Thomas, father of William, 2nd, continued for years, with suits and countersuits. Eventually the town got involved, passing a law that no obstruction could be put up preventing the minister from entering his lands. Nathaniel immediately built a fence. Eventually both father and son spent some time in jail and paid fines, which they recovered by refusing to pay the ministerial rates. Rev. Arnold's son entered the fray by assaulting William Thomas, 2nd. Both had to pay fines for breaking the King's Peace.

Eventually the Thomas men tired of the fight and Mr. Arnold followed the cart path to his land in peace.[42]

Quakers in Plymouth Colony were never tortured and hanged as they were in Massachusetts Bay Colony. Nevertheless, Samuel Arnold and others did harass those Quakers in their midst. Most notable of those were Arthur Howlands, father and son. The older Arthur Howland was the brother of Pilgrim John Howland. Both Arthur Howlands professed the Quaker faith, held meetings in their homes, and refused to pay the ministerial rates in support of the Congregational Mr.Arnold. The father was tried at the home of John Alden in Duxbury, but was found to be too old and infirm to be whipped and too poor to be fined. Arthur, Junior, demonstrated his resolve when he married, in 1668, Elizabeth Prence against the objections of her father, then Governor of the Colony, Thomas Prence. When his father died in 1675, the son continued the resistance. We shall let Mr. Howland speak for himself, as he does so eloquently. This letter he entitled, "The Sufferings of Arthur Howland." It was written in the Plymouth jail. [Edited for length and some spelling and grammar.]:[43]

> About the beginning of 1679, the so called church of Marshfield because of some scruples that were on my conscience I did refrain from partaking with them in that which they call their sacrament of bread and wine took occasion to be offended with me…
>
> First they required me to come to the church meeting which I did at that time although I told them that I could not partake with them without sinning against my conscience. They told me if I did not promise them to partake with them and to come to their meeting they should proceed to their sentence of excommunication against me…
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> [Samuel Arnold told him he must appear at Church to answer charges.]…I [Howland] said I think I shall not come. [Arnold] said why? I said because if I should come it was like he

[41] Ibid. p.78; this would indicate that the stocks were on the training ground or near the present town green.
[42] Thomas, William H.B., *Remarkable High Tories,* p. 43ff.
[43] Hager, *Marshfield.* p.39ff.

would require me to pull off my hat and stand before the church and seeing I did not believe that they had no ground from the scriptures for what they did it would be no better to me than bowing to an idol…

[Samuel Arnold] called me by my name and as he said delivered me to Satan when he had done that he charged all his church members that they should not eat or drink with me in common eating or drinking, then charged the neighbors of the town that they not carry…to me. And for a close he prayed to his god that the devil might be set to work on me.

When they had thus accomplished there matters with me they then began with my wife, she being unsatisfied with their proceeding with me… They did implicitly persuade her not to eat or drink with me. Samuel Arnold several times positively urged her…

She withdrew from them and told them if they would not or could not produce some clear scripture rule for what they had done to her husband she could not partake with them in that which she thought was such an unchristian act without sinning against her conscience…

Notwithstanding their discussions with us and refusing to eat and drink with us in the 3 months of 1682 …Samuel Arnold aforesaid same to our house and took away our pewter, scarse leaving us a convenient dish or flagon to eat our vittles in.

Again in the year 1684 the 22nd day of the 3 [rd] month, the constable with John Bourne…came to our house and made demand of 15 shilling and 3 pence for the said Arnold's rate for preaching the year that was past and because I refused to pay it he ceased on my person to carry me to prison and on the 4th day of the fourth month following I was by the constable without any hearing at all put up in the common jail and am not allowed neither bread nor water or any thing to lie on but the floor, not anything to cover me with nor liberty to go with the jailor to any other house to get anything for my money to sustained nature now so much as fine by their order.

This is a true account of their proceedings with us to which we have and set our hands. Plymouth Gaole, this 6 day of the 4th Month, 1684.[44]

Arthur Howland
Elizabeth Howland

It appears that the good people of the Marshfield Church realized after this incident that this was not the kind of behavior they wanted, as there does not seem to be any further harassment of the Howlands. But we can also dismiss the idea that this church believed in freedom of religion at that time.

Arthur and Elizabeth Howland lived near the present fairgrounds and their family cemetery, though almost entirely vandalized at this time, lies alongside the outside of the fairgrounds fence.

The Ministry of Edward Tompson - 1696 – 1707

The Minister:

It took three years for the church to settle on a replacement for Mr. Arnold. Their choice was Edward Tompson. He was apparently the first minister here to be called, "Reverend."

Rev. Tompson was born April 20, 1665, in Braintree, the son of Deacon Samuel Tompson and his wife, Sarah Shepard, and grandson of Rev. William Tompson, the first minister in Quincy, and his wife, Abigail Collins.

Rev. Tompson graduated from Harvard in the class of 1684, but began teaching school in Newbury before graduation.

[44] This would be June, 1684, as the year began in March.

He was called, in 1687, to Simsbury, Connecticut, where he was paid £50 a year (actually paid in corn, wheat, or pork). The town paid the expense of moving his family and effects to Connecticut. He was given the use of the parsonage, and supplied with firewood. Additionally, he was granted 200 acres of land. Altogether, this was an exceptional deal for a new, unordained minister.

In 1691, he returned to Newbury, Massachusetts, apparently as the result of a misunderstanding. "Several of the towne are about called of Mr. Tompson to be their minister, the towne did by vote manifest their dislike against it, or against any other minister, whom they should call, until the church and towne are agreed upon it, looking upon such a thing to be an intrusion upon the church and town." In 1693, the controversy continued when the selectmen of Newbury, in a petition to the General Court, stated:

> …a long difference has existed between the people of Newbury and those in the west end of the town about calling a minister, that…[they] called Mr. Edward Tompson to preach to them without acquainting the minister, church, or towne with their proceedings…yet they persisted…and brought him in, and when he was com in, our minister warned him to forbear preaching till the church and town were agreed, yet he presumed to set up a lecture and preach without any allowance of minister, church or town.

The upshot of all this was that in 1694, the town gave him seventeen votes and Christopher Toppan [Tappan] sixty-five votes. The next month, the town voted that thereafter the people in the west end could choose any minister for themselves, "only Mr. Tompson excepted."

The church at Simsbury voted unanimously to recall him, but he did not return to Connecticut. He must have taught school until he was appointed the fourth pastor of the church in Marshfield and ordained on October 14, 1696. He began immediately to keep records of the church, so that we have events in his own words

He preached his own ordination sermon, which might be considered somewhat arrogant. His text was Isaiah 6:9,10:

> And he said, Go, and tell the people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.
>
> Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

He also mentioned that "Mr.Samuel Torrey of Weymouth gave mee my Charge. Mr. Ichabod Wiswall of Duxbury gave mee the right hand of fellowship."

The records of the Plymouth Church mention that letters had come from Marshfield inviting their pastor and others to attend and "who did all of them goe to that solemnity."

Rev. Tomson and his wife, Sarah, apparently already had two sons and three daughters when they arrived in Marshfield. Three more sons were born in Marshfield.
One son, Samuel, served the church at Gloucester from 1712 until his early death in 1724. Edward was a physician in Haverhill; William ministered in Scarborough, Maine. Daughter Abigail married Judge Stephen Longfellow of Gorham, Maine, and they became ancestors of the poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Rev. Tompson died at age 40, "of a consumptive disease" in 1705, and was buried in Marshfield:

HERE LYES YE ASHES
OF YE REVEREND LEARNED
& PIOUS MR. EDWARD TOMPSON
PASTOR OF YE CHURCH OF
MARSHFIELD WHO SUDDENLY
DEPARTED THIS LIFE MARCH
YE 16TH 1705
ANNO AETATIS 40

HERE IN A TYRANT'S HAND DOES CAPTIVE LYE
A RARE SYNOPSIS OF DIVINITY,
OLD PATRIARCHS, PROPHETS, GOSPEL BISHOPS MEET,
UNDER DEEP SILENCE IN THEIR WINDING SHEET;
ALL REST AWHILE IN HOPES AND FULL INTENT,
WHEN THEIR KING CALLS, TO MEET IN PARLIAMENT.

That eminent preacher, Cotton Mather, of Boston, had been a student of the Rev. Tompson's uncle. Of Edward Thomson he said, "Indeed he was not an *Old Man,* but he was a *Good Man."*[45] A publication by his friends described him: "In conversation, being holy, humble, meek, patient, sober, temperate, blameless, diligent, useful, and going about doing good; so living desired and dying lamented."[46]

The Church:

Rev. Tompson began keeping regular records of the church. While this author has not seen the original, his records and those of his successors, were published in the *Mayflower Descendant* over a period of years.

On page two, he notes, "There were but Thirteen Male Members of this Church at this time, whose names follow: Nathaniel Thomas, Esq., Deacon William Ford, Ephraim Little, Nathaniel Winslow, John Foster, Josiah Holmes, and Abraham Holmes, John Branch, John Hewet, Anthony Eames, Deacon Samuel Arnold,[47] Israel Thomas, Solomon Hewet."

"The Number of the Sisters of this Church was about thirty whose Names I cannot recover." This is a rather interesting statement, since he had just arrived when he started keeping the book and it should not have been difficult to list the names of these thirty women.

Deacon William Ford and Deacon Samuel Arnold were apparently the first deacons in this church. They were "set apart" by ordination. They were both elected in 1696, perhaps one of Rev. Tompson's changes in the Church custom. Deacon Ford died in 1721. Samuel Arnold left Marshfield and so did not serve long. John Foster was elected in 1700 and died in 1732, presumably serving as Deacon during that period, and the only one after Deacon Ford's death.

[45] Sibley, Class of 1684, p306ff.
[46] Document of the Pilgrim Conference, 1854, p.12.
[47] Perhaps the son of the previous minister, though by this time he was a resident of Rochester.

In 1697, Rev. Tompson noted that "In this time of awfull drought wee with the town appointed a public fast to seek God for Rain, and God Sent us Rain the next day following. O that this answer of Prayer might be remembred!"

He also noted that "It is the Custome of this Church & hath been So far to celebrate the Lords Supper at Even."[48] He does not say how often it was celebrated, but it was probably every week, as that was the custom in the Congregational Churches of the time.

In his own hand we see Rev. Tompson's record that "Capt. Peregrine White the first born Child of New England born November 1620 was admitted into this Church May 22 1698 In the 78th Year of his age. Mat.20.6.7." ["And about the eleventh house he went out…"] Peregrine White died in Marshfield on July 22, 1704, the last male passenger of the Mayflower (having been born aboard ship at Cape Cod). The last female was Mary (Allerton) Cushman, who died at Plymouth on November 28, 1699.

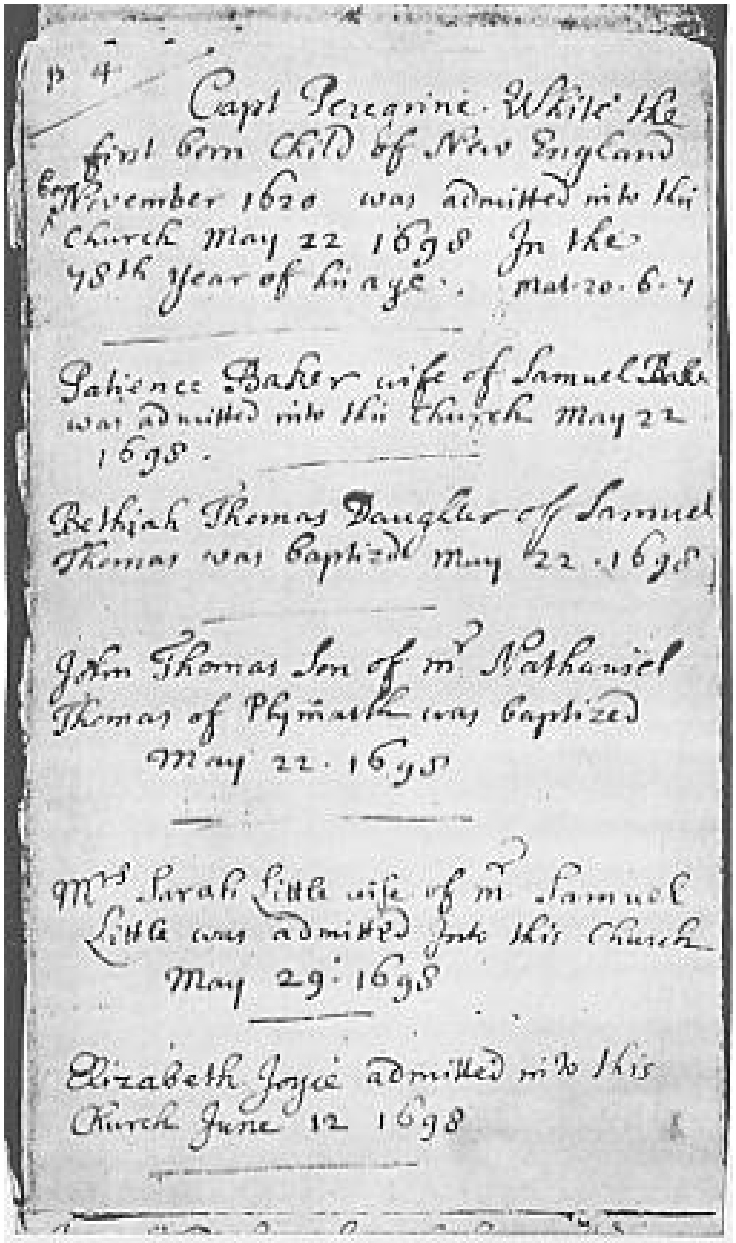
On October 23, 1698, he noted, "This church did appoint & Send forth Capt. Thomas & Deacon Ford with my selfe to assist in Gathring of a Church & Setling of Mr. Isaac Cushman In ye West End of Plimouth." This is now the Plympton Congregational Church.

"George, An Indian was Received into full communion with this church." (26 Nov 1699.) It appears that this man had no surname, unless Rev. Tompson saw no need to record it. "Full communion" for Indians was a relative term, as it was for slaves and women.

The records mention several people who confessed their sins, apparently before the congregation and in some detail, and were forgiven by the Church. Others were less compliant. Actually, attendance and membership in the church represented only a small percentage of the residents of Marshfield.

Rev. Alden and Mrs. Bosworth, in their short histories, both note that at this time the church instituted the policy of the "half-covenant" (Sometimes called half-way covenant.) and that it continued for about 100 years. Mrs. Bosworth is quite critical of this, saying "it allowed parents who did not come, and as far as we can see, were not fitted to come, to the communion table to be baptized, and to have their children baptized." The half-covenant was a rather curious response to the fact that there were people in the community who had been baptized as infants but had not, as adults, become members of the church because they could not demonstrate that they were of the elect. Until the new rule was instituted, people who were not members could not present their infants for baptism. The half-covenant allowed them to do so, but did not allow the parents to approach the communion table, or to vote in church affairs. As time passed, the rule became more and more liberal, so that those "owning the half-covenant" by virtue of their infant baptism could participate in all sacraments. This was later amended to require confirmation before full membership in the church.

[48] The afternoon service.



p 4

Capt Peregrine White He
first born Child off New England
in November 1620 was admitted into his
Church May 22 1698 In the
78th Year off his age. Mat. 20. 6. 7

Patience Baker wife of Samuel Baker
was admitted into his Church May 22
1698.

Bethiah Thomas Daughter off Samuel
Thomas was Baptized May 22. 1698

John Thomas Son off mr Nathaniel
Thomas of Plymouth was Baptized
May 22. 1698

Mrs Sarah Little wife off mr Samuel
Little was admitted into his Church
May 29. 1698

Elizabeth Joyce admitted into His
Church June 12 1698

CAPT. PEREGRINE WHITE'S ADMISSION TO THE CHURCH AT MARSHFIELD, MASS.

While this author has not located Rev. Tompson's records, this page was reproduced in the *Mayflower Descendant*. The top entry is the admission of Peregrine White to membership

There are six ancient pewter goblets or cups and two plates in the vestry cabinet. They are all of a style that could be from the 17th century. Records indicate that some pewter was given by Sylvanus White and his brother Peregrine, sons of Peregrine White, the "firstborn" New Englander. These plates, or one of them, may be the ones given by Peregrine White, Jr. Also, Thomas Bird gave a legacy in 1663, to be used for the Communion table. Perhaps some of these pieces are from that period. However, Grace Brown Ryder gave the Church some ancient pewter that had been in her family. At this time it is not possible to know which pieces have belonged to the Church throughout its history and which were more recently given by Mrs. Ryder. It seems most likely that the three matched goblets in the lower picture were those from the Brown family, and the similar but unmatched ones in the upper picture were those from the church, having perhaps been bought as the church grew and more goblets were needed.

Two pewter flagons, one shown in the picture below, are often attributed to Peregrine White's sons. However, research shows that at least one was most likely made

in the middle of the 18th century, after the deaths of Peregrine White and his sons. Therefore, they are more likely to have been bought about that time, perhaps by the gift of Deacon Israel Thomas who gave money for pewter and a table cloth in 1732 (still somewhat early for this pewter.) The flagons are similar but not exact matches, and it is possible that one was given by another person not found in the records, or was bought with funds from the Bird Legacy.

Oh Beautiful for Patriot Dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!

The 1700's – American Expansion and Independence

The Ministry of James Gardner - 1707 – 1739

The Minister:

After a period of two years, Rev. James Gardner was chosen as the next minister. Rev. Gardner was ordained on May 14, 1707, by the "imposition of the hands of Mr. Cotton Mather, Thomas Bridge, Benjamin Wadsworth, [and] Ephraim Little.

Rev. Gardner was born in Scotland, and we do not know where he was educated. However, he must have been well regarded, since Cotton Mather, probably the most prominent minister in Boston and in the Congregational Church at the time, himself came to Marshfield to "lay hands" on this new minister. Ephraim Little preached the sermon, using the text, "We then as workers together with him, beseech you also that he receive not the grace of God in vain." [2 Cor.6:1.]

James Gardner apparently was married when he came to Marshfield. His wife's given name, found in the town birth records of their eight children born here, was Mary, but her surname has not been determined.

When Rev. Gardner was hired, he was given a salary and the use of the "west side of the parsonage." The town records seem to indicate that the young widow Tompson and her children were allowed to remain in the east side of the house. Exactly how long that arrangement lasted has not yet been determined, but the parsonage must have been overflowing with children at that time.

Rev. Gardner died September 16, 1739, after a ministry in Marshfield of over thirty-two years. His body was said to have been placed in the tomb of the Winslows.[49] Neither he nor his wife seems to have a stone in Marshfield cemeteries.

The Church:

In 1706, a third meeting house was built, this one on the location of the current building. It was forty-four feet by thirty-four feet, and had a "Turrett or Bellfree." Contrary to popular lore, this building was not placed atop earlier graves, nor was anyone buried under it or the two later buildings. Deacon William Ford, having faithfully served in the previous building, asked that he be buried where the Deacons's Bench, in front of the pulpit, had been. His stone, dated 1721, and that of his wife, 1727, can be found in the cemetery, directly in front of the Parish Hall.

The previous building was sold for 10 pounds to Samuel Thomas and John Barker. The sale stipulated that the building was to be removed from town property. Mr. Barker was the schoolmaster. It is possible that Samuel Thomas owned the property

[49] Document of the Pilgrim Conference, 1854, p.13.

across the road (where the small cemetery is now – or perhaps as far as the current hardware store) and the building was moved to or rebuilt there and used for a schoolhouse. That might have been the school mentioned in memories of those who were schoolchildren when the British army marched though town at the beginning of the American Revolution.

No money actually changed hands. According to the town records, the town owed Mr. Thomas the same amount for expenses he had incurred for entertaining the "ministers and messengers" at the ordination of Mr. Gardner.

Speaking of this period, Ebenezer Alden says that there was no particular creed for the church, but "It is presumed that assent was given…to the *Westminister Catechism."*

That it was still difficult to be accepted into the church is indicated by the fact that Rev. Gardner's daughter, Jean, was baptized on Nov. 28, 1707,[50] but his wife was not admitted to the church until May 1709. It is noteworthy that he does not write even her given name on that date, nor at the baptisms of any of their several children, where he wrote, "my wife," "my son" or "my daughter." In most other cases, he does give the first names of both parents. During his ministry in Marshfield, he baptized 536 infants.

There are several interesting notations in Mr. Gardner's records:

"June 27 [1714] Elis daughter to Bety Thomas a molatto was baptised."

"octor 9th [1715] this day Elizabeth Waterman had a daughter baptised called orphan because born after its fathers decease"[51]

"Septr 2nd [1716] Mr Bell schoolmr had a daughter baptised called Sara

"June 29 [1718] a negro woman called mingo was taken into this church."

"Septr 13 1719 John Bourn confessed the sins and follys of the former pt of his life publikly and had a daughter baptised called Hanna"

"July 21 [1728] Subal Rose a molato was baptised.

The congregation was still concerned about Mr. Bird's legacy, and voted that thereafter they would only receive payment in silver, "as it passed at the time when the sd. Legacy was left, or in that which is equivalent." This is almost seventy years after Mr. Bird left the money in his will, and apparently his heirs were still paying the church as requested by the trustees. It was voted in 1745 "that three pound of that money be given to Mr. Gardner to buy him a preaching bible also that there be sufficient money put in Mr. Gardners hand to buy a church book."[52] Two years later the minister asked for forty shillings more since the amount given (five pounds), had not been enough to pay for the books.

[Jan. 28, 1733/4]"…voted that Mr. John Kent should own a confession agreed to by the church for some things that he had spoken of to Mr. Kennelm Winslow which had been offensive and injurious to his name but the sd [sic] Kent refused it."

[50] The Marshfield Vital Records, published in 1970, gives the name "Jane" and the year 1708.

[51] Anthony Waterman died April 3, 1715. This child was apparently born Aug. 21. Elizabeth apparently married Jonathan Alden January 17, 1717/18.

[52] It is interesting that, while Rev. Gardner refers to other ministers as "Rev., " he calls himself "Mr."

The town of Marshfield was expanding, particularly to the area now known as Marshfield Hills, but then called East Marshfield.[53] For years the residents there had to walk to "South Marshfield" to church. Today the street names reflect the paths they took - Eames Way, Sherman's Path, and Rogers Way. In 1738, a second parish, the Second Congregational Society Church, was established and a new church building built, called "The Chapel of Ease." [54] The name referred to the convenience of the building to those who had walked the long distance to the First Parish.

Deacon, John Foster passed away in 1732. Israel Thomas, in office by 1734, served until 1755.

Rev. Gardner "bears the reputation of being orthodox in faith, and eccentric in manner, and the brief records indicate external prosperity, yet a departure from the rigidity of Puritan practice, preparing the way for lamentable results."[55]

The Ministry of Samuel Hill - 1740 – 1753

The Minister:

Samuel Hill was born in Malden on October 17, 1714, the son of Abraham and Abigail Hill. He went to Harvard College [Class of 1735] at a time when class placement was by the prominence of the family rather than the achievements of the student. Samuel Hill was not high on the list. However, he was "earnest and able and… progressed from a waitership at the lower table to the affluence of a Hollis scholarship." After he received a Master's Degree in 1739, he went to Biddleford, Maine. He was married there to Sarah Jordan in 1739. He was ordained in Marshfield in 1740, with the sermon by Rev. Joseph Emerson of Malden.

The Harvard records report:

> In spite of the fact that Hill was an ardent hunter of wild fowl, his health was so poor as to be a constant drag. When he shot himself while hunting at Brant Rock, he made a bad situation worse… [In February, 1751] the parish had to hire a substitute preacher, but out of affection it sent Hill to Maine to rest. This was hardly a health resort in those days, however, for once when he was riding with Brother Morrill [his brother-in-law] they encountered hostile Indians and barely escaped to the fortified parsonage.
>
> On November 18, 1751, an ecclesiastical council meeting at Marshfield reluctantly approved the dismission of Parson Hill on grounds of poor health. A friendly neighbor on this occasion remarked that Hill was "a good man and a good preacher, but very crazy and infirm and otherwise under poor circumstance." Even so, Marshfield was reluctant to relinquish him, and did not do so until March 1752, when it made him the parting present of a Bible.

Before he was dismissed, a day of fasting and prayer was observed, and the attendance of neighboring ministers invited. "Council was afterward convened, by the

[53] The name was changed when regular postal delivery was established there, as East Marshfield was often confused with East Mansfield.

[54] The Second Church continued for a hundred years, when it was split. The Unitarian faction kept title to the original building, then standing at the top of Old Main Street. A Trinitarian Congregational faction withdrew and erected a new church, the present North Community Church building. A Baptist faction built what is today the Trinity Episcopal Church on Highland Street.

[55] Document of the Pilgrim Conference, 1854, p.14.

advice of which,…Rev. B. Bass of Hanover, Moderator,…a vote of dismission was passed. He and Mrs. Hill were provided with letters of recommendation.

Rev. Hill went back to Biddleford where he lived in the house of his late father-in-law. In 1754 and 1755, the town sent him to the House of Representatives in Boston.[56] His first wife died in 1756, and on March 20, 1758, he noted his intention to marry Elizabeth Shapleigh of Kittery. For these years he preached in various churches that were "between ministers." In April 1760, he went to Rochester, NH, to fill the pulpit for his ill friend. When the friend died, the church offered to build Hill a house and barn, fence a lot, dig a well, and plant an orchard, as well as pay him 50 pounds a year if he would be their minister.

It took so long to build the parsonage that he had to live with the widow and children of his friend. The parsonage, now called Haven's Hill, still stands.

But his ill health returned and he died April 13, 1764.

> He was much beloved by the People of his Charge for his ministerial Abilities, and faithful services; and the Affection of his bereaved Flock is much aggravated by the shortness of the Time of his continuance…The sweetness of his Temper peculiarly endeared him…and rendered him amiable to…all his Acquaintance.[57]

At least two children were born in Marshfield to Rev. Hill and his wife, Olive and Sarah. Sarah died in 1750 at age four, and is buried near the church.

The Church:

Samuel Hill's records begin:

> The Revnd. Mr. James Gardner, Died, September 16, 1739. After the Death of this worthy Gentleman, This church gave me, Saml Hill, a call to the Gospel Ministry amongst them & I was separated there unto, July, 1740.
>
> The Revnd. Mr. Thos. Prentis of Charlstown began the service with Prayer.
>
> The Revnd. Mr. Joseph Emerson of Maldon Preached from those words in matthew 4:17th And hee said unto them, follow me.
>
> The Revnd Mr. Nathl. Eals, of Situate gave the Charge.
>
> The Revnd Mr. Daniel Perkins of Bridgewater gave the right hand of fellowship.

[May 21, 1741] "Memorandum, Although it hath in time past been the custom of this church to Celebrate the ordinance of the Lords Supper in the Evening,[58] yet now by a Clear vote they have altered that custom, & celebrate it at noon." Again, he does not indicate how often Communion was offered at the church, but it was probably every Sunday. "Evening" probably means at the end of the afternoon service, and "noon" would be at the end of the morning service.

Rev. Ebenezer Alden, who wrote a short history of the church, says that "during this period a theory of infant church membership was held, and a guardianship maintained over the children of the church…as exhibited in the discipline of two such

[56] Maine was then part of Massachusetts.
[57] *New-Hampshire Gazette,* Apr. 27, 1764, pp.1, 2.
[58] At that time, evening referred to the period between noon and twilight.

who had notoriously broken the Sabbath day. One of the boys was 'restored to charity' but the labor of the pastor and deacons with the other seems to have been unavailing."

An interesting notation of January 8, 1743/4 reads, "Cesar a Negro Man belonging to Kenelm Winslow, Esq. was baptized. Isaiah: 35:8." It is a surprise to many that there were slaves in Massachusetts, and in Marshfield in particular, but there were. Certainly the Winslow family held slaves until the law released them just before the Revolution.

In 1749, a third parsonage was built for Rev. Hill and his family. According to Ebenezer Alden, that house stood until 1858, though it was replaced by the fourth parsonage in 1850.

Rev. Alden says further:

> It seems probable that the "Great Awakening" in which Jonathan Edwards was a chief instrument was felt in Marshfield. In 1742, there were 18 additions to the church, six on one Sabbath, and five a few weeks later. Nothing similar was recorded until one hundred years after, in the year 1842.

Jonathan Edwards, a minister in Western Massachusetts, was truly a "fire and brimstone" preacher. His most famous sermon, of 1741, was *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,* one of the classic sermons of all time. "The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked." As indicated by Alden, this kind of preaching, along with less stringent requirements for those seeking church membership to "prove their calling", led to increased church membership throughout the country.

Thomas Macomber was elected deacon in 1741 and served until his death in 1771. Thomas Waterman was elected in 1748 and served until 1774. Nehemiah Thomas was elected in 1751 and served until 1782. There were, therefore, four Deacons, counting Israel Thomas. This was not the case again for many years, as there usually were no more than two.

The Ministry of Joseph Green - 1753 – 1759

The Minister:

Joseph Green was born at Barnstable on September 12, 1727, the eldest son of Rev. Joseph and Hannah (Russell) Green. At Harvard College, class of 1746, he served as a waiter and a Scholar of the House, and received both Browne and Hollis scholarships. “The one black mark on his record is a fine for three weeks’ absence, but normal difficulties of transportation could have explained this.” He took his M.A. degree in 1749.

He preached for a while at Norton, then moved to Yale College where he took a second M.A. degree.

On February 21, 1753, he was ordained at the Marshfield Church. On this occasion, his father, Minister of the East Church in Barnstable, preached from the text, “My Son, be Strong in the Lord.” His father then admonished the parish:

> This my Son is young and tender, despise not his Youth, and the House that is to be builded for the Lord, and must be exceeding magnifical. Let him then have your Hearts and Hands with him, to help him in the great Work. Do nothing to weaken his Hands or discourage his Heart in a Way of unreasonable Exception or Prejudice, or by Division among your selves; but do all to help him; as he is a Worker with God, so do your Works together with him.[59]

Rev. Green's annual salary was forty-five pounds and twenty cords of wood. On April 4, 1753, he married, at Boston, Hannah, daughter of Rev. Isaiah and Abigail (Winslow) Lewis of Wellfleet. He and his wife were named Joseph and Hannah, as were his parents. So, their first two children, born in 1754 and in 1755 in Marshfield, were also Hannah and Joseph Green.

Mrs. Bosworth delicately describes the end of Rev. Green's ministry in Marshfield:

> In the midst of apparent prosperity and success, Mr. Green's Ministry came to a sudden termination in consequence of an infirmity on his part - bringing scandal on the church, the nature of which is carefully concealed in the records, but which is known to have been immoderate use of intoxicating drink at a social gathering.[60]

The social gathering was a corn husking bee, and this was the final straw for the embarrassed congregation. It was particularly mortifying that the bee was held at the parsonage.[61] While some did not wish his dismissal, because he had repented and asked forgiveness, others called for a council of ministers from the surrounding towns, and they advised that he ask for dismissal.

For a while Rev. Green preached at Provincetown, and on September 15, 1762, he was installed at the First Congregational Church of Yarmouth. Rev. Isaiah Dunster preached on this occasion and reminded him that:

> … you are intreated to be peculiarly watchful and exemplary in your Life and conversation. You can't but know, a good Example in a Minister is of vast Importance to the Interest of Religion.

He must have heeded this admonition, as there seem to have been no more incidents. Soon the Yarmouth building had to be enlarged. He died, after a short illness, on November 5, 1768, only forty-one years old. His wife remarried Ezekiel Holbrook of Wellfleet.

The Church:

Rev. Green brought some new ideas to the church, though his ministry was quite short. Most notable, perhaps, is the idea that the scriptures should be read from the pulpit. We can hardly imagine, today, a service without the reading of scripture, but such was apparently the case for the first one hundred and twenty years of this church. A new pulpit Bible was bought, published in 1751 in London. That Bible is now in the glass cabinet in the vestibule of the church building.

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[59] Sibley, Harvard Graduates, p.29.
[60] Bosworth, Sarah Elizabeth, Handwritten notebook.
[61] Document of the Pilgrim Conference, 1854, p.18.

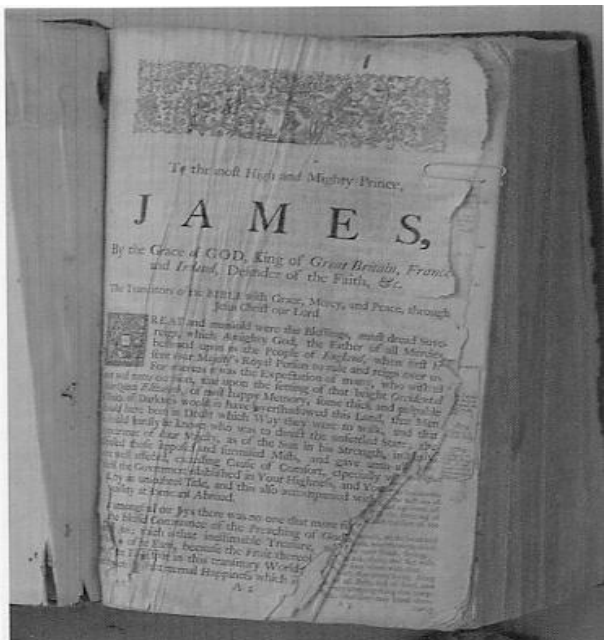
It is most significant that this is a King James Version of the Bible. Remember that it was King James himself who "harried" the Pilgrims out of England and persecuted those who stayed. The Bible of the Pilgrims was the Geneva Bible. But the original Pilgrims in Marshfield had passed on, as had time, and the Church now accepted the version of the Bible authorized by King James.

Rev. Green also proposed ending the practice of requiring candidates for admission to the church to give a public relation of their religious experience. This requirement had prevented many devout believers from becoming members of the church, even though they had been baptized as infants and faithfully attended services. Mrs. Bosworth says, "The brethering [sic] of the church, as has been apparent in the pevious century, did not hesitate to express their minds, and opposed this change"[62] It took some years for the new practice to be fully accepted.

The parish, however, was apparently ready for the change, and immediately began to grow in numbers. Though the church building was only about fifty years old, it was too small. Consideration was given to cutting it in half, moving the ends apart, and adding space between them. That proved to be impractical, however, so the old building was razed and a new one built in its place. This one was 40 x 60 feet. It was a plain, classic, square building with upper galleries all around for the "lower caste" –servants, Negroes and Indians and visitors who were not invited to sit in an owner's pew. It had no belfry or bell, and was unpainted. There was a door on the south side, and also on the west side. We will note that there are apparently no burials on the west side of the church, so we may presume this was a lawn up to the west entrance.

By this time Communion, or the Lord's Supper was no longer held weekly, but about six times per year, not evenly, but concentrating on the summer months.[63]

The church finally called for the Bird legacy in full, and three years later received it, a total of £104 7s 2d. As we shall see later, this was still not the end of it.


To the most High and Mighty Prince,

JAMES,

By the Grace of GOD, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.

The Translators of the BIBLE wish Grace, Mercy and Peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[62] Bosworth, Sarah Elizabeth, Handwritten Document.
[63] Document of the Pilgrim Conference, 1854, p.17.

The Ministry of Thomas Brown - 1759 – 1766

The Minister:

Rev. Thomas Brown was born in Haverhill, MA, on May 17, 1733, a son of Rev. John and Joanna Cotton Brown. When he was nine, his father died, and his mother moved to the Cotton family farms in Brighton, then a part of Cambridge. His mother was particularly "well connected." The Cottons were well known in ecclesiastical circles, and Joanna's mother was Elizabeth Saltonstall, whose brother was Governor of Connecticut.

Thomas Brown attended Harvard College, where his career was not stellar. In his Junior year, he and a classmate were degraded seven places in the class order for "absenting themselves from the Public Worship on the Lord's Day without leave, and also for opening a Cellar Door or Doors with a false key and also for Singing a profane Song in their Chamber on the Said Day, being by these things guilty of a most aggravated Breach of the Sabbath."

Five weeks later he was again before the faculty:

> Browne…has been lately found guilty of Theft, viz of Stealing out of one of the Master's Chambers…his Celler Key, When the said Master was out of Town, and taking Opportunity by detaining said Key in his Possession, of Stealing out of said Cellar at Sundry times a Quantity of Wine at least twenty Bottles, and…the said Crime was much aggravated…as he…committed the Crime above mentioned in about a Week or ten Daies after he had been degraded Seven places.

A vote to expel him failed, but he was "demoted to the lowest place in his Class and…but off from all hope of being ever restored to his first Place again." He also lost his scholarship.

After graduation, he taught school in Hingham, and returned to Harvard for a Master's Degree. His thesis argument was that frequent war does more to promote the safety of a people than continual peace. Interesting, to say the least.

For several years he had no regular pastorate, but lived at Harvard and supplied pulpits as needed.

He was ordained on September 5, 1759, at Marshfield. Ebenezer Gay, of Hingham, related by marriage to the Winslows of Marshfield, told the congregation:

> We congratulate you, Brethren, on your receiving a precious Gift from our ascended Saviour. This our dear Fellow Labourer, is for you (we trust) a faithful Minister of Jesus Christ. Gladly receive him as such; and always hold him in Reputation for his Works Sake. See that he be with you without Fear – the insnaring Fear of Man – the distracting Fear of Want – the discouraging Fear lest he bestow on you Labour in vain."[64]

Rev. Gay's high praise and expectation, however, were not met. In the spring of 1763, a church meeting was called to:

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[64] Cushing, John, *Gospel Ministers,* p.iii-iv.

> …investigate the evidence of truth of reports, adverse to Mr. Brown's moral character. Two meetings were held, and the evidence produced by the pastor in his favor was pronounced unsatisfactory. A council was then assembled, and the results was (sic) afterwards accepted by Mr. Brown at a church meeting, Rev. Gad Hitchcock, Moderator. Mr. Brown then asked for a dismission on condition that the parish would accede to certain terms. [65] The parish complying, a dismission was asked and granted, Nov. 1, 1763.

Exactly what Rev. Brown was guilty of has been carefully concealed in the records. However, some facts can be learned.

Rev. Mr. Thomas Brown and Mrs. Lydia Howard were married in Marshfield on February 22, 1763. It is interesting that Mrs. Howard had published, on February 4, 1762, intent to marry Josiah Snell, of Bridgewater. Apparently that marriage did not take place. She had, however, been previously married.

She was born Lydia Wadsworth of Duxbury. There are several Lydia Wadsworths, but apparently she was the daughter of Ichabod and Margaret, and her sister was Mercy Wadsworth who married Briggs Alden. The Aldens lived in the house now a museum in Duxbury, the original John and Priscilla Alden home.

Lydia first married Enoch Howard in 1754. He was master of a schooner and was lost on April 25, 1757, when he was "struck overboard by the tiller, 4 days after leaving Halifax."[66] Apparently the young widow came to Marshfield to live with relatives.

On November 13, 1763, Abigail Brown, daughter of Rev. Thomas and Lydia Brown, was baptized at the church. This is twelve days after Rev. Brown had been dismissed. The child's birth is not recorded in Marshfield, nor in any of the neighboring towns, but the family Bible, published as part of the *Maine Families* series by the Maine Historical Society, shows her birth as September 24, 1763. Perhaps this is the basis for the dismissal. However, as we have seen, only those in full communion with the church could present infants for baptisms. Since her father had been dismissed, her mother had to have presented her. If her early birth had been the problem, then her mother would also have been unable to present her.

But there are darker possibilities. According to Marshfield lore, Nathaniel Hawthorne used a story from Marshfield as the basis for *The Scarlet Letter*. There is apparently no other hint of such a story with any of the earlier ministers. But it should be noted that on October 6, 1763, a young single woman in Marshfield was arrested for the murder of her newborn infant. This arrest was only two weeks before Rev. Brown was dismissed from the church, and might explain the rumors beginning in the spring. That young woman was held over for trial until the following spring, then acquitted, since the baby, born in August, had "been born too early" and therefore might not have been expected to live.

Robert McCracken, who lives in the old John Dingley house, and Cynthia Krusell, Marshfield historian, have concluded that Sarah Dingley was related to Nathaniel Hawthorne and that he may have visited that house. It was next door to the parsonage in which Rev. Brown lived. Also, Hawthorne and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow were life-long friends, having met at Bowdoin College. Longfellow's mother was also a Wadsworth from the Duxbury family, and surely knew Lydia Wadsworth Howard Brown, and both she and Longfellow's father lived in Falmouth, Maine, where

[65] Just what those terms were has not been found.
[66] Boston, MA, Vital Records, p.483.

the Browns went after they left Marshfield. So there was plenty of opportunity for Hawthorne to have heard this story.

But we will never know the whole story, so we must leave it at that.

Two years after leaving Marshfield, Rev. Brown became minister of the 4th Parish in Falmouth, Maine (Westbrook). The ministers there were unhappy about his coming and at the "Gorham parsonage of Solomon Lombard, he was at first refused shelter on a bitter winter night, and then given an inadequate supper and breakfast of pea porridge and Johnny cake without butter."[67] He was installed on August 21, 1765, and the two ministers of the First Church and all of their parishioners pointedly stayed away from the ceremony.

In 1771, there was a protest letter from "the Petitioners in Cape Elizabeth" regarding Rev. Mr. Thomas Brown because he "hath hired and doth live on and improve the most Valuable Farm in said District, which Farm belonged to the late Col. Samuel Waldo, Esq. Of Falmouth, Deceased. We think it a great Damage to and an infringement on the Right of said District that a Minister of Another Town should hire and live on so Valuable a Farm in this District and pay no Taxes for them which said Mr. Brown utterly refuses to do, because he is a Settled Minister in Falmouth."

This land was confiscated by the authorities at the beginning of the Revolution when the owner, Francis Waldo, fled to England as a Tory. How that affected Rev. Brown is not known.

But during his more than thirty years in Maine, resentments and, presumably, rumors, faded "before the Parson's wit and charm, his humility, grace, and goodness." He was a force for liberalism and when ordaining young ministers, he never failed to remind them that neither the Association nor the ordaining council had any authority over them.

When he died, October 18, 1797, newspapers as far away as Boston carried laudatory obituaries. His wife died in 1805. They had at least five children, Abigail, Eliza, Thomas, Rebecca, and William.[68]

The Church:

In 1760, the proposition in reference to the public relation of Christian experience by candidates for admission to the church, originally introduced by Rev. Greene, was carried by unanimous vote.

After Rev. Brown's dismissal, there was a period of two years and five months before another minister was found. "The Savior had been wounded in the house of his friends; and in their desolation, the church, early in 1764, appointed a fast in reference to the re-establishment of the ministry. Three neighboring ministers were invited to be present. The day proved cold and the traveling bad on account of drifted snow, so it had to be postponed a week. A Rev. Smith preached on Numbers 27:16, "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd."[69]

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[67] *Journals of Thomas Smith and Samuel Deane,* p.309-10.
[68] Sibley, *Harvard Graduates*, Class of 1752, p.204.
[69] Bosworth manuscripts.

At least two ministers declined offers to come to Marshfield. This is not surprising, after the last three had been dismissed.

The Ministry of William Shaw - 1766 – 1817

The Minister:

Mrs. Bosworth relates, "It was between two and three years before the church was able to secure another pastor. In their desolation they looked to God in Special prayer and to the neighboring pastors for counsel and sympathy. The result was that they secured as the Minister Rev. William Shaw, D.D., then a young man, who continued here till his death, fifty years afterwards."

Rev. Shaw does appear to be an answer to prayer. The 1st Parish was in desperate need of continuity and leadership. They found both in Rev. Shaw. His is the longest ministry in the church history, a period of fifty-one years. He came to Marshfield just as the idea of independence from England began to bubble under the surface. He managed, somehow, to hold the congregation together during the years of the American Revolution, when Marshfield was known as a Tory town. And he remained until after the War of 1812, sometimes called the "2nd American Revolution," when the United States finally took its place among the community of nations and confirmed the ability to remain independent.

William Shaw was born in Bridgewater on January 15, 1741, the son of Rev. John and Sarah (Angier) Shaw. He graduated from Harvard College in 1762, then stayed for advanced degrees. While he was in college he waited tables until he won a Hollis Scholarship. A prize he won, a copy of *The Historical, Genealogical, and Classical Dictionary,* published in London in 1743, is in the Harvard Archives. For his Master's Thesis, he argued that "All Pastors of Churches are Entitled to Be Called Bishops," and he apparently did call himself by that title. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity by Harvard in 1815. Thereafter he was usually called "Dr. Shaw."

William Shaw was ordained in Marshfield on April 2, 1766. Great preparations were made, including adding extra support under the galleries for the expected crowds. His brother Oakes Shaw preached the ordination sermon. Kenelm Winslow donated £16 for the entertainment of the "Ministers, messengers, Scholers [sic] and other Gentlemen."[70] The Marshfield Church was the only church he served.

Rev. Shaw married his first wife, Lucia Crocker, in Eastham in October 1766. They had four children, Ezra, who died young; Lucia, who married John Cruft; Josiah Crocker, who was, by then, minister in Cohasset, married Ruth Stockbridge Winslow; and Philander, who graduated from Harvard in 1792. Lucia Crocker Shaw died in 1777.

In 1779, Rev. Shaw married Sarah Mather, daughter of Rev. Samuel Mather of Boston. She died in 1788. Apparently they had no children.

In 1790, he married his third wife, Nancy Checkley, daughter of Rev. Samuel and Elizabeth Checkley of Boston. They were the parents of Ann Checkley Shaw, William Checkley Shaw, and Elizabeth Shaw.

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[70] *Document of the Pilgrim Conference*, 1854, p.21.

Rev. Shaw's family is rather interesting. His brother, Bazaleel Shaw, was minister on Nantucket. Another brother, Oakes Shaw, served the Barnstable Church for forty-seven years. Oakes Shaw's son, Lemuel, was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, where his decisions fill fifty volumes, and Lemuel's daughter was the wife of Herman Melville.

A third brother was Rev. John Shaw, who was minister of the Haverhill Church.[71] His wife was Elizabeth Smith, a sister of Abigail Smith who married John Adams. When Abigail Adams went to Europe to join her husband, she left her younger sons with John and Elizabeth Shaw, and when John Quincy Adams returned alone to prepare for Harvard, he stayed with the Shaws and John Shaw tutored him. William Shaw, John and Elizabeth's son, was later secretary to John Adams and was a trusted advisor to his aunt Abigail. Unfortunately, Rev. John Shaw did not live to see John or John Quincy Adams become president, as he died in 1794, but his brother must have taken pride in the connection to the president. Elizabeth Shaw soon remarried to the minister who preached his funeral, Rev. Stephen Peabody.

Rev. William Shaw's biography in the Harvard Graduates series reports, "He agreed with them [the people of Marshfield] in political matters and was sent by them to the Massachusetts convention of 1788, in which he voted for the ratification of the Federal Constitution."[72]

Rev. William Shaw, who died July 1, 1816, and two of his wives, Lucia and Sarah, are buried in Winslow Cemetery. His obituary, published in the *Columbian Centinel*, July 16, 1816, described him as, "A man of dignified manners and correct deportment, an able minister, beloved by his people." In the Boston papers, he was eulogized, "As a Christian Minister, he possessed substantial and useful talents: was faithful in the discharge of the duties of his profession; beloved by the people of his charge; highly esteemed by an extensive circle of acquaintance and friends; whose praise will long be in the churches; favored with animating hopes in the near approach of death; and is gone, we trust, to reap the fruit of his labors, a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

The Church:

Rev. Shaw drew up two forms of covenant that were used until new ones were approved during the ministry of Ebenezer Alden almost a century earlier.

It is curious that early in his ministry Rev. Shaw allowed members of the Baptist church to partake of the Lord's Supper, then contrary to custom. Also, two members of the Second Church in Marshfield had apparently been disciplined by barring them from the Communion Table, but Rev. Shaw debarred them, an act considered interfering with the discipline of another church. Both these incidents indicate a liberalism beyond the times, but in keeping with later views of Christian universality.

The ministry of Rev. Shaw included the period of the Revolutionary War, and of the War of 1812.

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[71] John Shaw was minister at the church where Marshfield's previous pastor, Thomas Browne's, father had been pastor.

[72] This is significant. Many rural areas of Massachusetts opposed the ratification of the Constitution.

The Revolution was a most trying time in all American towns, but in Marshfield in particular because of the unusually large number of loyalists.

It was in the 1st Parish Meeting House that the notorious "Marshfield Resolves" were passed in town meeting, February 20, 1775. This was two months before the battles of Lexington and Concord. The leading Tory, Nathaniel Ray Thomas, had fled Marshfield for Boston, but there were plenty of them left in town, and most of them attended or were members of the Church.

The Resolves "acknowledged [their] obligations to our Sovereign for his great goodness and wisdom…" and thanked General Gage for sending a "detachment of His Majesty's Troops" to Marshfield to protect the citizens. They continued:

> With pleasure we embrace this opportunity of expressing our detestation and abhorrence of all assemblies and combinations of men (by whatever specious name they may call themselves) who have or shall rebelliously attempt to alter or oppose the wise Constitution and Government of Great Britain.
>
> Furthermore, we beg leave to inform your Excellency, that in the most critical and dangerous times, we have always manifested and preserved our loyalty to the King, and obedience to his laws; carefully avoiding all constitutional covenants and engagements whatsoever, that might warp us from our duty to our God, our king, and country; and as we are determined to persevere in the same course, we flatter ourselves that our endeavors and exertions will meet with our most gracious Sovereign's approbation, as well as your Excellency's, that under his and your gentle and humane government and kind protection, we may peaceably and quietly sit under our vines and fig trees and have none to molest or make us afraid.[73]

The address was signed by Isaac Winslow, Chairman of the Committee. He was then the town doctor and owner of the historic Winslow House.

Of course, there was no sitting under vines and fig trees for several years. Immediately the Marshfield Whigs (or Patriots) protested the resolves and the troops stationed in Marshfield. Mercy Warren in Plymouth, in a letter to Abigail Adams in Braintree, reflected the thoughts of those who believed the troops were not here for the protection of the citizens as much as to provoke an incident so that the troops could show their power to put down any signs of rebellion. As it turned out, the militia, under the leadership of Marshfield native Gen. John Thomas[74], was able to intimidate the British who left on ships anchored off Brant Rock about April 20, 1775 – only two days after the Battles of Lexington and Concord. Seth Sprague later remembered that the Whigs of Duxbury searched every house in Marshfield that was thought to be inhabited by a Tory and took all the firearms they could find.[75]

Thereafter, the Whigs or Patriots were firmly in charge of Marshfield, though the sentiment of the Tories had not changed.

In 1778, the State of Massachusetts passed the Banishment Act, requiring those who were found to be loyal to the King of England to leave the country and forfeit their property. This was a terrible punishment in any time, but particularly when there was not reliable means of communication with family members who were left behind. Many of the men were older and had to give up their ancestral lands and the estates they had

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[73] Thomas, William H.B., *Remarkable High Tories,* p.133ff.

[74] General John Thomas later gained fame by directing the fortification of the Dorchester Heights, directly leading to the evacuation of the British from the city of Boston.

[75] Thomas, William H.B., *Remarkable High Tories,* p. 42.

worked lifetimes to acquire. Sixteen men of Marshfield were included in the list, and most had ties to the church:

Nathaniel Ray Thomas	Caleb Carver	Melzar Carver
Israel Tilden	Seth Bryant	Thomas Decrow
Zera Walker	Isaac Joice	John Baker, Jr.
Adam Hall	Joseph Phillips	Gideon Walker
Benjamin Walker	Daniel White, Jr	Luke Hall
	Cornelius White	

It is curious that the name of Isaac Winslow does not appear on this list, since he was the signer of the Tory Resolves and never hid his feelings during the Revolution. It is assumed that the townspeople were simply so fond of him and so grateful for his medical assistance that they did not hold his political leanings against him.

That the Church held together during this period is a testament to the diplomacy and ability of Dr. Shaw. That church members could have such world-changing opinions, backed by military force, and still remain friends and fellow church members with those whose opinions were diametrically opposed is little short of a miracle. Yet in the end, there seemed to be no change within the church, except that a few male members were no longer in the pews and a there were no longer prayers each Sunday, "God save the King."

Dr. Shaw continued his leadership through the War of 1812. In hindsight we would also support that war, recognizing that it established the United States among the nations of the world as a country able to defend itself. Some call it the "Second American Revolution," since it convinced Britain once and for all that this country could not be intimidated. But it was not universally supported then, and particularly in Coastal New England. Newspapers glued to the wall in a closet of the John Alden House in Duxbury, dated during that war, clearly show the objections to the war and to the embargoes against shipping that were enforced. Once again, there seemed to be no fallout within the Church itself.

Toward the end of the period, the Unitarian movement split many Congregational Churches. Mrs. Bosworth was explicit. She says, "The Unitarian defection from the faith was developing." She further says, "The preaching of Dr. Shaw is understood to have been of the Armenian type, and the tendency of things here was very much in line with that which characterized the South Shore churches generally." Armenianism was a stance somewhere between the strict Puritanism of Cotton Mather, and the liberalism of the Unitarians. It argued for greater freewill than the Calvinistic predestinarianism, and encouraged more participation by the communicants in the governing of the church, and thus less authority for the ministers and deacons. This defines the Congregational stance. Of predestination, he wrote, "I say all good men enjoy a most desirable rest upon their departure hence."[76]

Sources indicate that Rev. Shaw was liberal enough that, if the question of Unitarianism had come to a vote, he might have leaned that way. As we shall see,

[76]Shaw, William, *The Resurrection of Good Men,* p10.

however, circumstances were different when other churches made that decision, and this one remained Trinitarian.

This questioning of church authority was paralleled by questioning the civil authority – a change necessary for a population to foment revolution and establish new governments.

The question of the Bird legacy came up again in 1797. The owner of a farm in Scituate paid the Church 20 pounds as a final settlement. This was over one hundred and thirty years since the original will of Mr. Bird. That man surely considered this an imposition beyond his duty.

In 1815, the Rev. Dr. Shaw was given a raise of an additional ten cords of hard wood.

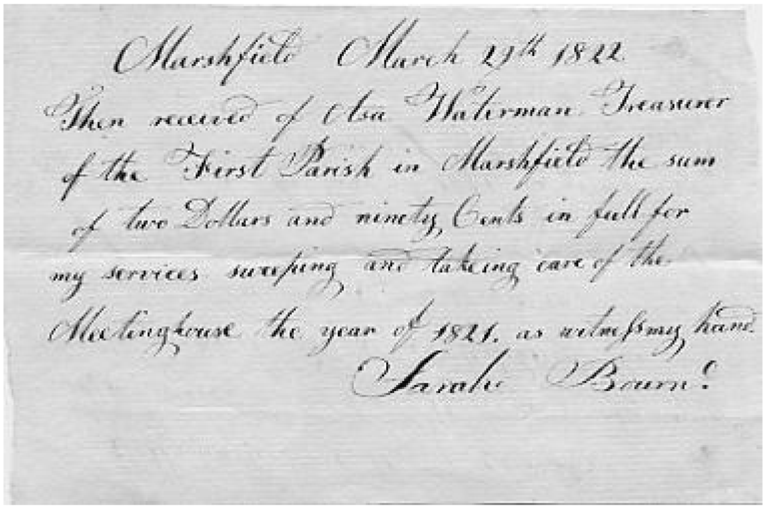
The pews in the meeting house were taxed in 1816 to provide money to repair the building. Pews were deeded to the owners and were treated like any other real property in the assessment and probate of estates. The power to impose this tax required permission from the General Court.

Deacons elected during the ministry of Rev. Shaw were:

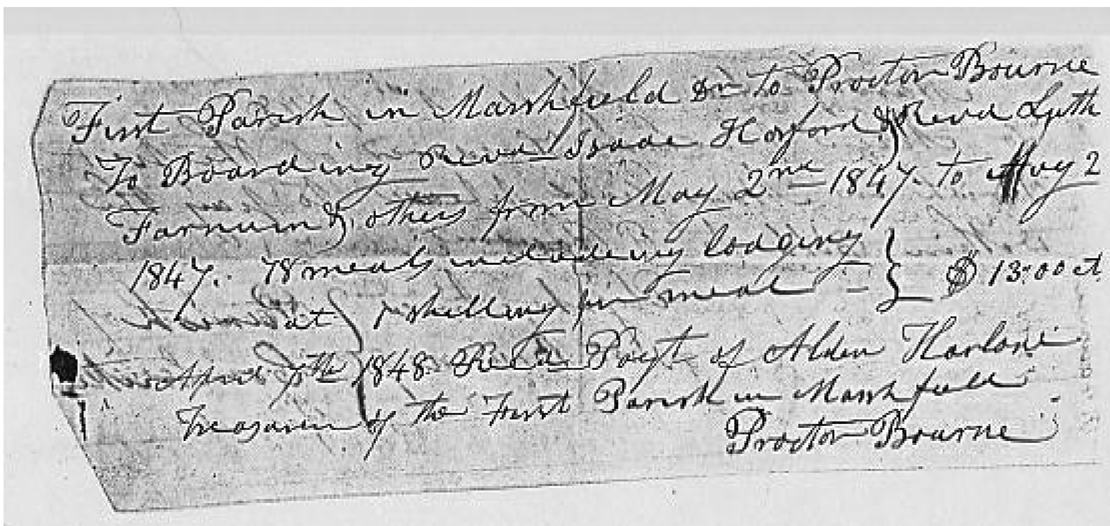
Thomas Dingley, elected 1775; died 1806
William Weston, elected 1783; died 1805
Rouse Bourne, elected 1806, dismissed 1815 (perhaps to another town)
Gideon Harlow, elected 1807; died 1811
Briggs Thomas, elected 1811; died 1833
Charles Hatch, elected 1811, died 1828

The Church lost a number of families after 1780, when a group of young Marshfield men decided to migrate to Maine. One of those was Nathaniel Kent who died soon after the move, and the town they founded was named "Kent's Hill" in his memory. Others who moved included his parents, Elisha and Susanna Ford Kent, his brother Charles Kent, and cousin John Kent. Another, Luther Sampson, founded the Wesleyan Seminary there, a school that is still in existence and is known as one of the first to offer co-education for boys and girls. His father, Paul Sampson, was the master carpenter on the meetinghouse in Marshfield, built in 1758 and taken down in 1837.

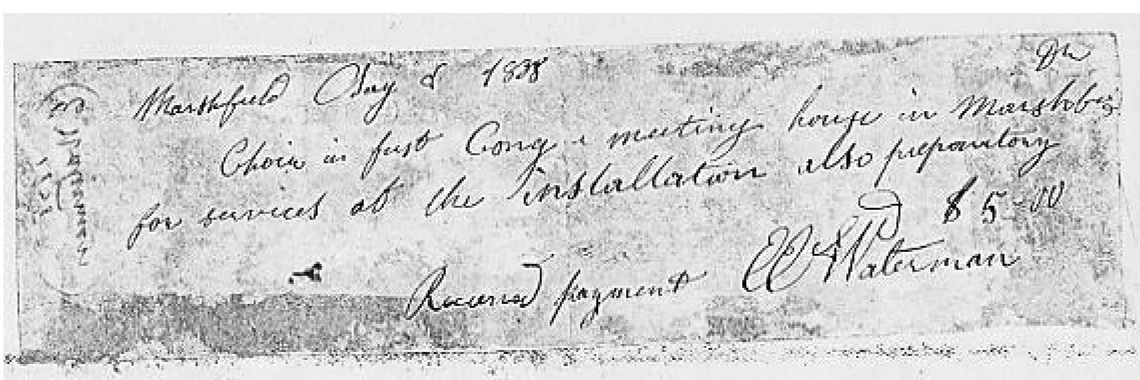
Think of your Forefathers! Think of your Posterity!
John Quincy Adams. Speech in Plymouth, MA, 1802



Marshfield March 19th 1822
Then received of Asa Waterman Treasurer
of the First Parish in Marshfield the sum
of two Dollars and ninety Cents in full for
my services sweeping and taking care of the
Meetinghouse the year of 1821, as witness my hand
Sarah Bourn



First Parish in Marshfield Dr to Proctor Bourne
To Boarding Revd Isaac Harford & Revd Lyth
Farnum & others from May 2nd 1847 to May 2
1847. 78 meals including lodging } $13.00 cts
at 1 shilling per meal
April 8th 1848 Recd Payt of Alden Harlow
Treasurer of the First Parish in Marshfield
Proctor Bourne



Marshfield Aug 8 1838 Dr
Choir in first Cong. meeting house in Marshfield
for services at the installation also preparatory
$5.00
Received payment E. P. Waterman

Oh! Beautiful for Heroes Proved
In liberating strife
Who more than self their country loved
And mercy more than life!

The 1800's – Manifest Destiny, Benevolence, and Civil War

The Ministry of Martin Parris - 1817 – 1838

The Minister:

Martin Parris was born in Pembroke in 1766, the son of Benjamin and Millisant Keith Parris. He married Julia Drew in 1794. They had three children: Martin Luther, Benjamin, and Samuel Bartlett Parris.

Rev. Parris was educated at Brown University. He spent most of his life as a teacher in Kingston, MA, but at age fifty-one decided to become a minister. He was chosen to take the place of the venerable Rev. Shaw in Marshfield.

Martin Parris, like several of his predecessors, was ordained in Marshfield. While the Marshfield records do not mention that service, the records of the First Parish Church in Plymouth record that their pastor and delegates were invited to attend, and that on that occasion, "Rev. Mr. Thomas of Scituate made the Introductory Prayer; Rev. Mr. Willis of Kingston preached the Sermond [sic]; the Pastor of this CH. made the consecrating prayer; Rev. Dr. Allyn of Duxboro delivered the Charge; Rev. Mr. [Elijah] Leonard of Marshfield[77] expressed the fellowship of the CHHs.; and the Rev. Mr. Richmond of Halafax [sic]made the concluding prayer."[78]

Rev. Parris, like his predecessor, had some very interesting relatives.

Maine became a state in 1820, having previously been a part of Massachusetts. Rev. Parris' nephew, Albion K. Parris, became Governor of Maine in 1824.

Another nephew, Alexander Parris, was perhaps the best-known architect of his day. Born in Pembroke, he was trained under Bullfinch, who designed the Massachusetts State House and the Capitol building in Washington, DC. Alexander Parris chose as his signature style the Greek Revival. While his uncle was pastor in Marshfield, Alexander Parris designed Quincy Market in Boston, Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth, the First Parish Church of Quincy (Church of the Presidents), and the First Church in Pembroke, along with many other public buildings and homes.

Rev. Martin Parris was distantly related to another, more notorious, Massachusetts minister, Rev. Samuel Parris. Martin's third great-grandfather, John Parris, did not leave England, but was a brother to Rev. Samuel Parris of Salem. It was in Samuel Parris' home that Tituba, a servant he had brought from Barbados, and Elizabeth, Samuel's teenaged daughter, instigated what eventually became the Salem Witch Trials.

[77] Minister of 2nd Parish, Marshfield Hills
[78] Plymouth Church Records, V. II, Jan. 29, 1817.

Samuel Parris took the accusations seriously, and insisted that those accused be tried and those found guilty be put to death. Apparently, he was a man who saw evil in everything. When the Salem church leaders finally realized their error, they dismissed Samuel Parris. He preached in Stowe, Concord, and Dunstable, and finally supported his family by teaching school in Sudbury. Samuel Parris died Feb. 27, 1720, aged 67 years.

Our Rev. Martin Parris was apparently a fine teacher and highly respected as an individual. He does not, however, receive high praise as a minister, as we shall see. That may be attributed to his personal tragedy. This man, best remembered for having loved children, had three sons. One, Benjamin, died at age six in 1805. The other two were fine young men in their twenties when they also died; Martin Luther Parris, lost at sea in 1824 and Samuel Bartlett Parris, M.D., in 1827, apparently of illness, while their father was minister in Marshfield. There were no grandchildren. We can grant the possibility that he lost heart and that made his work less effective, but the church could not find it in theirs to dismiss him.

Rev. Parris' ministry officially ended in 1838, but he apparently did not preach in Marshfield after 1836. Rev. and Mrs. Parris retired to Kingston. He died "of old age and hiccoughs" November 15, 1839.

The Church:

It was during this ministry that the Sunday School was established in Marshfield. This was at the very beginning of the Sunday School movement in America. The women of the church took responsibility for the establishment of the first classes, with guidance from the pastor, Rev. Parris, himself a former educator. They established a society to plan and oversee the Sunday School. The men soon followed by establishing their own organization for the support of the women and the cause. Further information about the Sunday School may be found under the chapter entitled, "Sunday School and Youth."

In 1819, there was a revival of the Methodist Churches, under the preaching of Mr. Taylor, known as the "Seaman's Preacher." Several members of the Congregational Church went to the Methodist Church at this time.[79] Several others went to the Baptist Church. The letters from those who left the Church at this time are still found in the records. However, there were fourteen new members in the Congregational Church, perhaps partially in response to the new interest in religion in general. From this year on, however, the membership continued to diminish.

In 1823, Sarah Bourne was paid $2.90 for services of sweeping and taking care of the Meeting House for the year. Also, she was paid $2 for two jugs of wine and seven pounds of flour, and for making bread for the Communion Service. The job was put out for bids in 1833, with the additional responsibility of making the fires in the stove. Mrs. Bourne was again appointed, for $5 a year.

In 1828, Luther Thomas, in consideration of $1, sold the church an acre of land. This appears to be part of the property where the Parish House now stands. This deed was not recorded until 1956.

After owning the Parsonage farm and meadow lots (formerly known as the ministerial lands) for over two hundred years, the church sold them in 1835 and 1836.

[79] Peterson, et al, *History of the First Congregational Church,* p.4.

Different portions of the property were sold to John Dingley, I. Peterson, G. Baker, & J. Delano. Three sections, including the Island meadow, the fresh meadow, and the salt meadow, were divided into lots and sold at auction. Surveyor John Ford, Jr., who did the well known map of Marshfield, divided the property into lots and sections. It is not clear what they did with the money, though part of it probably went for operating expenses, since at that time the church was barely being supported. Some of it may have been spent later to build the new meeting house, though much of that money was raised separately.

A committee reported, in 1833, that after consulting with Rev. Parris it was "for the interest of the partys [sic] concerned to reduce the pastor's salary the present year to the sum of two hundred dollars." This is a very small sum, even in that day, and it is interesting that five years later his successor was hired at $550 per year. Perhaps this means he was no longer full time, or it might have been a means to encourage his resignation. In 1835, his salary was up to $240 a year, but in March of 1836 he wrote a letter asking that he be paid for the previous year. "…having been at unusual expense since the commencement of the year 1835, I am under necessity of asking for some part of my salary for the last year to be paid soon as is convenient. It think this communication is made with Christian feelings, and trust it will be received with the same." A few days later, he again wrote, resigning his ministry. He ended with this plaintive wish:

> If the Lord has no more service for me to do in this place, and I think he has not…it is my fervent desire that you may be united and successful in settling a faithful and Evangelical Minister.
>
> Martin Parris

Before the parsonage farm was sold (including the old parsonage), Rev. Parris met with the committee to negotiate his buying it, but apparently they could not agree on a price.

Mrs. Bosworth, probably using Ebenezer Alden's notes, said of Martin Parris' ministry:

> He was evangelical in his preaching, and when the lines of division were more closely drawn in our denomination identified himself with those called orthodox. In his day, Sabbath Schools were having their origin and he promoted the organization of one here, as might have been expected of an old teacher who loved and won the affection of children.
>
> During these years no evidence exists of the special out-pouring of the Holy-Spirit to any great degree. The religious condition of the people was in a declining state. It was partly for this reason that the Baptist, and the Methodist Movement became successful here.
>
> Those who were converted and were zealous sought a more congenial companionship than was found in those days in the old church.
>
> It also seems that the baptism of the children of those who were not themselves believers in the sense of experiencing the new birth produced a prejudice against infant baptism as a rite.[80]
>
> Mr. Parris was in advancing years and preached in an old and unattractive building. When he died, the church was in a perilous condition. The downward progress had been long continued. Elsewhere the churches had maintained the faith of the fathers and God's work had been revived. In our region the lost ground had been partially regained and the struggle for life was going on. But over this church there hung a cloud of Spiritual desolation.
>
> Yet was she not forgotten by her covenant-keeping God.

[80] The Baptist Church has never practiced infant baptism. The Methodist Church does.

Since she was born in the final year of Mr. Parris' ministry, she must have learned this from her parents and others.

Rev. Alden said, “If the multiplication of religious societies in Marshfield is an evil, then the old church must reproach herself with a part of the blame. Her protracted slumbers and dubious position, caused a decline in attendance upon her instrumentalities for good and a withdrawal of numbers from the ancient Sanctuary to other places of worship.”

The Report of the Pilgrim Association, in 1837, records, "That at Marshfield S[outh]. has long been in a backsliding and critical state."[81]

Rev. Alden says that “twenty candidates were heard [as possible replacements for Mr. Parris], some Unitarian and some Orthodox…As far as can be ascertained this church was the only one in the Old Colony which did not separate when the wave of Unitarianism swept the country.”

The Ministry of Seneca White - 1838 – 1847

The Minister:

Seneca White, the son of Peter and Sarah Moore White, was born at West Boylston, MA, Feb. 27, 1794, but grew up in Vermont. He graduated from Dartmouth College, Phi Beta Kappa, in 1818, and Andover Theological Seminary in 1822. He served the Second Congregational Church in Bath, ME, where he was ordained, from 1823 to 1830, in Wiscasset, ME, from 1832 to 1837, and Marshfield from Sept. 8, 1838 until Oct. 20, 1850.

> “He was recognized as decidedly evangelical in his Sentiments, having been settled in two flourishing villages in Maine, his experience combined with his abilities to fit him judiciously and successfully to meet the condition of things which he found and to be the honored instrument of resuscitating the life of the old and decaying church.”[82]

His letter of acceptance, addressed to Waterman Thomas, Esq., is rather lacking in enthusiasm. He says:

> After mature deliberation, &, I trust, sincere prayer to heaven for divine direction, I have come to the conclusion that *it is my duty* to accept the kind invitation which has been extended to me.
>
> But at arriving at this conclusion I have had many doubts & difficulties in my own mind. I am aware that there is *a respectable opposition* to my settlement,[83] & that the salary offered is small, leaving in addition to the annual income from the funds only about one hundred & fifty dollars to be raised by a tax upon the property of a very rich Society. And I have at last perhaps been influenced more by the opinion & wishes of the members of the church & Parish who have treated me with so much hospitality & kindness, than by a full conviction that Providence has assigned me this place as the field of my future ministerial labours, or that I am qualified for the duties, arduous & responsible, which will here devolve upon me.

[81] The "S." refers to South. The church was then known as South Marshfield Congregational Church.
[82] Bosworth, Handwritten manuscript, p.24.
[83] The vote was 25 to 5 to accept him as pastor. Italics added.

He continues that he will require three or four Sabbaths a year for the "purpose of visiting my friends" without "being obliged to supply the pulpit in the meantime."

He also assumes that he will be allowed to live in the present parsonage rent free, but if they build a new one, as was being discussed, then he would negotiate an equitable rent. As it happened, no new parsonage was built while he was minister, and the old one was apparently so neglected that, after it was finally replaced in 1850, it was soon torn down.

Several copies exist of the Order of Exercises at the Installation of the Rev. Seneca White at South Marshfield, August 8, 1838. The programs match the Order of Exercises at the Dedication of the New Meetinghouse in South Marshfield, August 8, 1838. It has been said that the building was dedicated on Saturday and the minister installed on Sunday, but the programs indicate that they took place the same day. And, in fact, August 8, 1838, was a Wednesday. This would allow ministers from other places, perhaps as far away as Vermont, to attend the program and still not miss their pulpits on previous and following Sabbaths.

Rev. Seneca White is something of an enigma. There have been found no negative remarks concerning him, yet, though well educated and apparently respected as a preacher, he was dismissed from all three churches he pastored, and there was a period of time between each assignment. He did not work, apparently, the last eighteen years of his life. In Marshfield, he was only able to preach for about "eight or nine" years, but was not formally dismissed from the church for twelve years. This is apparently because of "long and protracted illness," the exact nature of which has not been learned. His dismissal went into effect in 1847, but he did not actually leave the post until 1850, perhaps to allow him to live in the parsonage until a new minister was hired.

Rev. White was married to Elizabeth Stockbridge Winslow, daughter of John Winslow, and a descendant of Marshfield and church founder Edward Winslow and his wife Susannah. That was "…a link in the chain of providential events which brought him to this place." He was forty-three years old when they married in Bath, Maine, in May 1837, one year before they came to Marshfield. There may have been an earlier marriage.

Seneca White served on the Board of Overseers of Bowdoin College from 1825 until 1840. This must have required long and difficult trips to Maine, though some business could have been conducted by correspondence.

Rev. and Mrs. White did not leave Marshfield immediately after he was dismissed. Eventually they moved to Amherst, NH, where he died January 11, 1865, according to Amherst Vital Records, at age sixty-eight. His obituary said, "He held an honorable position as a Christian gentleman and a man of Learning."[84] His wife died in 1888. There are memorials to Rev. and Mrs. White in the Winslow Cemetery. However, it is not known if they are actually buried there or in New Hampshire. In the cemetery, he is said to have died January 11, 1867 at age seventy.

In 1907, the church received a bequest of $1,000 from Elizabeth White, to be applied to "Evangelical Preaching." That money was through her executor, Mrs. Elizabeth W. Nichols. In 1919, Mrs. Nichols, of Amherst, NH, called "a descendant of Seneca White," donated the portrait that hangs in the vestry of the church. This Elizabeth

[84] Davis, Emerson, *Biographical Sketches,* p.112.

White may have been a daughter or daughter-in-law of Seneca White, and perhaps Mrs. Nichols was her niece or daughter.

The Church:

A building committee had been chosen in 1837 - Proctor Bourne, Elijah Ames, and Gideon Harlow. The new building is the same one in use today and, except for the addition of electricity and central heating, has been little altered.

The job description for the building caretaker now included "ringing the bell." There had not been a bell on the previous building, though there had been a belfry and presumably a bell on the one before that. A bell was important to the town, since it was used to alert people to emergencies such as fires. About this time, it also became the custom to toll the bell upon the death of a person in the community – one toll for each year of age, a pause, and then one toll for a male and two tolls for a female. Before telephones and daily papers, this was important news.

At the time this church building was erected, there were very few people attending church, and only thirty-nine members. The total population of Marshfield was between 1750 and 1800 people.

The same year, new hymnbooks were purchased, "10 copies of Church *Psalmody*," and "9 Singing books for the singing seats." Perhaps that refers to a choir, since for the first time there was a place set aside for one. Asa Waterman was paid $5 to lead a choir for the installation and dedication ceremonies. A bass viol was used for several years in lieu of an organ or piano.

In 1840, the town granted the church permission to build horse sheds on the corner of the burying ground near the "Parish House." This does not refer to the present "Parish Hall," since that building was not built until ten years later, and was not in its present location until 1876. So it has to refer to the meetinghouse itself. These original horse sheds were probably on the same side of street as the church, perhaps in the area now encompassed by Cedar Grove Cemetery. That area did not become part of the cemetery until the latter part of the century. Later, the horse sheds were across the street beside what became the Parish Hall. They were used to shelter the horses during the two long church services on Sunday and during other meetings in the building.

A separate town hall had been built, the first in town, in 1838. The First (or South Parish) or the North Parish (Marshfield Hills), and sometimes the Baptist Church buildings were used for town meetings until that time.

Mrs. Bosworth gives us her first-hand account of the reaction to the preaching of Seneca White:

> Strong opposition against evangelical truth was manifested on the part of some families, but the greater part of the congregation adapted themselves to the new condition of things.
>
> Within a few years the preaching of the truth was accompanied by a Special outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
>
> The result was a large accession to the church. The revival of 1842 marked the transition from a period of decay and doubtfulness to one of activity and spiritual progress.[85]

[85] Bosworth, Notebook.

Mrs. Bosworth's assertion is supported by the records. In 1835 and 1836 only one child was baptized each year, and no adults. In 1837, 1838, and 1839, one adult and no children were baptized each year. In 1840, there were two adults. In 1841, there were no baptisms. But in 1842, fourteen adults (seven men and seven women) and three children were baptised. Among the names of the adults are those who provided important leadership in the church organization, particularly the Ladies' Benevolent Society, for the rest of the century. These numbers were not matched again until 1879.

Rev. Alden says that:

> The work of grace commenced in a district school under the instruction of one, then a recent convert, and member of the Church of which he is now the senior deacon. [This is Joseph Hewitt, baptized six weeks after the arrival of Seneca White.] The attention of the youth of this school, awakened by Divine Providence, was still further directed to the great business of preparation for death by the Christian faithfulness of their teacher. [86] Meetings were held with them after school and in the evening, which deepened their serious impressions. A protracted meeting, held in the north part of the town, increased the religious interest and resulting in some conversions. But the chief instrumentality for good results, was a series of religious meetings, voted to be held by the church, commencing Feb. 2, 1842. These were conducted by the pastor, assisted by various ministers in the vicinity. The Meeting House was crowded to overflowing and the Holy Spirit crowned these labors with a rich blessing. The long night of the church gave place to a bright and glorious morning.

Rev. Alden elaborates, "Prayer Meetings and occasional lectures had been introduced a short time previously, and were now sustained. A new order of things came into existence, or rather an employment of instrumentalities, more like that of the founders of the church, and not wholly abandoned, a century ago."

Seneca White also made a concerted effort to restore those members who had drifted away during the previous ministry. He wrote long letters (and made a copy of each one)[87] to each person, and sent committees to talk to those who did not respond. The most interesting "case" was that of Joshua Loring, who had been a member since 1816.

The committee composed of Jesse Reed and Azel Ames went to visit Mr. Loring in January, 1842, and returned a lengthy written report. Among other items:

> His answer was that he thought the Parish had done wrong in turning off Mr. Parris, had done wrong also in pulling down the Old Meeting House; he had not been paid as he ought to have been, for a pew he owned in it. The Church had not done right with the Church Fund. He was then asked if these faults of the Church, and Parish was any reason or excuse for him why he should not do his Duty, and fulfill his covenants with his God and the Church? He said he had nothing to do with the Church, he was accountable to his conscience and his God only. We reminded him many times of his Vows and Covenants and that in failing to fulfill his Promises to the Church, he had violated unto God, but nothing appears to have any effect upon him….

The report goes on for several pages, and included a discussion with Mrs. Loring who, though she had not recently been to Church and had attended others, was willing to return.

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[86] Whose death was anticipated is not clear. It may have been Marshall Bessey. He and several of his family were baptized shortly before his death in 1842.

[87] The copies are among the Church records. This was quite a task, keeping in mind that all writing was with a dip pen. Presumably they were written with the pen given him by the building committee.

Mr. Loring wrote on February 25, 1842:

> Mr. White, Sir:
> I received a letter from you stating the unanimous vote for my appearance…to show cause why I should not be excommunicated from the Church:
> I have thought it proper to write:
> My feelings have been very much tryd [sic] in connection with my family, but very different should I have felt if I had done anything that justly deserved it. If I have broken the Covenant as you affirm, I must look to God for forgiveness. Again you say I have excommunicated myself. Why is not that enough. [?] I could say a great deal. I forbear. Hoping we shall all walk in newness of life and in new and better Obedience.
> Yours Respectfully
> Joshua Loring

In March, Seneca White wrote to Mr. Loring:

> …At a regular church meeting held at the meeting-house on the 12th inst., I used your letter on the subject of your excommunication. After mature deliberation it was voted that your name be erased from the words of the church. Ten brethren were present on the occasional. Eight voted for your excommunication and two against it.

Similar correspondence was carried on with Mr. and Mrs. Peleg Ford, who essentially told Rev. White that, "...as regarding ourselves under your particular care, we consider but one Church of Christ on earth, and it matters little whether we worship on this mountain or that, if our hearts and lives correspond with the Life of Christ." Apparently they were not excommunicated, as both were still listed as members in 1851, with the note, "Resides in Hingham."

This was a period of national leadership by the Congregational Church. Though as a denomination they were relatively few in number, and there was no large, central organization, the members of the Congregational Churches were dedicated and passionate in their quest for social justice and the spread of the Gospel.

The *Amistad* case of 1839 was an important milestone in Congregational history. In that case, a group of slaves overtook the vessel in which they were being transported, and killed the Captain and others. The Churches took up the cause, and led by John Quincy Adams, argued that since the slaves were being transported illegally, they were within their rights to resist. Eventually the slaves were released.

New Articles of Faith and a Covenant were drawn up in Marshfield under the "Superintendance of Mr. Dickinson." In this connection advanced ground was taken on the moral questions of temperance and slavery."[88] In 1844, the church passed a vote requiring future candidates for membership to assent to a pledge of "total abstinence from all which can intoxicate."[89] In 1845, a series of resolutions was adopted respecting the subject of slavery. In one of these Christian fellowship was withdrawn from all ministers and church members who practice slavery."[90]

This was also the beginning of the great missionary movement. Churches not only supported missionaries, but encouraged their own members and young people to go to the

[88] Ibid
[89] Alcohol was a very serious problem at this time, and this was the beginning of the temperance movement.
[90] Ashley, Linda R., *Your Affectionate Pastor*, p74.

mission fields. During the same period, the next minister of this church, Ebenezer Alden, was serving as a missionary in Iowa Territory. His hope had been to go to the Sandwich Islands, but his health was not good enough. The Islands, now Hawaii, still have schools and white "New England" style churches that were founded by the Congregational Missionaries.

"The Church voted to connect itself with the Pilgrim Conference. The duty of systematic benevolence was recognized. This period showed marked progress both in the externals of religion and in spiritual growth."[91]

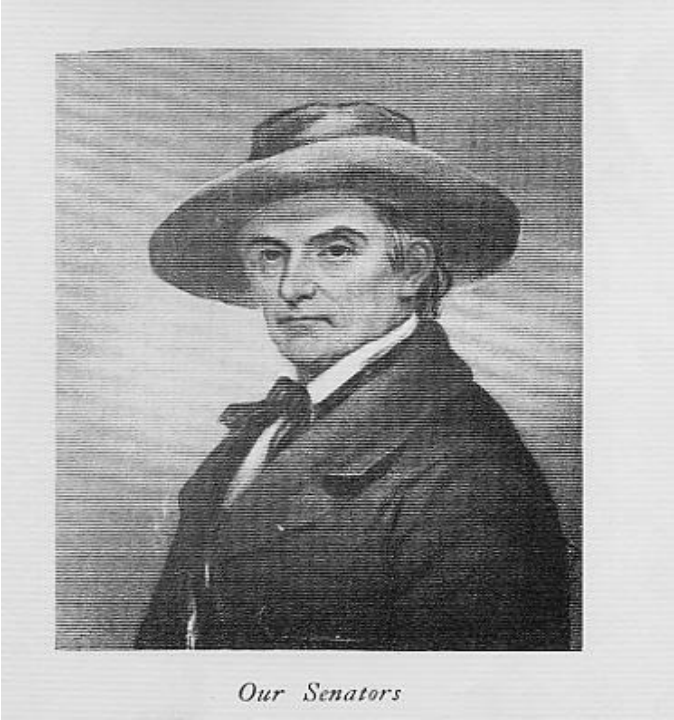
This systematic benevolence manifested itself in the establishment of the Ladies'Benevolent Society. This organization was not limited to the First Congregational Church, then called the South Parish, but invited the community at large. Rev. Luther Farnham, who preached when Seneca White was unable to, encouraged the establishment of the Society in 1848 and was a working member, even though his wife was ill and could not participate.

The idea of benevolence was actually rather new. While the church had always accepted some responsibility for the poor and offered aid, the prevailing idea was that illness and calamity were often the result of sin, and therefore there was little responsibility to interfere with the punishment. During this new period, the teachings of Jesus himself were taken into account, "…Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."[92]

In 1846, the caretaker's title was changed to "sexton." There is no mention of any raise in the salary.

The community, apparently led by the Ladies' Benevolent Society, cooperated in the building of a "Concert Hall" in 1849. This was a simple, one floor, but substantial building, directly across the street from the church, and built to match the style of the older building. It was used for meetings of the Society, and for lectures and concerts to which the town was invited. It stood in that place until 1876, when it was moved to the east to accommodate the building of Centennial Street diagonally across the green. At that time it was placed above a basement foundation and, since it now belonged to the Benevolent Society, the name was changed to "The Chapel." It is now the front section of the Parish Hall

[91] Ibid.
[92] Matthew 25:40.



Our Senators

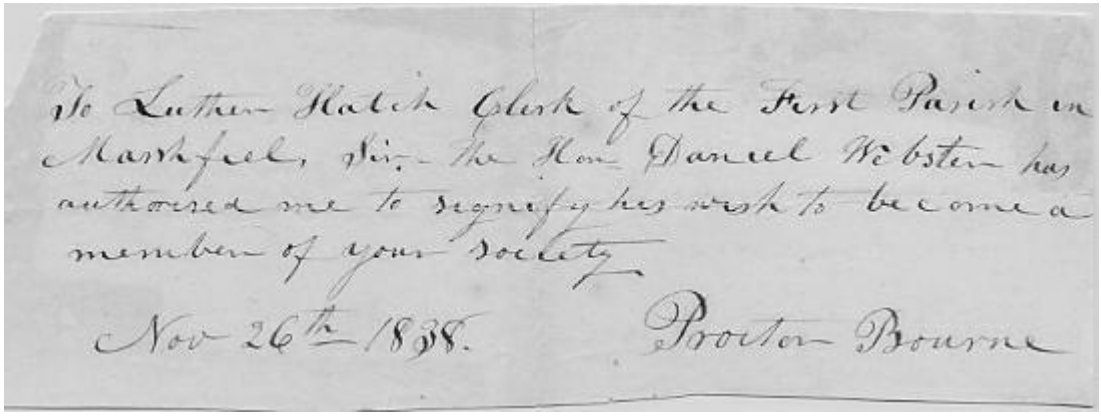
Daniel Webster
Farmer, Senator,
Secretary of State

It was during this time that Daniel Webster and his family began attending the church when they were in Marshfield. At the auction of pews to raise money to build the church in 1838, Webster bought two pews, the front left for his family and the back left for his servants. His five children, all by his first wife, Grace, were baptized at the Brattle Street Church in Boston before he came to Marshfield. Two of the children were originally buried there. He also served on the building committee of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Boston.[93] When Grace Webster died, she was buried at St. Paul's and the remains of the two children were moved there. The family remains from St. Paul's were eventually moved to Winslow Cemetery, Marshfield, probably when son Edward died in the Mexican War and daughter Julia Appleton died the same year. Webster continued to own pews in both Brattle Street and St. Paul's until his death.

Webster, though not widely known for his piety, had a life-long interest in religion and theology, encouraged, perhaps, by his devout wife, Grace. He once wrote a defense of Trinitarianism and his influence may have helped keep this church from the Unitarian fold. It can be assumed that Seneca White was a capable preacher, since his ability in the pulpit would have been of more concern to orator Daniel Webster than his abilities as a pastor.

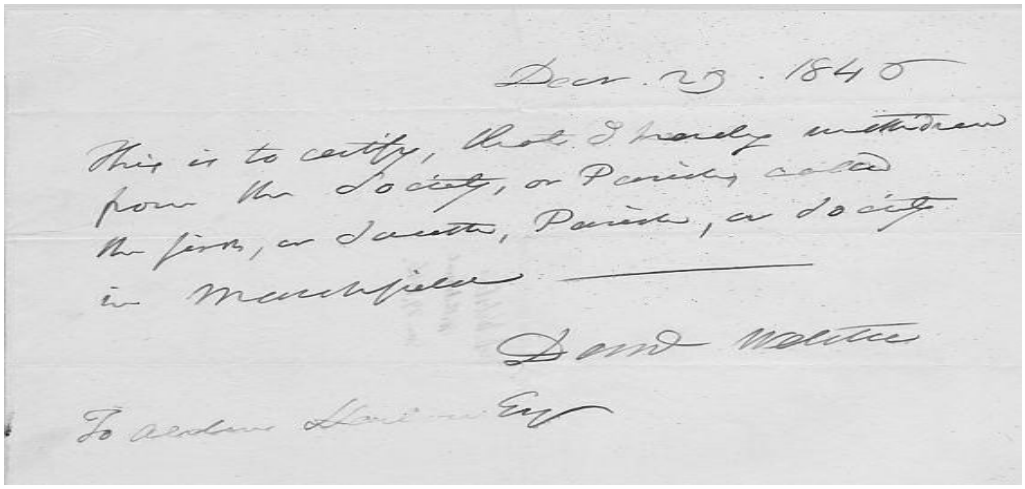
Daniel Webster himself was apparently the only member of his family who ever officially belonged to this church. As the two notes here indicate, he asked to become a member in 1838, and then withdrew in 1846. But he continued attending until his death in 1852.

[93] Incidentally designed by Alexander Parris, nephew of Rev. Martin Parris.



To Luther Hatch Clerk of the First Parish in Marshfield, Sir. The Hon Daniel Webster has authorised me to signify his wish to become a member of your Society

Nov 26th 1838. Proctor Bourne



Dec. 23. 1840

This is to certify, that I hereby withdraw from the Society, or Parish called the First, or Second, Parish, or Society in Marshfield

David Wilcox

To Reuben Hatch Esq

Rev. Luther Farnham and Rev. Erastus Dickinson supplied the pulpit, (with the help of other visiting preachers,) and carried on the work of the Church for the three years before Seneca White was formally dismissed. That they were participants in all aspects of the Church is indicated by the fact that during Rev. White's period of ministry, he baptized three infants, Rev. Farnham baptized four, and Rev. Dickinson, one. Rev. White did, however, baptize more adults, probably during the early years, a total of twenty-two, with Farnham none and Dickinson four. Rev. Farnham was asked to succeed to the open position, but declined.

In his letter of resignation, Rev. White mentioned his prolonged illness, but indicated that he would have resigned anyway, since people were leaving the church and it was not being supported by the community. Certainly, there are several letters[94] from the period, indicating that some of the oldest families had left the church. For example:

> Sir: Duties to myself, my family, and friends, Demand of me the unwelcome task of informating you and through you all, and every one it may concern, that the subscriber is <u>not</u> a member of the first Parish in Marshfield.
>
> Marshfield, March 30, 1846
>
> Isaac Dingley
>
> To: Mr. Alden Harlow, Clerk

Another letter is more enigmatic:

> To the Gentlemen belonging to the South Parish, Greeting
>
> Whereas it is well known that I cannot enjoy the same privilege in common with the rest of the people belonging to the parish – and I cannot feel it my Duty to pay for what I never had --- and I never could have---and which I never expect to enjoy ---therefore I wish you to take it into consideration---and see where it is allowable to exempt me from paying a parish tax –or where it is just that I should pay one…And if so I shall be satisfied for the present –in whatever you may Determine.
>
> Respectfully yours
> Thomas Baker

[94] As was the custom of the day, these are on small pieces of paper and show evidence of sealing wax, without envelopes.

The Ministry of Ebenezer Alden - 1850 – 1886

The Minister:

Ebenezer Alden, the third of the name but who called himself "Junior," was born in Randolph, MA, on August 10, 1819. His father was Dr. Ebenezer Alden, a leading citizen and physician, and seventh in descent from Pilgrims John and Priscilla (Mullins) Alden. His mother was Anne Kimball Alden of Newburyport and Wenham.

Young Ebenezer was educated at Amherst College and Andover Seminary. He then spent the next five years as a missionary in the distant Territory of Iowa, as part of the "Iowa Band" of twelve young Andover graduates who undertook this effort together. He was ordained at Denmark, Iowa, in 1843.

The Iowa Band had two missions: "Each man a church, and all a college." They founded Iowa College, which later became Grinnell College, and Ebenezer Alden served as one of the first trustees of that institution. His assignment as a minister was Tipton, Iowa.

He made a trip home in 1847, and met Maria Louisa Dyer, daughter of Christopher Dyer, whom he married on April 4, 1848, at her home in Abington (now Whitman). Her brother, Ebenezer Dyer, was minister in Hingham at the time.

The young couple returned to Iowa, but finding themselves unsuited to the conditions there, returned to Massachusetts in 1849.

On October 30, 1850, (a Wednesday) he was installed as Minister of the Marshfield congregation, a position he held until 1885. He remained as Pastor Emeritus until his death, January 4, 1899.

Rev. and Mrs. Alden had six children, five of them born in the Parsonage at Marshfield:

Maria Louisa, b. 1849 in Abington, married at age 35, Horatio Sprague, town treasurer of Marshfield. They were the parents of Edith Alden Sprague, who lived in the old parsonage house and remained active in the church.until her death in 1969

Anna Alden, b. 1851, married Harrison Kingman. They were the parents of eight children.

Ebenezer Alden, III, "Little Ebbie," was born in 1854 and died in the parsonage before his third birthday.

Edmund Kimball Alden, b. 1858, married Emilie Pellissier, a French woman he met on his "grand tour" of Europe. They had three daughters. He died in 1938.

Mary Alden, b. May 17, 1860, d. September 12, 1860, in the parsonage.

Alice Elizabeth Alden, b. 1863, married Allston Sinnott. They had no children.

Mrs. Alden died in 1889 in the parsonage, after a long illness. She and her husband are buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery, hers the oldest death date in the "new section" to the right of the main road. Most of their children and their spouses are buried

beside them. It is believed she was first buried in the Waterman plot and moved to the Alden family plot after his death.

Rev. Alden was interested in town affairs, and served on the school committee for many years. Some of the books he donated to the Ventress library are still in use. He was widely loved and respected throughout the community. Rev. Alden died suddenly on January 4, 1899.

A more extensive study of the life of Rev. Ebenezer Alden has been published by this author.[95]

The Church:

Rev. Ebenezer Alden, Jr. was formally installed on October 30, 1850. The invocation and scripture reading were by his good friend, Alden Robbins, one of the Iowa Band, then serving in Muscatine, Iowa. There were two original hymns by Rev. E.P. Dyer, his brother-in-law and minister in Hingham. The sermon was by his brother, Rev. Edmund K. Alden,[96] then of Yarmouth, ME.

When Rev. Alden became the minister, the church had a little over 60 members, about one-half larger than the average of the first 200 years, 40 members. However, attendance was much greater than membership. He reported that the congregation was about 230 people on a "pleasant day," a little less in the afternoon. The "Sabbath School" was in a fair condition and a Social Meeting was maintained Sabbath evening. His son, Edmund, remembered that there was also a prayer meeting held in homes on Tuesday nights, and that as a child he was required to attend all these meetings.

For the first time, a layman was chosen to be the Church Clerk and keep the records, rather than the minister.

Since William Ford and Samuel Arnold were elected Deacons in 1696, there had been two Deacons most of the time. Briggs Thomas and Charles Hatch were elected in 1811. Deacon Hatch died in 1828 and Deacon Thomas died in 1833. From 1833 until 1851 there were no Deacons. That curious state of affairs ended when Joseph Hewett was elected February 14, 1851, and Elijah Ames, Jr., was elected September 7, 1851.

Daniel Webster, former United States Senator and Secretary of State of the United States, passed away at his home in Marshfield on Sunday morning, October 24, 1852. During his last days, he personally asked Rev. Alden to preach his funeral. This was quite an honor, since Webster had many friends who could have been chosen, including Edward Everett Hale, an eminent pastor and public servant.[97] The church building was too small for the huge crowds that were expected, so the service, on Friday after the death, was held at the Webster estate.

> *It is wise for us to recur to the history of our ancestors. Those who do not look upon themselves as a link connecting the Past with the Future, do not perform their duty to the world.*
>
> Daniel Webster

[95] Ashley, Linda R. *Your Affectionate Pastor.*

[96] Based on Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto Salvation…

[97] Hale was the featured speaker at Gettysburg, PA, and spoke well over an hour. President Lincoln spoke only two minutes.

Excursion boats brought crowds from Boston. The trains were full as far as they came, then hundreds of carriages brought people into Marshfield. Thousands filed past the body, laid out in the sun for better viewing. It has been estimated that as many as 10,000 people may have come. Among them were the Mayor of Boston and the Governor of Massachusetts. Also in attendance was Franklin Pierce, who was elected President of the United States three weeks later.

For the funeral of a man known as America's greatest orator, Rev. Alden appropriately chose as his text Hebrews 11:4, "He being dead yet speaketh." Only a few people could actually hear his words as he spoke from the doorway of the Webster home, but his words were widely published in newspapers and memorial booklets.

It is an interesting note that Daniel Webster, arguably the most powerful man in the country at the time, wrote the Fugitive Slave Law as part of the Compromise of 1850. This was the strongest Fugitive Law adopted, and required heavy fines and punishment for anyone caught assisting a runaway slave. At the same time, Ebenezer Alden surely knew that his father, Dr. Ebenezer Alden of Randolph, had a secret room built in his house and conducted slaves through the underground railroad.

In 1854, Rev. Alden noted that the Sunday School had been kept up during the winter, a change from former years. Such are the changes of modern times. Now we keep it open in the winter and close it during the summer. He was concerned that a "generation is rising up having no hope and without God in the world." Perhaps things are not so different, after all.

At that time, there were 61 members. He also noted that this church had only furnished six for the gospel ministry over its history.[98] There is no record of how many there have been since.

The years between 1861 and 1865 were difficult for the entire country, as the states were divided by Civil War. A total of 254 men from Marshfield served as soldiers, most of whom were in some way related to members of the Church. Rev. Alden, still barely of age to be included in the draft, paid a commutation fee of $300. His yearly salary at the time was about $425. His wife's family suffered several men lost to the war, and one niece was lost at sea on the way to help the freedmen of the South.

Several of the Marshfield men were killed, particularly those from the Marshfield Hills. One of the first was Fletcher Webster, only remaining son of Daniel Webster, who was killed in the first battle of Bull Run.

The Ladies' Benevolent Society joined with other women of the community to send barrels of supplies to the troops, including homemade wine along with bandages, blankets, and stockings. Letters of appreciation may still be found in the records of that organization.[99]

Except for the terrible loss of men, and the anxiety caused by their being away from home for years, the town of Marshfield was very little affected by the Civil War, and Massachusetts as a whole greatly benefited economically. The soldiers needed shoes and boots and so that industry flourished during the war and years afterward. Shipping and interstate trade increased. There certainly was no great period of recovery here, and

[98] Most of those had been sons of former ministers. One exception was Marcus Ames, the son of Azel and Mercy Hatch Ames, who became the minister of the First Congregational Church in Patterson, NJ, on Wednesday, June 8, 1854. The pastor and a delegate were invited to attend his ordination.

[99] Further information can be found in Ashley, Linda, *Ladies' Benevolent Society.*

the stage was set for great changes in technology, particularly in travel and communication.

While Rev. Alden was not exactly a progressive man, he was willing to make some changes in the service and in the administration of the Church. The women of the church were finally recognized as full members, able to vote on business matters in Church meetings, in 1883. It seems reasonable. In 1884, there were 89 members of the church and only 25, including the minister and his son, were men. Rev. Alden had a capable and influential wife, as well as three grown daughters at this time. No doubt they encouraged him to suggest this change.

Mrs. Bosworth makes another observation:

> During this period at three different times there were special manifestations of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The results was seen in the increase of the members of the church, so that it at length numbered about 90. At one time, 1856, a four days meeting was held after the manner of the revival of 1842, and the former days. At another time, 1868, there was a quiet and gentle descent of the Spirit for about a year and the Sabbath Evening meetings were characterized by Solemnity and tenderness. The third revivals, 1878 and '79 [were] already in progress when an evangelist was introduced, who though uneducated, attracted attention and did good through his singing as well as by his earnest words. At one time there were no additions to the Church and the Spiritual condition was discouraging. But it was followed by one of the seasons referred to in which sanctified affliction was a marked instrumentality for good.[100]

Rev. Alden, in his retirement sermon, October 31, 1885, after thirty-five years in Marshfield, made the following comments:

> This church is in one of the 150 out of 350 towns of Massachusetts which are declining in population[101]…Another feature of the present State of Society is the custom of resorting to the mountains and Sea Shore during the summer months. A large population is temporarily within our limits though not to much extent in our homes, but their presence and influence seriously affecting the observance of the Sabbath and the tone of morals. We live in times and under conditions quite diverse from those of the 6 or 7 generations which have preceded us and no estimate of success or failure which leaves out such points as have been adduced, can be correct.
>
> Thirty-five years ago the savor of the revival of 1842 still remained. You had a pleasant house of worship, a new chapel, an average congregation on a pleasant day of 230, and a church numbering 64 members, fifty-one have been removed, leaving 13 of that number still with us. During the existing pastorate there have been received to this church by professions 96, and by letter 28 – 124. Deducting names more than once enumerated, 120 in all. Our present number is 89. Thus it will be seen that the church is about half greater in number than 25 years ago, and more than double the numbers of its first 200 years. Since our population is diminishing the ratio of progress in numbers on the part of the church compared with those not connected with it is yet greater.

[100] Bosworth, Handwritten manuscript, p.28-29.
[101] The population of Marshfield was 1837 people in 1860; there were 1660 people in 1870.

And as a final farewell (though he was an active Pastor Emeritus until his death fifteen years later), Rev. Alden left the congregation with these words:

> We have looked backward, now we look forward. Have we not reason to do so with hope and courage? So feels your pastor, and hence with gratitude to God for his goodness for so many years to himself and to his people, with heartfelt thanks to you for the uniform kindness and for the expression of affection to himself and his family which in other days and more recently he has experienced, he retires from this office, not because the future appears to be dark, but rather because it appears hopeful, and the present a favorable time for a change that at the farthest is soon inevitable.

Members of the Church in 1851
Soon after the beginning of E. Alden's Ministry
With dates of admission

John Bourne	1790
Abigail Baker	1799
Isaac Dingley	1817
Abigail Ames	1817
Elizabeth Ford Guild	1817
Peleg T. Ford	1818
Lucy Baker Ford	1818
Waterman Thomas	1818
Gideon White	1819
Betsey Wright	1819
Sarah Sampson Thomas	1819
Abigail Ford	1819
Anne P. Loring Sherman	1827
Jesse Reed	1827
Polly F. Baker	1832
Mary Clark	1834
Lucy Keen	1838
Seneca White	1838
Elizabeth S. White	1838
Joseph Hewett	1838
Abigail Hewett	1838
Elizabeth T. White House	1839
Deborah Weston	1840
Hannah Hewett	1840
Clarissa Ford	1840
Proctor Bourne	1842
Elijah Ames, Jr.	1842
Sarah Ann Ames	1842
Lucy Carver Church	1842
Temperance Bourne	1842
Alden Harlow	1842
Otis Baker	1842
Sally Baker	1842
George Martin Baker	1842
Temperance Bourne Harlow	1842

John Bourne, Jr.	1842
Ruth Bourne	1842
Joannah A. Bessey	1842
Nathaniel Ames	1842
Washburn Weston	1842
Harvey Sprague	1842
Lucretia Sprague	1842
Seth H. Sprague	1842
William P. Cushman	1842
Marcia A. Packard Cushman	1842
Esther C. Sampson	1842
Deborah Williamson	1842
Marcus Ames	1842
Elizabeth Ames	1842
Lois Ames	1842
Olive S. Bourne	1842
Olive Thomas Sampson	1842
Augusta Pratt	1842
Nahum Packard	1842
Persis P. Weston	1843
Lucy Pratt	1843
Sophronia H. Baker	1843
Eliza W. Weston Kent	1843
Ebenezer Taylor	1848
Harriett N. Parsons	1848
Charles Sampson, Jr.	1849
Sarah A. Lakin	1849
Mercy Hewett	1849
Ebenezer Alden, Jr.	1850
Maria Louisa Alden	1850
Sarah T. Hewett	1851
Deborah C. Winsor	1851
John Henry Bourne	1851

Rev. Ebenezer Alden at two stages of his life. The portrait on the right was taken about the time he came to Marshfield, about 28 years old. The other was taken near the end of his life and pastorate, when he was about 78 years old.

Rev. Richard S. Whidden, his wife Annie J. Smith Whidden, (seated) and five of their children. The lady at the left is Mrs. Whidden's sister. The picture is believed to have been taken at the parsonage, perhaps June 1890 when Louisa Alden Whidden was baptized.

The Ministry of Richard S. Whidden - 1885 – 1890

The Minister:

Richard Smith Whidden was a native of Nova Scotia, born in Maitland on June 26, 1850. He was the son of John Hancock and Lucy Ann (Graham) Whidden. He said his first public profession of religion was at the Methodist Church at Selmah, Nova Scotia. He was a graduate Mt. Allison College, New Brunswick, and of Bangor Theological Seminary, Maine, class of 1879.

He married Annie Jane Smith on June 10, 1879. He was ordained in Caribou, Maine, on November 19, 1879.

Rev. Whidden served Congregational Churches in Caribou and Standish, Maine, before arriving in Marshfield in 1885.

While Rev. Whidden might have been intimidated by the fact that his predecessor, Rev. Alden, attended church and sat on the front row (Webster Pew) each Sunday, he was apparently very fond of Rev. Alden. On June 13, 1886, Rev. Alden baptized Helen HenRitzy Whidden and Lucy Georgianna Whidden, young daughters of the new minister. Rev. Alden's wife, Maria Louisa, died on March 4, 1889, and on June 13 of that year, Rev. Alden baptized Louisa Alden Whidden, then one year old. Rev. and Mrs. Whidden also had Atwood Kimball and Annie Beth Whidden before they came to Marshfield, and John Smith, Richard Graham, and Augustus Anderson after they left.

After leaving Marshfield in 1892, Richard Whidden served as a missionary in Kettle River Valley, British Columbia, Canada. Thereafter, he was a Presbyterian Minister in Annapolis and Bridgetown, Nova Scotia; North Bedeque, Prince Edward Island; Carstairs and Rose Lynn Mission, Alberta; and Gore and Kennetcook, Nova Scotia.

Rev. Whidden died suddenly at age 73, in Kennetcook, Nova Scotia, on the 18th of August, 1923. His newspaper obituary says:

> On the 17th of August he spent a day in pastoral visitation at Five Mile River. Feeling unwell on the Saturday he lay down to rest in the evening and was found dead on the bed, his spectacles on his nose and manuscript in his hands. Rev. C.D. McIntosh, River John, was spending his vacation in the congregation, and on the Sabbath delivered [Rev. Whidden's] last message to the people…His body was interred in the Methodist Cemetery, Selma. His wife predeceased him, and a family of three sons and four daughters remain.

Atwood had died at age 26 after falling from a horse. The other seven children spread out across North America. Atwood raised bees in California. Annie lived in California and on Prince Edward Island. Helen lived in Maine, France, Nova Scotia, and California. Lucy lived in Alberta, Canada, and in Washington State, US. Louisa lived in Alberta and on Vancouver Island. John lived in Manitoba. Richard lived in Alberta and Victoria, British Columbia.

The Church:

Upon Mr. Alden's resignation as regular pastor, he and his wife had purchased the parsonage where they had lived since 1850. With the money from that sale, the church purchased another parsonage. While it was being readied for the new occupants, Rev. Whidden and his family apparently lived in "rooms" somewhere in town.

The new parsonage was at the foot of Main Street, now the corner of Rts. 139 and 3A, across from Veteran's Park. Rev. and Mrs. Whidden may have moved in sometime late in 1885, or they may have waited until he was actually "installed " as the Minister in 1886, and the house served as the parsonage until the present parsonage at 1981 Ocean Street was built in 1989.

The Young People's Prayer Meeting, apparently started when Rev. Alden's children were young, about 1870, was merged into the Christian Endeavor. This organization was a nation-wide movement for young church members of several denominations. The organization still exists and is active world-wide. In many congregations this is still the name of the youth groups, even though they are no longer associated with the organization. The Marshfield Church is no longer affiliated, nor does it use that name today.

Mrs. Annie J. Whidden, the pastor's wife, reorganized a choir after a lapse of ten years. She did not like the previous custom of having the choir in the balcony, so the Church agreed to make a change. A place was provided by removing the side, or perpendicular, pews to the right of the pulpit (left as viewed by the congregation.) A rail was built in front of the choir, and the ladies made a curtain to fall from the rail.

The organist was paid ten cents per service. Since there was no electricity in the building, the little boys of the congregation were recruited to pump furiously during the singing of the hymns, to keep the organ going.

At the same time, a new pulpit was put in place. Edmund Alden, son of the previous minister, remembered that the older pulpit had been much higher and that he had been required to sit on the front row and look up at his father during the sermon. The Alden family now moved to the pew previously occupied by Daniel Webster's family, (a gift to them from Fletcher Webster's widow when she left Marshfield), and the Whidden family took the front row. No doubt his children were happy that the pulpit had been lowered to a more comfortable level.

In 1887, the Ladies' Benevolent Society took on a major renovation of the Chapel, now called the Parish Hall. Now that building had the configuration it has today, with steps leading up to the front door, and a brick foundation of three feet above ground level. The sewing room addition was not raised. Instead, the floor was raised three feet to be even with the older section. The rest of the basement was still unfinished and remained so until 1910.

In 1890, the Ladies of the Benevolent Society noted that most of their sewing was for the wife of the minister and for the children of Capt. Baker, Sophie and Alice, and for Frank Sinnott's children. These families were not poor; they simply had no mother to sew for them. Annie Whidden was a member of the society throughout her stay in Marshfield, even with her own large brood of children.

It is probable that Rev. and Mrs. Whidden introduced the celebration of Christmas into the Church at Marshfield. Certainly in the early days of his ministry here, Rev. Alden

did not approve of the celebration of Christmas[102] and sermons he preached on Dec. 25 do not mention the subject. But in Boston and other towns, there was now some celebration and decoration, and Christmas cards had been introduced. Since Rev. and Mrs. Whidden came from Canada, perhaps they brought the custom with them. We cannot be sure, however, since no Church records mention Christmas until 1892.

The pews of the church continued to be bought and sold as regular property. One deed, for example, dated 1888, conveys the pew of the late Nancy Packard to M. Herman Kent, from whom the parsonage had been bought. Franklin Hatch, the executor of her estate, signed the deed, and the cost was $30.00. – A wall pew on the Easterly side, and numbered 37.

The Ministry of Isaac R. Prior - 1890 – 1891

The Minister:

Isaac R. Prior was a minister with wanderlust in his heels. He only stayed in Marshfield one year and was never "installed" as a regular minister.

The son of Rev. Jesse (a Methodist Episcopal minister) and Rebecca C. (House) Prior, was born in Delaware, Ohio, on July 22, 1840. Isaac enlisted in the Union army at his hometown, Adrian, Michigan, on August 6, 1862, at age twenty-two, and served in Company A, 17th Michigan infantry until he was discharged for medical disability at Washington, D.C. in April 1863. He graduated from Adrian College, Adrian, MI, in 1864, and from Albany Law School, Albany, NY, in 1866. He apparently worked as an attorney for a time in New York and perhaps taught English and Penmanship at a University, but at some point felt led to give up his work in law and education and dedicate his remaining years to the Lord's service.

Isaac Prior entered Union Theological Seminary at New York City in 1867, graduated in 1870, and was ordained a Congregational Minister in New York City, May 19, 1872. His first congregation was at Rehoboth, MA, where he remained until Oct1877, when he went to Kingstown, RI. On Sept. 29, 1874, he was married to Miss Ruth E. Manton, daughter of Stephen Randall and Ruth (White) Manton of Providence, RI. Four of their five children were living in 1900.

From 1879 until 1899, Rev. Prior served as a traveling missionary in the western United States, except for a few years when he returned to the East, probably in an attempt to recover from consumption, the illness that eventually took his life. He served at Alma, Kansas; Fredonia, Kansas; Great Bend, Kansas; Park City, Utah; Provincetown, MA;

[102] In the 1700's, it was actually against the law in Massachusetts to celebrate Christmas. This was the remaining influence of the Puritans.

Marshfield, MA; Jacksonville, Florida; and Apoka, Florida. Then he returned to the West, serving at Bryant, South Dakota; Columbia, South Dakota; and finally at Redfield, South Dakota.

Rev. Isaac Prior died on March 3, 1899, aged fifty-eight years, seven months, and eleven days. He is buried at Greenlawn Cemetery in Redfield, Spink County, South Dakota.[103] His wife went on west with her daughters and died in Montana.[104]

The Church:

No notable events have been found for the year 1890-1891, except that the ladies invited the men to "an entertainment" to raise money to buy stovepipes for the church.

There were no adult additions to the church, and only one infant baptized, and she, Carrie Bradford Bent, was baptized by the Pastor Emeritus, Rev. Ebenezer Alden.

The Ministry of Frederic W. Manning - 1891 – 1901

The Minister:

Frederick Wilbur Manning was born June 26, 1862, in Andover, MA, the son of John Hart Manning, Andover class of 1864. He was educated at Punchard Free School and at Phillips Academy. His health was not good, so he was sent to Colorado to recuperate. After some time in Denver and Estes Park, he entered college at Colorado Springs, Colorado College, and graduated with honors in 1886. He returned to Andover and graduated from Andover Theological Seminary in 1890. He received several honorary scholarships, one for an essay on the subject, "Heredity and Responsibility."

He supplied small churches while attending Andover for still further education.

Rev. Manning was ordained to the Christian ministry, as were so many before him, at Marshfield, on December 31, 1891. While at Marshfield, he attended classes at Harvard Divinity School.

Unmarried until age 39, Rev. Manning married Mary Sayer Delano (b.Sept. 11, 1875, in Duxbury) in Marshfield on June 12, 1901. They had seven children.

After leaving Marshfield, Rev. Manning was minister on Nantucket 1902-11, in Swampscott 1912-16, and was in Manchester, MA, in 1917.

After World War I, Rev. Manning wrote an impressive pamphlet in support of the League of Nations entitled, "World Peace: A Vision of the World Organized for Peace." It reveals not only a wonderful facility with words and vocabulary, but insight into history and foresight concerning the possibility of another war.

Rev. Manning retired to Cumberland, RI, where he died March 28, 1950, at age eighty-one.

[103] Congregational Yearbook, 1900, p30

[104] E-Mail correspondence from Prior granddaughter, Mrs. Peggy McKrill Gardner.

The Church:

Rev. Alden and his predecessors had not celebrated Christmas. Whether or not Rev. Whidden or Prior did cannot be determined, though it is possible that, not being from Massachusetts, they did so. The first mention of Christmas in the church records is from the minutes of the Ladies' Benevolent Society: "December 21, 1892. We assisted in trimming with evergreen the church and chapel."[105]

It was probably about this same time that Easter was first celebrated at this church, though there are no records mentioning it. It had been celebrated at Catholic and Orthodox churches for centuries, but was not part of the Protestant tradition until about 1900. It is first mentioned in the Ladies Benevolent Society records in 1908.

In 1895, the traditional "Fast Day" ended in Massachusetts. From the earliest days of the state, this day had been proclaimed annually by the governor, and devout people celebrated it faithfully in fasting and prayer. But it had become a "day of sport" and so was abolished.

Both Rev. Manning and "Father Alden" participated in the dedication of the Brant Rock Union Chapel on Sunday afternoon, July 12, 1896.

New carpet was installed in the church in 1896. The cost was $127.40 for 167 yards of wool carpeting.

A mighty hurricane struck in November of 1898. The mouth of the North and South Rivers, previously at Rexham, was closed by sand, and a new mouth was opened between third and fourth cliffs. Humarock, previously attached to Scituate, was now geographically attached to Marshfield, though it remains civically Scituate.

On January 4, 1899, the old Patriarch of the Church in Marshfield, Rev. Ebenezer Alden, died suddenly in his home. At the funeral, held at the Church, Rev. Zenas Crowell of Kingston gave the sermon and Rev. E.W. Manning the prayer.

[105] Ashley, Linda R., *Ladies Benevolent Society,* p.76.

Oh Beautiful for Spacious Skies
For amber waves of grain
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!

The 1900's- Technology, Global Wars, and Social Change

The Ministry of Burton A. Lucas - 1901 – 1908

The Minister:

Burton Andrews Lucas was born in Portland, Connecticut, July 29, 1866.[106] He only had nine years of public school before he entered Bangor Theological Seminary, where he graduated in 1897, at age thirty-one. He was ordained at Alton, New Hampshire, in 1897.

Apparently his family moved to Bridgewater, MA, while he was a child, and he became a member of the church there in September 1881. During his twenties, he worked as a druggist.

Before Marshfield, he served churches in Alton, and in North Barnstead, NH. Afterward he went East Providence, RI; Windsor, VT; Cumberland Center, ME; and finally to the Scotland Church in Bridgewater, MA, where he retired in 1939.

Rev. Lucas died in Brockton, MA, Dec. 26, 1951.

He left two children, Col. Burton L. Lucas of Washington, DC, and a daughter, Mrs. Harold Copeland of Bridgewater. Descendants of Mrs. Copeland live in Bridgewater today.

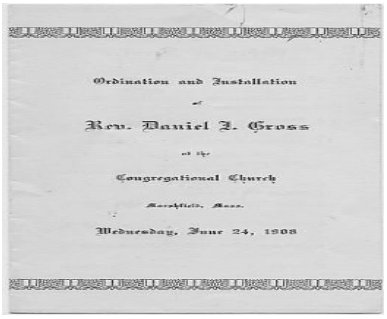
The Church:

The first mention of Easter was in 1908 when the Ladies' Benevolent Society held an "Easter sale, supper and entertainment." It was well supported by the public and netted $26 for the Society. The celebration of Easter had not been common in the Protestant Churches until about 1900, though it is not certain when it began in Marshfield.

The same year, the ladies bought a dozen rocking chairs for the sewing room for a total of $10.50. They also bought 80 place settings of dishes, forks, spoons, and tumblers to be used in the dining room, for a total of $35.31. All those dishes required a new china closet, bought for $23.00. That may be the large cabinet still used for the Sunday School.

There was a large gathering of people in the "Chapel" to bid Rev. Mr. Lucas goodbye. Mrs. Bosworth recorded part of the speech by George M. Baker:

[106] His obituary and other sources say "Portland, ME," but they are in error.


Ordination and Installation
of
Rev. Daniel I. Gross
as the
Congregational Church
Marshfield, Mass.
Wednesday, June 24, 1908

Friends: I confess that I share with you in the regret that pervades this community on account of the removal of Rev. Mr. Lucas and family from this town.

He has occupied a place where we think none might have done better – and few would have done so well…

Soon after Mr. Lucas same here, a fire occurred in the wood near the Methodist Church and with others he was present and helped to subdue the flames. One of the fire wardens remarked that "if Mr. Lucas can preach as well as he can fight-fire, he must be a good minister." The warden was not a member of Mr. Lucas' parish.

I mention this incident – not such much for its importance – as to indicate a trait of our Pastor's character – a willingness to help others in time of need in other department of life – as well as in the Pulpit, for while he is a good preacher, he is more both in speech and practice and I respect and honor him, whether in the Pulpit – where he is at home – or helping to save property from destruction – or assisting a neighbor to overcome wayward and unruly bees, or in building cranberry bogs…wherever we find him he is the same genial spirit – the same helpful man.

I remember hearing a story of a town in which lived an old Quaker whom everybody respected and everybody loved.

Whenever a citizen had to leave the town for any considerable time, it was the custom to visit the Quaker, perhaps to receive his blessing and bid him good bye. On one occasion a neighbor who was not particularly beloved called in the Quaker and told him he was going away and how glad he was to go, because there were so many bad people there. "Ah," said the Quaker, "thee will find bad people wherever thee goes – thee will find bad people wherever thee goes."

At another time a neighbor whom all loved called and told him how sorry he was to go away because there were so many good people there. "Ah," said the Quaker, "thee will find good people wherever thee goes. Thee will find good people wherever thee goes."

The Ministry of Daniel I. Gross - 1908 – 1911

The Minister:

Daniel Irving Gross was born in Orland, Maine, February 10, 1875. He was educated at the University of Colorado and at Bowdoin College, where he graduated in 1902, and attended Harvard Law School 1902-1904. He graduated from Andover Theological Seminary in 1908. While in school, he served the Inman Church in Beverly, MA.

Rev. Gross was ordained in Marshfield on June 24, 1908, and entered his first regular pastorate. He remained until 1911, when he went to Pilgrim Church, Nashua, NH, until 1918. He was at Woodfords Church, Portland, ME, until 1931, and at Athol, MA, until his death, September 30, 1945.

He was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity by Bowdoin College in 1922.

Dr. Gross served as a Director of the Boston Seaman's Friend Society 1925-31.

Dr. Gross wrote several books, including *What, Saxon!,* 1904, *On the Bay and Other Poems,*1928*,* and *Peace I Find in Contemplation,* 1930. He also wrote a major bibliography, *Childhood in Poetry.* As a result of this history, a copy of *What, Saxon*, along with a personal letter from Dr. Gross, has been added to the church library.

Dr. Gross's wife was Annie Gertrude Parsons, whom he married in Bluehill, ME, in 1905. They had two children, Virgil Tyler Gross and Elisabeth Gross Nelson.

The Church:

Rev. and Mrs. Gross were particularly interested in missionary efforts. They offered the parsonage for meetings of the Women's Missionary Study Circle. Mrs. Gross introduced the study of books prepared by an interdenominational committee and published by Friendship Press, always on a current missionary problem and theme. Those materials were used for at least seventy years, supplemented by letters from church-sponsored missionaries and other publications.

Both Rev. and Mrs. Gross had fine, trained voices, and offered special music for various church functions and occasions.

For the first time, the church was lighted with electricity in 1911. The Ladies Benevolent Society contributed the odd sum of $58.09 toward that project. They also bought a piano for $170, but whether it was for the church or the "chapel" is not clear. And, since the church was still heated by wood, the ladies built a new woodshed. "We have been assured it has met all requirements and proved convenient."

The Ministry of Charles H. Peck - 1912 – 1917

The Minister:

Charles Huntington Peck was born in New York City, NY, April 9, 1851. He was the son of Elias Peck, a merchant in New York, and Ellen Perkins Rogers Peck. He attended Bartlett High School, New London, CT., and the Scientific School. He graduated from Yale University in 1871.

His original plan was to be a teacher. From 1873 until 1876, he was Principal of Huntington, Long Island, Union School. He apparently had a life-changing event when he was sued by a "Dutch barber whose son he had flogged."[107] He became Principal of Bridgeport High School in Connecticut in 1876, and married that year. However, he decided to become a minister and graduated from Yale Divinity School in 1882.

He was ordained at Griswold, CT, on December 5, 1882, and served there until 1889. He was North Bennington, VT, 1889-1905; Hanover, CT, 1905-12; and came to Marshfield in 1912.

From 1917 until 1924, Rev. Peck was at Essex, CT, then at Broad Brook, CT, until he retired in 1934, at age 83. He was Pastor Emeritus there until his death in Norwich, CT, on March 18, 1937.

Rev. Peck was married on December 27, 1876, in Huntington, NY, to Anna Crossman, daughter of Gilbert and Mary Gould Crossman, and a graduate of Vassar. Their children were Roger Crossman Peck, Edith Warren Peck, Ellen Rogers Peck, Alice Theodora Peck (Mrs. Andrew Scarlett), and Carroll Wilmot Peck.

[107] *Triennial and Sexennial Record of the Class of 1871*, *Yale University,* 1877. p.54.

Mrs. Anna Crossman Peck died March 26, 1906, in Stamford, CT. Her obituary read:

> The family and friends have a source of great comfort in the memory of one whose character was so sweet, so gentle and so strong; who was especially active and efficient in all lines of philanthropic and religious work, and her personality and influence was felt in a marked degree through the intensity of love and zeal with which she entered into home, church, and social life. During the past two years, while suffering from failing health, she exhibited such gentleness and dignity of bearing as to command the profoundest respect and admiration from all about her.[108]

All the children but Carroll, then age 20, had graduated from college before their father came to Marshfield. However, all but Roger became members of the church. Roger died in 1922.

Rev. Peck married his second wife the year he came to Marshfield, March 22, 1912. She was Helen Eadie, daughter of George and Margaret Kane Eadie of Glasgow, Scotland. They were married in Hanover, CT.

Rev. Charles H. Peck died on March 18, 1937, in Norwich, CT., of myocarditis. He was buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery, New London, CT.

The Church:

There were ninety-two members of the church in 1912. Again, the women were heavily in the majority, as there were only twenty-two men, including the minister and his son.

The Ladies Benevolent society had bought a clock for the church in 1855. In 1912, it was moved to the "sewing room" of the Parish Hall. In 2001 it is in the secretary's office and keeps almost perfect time.

The church was completely redecorated in 1916, "in keeping with the colonial style of architecture." The fresco and sidelights that had been added in Rev. Alden's time were painted over, and a door added behind the pulpit. The pews were painted white. The old mahogany pulpit and sofa that had been used prior to 1886 were restored, though apparently the pulpit was not as high as it had been then. They had been built by Elijah Ames, Jr., who had served for many years as Senior Deacon. It is possible that the ceiling was changed at this time, since the cost, $975.14 indicates major renovations.

This amount was raised by taxes on pew owners ($10 per pew), and proceeds from vesper services, concerts, lectures, suppers, and food sales, added to gifts from societies and individuals. Once again, the largest contribution was from the Ladies' Benevolent Society, $140. The next largest was from the North Duxbury Ladies' Union, $46.50.

On the program for the "reopening of the church," November 5, 1916, there is a pledge form, ranging from five cents to one dollar per week, and the notation, "Weekly offering envelopes will be issued to those who desire or will add herewith their signatures." This is the first mention of Church pledges found in the church records.

[108] *The Long-Islander,* April 6, 1906.

World War I brought a new patriotic fervor all over the country. The Ladies Benevolent Society and the Sons of Veterans and Auxiliary bought an American flag for the sanctuary. Again, the Ladies' Benevolent Society organized efforts to support the "boys" in the service.

The Ministry of Walter A. Squires - 1918

The Minister:

Walter Albion Squires was born Dec. 26, 1874, in Cloud County, Kansas, the son of Albion Caleb and Sarah Isabelle McDonald Squires. He was one of nine children. The family migrated early to Medford, Oregon, where he completed high school.

His first plan apparently was to be an educator, so he attended Albany College and Kansas State Normal School, receiving A.B. degrees at each. After some experience as a teacher and principal in the state of Idaho, he returned to San Francisco Theological Seminary for four years. During this time he was serving as Pastor in Stockton, CA, and in San Franciso; both Presbyterian Churches. He then went to Hartford School of Religious Education for another year.

He came to Marshfield to serve as Pastor while attending more graduate school at Boston University. He was forty-four years old when he came to Marshfield.

Mrs. Squires was the former Elizabeth Thompson. Their only son, Leslie, was about six or seven years old when they were here. Leslie Squires eventually attended Duke University and made a career in the Diplomatic Corp in Washington, D.C.

There are only little clues to his short stay in Marshfield. The quote below indicates that the decision had to do with the World War. From Marshfield, Dr. Squires went to Chicago where he apparently worked with a group that supplied ministers and developed Sunday Schools where ministers had gone to war. However, it may be that he and his wife also found the parsonage difficult, after having lived in larger cities. Immediately after they left, the church completely renovated the parsonage, with the major change being the addition of electricity and perhaps indoor plumbing.

Dr. Squires spent the major part of his career in the area of Christian education for the Presbyterian Church, including thirteen years in Philadelphia at the board of Christian Education. He was the author of dozens of books and many articles on the subject.

He served two other congregations in California before retiring there. Dr. Squires died at age 74, November 2, 1949, in San Clemente, California. His wife then went to live with her son in Washington.[109]

[109] *Religious Leaders in America, Vol. II,* p.1014; *Curricula Vitae*, Dr. Walter Albion Squires; *San Clemente Sun,* 4 Nov., 1949.

The Church:

Rev. Squires was only at the church a few months. From the minutes of the Ladies' Benevolent Society we read:

> …After being without a pastor all winter we were so glad to welcome in the Spring a pastor and his family. But in the Fall when the war draft called for older men, he had a call where he felt his work was needed more so left us. May we not have to go through this winter without a pastor, and when one comes to us may we all co-operate with him in his work, remembering we are a branch of the church, and the least we can do making one more in the congregation to receive his message to us.[110]

The patriotism continued when the Daughters of the American Revolution invited the town to the Flag Raising on the Common. "It was a beautiful day, the exercises very interesting, and a grand sight when Old Glory floated in the breeze."

Seventy-four Marshfield men served in World War I as soldiers or sailors, most of whom were in some way connected to the church and its members. All the church members apparently returned safely.

The Ministry of J. Sherman Gove - 1919 – 1925

The Minister:

Joseph Sherman Gove was born in Wilmot, NH, on September 20, 1866. He attended the Chicago Theological Seminary, Illinois, and Oberlin Graduate School of Theology, Ohio. He was another minister who liked to move about.

Rev. Gove was ordained in Salem, NH, on December 13, 1893, after serving Wentworth, NH, in 1891 and 1892. He was in Salem until he went to Gilsum, NH, in 1894, and then he went to South Dennis, MA, in 1897. In 1899, he moved to East Jaffrey, NH, where he stayed until 1903. Apparently looking for a change of scene, he went to Leavenworth, in Washington State, where he preached in 1903 and 1904. He returned to New England and served Harvard, MA, 1904-08; Marlboro, NH, 1908-12; Wauregan, CT, 1912-15; and Lynnfield Center, MA, 1915-19. He came to Marshfield and served from 1919 until 1925. This six-year period was his longest pastorate.

The Ladies' Benevolent Society sent him $25 in 1921, "as he is going through an operation for appendicitis and is at the Deaconess hospital. Received a note from Mr. Gove…he said it helped him to have his special nurses longer." In this time before antibiotics, an appendectomy was very serious surgery.

Apparently he retired in 1925, perhaps because of health. He died in Manchester, NH, on June 13, 1930, at age 63, from angina pectoris.

He married Ella F. Clay on June 1, 1892, in Concord, NH. They had five children, Floyd, Paul Fairchild, Ruth Frances, Fredrick, and a twin to Fredrick.

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[110] Ashley, Linda R., *Ladies' Benevolent Society,* p. 56.

The Church:

The year 1920 was special in Massachusetts, and in Plymouth County in particular. This was the tercentennial of the landing of the Pilgrims. This church, founded by original passengers on the Mayflower, had several special observances, and participated in those in Plymouth. This celebration continued through the summer of the following year.

Forty people went together to Plymouth on July 1, 1921, to see the "Pilgrim's Progress up Burial Hill." There was a pageant held at night. Several Marshfield ladies had made several trips to Plymouth to make costumes and they got free tickets to the show. Over 1200 costumes had been made and many were used several times during the show, as there was literally a "cast of thousands." The most spectacular part of the show was the extensive lighting, a relatively new thing, since electricity had only relatively recently come to the South Shore, and no one had ever seen anything like this. A whole page of the program was devoted to "Electrical Facts."

A union service of all the town churches, under the auspices of the Historical Society, was held at the Congregational Church on August 31, 1921. The day began with a dinner (lunch) at the Chapel, which was "prettily decorated." "The morning was spent socially, and after dinner we too had a Pilgrim procession in marching to the church having our pictures taken on the way and in the church…a little advance from Pilgrim times. Then we had an address from Rev. Geo. Gutterson. A very pleasant time."[111]

The Ministry of George W. Zartman - 1925 – 1928

The Minister:

Rev. George W. Zartman was a native of Lodi, NY, where he was born May 9, 1887. He was educated at Syracuse University, NY, and Drew Theological Seminary in Madison, NJ, a small Methodist College, where he graduated in 1913. He was ordained a Methodist minister in Scranton, PA, in 1916, and joined the Congregational fellowship in 1920.

His Methodist charges were in Chenango Forks, NY, 1913-1915, and Tunnell, NY, 1915-1917.

He was in Iowa Village, NY, 1919-1921, then served as Chaplain and Teacher at the State Reformatory in Rahway, NJ, until 1923. He moved to Mt. Vernon, NH, where he was a Congregational Minister until 1925, when he came to Marshfield. He left Marshfield in 1928. His next Church was in Piermont, NH, 1929-31. His last ministry was in Barnstead, NY, until 1933. He may have retired because of illness. He died February 27, 1943, at age 55.[112]

Rev. Zartman was never married.

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[111] Ashley, Linda R., *Ladies Benevolent Society,* p.77.

[112] Place of death not yet identified.

The Church:

The most interesting items in the church records of this period are from the financial reports. For example, one of the sources of income was:

"Sale of apples from parsonage trees - $8.00"

There was a note: "Amount rec'd for damage to Parsonage Hedge - $100.00." They paid someone $75 to reset the hedge, a large amount in 1925, so there must have been an extensive hedge. This must have been the result of the widening of Plain Street and building of sidewalks.

The janitor and the organist were each paid $104 for the year, or $2 per week.

The salary of the minister was $1200 in 1925. It was raised to $1500 in 1928, a rather large increase. Perhaps the church found it necessary to raise the salary to get a successor to Rev. Zartman. Incidentally, the salary was not raised again until 1940, when it was raised to $1600.

The Ministry of William L. Halladay - 1928 – 1932

The Minister:

William Lovel Halladay was born in Michigan on August 6, 1878, the son of Lovel Halladay and Lovina Weld Halladay. According to the *Congregational Yearbook*, he was ordained in 1924. That would make him forty-eight years old. Perhaps he had an earlier occupation, or perhaps he changed denominations and sought a new ordination.

His wife while he was in Marshfield was named Mabel. They moved to Florida after leaving Marshfield. They visited Marshfield several times in the 1930's, and Mrs. Halladay met with the Women's Temperance Society and Ladies' Benevolent Societies if they had meetings during her visits. On one occasion it was noted that she gave a short talk, speaking and quoting scripture from memory as she was totally blind.

Rev. Halladay was later, probably in 1956, married to Dora M. Bidwell.

Rev. Halladay died on March 18, 1972, in St. Cloud, Florida. He was 93 years of age. He was buried in Portland, Michigan, apparently beside his first wife. Dora Bidwell Halladay died in May 1982, in St. Cloud, at age 95. Apparently neither left any children.

The Church:

A severe storm on March 8, 1931, completely destroyed the church steeple. It was replaced through donations from members and friends. Steeple Jack George Everett of Rockland charged $69.50 "to remove the old bell cradle, installing and painting, all labor and tools and material."

These were the early years of the Great Depression, and it was difficult for members to support the Church. While new initiatives were very few, necessary repairs were made, as above, and the property and the Church as an entity came through the depression in relatively good condition.

The Ministry of J. Stanley Bellinger - 1932 – 1937

The Minister:

John Stanley Bellinger was a native of St. Thomas, North Dakota, where he was born on July 12, 1905. He came to New England to attend Boston College and to prepare for the ministry in the Methodist Church. He served the Marshfield Church and commuted to Boston for classes.

His first wife was Rose F. Brockway, a native of Kalamazoo, Michigan.

When the Marshfield Church celebrated its 300th Anniversary, J. Stanley Bellinger signed his name with a flourish in the guest book. Later, his wife Rose signed for herself and for John Bellinger, whom she noted was five weeks old. John had been born in June, 1932, at Brockton Hospital, but as an adult he came to Marshfield to visit the Church and registered his birth in the Marshfield town records. Rev. and Mrs. Bellinger also had a daughter Suzanne.

After he completed his education in Boston, the Bellingers moved west, first to Idaho. Most of his career he was associated with the California-Nevada Methodist conference. By 1940, he was in Madera and Bakersfield, California. He also served the Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco, and the Methodist Church in Corcoran.

After a ministry of 47 years, he retired and moved to Moscow, Idaho. Rose Bellinger had died in San Jose, CA, in 1976, and he was married a second time to Elsie McNee, with whom he enjoyed traveling and "generally enjoying life," though, as it happened, they only had five years together.

He died in October, 1982, at Gritman Memorial Hospital, Moscow, Idaho. He was survived by his son John and daughter Susanne French (later Whitlow), as well as a stepson, Wes McNee, and five grandchildren. Two sisters lived in Grays Lake, IL.

John Bellinger, a CPA in Irvine and Palm Springs, CA, died of cancer in 1996. Susanne Whitlow is living in Antioch, CA.

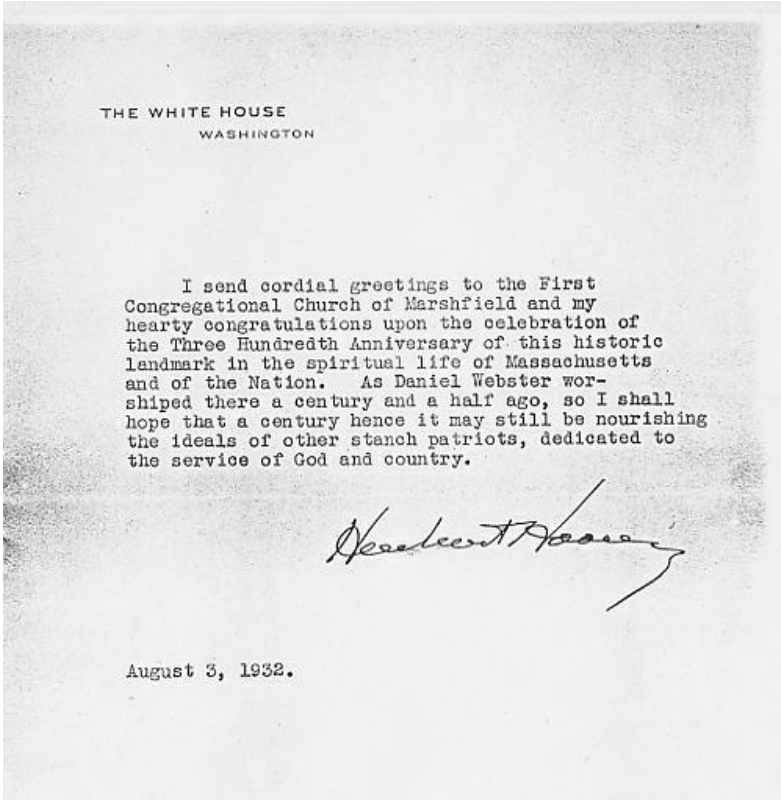
While distance prevented his visiting keeping close contact with Marshfield, Rev. Bellinger fondly remembered it. His obituary included the statement, "He had served churches from Boston – where he was minister in the church regularly attended in early days by Daniel Webster – to San Francisco…"

The Church:

This Church celebrated its Three Hundredth Anniversary on August 7, 1932. The keynote address was given by Rev. D. Brewer Eddy, D.D., Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners. The service was attended by at least four hundred people.

Those for whom there was no room in the sanctuary heard the service through a sound system outside.

President Herbert Hoover sent a personal letter congratulating "The First Congregational Church on celebrating the Three Hundredth Anniversary of this historic landmark in the spiritual life of Massachusetts and of the nation." Former President Calvin Coolidge also sent a personal message.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

I send cordial greetings to the First Congregational Church of Marshfield and my hearty congratulations upon the celebration of the Three Hundredth Anniversary of this historic landmark in the spiritual life of Massachusetts and of the Nation. As Daniel Webster worshiped there a century and a half ago, so I shall hope that a century hence it may still be nourishing the ideals of other stanch patriots, dedicated to the service of God and country.

Herbert Hoover

August 3, 1932.

The choir and many church members dressed in Pilgrim costume and marched from the Parish House to the Church to a drum beat. Mr. John Gutterson of Norwell "deaconed" the hymns. Others who participated were Russell D. Baker, Mrs. Roberts, Miss Stevens, and Mrs. Ryder.

Several of the churches in Marshfield banded together in 1934 to form a Federation of Churches "for the purpose of getting nearer together in church work, in order to make the cause of Christ and His Church more effective in the community and mutual Christian cooperation."

During the ministry of Rev. Bellinger, the Deacons of the Church still sat, as they had for centuries, on a Deacon bench in front of the pulpit, facing the congregation. They wore identical swallow-tail morning coats. It is not certain when this practice ended, but it was probably about the time of Rev. Field's arrival in 1937.

The Ministry of Edwin C. Field - 1937 – 1940

The Minister:

Edwin Curtis Field was born in Cambridge, MA, on August 19, 1898, and was reared in Somerville. He graduated from Boston University and Yale Divinity School and was ordained in Calais, ME, on October 5, 1926.

He served churches in Robbinston and Red Beach, ME, in 1926 and 1927, and in Middle Haddam, CT, from 1927 to 1929. He was in East Hampton, CT, from 1929 until 1937. After serving at Marshfield from 1937 until 1940, he went to Bridgton, ME, until 1945. He served as an Associate Professor at Bangor Theological Seminary from 1945 until 1949. His classes were Rural Church and Religious Education. He then went to Minneapolis, MN, to serve as a Conference Minister.

We have not learned the name of the wife who accompanied him to Marshfield, but his children were Robert and Priscilla. They were probably young teenagers when they lived here. This first wife died in 1945, apparently no more than forty-five years old. His mother died the same year.

He married his second wife, Laura D. Purchas, on August 2, 1949.

Rev. Field died in Minneapolis, MN, January 2, 1959, only sixty-one years old.

The Church:

There were special exercises, on August 7, 1938, to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the dedication of the present building. The service was based on the original order of worship used at the dedication in 1838. Rev. Edwin Field led the service. Rev. Alfred V. Bliss, Secretary of the Massachusetts Congregational Conference, presented the sermon. Church historian, Mrs. R.C. Ewell, spoke on "The Last Hundred Years."

The King Philathea Bible Class was formed by Mrs. Mildred King in April, 1939. The class received a charter from the Massachusetts Baraca-Philathea organization, part of a World Wide Union.

On January 12, 1940, a letter was sent to the membership, suggesting that there had not been sufficient support for the church, and proposing a campaign to support the ongoing budget and begin a fund for future expansion. It was actually a modest budget, a total of $4000 to include all salaries and expenses as well as $800 for parsonage repair. The addition fund was a goal of $1000. It was promised that no building would actually take place until sufficient funds were raised. As it happened, perhaps because of the intervention of the Second World War or general lack of interest, no building actually took place until 1954.

Rev. Field, whose name was on the letterhead, but who did not sign the letter, may have been discouraged by the perceived lack of interest, as he left shortly thereafter.

The Ministry of George D. Hallowell - 1940 – 1957

The Minister:

George Dewey Hallowell was born in Waldoboro, Maine, on April 8, 1896, the son of Mr. And Mrs. Gardner Hallowell. He was educated at Mars Hill High School, Aroostook Academy and at Bangor Theological Seminary, class of 1922.

Rev. Hallowell was ordained in the Christian denomination at Blaine, Maine, on October 7, 1922.

On December 5, 1922, in South Brewer, Maine, he married Carolyn Elizabeth Ware, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Ware.

Rev. Hallowell served two South Brewer congregations from 1922 until 1927, and two churches in Swansea, MA, 1927-30. From 1930 until 1940, he was at Woodstock Christian Church, Woodstock, VT.

Rev. Hallowell was minister in Marshfield from 1940 until 1957, and Pastor Emeritus until 1959. He was a well-loved and effective minister. He was active in community affairs, serving as Chaplain of the Kiwanis Club and member of other civic organizations. He was also President of the Marshfield Ministers Association.

Four children came with Rev. and Mrs. Hallowell to Marshfield: George D., Jr., b. 1924, Vaughn Harrison, b. 1925, Eric, b. 1933, and Carol Jean, b. 1938.

Rev. Hallowell died of a heart attack in Marshfield on July 11, 1959, and is buried near the church. His funeral service was conducted by Rev. Vaughn Shedd, his successor as minister, assisted by Rev. Lee Fletcher of the North Community Church, and Rev. Ross Peterson of the Baptist Church.

He had attended the Church Fair the day before and officiated at his daughter's wedding the previous month.

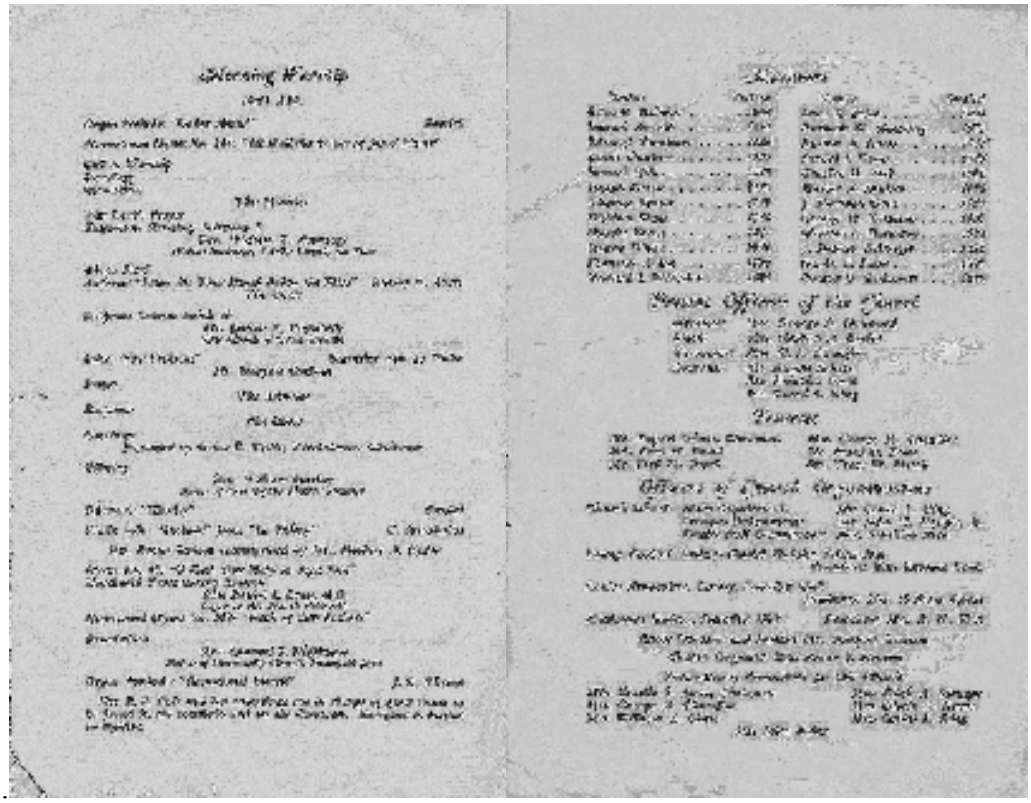
After his death, his wife, Carolyn Hallowell, moved to Boston.

At the time of his death, his son George, Jr. lived in Lebanon, IN; Vaughn in Chelmsford, MA; Bruce in Marshfield; and daughter, Carol (Mrs. Lewis Styles), in Newton, MA. After living in Florida, Bruce Hallowell has recently returned to live in Duxbury.

The Church:

A celebration took place the week of July 21-28, 1940, when the town commemorated its Tercentenary Anniversary. The week began with a Union Service held on Sunday morning in the church, with Pastor Hallowell and ministers or representatives from all church in town taking part. Former pastor, Rev. Daniel I. Gross (1908-11), returned to present the sermon. Letters were received from President Franklin Roosevelt

and other national and state officials. The church could not hold the crowd and many heard the service across the common. A second service ended the celebration the following Sunday at the Unitarian Church, Marshfield Hills, at 4pm.



A town-wide program was held on July 24 at the Daniel Webster Homestead. Governor Leverett Saltonstall was the speaker, along with Senator David I. Walsh, Mayor Thomas S. Burgin of Quincy, Dr. Claude Fuess of Phillips Andover Adademy, Stephen Vincent Benet, poet, and Professor W. Hatch of New Jersey.

World War II affected the church in Marshfield as it did all the nation. Twenty-nine young men and women of the church served their country and four did not return, having given their lives. They were: Burton Peterson, Norman Randall, Richard Peterson, and Martin Baker.

On Sunday morning, January 31, 1954, the building suffered extensive damage from fire. At about 8 am, the custodian, Earl Pineo, went to prepare the sanctuary for the morning service. It was fortunate that he arrived at that moment or the church building would have been lost from the fire that had just broken out in front of the pulpit.

Mr. Pineo rushed in through the dense smoke to be certain that there was no one in the building, and had to crawl out on his hands and knees.

The fire companies arrived promptly and efficiently stopped the fire.

All the window glass had become so hot that the water caused all of them to break. Because they were warped, the entire windows had to be replaced.

The pulpit and front pews, the drapery hangings, the sofa, the flags, and the carpet were all damaged or destroyed, as were the organ and piano.

The ceiling had some damage, but luckily it was possible to match the tin pattern seamlessly.

The damage was estimated by August Schatz, carpenter, to be $15,474.00. That is a low figure compared to comparable damage today. For example, to replace all the glass and all windows was only $500. The remove all old electric wiring and replace with new, including fixtures, was only $900. Mr. Schatz charged only $150 to clean up all the debris. To recondition the heating system, that caused the fire, was $900.00.

The church launched a drive called, "Program of Progress" to restore the church building and add to the Parish Hall. A total of $35,000 had been pledged by the time the church had been rebuilt.

The restored church was rededicated on August 22, 1954. Over 450 people attended the service, including the guests of honor, the Fire Companies 1, 2, & 3, who were praised for having saved the building from total destruction.

The new organ was dedicated in the fall of the same year, having been paid for by a separate organ fund. (see the chapter entitled, "Music.")

Several people made specific donations. Mr. and Mrs. Walter Kelly of Dedham bought new hymnals, Mr. and Mrs. Parke Carpenter a new Christian flag, and the VFW Auxiliary the new American flag.

The family of Rev. (1891-1901) and Mrs. Frederick Manning presented a silver baptismal font in memory of their parents. On the following Tuesday afternoon, Nancy Ford Cole, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Cole of New York City, was the first to be baptized using the font. She was the great-great granddaughter of Rev. Ebenezer Alden, and the granddaughter of the late Edward P. Cole, former organist and soloist of the church, and Helen Cole, at that time an active member of the church. The young father, Edward Cole, was a singer on Broadway at the time. This font is still used today.

A new Parish Hall addition was dedicated on September 8, 1957. A litany led by Rev. Hallowell stated the objectives of the dedication:

> So that the children shall have:
>
> An awareness of God's love…
> A knowledge of truth…
> An understanding of faith…
> An understanding of life
>
> And so that the children may understand men's true relationship to God for "though empires may fall the Lord reigneth forever."

A program for the Church fair in 1954 lists many of the active Church members of the time.

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The Ministry of Vaughn Shedd - 1958 – 1970

The Minister:

Vaughn Shedd was born in Evans, New York, on July 5, 1917, the first child of four children of Rev. Guy Vaughn Shedd and Sarah Katheryn Redans Shedd, both natives of New York State. Before he was a year old, the family moved to South Walpole, MA. During the 1920's, his father was minister of Methodist Churches in Quincy and Newton Upper Falls, where Vaughn Shedd graduated from High School.

Under the leadership of G. V. Shedd, the Quincy M.E. Church grew from fifty members to over five hundred in nine years and a new building was built. The Shedd family had long ties to Quincy, as an ancestor had settled Shedd's Neck (Germantown) in the 1600's.

Rev. Vaughn Shedd was educated at DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana, a small school associated with the United Methodist Church, and at Boston University School of Theology (1941). He served Methodist churches in Melrose and Islington, MA. He went to Buenos Aires, Argentina, for two years, to serve the American Community Church. From 1942 to 1946, he served in the U.S. Army as a Chaplain, European Theater. He married Anne Isabel Ebbert on April 4, 1943.

Between 1946 and 1958, Mr. Vaughn was in the business community in California, in sales and advertising for the pharmaceutical industry.

Returning to Massachusetts, he became minister in Marshfield on October 1, 1958. At his installation service, the prayer was offered by his father, Rev. G. Vaughn Shedd, then General Secretary of the Lord's Day League of New England, and the sermon was given by Rev. Edwin P. Booth, Professor of Historical Theology at Boston University and Minister Emeritus of the Islington Community Church.

Rev. Shedd served until 1969. Afterward, he went to Watertown, MA, where he was minister from until he retired in 1982. During his last years he lived in Duxbury. He died in Plymouth, June 17, 1992.

The Church:

Rev. Vaughn S. Shedd and his family were welcomed to Marshfield with a reception and tea held on September 19, 1958. About 200 guests attended, including former Pastor and Mrs. Hallowell, the town officials, and other clergy.

During the late 1950's and early 60's, the eight "Pilgrim" Churches, had annual meetings called, "Service of Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Departure of the Pilgrims from Leyden, Holland, on July 21, 1620." It was an impressive name and apparently an impressive service. The first one was held at the First Church Unitarian in Plymouth in 1957. The second was at the First Church Unitarian in Duxbury. The Third, in 1959, was held at Marshfield, and the fourth at First Church in Eastham (now Orleans). It is interesting that at that time the Third Church in Plymouth (The Church of the Pilgrimage), listed its founding as 1801, and the Unitarian churches were listed in order of their founding, beginning with Plymouth in 1620 and Duxbury in 1632.

Again the church celebrated on the Three Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the founding of the church, October 25-27, 1957. The first evening featured a roast beef dinner catered by Dora Ferguson. The speaker was Senator Leverett E. Saltonstall. There was a candlelight service on the 26th, with speaker Rev. John Prescott from the First Congregational Church in Braintree and soloist Frances Trisorio. On Sunday morning, the 27th, Rev. Frank Duddy, a representative of the Massachusetts Congregational Church, gave the sermon and the new organ was dedicated. Mrs. J. Richard Brett was the guest organist, and Jon Chandler, Vice President of the South Shore Choral Society, was soloist.

In 1960, Leo Barbeau, along with helpers, served popular breakfasts in the Parish Hall on Sunday mornings.

The numbers of Deacons and Deaconesses was increased to eight each.

Beginning in 1961, it was necessary to hold two services each Sunday morning, except in the summer, one at 9:30 and another at 11:00. Parents could attend church while their children were in Sunday School, or parents and children could attend both Sunday School and Church.

On Easter Sunday morning, 1961, 620 people attended services and 24 new members united with the church. For several years there were five services on Easter Sunday morning, beginning with the Sunrise service at 5am, and then worship services at 6, 8, 9:30, and 11.

Grace Ryder, who had served as Church Clerk for over twenty five years and was called by many the First Lady of Marshfield because of her many civic and church-related activities, died in 1960. Miss Annie Stevens, who had played the organ at church for fifty years, passed away in 1962.

A successful Vacation Bible School program was begun in 1964, under the leadership of Mary Ellen Andreen and Rev. Shedd.

The Cindy Henderson Library in the Parish Hall was dedicated on January 23, 1966. Cindy was the daughter of Natalie and Wilfred Henderson. She died of leukemia at age eight. Family and friends honored her memory with the memorial library.

In the summer of 1966, Rev. Shedd exchanged pulpits with Rev. Arthur Dewhurst from Folkestone, England. Rev. Shedd led church members and townspeople on a tour of England, Scotland, and Switzerland.

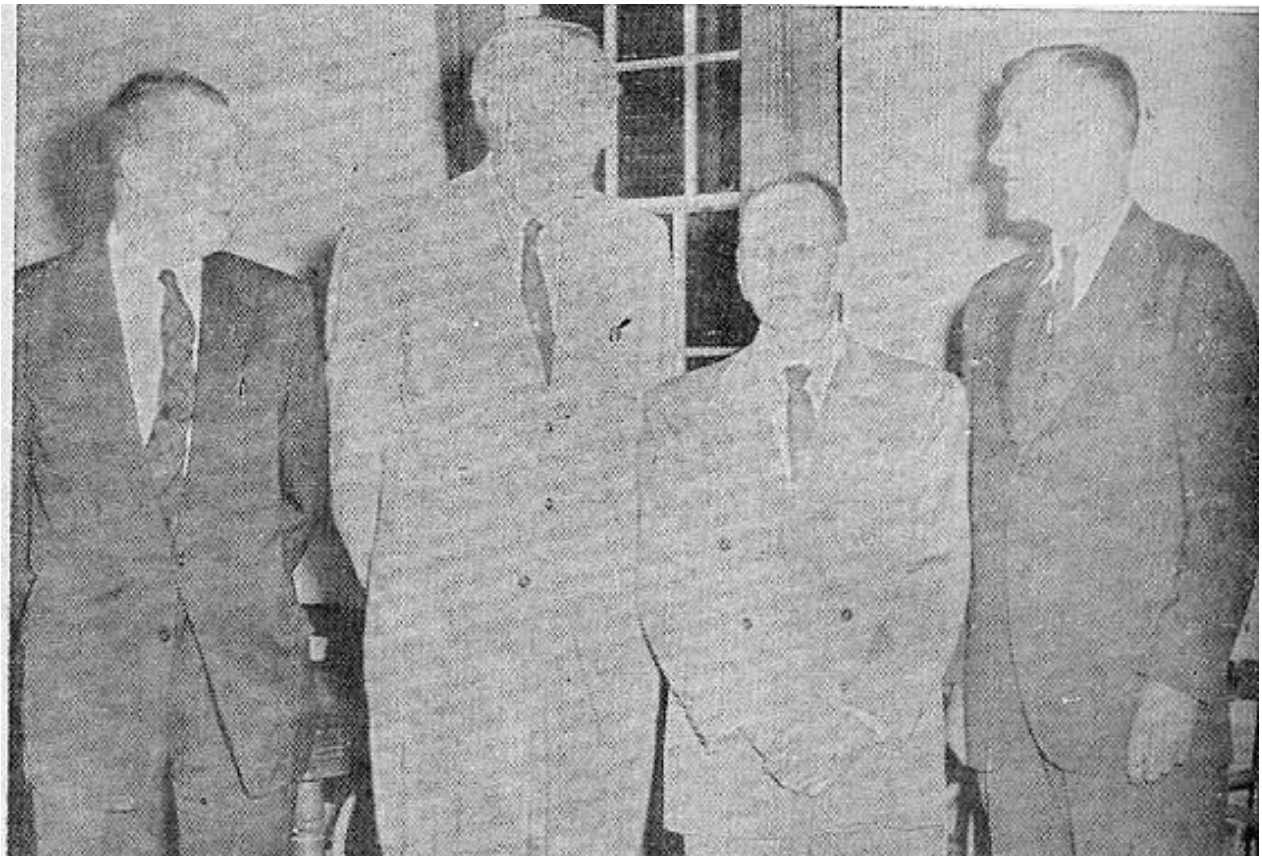
The Minister was also on television, appearing weekly on "We Believe," a program of WHDH-TV. He reported in 1967 that he had been told that the program was making the Marshfield pulpit "one of the most important in all New England."

The Church voted on June 15, 1968, to unite the First Congregational Church in Marshfield with the United Church of Christ. This was not without controversy, as there were members who did not want to make this change.

Pauline P. Brett was Organist, and Ernest Chandler, Jr., was assistant organist.

There were several church organizations, including the Couples Club, and the Adult Discussion Group.

Edith Alden Sprague was still living in the house built as a parsonage for her grandfather, Rev. Ebenezer Alden, in 1850, when she passed away in 1969.



Participants in the 325th Anniversary Celebration at the First Congregational Church, Marshfield, in 1957. From left, Arthur Hart, Chairman of the three-day event, Senator Leverett Saltonstall, unidentified, and Pastor Emeritus, Rev. George D. Hallowell.

The Ministry of William James Cox - 1970 – 1984

The Minister:

William James Cox was born in Warren, Ohio, on August 15, 1919, the son of William James Cox, Sr. and Hazel Hall Cox. Warren was a relatively small town then, located between Youngstown and Cleveland. After high school in Warren, he went to the College of Wooster, a small liberal arts college of excellent reputation, located about forty miles southwest of Cleveland.

The College of Wooster was founded by Presbyterians about the time of the Civil War and remains religiously oriented. William Cox had early decided to become a minister. From Wooster, he went to Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

At a dance sponsored by the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, he met Alice Janison, the daughter of a Manhattan cab driver. They were married in 1944 and he was ordained the following year.

His first two pastorates were Presbyterian Churches in Auburn, NY, and Independence, OH.

He came to Boston to attend Boston University Graduate School. Later, he studied r at the Clinical Pastoral Institute Program in the Boston area. During this time, he decided to change his affiliation from Presbyterian to the United Church of Christ.

As a minister of the United Church of Christ, he served pastorates in Southbridge, MA; Webster, NY; and Marshfield, MA.

Bill and Alice Cox were the parents of two children, Joanne and Douglas, both of whom attended high school in Marshfield. Joanne Cox, a physician, is married to Dr. George Dallos and lives in Weston, MA. They are the parents of three children, Matthew, Julia, and Andrew. Douglas is in the commercial insurance business and lives in Woburn, MA.

Rev. Cox retired from the Marshfield Church in 1984, and his and his wife moved to Craigville, MA, on Cape Cod. There he served as a Visitor to Retired Clergy on behalf of the United Church of Christ Pension Board and as Interim Chaplin at Cape Cod Hospital. As a member of the South Congregational Church, he served on the Board of Deacons. He also served on the Board of Directors of the Craigville Conference Center.

Rev. and Mrs. Cox spent the winters of retirement in Florida.

Rev. Cox passed away on July 14, 2001, at Emerson Hospital in Concord, MA, after a lengthy illness. He was survived by this wife, Alice. Rev. Cox was interred at Cotuit, on Cape Cod. A Thanksgiving for the Life of Rev. William J. “Bill” Cox was held at the South Congregational Church, Centerville, MA, on July 31, 2001. The services were conducted by Rev. Russell C. Wentling, assisted by Rev. Loree Elliott. Music was arranged by Philip Buddington, Minister of Music.

The opening prayer was in unison, beginning:

> Eternal God:
>
> We praise you for the great company of all those who have finished their course in faith and now rest from their labor.
>
> We praise you for those dear to us whom we name in our hearts before you.
>
> Especially we praise you for Bill, whom you have graciously received into your presence.
>
> To all these, grant your peace.
>
> Let perpetual light shine upon them….

The Church:

Rev. William Cox and his family were welcomed on February 1, 1970, with a dinner, followed by an installation program. He and his family had moved to Marshfield in December, 1969.

During the year 1976, the entire nation joined in celebration of the Bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence. There was a special service at this church, held on July 4, 1976. The Oldham Brass Ensemble played Bach's "Now Let Every Tongue Adore Thee" as a prelude, and Purcell's "Trumpet Tune" as postlude, as well as three other early New England hymns. Several of the hymns sung by the congregation were from the Revolutionary period. The scripture was Leviticus 25:8-12, describing the "Year of Jubilee." The sermon by Rev. Cox was taken from the engraving on the Liberty Bell, "Proclaim Liberty Throughout the Land." Karl Peterson sang a solo. Harry Jorgenson, who had served on the South Shore Bicentennial Commission, spoke on "The Spirituality of the Revolution," and was dressed in Revolutionary Costume.

Others who participated were: Gilbert, Jonathan, Joseph, and Elizabeth Oldham, Polly Brett, James and Jean Wellbeloved, Ernest Chandler, Kenneth Oakman, Barbara and Nancy Worth, David and Robert Willis, Stewart MacKenzie, Matthew Sinnott, and Rosella Ames.

Winslow Village, a senior citizen housing complex, welcomed its first residents in 1972. This complex was developed under the HUD 236 program by Winslow Village, Inc., a 121A Non-profit Corporation. Winslow Village is sponsored spiritually and moral support is given by the church, but there is no financial obligation to the congregation. Church members serve on the board. Winslow Village is located on Ocean Street.

Centennial Street had been built from the corner of Snow and Moraine Streets, diagonally across the town green to Ocean Street in 1876. In 1972, this street was removed, restoring the green all the way to the new town hall. This allowed the parking lot at the Parish Hall to be reconfigured for more and safer parking.

The church building was covered in vinyl siding in 1973.

Mrs. Polly Brett, the church organist, died in 1977.

The Church Council was organized in 1978. The Council is made up of representatives of each of the Church committees, along with the pastor and

representatives from the church at large and the groups. It meets once each month to discuss church issues and keep members informed of all church activities and initiatives.

Rev. Cox was extended a three-month sabbatical leave in 1980. Rev. John Martin of Manomet served as interim minister. The 35th Anniversary of Rev. Cox's ministry was celebrated with a luncheon and gifts from members and friends.

Storm windows were added to the church in 1981. The parsonage was renovated and improvements were made to the Parish Hall. All building debt was paid in full.

The Three Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Church was celebrated in 1982. In preparation for that event, Arthur Hart was selected as chairman. He, however, unfortunately passed away in August of 1981. A church history written to commemorate the anniversary was dedicated to Mr. Hart. That history was compiled by Helen L. Peterson, Eleanor Barstow Allen, and Albert W. Kimball, Jr. Virginia Hart was the typist and Arlene Roy provided the art work.

The Ministry of Robert H. Jackson - 1985—

The Minister:

Robert Harold Jackson was born July 29, 1955, in Stoneham, Massachusetts, the son of Harold and Marilyn Wiseman Jackson. He was one of five children – four boys and one girl.

He graduated from Stoneham High School in 1973. He attended Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill, the University of Lowell, and Gordon Conwell College. He graduated from Bangor Theological Seminary in 1982.

Rev. Jackson was ordained on December 12, 1982, at his home church in Stoneham, MA.

He was married on December 30, 1989, to Carolyn Joan Davis. The wedding was held at the First Congregational Church in Marshfield, with the reception at the Bridgewaye Inn at Humarock.

From 1975 to 1977, Bob Jackson was a volunteer at the Junior High Youth Fellowship of the Methodist Church in Reading, MA. From 1977 to 1979, he was Youth leader at the Congregational Church in Wilmington, MA. He was Youth Minister at Greenwood Union Church, Wakefield, MA, from 1979 until 1981. From 1982 until October, 1985, he was Minister of the Brookline Church of Christ, Brookline, New Hampshire.

Rev. Robert H. Jackson became the Minister of the First Congregational Church in Marshfield, MA, in October, 1985, where he continues.

Rev. Jackson strongly believes in youth ministry and has devoted much time and energy into building the youth program at this Church. At the present time, between 80 and 100 young people attend youth meetings each week. He leads retreats to locations such as Monadnock Retreat Center, New Hampshire, or Nantucket, and often over one hundred youth and appropriate numbers of adults go along. Hiking, mountain climbing, biking and other activities are enjoyed along with prayer, communion, and devotions. One couple even chose to be married on one of these retreats and Rev. Jackson performed

the ceremony on a mountain top. There is no doubt that the Church as well as the town of Marshfield has benefited from this strong youth fellowship.

Rev. Robert Jackson and Rev. Stephen Turrell
On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Rev. Turrell's ordination.

The Minister of Visitation: Rev. Stephen W. Turrell:

The Rev. Stephen W. Turrell was born in Hampstead, New York, on August 15, 1918. He was graduated from the University of Alabama in 1940 with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, and from the Hartford Theological Seminary n 1943 with a Bachelor of Divinity degree.

Ordained in the Christian minister in 1943, he served churches in Northfield, CT, and Pittsfield, Grafton, Beverly, and Duxbury, MA. In 1983, Mr. Turrell resigned as minister of the Pilgrim Church in Duxbury after a pastorate of twenty years, the longest pastorate in the history of that church.

During the Second World War, Mr. Turrell served as Chaplain in the United States Army in England, France, and Germany. He later served as Chaplain at the Worcester City Hospital and Grafton State Hospital, and from 1988 to 1993 as Chaplain and Pastoral Care Coordinator for the Cranberry Area Hospice.

After retiring from the Pilgrim Church, he served interim pastorates at the Central Congregational Church in Bridgewater, MA, and the First Congregational Church in Plympton, MA. He served an interim pastorate at this church in Marshfield and since 1989 has served part-time as Minister of Visitation.

Rev. Turrell and his wife, Alice L., have a son, Mark H. Turrell, and three grandchildren, Kristin, Amanda, and Matthew. Another son, Jonathan, died in an automobile accident as a teenager.

The Church:

The old parsonage at the corner of Plain Street and Main Street was sold and a new parsonage was built in 1989. Rev. Jackson, who had lived alone in the old parsonage, moved into the new one alone in July, 1989, but soon changed the situation by marrying Carolyn Davis on December 30, 1989.

In 1990, the town of Marshfield celebrated the 350th anniversary of the founding of the town. One of the events was an ecumenical service was held at the church. Several churches participated and there was a large crowd in attendance. After the service, the entire congregation, led by a piper went to the town green for another program presented by the town.

Also in 1990, the first occupants of Winslow Village II moved into the new facility. Winslow II is on the same property as Winslow I, and illustrated the success of the first venture. Both provide a much needed service for the elderly of Marshfield.

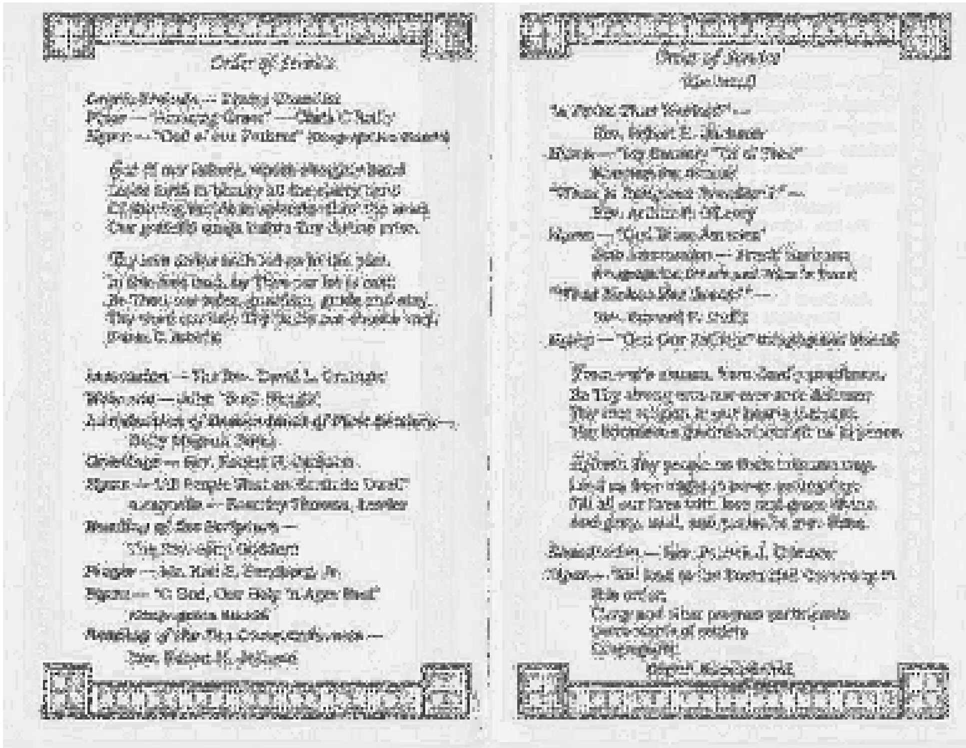
The current Church Secretary is Penney Gustafson. She manages the Church office, prepares the Sunday Bulletins and the Church newsletter, the "Bell," and is the "keeper of the keys" for functions and events in the Parish Hall.

Willard Thomes is the Church Sexton. He faithfully opens the Church building for functions and oversees the building. While he has never married himself, he is an expert on weddings and can be counted on to provide the missing candle, save the day with a safety pin, or send the bridesmaids down the aisle at the proper time.

As this history is written, consideration is being given to building a new church building. Those in favor believe it will stimulate the growth of the Church, would provide more service to the community and offer a more attractive facility, and would address the problems of crossing the street and the lack of restrooms at the church. Those opposed cite the historical significance of the current building, the prominence in the center of town, the convenience, and the previous memories of their families in worship there. The question will not be answered before this little book goes to press, and so we will leave without knowing the outcome. We can only assume God's guidance as the congregation makes plans for the future and choices that will affect everyone now and for succeeding generations.

Linda R. Ashley

> I charge you before God and his blessed angels that you follow me no further than you have seen me follow Christ. If God reveal anything to you by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth from my ministry. For I am confident the Lord has more truth and light et to break forth out of his Holy Word.
>
> John Robinson
> Minister to the Separatists in Leiden, Holland.



Order of Service

[illegible] — [illegible]
[illegible] — "[illegible]" — [illegible]
Hymn — "God of Our Fathers" [illegible]

God of our fathers, whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies,
Our grateful songs before thy throne arise.

Thy love divine hath led us in the past,
In this free land by Thee our lot is cast;
Be Thou our ruler, guardian, guide and stay,
Thy word our law, Thy paths our chosen way.
Daniel C. Roberts

Invocation — The Rev. David L. Grainger
Welcome — [illegible]
Introduction of Descendants of First Settlers — [illegible]
Greetings — Rev. Robert H. Jackson
Hymn — "All People That on Earth do Dwell" a cappella — [illegible], Leader
Reading of the Scriptures — [illegible]
Prayer — Rev. [illegible], Jr.
Hymn — "O God, Our Help in Ages Past" Congregation [illegible]
Reading of the [illegible] — Rev. Robert H. Jackson

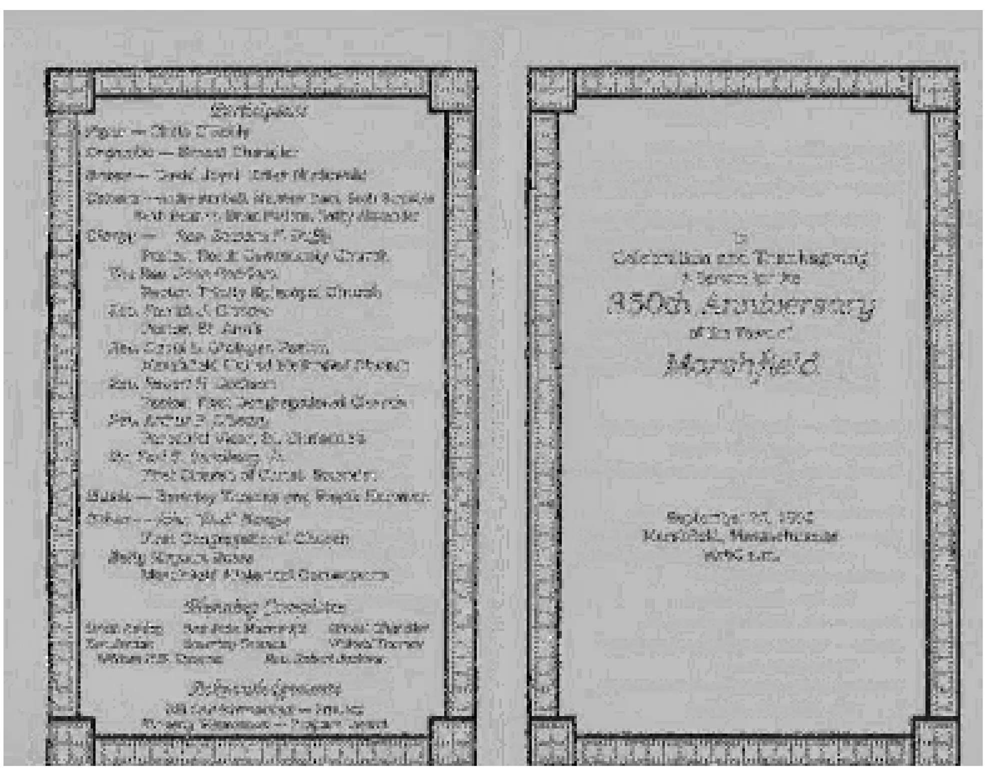
Order of Service (Continued)

"[illegible]" — Rev. Robert H. Jackson
[illegible] — "My Country 'Tis of Thee" [illegible]
"[illegible]" — Rev. Arthur P. O'Leary
Hymn — "God Bless America" [illegible] — [illegible] [illegible]
"What Makes Us [illegible]" — Rev. [illegible]
Hymn — "God Our Father" [illegible]

From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,
Be Thy strong arm our ever sure defense;
Thy true religion in our hearts increase,
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

Refresh Thy people on their toilsome way,
Lead us from night to never ending day;
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine,
And glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine.

Benediction — Rev. Patrick J. [illegible]
[illegible] — [illegible] in this order:
Clergy and other program participants
[illegible]
Congregation
[illegible]



Participants

[illegible] — [illegible]
Organist — [illegible] Chandler
[illegible] — [illegible]
[illegible] — [illegible]
Clergy — Rev. [illegible], Pastor, [illegible] Community Church
The Rev. [illegible], Rector, Trinity Episcopal Church
Rev. Patrick J. [illegible], Pastor, St. Ann's
Rev. David L. Grainger, Pastor, Marshfield Hills United Methodist Church
Rev. Robert H. Jackson, Pastor, First Congregational Church
Rev. Arthur P. O'Leary, Parochial Vicar, St. Christine's
Rev. [illegible], Jr., First Church of Christ, Scientist
[illegible] — [illegible]
[illegible] — [illegible], First Congregational Church
[illegible], Marshfield [illegible]

[illegible] Committee

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

In
Celebration and Thanksgiving
A Service for the
350th Anniversary
of the Town of
Marshfield

[illegible]
Marshfield, Massachusetts
[illegible]

The Colonial Churches of New England

The following charts were found in an early Congregational Yearbook. They illustrate the preeminence of the Congregational Church in the period between the landing of the pilgrims in 1620, and the American Revolution, beginning in 1776.

Denomination	ME	NH	VT	MA	RI	CT	Total	%
Congregational	48	101	12	12	344	200	720	72%
Baptist	5	11	2	2	63	26	148	15%
Episcopal	4	3	--	22	7	49	75	7.5%
Separatist	--	1	--	18	--	26	42	4%
Presbyterian	10	14	--	9	--	1	9	1%
Huguenot	--	--	--	2	--	--	2	
Lutheran	1	--	--	--	--	--	1	
Moravian	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	
Sandemanian	--	1	1	1	2	2	4	
Total	**68**	**131**	**14**	**459**	**64**	**295**	**1001**	
Percent	6	12	1	45	6	29		
Became Universalist				12		1	13	
Became Unitarian	6	9		125	1	1	142	

The above numbers do not necessarily add up to the total, as some churches, presumably Marshfield Congregational among them, changed, for example from Separatist to Congregational. The numbers outside of New England would be decidedly different, with Episcopal and Presbyterian, for example, dominating in the South.

Among the Congregationalists, 95% of the ministers held college degrees. The Baptists, on the other hand, did not require their ministers to hold degrees, and so 89% did not. Of all the denominations, 85% of the ministers held degrees. Even more remarkable is the fact that among Congregational Clergymen, 83% held earned or honorary doctorates.

As we see among the ministers of this Church, Most of the early ministers studied at Harvard (57%), with Yale following at 26%. A good percentage were educated in England or Scotland, and then came to the colonies. These would be mostly Episcopal or Presbyterian ministers, though, ;of course, the earliest Congregational ministers were also education there.

Lest anyone assume that "everyone went to Church back then," that was certainly not the case. According to the *Historical Atlas of the American Revolution,*[113] fewer than twenty percent of the population was linked to a church. Only about 17 % of the population in Boston attended church in 1780. Yet the Congregationalists, among the most educated of the population, led the move for self-rule and opposed foreign control, as they had since their beginnings in the Separatist and Puritan movements.

[113] Barnes, Ian, *Historical Atlas of the American Revolution,* p28.

The United Church of Christ

The United Church of Christ (UCC) was formed in 1957, when two million members of Evangelical, Reformed, and Congregational Churches united to form one denomination. Earlier mergers had included the small Christian Church (1931.) At that time, a dissenting member was quoted as having said, "I have been a Congregationalist all my life and no one is going to make a Christian of me now."[114]

In 1957, some Congregational Churches declined to join the UCC. Some of them joined other Congregational or Christian Associations, and others remained independent, the Marshfield Church among them.

At the annual meeting of January 1967, a committee was appointed to study the question of whether this congregation should join the United Church of Christ. At the meeting of 1968, the committee presented its conclusions. Those serving on the committee were:

Daphne Baker	Richard Cole	Isabel Dole
Virginia Lakehomer	Gladys Langille	Marguerite Lee
Richard Pelton	Elsie Wood	Clarence Wheeler
Rev. Vaughn Shedd		

Some of the points they made were:

1. Over 85 % of Congregational Churches had already joined the United Church of Christ, and none had dropped out. Only fifty churches had not joined, and some of those were still considering, as was Marshfield.
2. For six years, the Marshfield Congregation had been "enjoying and partaking of the benefits of the UCC without accepting any of the responsibilities." The Sunday School was using all UCC material and "there is absolutely nothing unfavorable in either the intent or purpose."
3. The Massachusetts Conference of Congregational Christian Churches no longer exists but is the Massachusetts Conference of United Church of Christ, and that Pilgrim Association (although still functioning as an association for the remaining Congregational Christian Churches) functions primarily as an association in the United Church of Christ.
4. There are two options: Join the United Church of Christ or become a Community Church.

This congregation voted on June 15, 1968, to unite with the United Church of Christ, Massachusetts Conference.

The Statement of Faith now accepted by the Congregational Church was originally written and adopted by the United Church of Christ in 1959:

[114] Youngs, *The Congregationalists,* p.192.

Statement of Faith

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify:

He called the worlds into being, created man in his own image, and sets before him the ways of life and death.

He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

He judges men and nations by his righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he had some to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to himself.

He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

He calls us into his church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at this table, to join him in his passion and victory.

He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him.

Amen.

Covenant

[The Congregational Churches have always held that there is a covenant between God and his people, and a covenant among the members of a Congregation]:

We convenant one with another to seek and respond to the word and the will of God. We purpose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As did those who came before, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the kingdom of God and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

Communion or the "Lord's Supper"

The early Separatists took as their guide I Corinthians 11:23, and, in a simple service with much prayer and preaching, included two separate thanksgivings, for the bread and for the cup. This continued into eighteenth century Congregationalism. By contrast, the Presbyterians used only one blessing.

John Cotton, early minister in New England, said, "The prayers we use at the administration of the seals are not set forms prescribed to us, but conceived by the Minister, according to the present occasion and the nature of the duties in hand. Ceremonies we use none, but are careful to administer all things according to the primitive institution."[115] This indicates the refusal of the Separatists and Puritans to use a common prayer book, or other prescribed ceremonies.

Congregationalists restricted communion to covenanted members of the gathered churches. The unworthy were excluded and a period of preparation, redress of wrongs, and examination of conscience was normal. "All must prove and examine themselves, that their conscience be clear by faith and repentance." "The ignorant and scandalous are not fit to receive this sacrament of the Lord's Supper." However, the orthodox Church of England still believed that the Congregationalists were not strict enough. Robert Baillie wrote, "The Independents' way of celebration seems to be very irreverent. They have communion every Sabbath without any preparation before or thanksgiving after; little examination of the people…"

This also confirms that Communion was offered every Sunday. This continued until about the middle of the 19th Century. The general pattern today is once a month, as in Marshfield, but some congregations have Communion more or less often.

Early churches did not celebrate the sacrament if it had no pastor, a problem often faced in Plymouth Colony. This continued until about 1880, when the *Manual of Congregational Principles* noted, "An ordained minister is not necessary to give validity to the service."

Certain principles remain common in Marshfield from the earliest days: the narrative, the separate prayers, the distribution of the elements, and a collection for the poor. Other Congregational Churches dropped the collection in the 1970's.

Congregationalists have never believed in transubstantiation, such as Roman Catholics believe, in which the elements are believed to actually become the blood and body of Christ. There is no mystical effect in the blessing of the bread, but the acceptance of Christ in oneself is symbolic.

During the twentieth century, it became common for the invitation to be to "all who love the Lord," and the seriousness with which the sacrament was treated diminished. Less time was given to self-examination and more formality was adopted, almost reflecting the Anglican pattern. The 1936 Congregational *Manual for Ministers* evinced a greater sentimentality, for example through the inclusion of John Hunter's prayer, "Come not because you must, but because you may…Come not to express an opinion, but to seek a presence." The emphasis was on the congregation's approach to God, rather than God's activity toward them.

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[115] Cotton, T*he Way of the Churches,* p.68ff

The Church Buildings or Meetinghouses

The First Building

It is not certain when the first church building in Marshfield was built. Surely in the earliest days the people met for worship in the homes of the settlers, probably at Edward and Susanna Winslow's home, and perhaps others. However, since the business of the town in general also had to be conducted and the same building was used for both, a building was probably an early priority.

The Plymouth court allowed some land for this use, granting it to the town/church. William Thomas, whose large land grant was adjacent to that property, added some more, specifically for a burying ground. While we know that cemetery today as the "Winslow Cemetery," that name is relatively recent. In early documents it was the "Bury Ground," and in later ones it was referred to as the "Old Burying Ground." It was apparently because of the prominence of the Winslows in town affairs and that they were among the earliest families buried there, that the cemetery acquired their name. Edward Winslow, Pilgrim and early Governor of the Colony, was not buried there, as he died off the coast of Hispaniola and was buried at sea.

In his will, dated 1651, William Thomas added another 100 acres for the use of the church. This would be for income and support of the minister. The minister received some salary, even in the earliest day, but it was often in wood or food, rather than money. His real income was earned, usually by farming the “ministerial lands.”

The building was traditionally described as a small, thatched structure. Records indicate it was unheated, and light must have been minimal, particularly during the winter when windows, if there were any, were probably heavy, oiled paper, probably closed by shutters. It may have had a dirt floor, at least in the beginning.

Mr. Thomas also left in his will a "diaper[116] table cloth of 9 foot longe" for the communion table. This is a most important piece of information. In the 17th century, cloth was very valuable, because of the labor intensity of producing it. Clothes and linens were left in wills, and thieves were as likely to steal cloth as silver or other valuables. Mr. Thomas also left the wife of the minister, Mrs. Bulkeley, a cloth of the same length.

The Separatists rejected the idea of a sacrifice before an altar (and the consecration of the host), as ideas from pagan idolatry perpetuated by the Catholic Church and the Church of England. They removed the altar and replaced it with a table.

Holy Communion was the most important activity of the Sunday services. It was served every Sunday, in this period after the afternoon service, and only those who had “full communion with the Church” could participate. These would be the members, who were accepted only after they had convinced the Minister and other members that they “owned the covenant.” Then they could “approach the communion table.” They were, then, Communicants, and the service was the “Lord’s Supper,” more like a meal in a home around a table. Anyone else stood around the outside walls, though there might be benches for the old and infirm. We are used to seeing churches with pews lined up facing the minister. This was probably not the case in a small church, and, in fact, that was not

[116] Diaper cloth was a linen weave , usually in a “bird’s eye” pattern.

the usual arrangement in Congregational Churches until almost two hundred years later. The drawings on this page show an arrangement, with benches surrounding the central table. I suggest that the evidence points to this arrangement for the first church building in Marshfield. The minister would stand at his seat and deliver the sermon. While there is no description of the church in Marshfield at this time, this arrangement would make sense.

This building was probably also used for town meetings, though they might also have been in homes. It probably was not used for school. The arrangement would not have been suitable, and children might have desecrated the table. School was probably held in the home of the schoolmaster until a separate building was provided.

The Town Meeting of July 7, 1653 "agreed that the meeting house shall be covered with good spruce or cedar boards, and that Josiah Winslow, Sr., and John Dingley shall agree with a workman, or workmen, for the doing of it." Whether this is siding or roofing is not clear.

In the days before other communication, notices of all types would have been posted on the meetinghouse door. This would include banns of intended marriages, warrants of town meetings, and calls to arms. When there was a bounty for wolves, the heads would probably have been nailed to the outer walls.[117]

Since there was probably no bell and there was no standard time, someone likely stood on a prominence and shot a gun, indicating the approaching time of the meeting, or a drummer walked the main roads, beating a cadence toward the service.

When the second building was completed, this one was sold for 50 shillings. Whether it was moved or used for lumber is not known.

The Second Building

In the Town meeting of May 18, 1657, Anthony Ames, Moderator, noted, that:

> The inhabitants then present have concluded and agreed that the meeting house of the Town shall be builded and set up upon the land of Timothy Williamson near the training place,

[117] Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days,* p.367.

and the said Timothy Williamson and Joseph Rose, which is now tenant upon the said lands, are willing to consent therunto.

It is obvious that there were plans by that date to build a new meeting house, and that the site, not far from the present church building and town green, had been chosen and agreed to. But it did not proceed immediately. In November of the same year we find:

> The inhabitants are agreed that whereas there is nineteen shillings and nine pence due to the Town; in the hands of Josiah Winslow, Sr. fifteen shillings and nine pence; and in George Russell's hands four shillings; all which is appointed to be bestowed in repairing the meeting house.

Perhaps the financial difficulties with Mr. Bulkeley, and the uncertainty caused by his resignation as pastor about the same time, caused the parishioners to delay the building of a new meetinghouse. Timothy Williamson might have also had reservations about his agreement, since he had actually come to Marshfield with Mr. Bulkeley and could be expected to have sided with him in the parsonage controversy.

In May, 1663, "Timothy Williamson having formerly granted to the Town a small parcel of ground to set the meeting house upon and a pound to pound cattle, and also for a training place which is now used accordingly," the town gave Williamson additional land on the north side of the South River.

Eleven years later, September 21, 1668, the "At the…Town Meeting the Town granted 3 acres of land to Anthony Snow near Duxborough for which he surrendered title to land upon which the meeting house of Marshfield now stands and the land by it which is the training place." This is a similar arrangement to that made with Williamson. Questions must be raised about Timothy Williamson's land and his contribution and that of Anthony Snow's.[118]

The logical explanation is that the combined property owned by the town, including the sites of the meeting house, the town green (and training ground) and the cemetery encompassed land previously owned by both men, and later records did not differentiate exactly where the line originally had been. Most likely the part now including Cedar Grove cemetery east of the main driveway, the Parish Hall, and the Chapel Cemetery beside it were part of the Snow grant, and the town green, the current location of the church building, and the cemetery around the church (Old Congregational Cemetery), were part of the Williamson grant. While we think now of the town green as being the grassy area with which we are familiar, we must remember that the whole area was then unoccupied and the men who were required to repair there for training could have camped and marched anywhere.

The second building, then, was completed by 1665 and probably by 1660. Its exact location can be determined by finding the graves of Deacon William Ford and his wife, Sarah. They are buried almost directly in front of the current Parish Hall (across the street, of course). Before he died, on February 7, 1721/2, Deacon Ford requested that he be buried under the former location of the Deacon's Bench on which he had sat during the many years as the first Deacon chosen by the Church in Marshfield. Subsequent generations, reading this request, have assumed that Deacon Ford is buried under the

[118] It is also the same day that the town sent Major Josiah Winslow and Anthony Snow to Concord to settle, finally, the financial problems with Mr. Bulkeley.

present church building, but that is not the case. The third building had been built in 1706-7, and Ford died fifteen years later. [119]

This second building was, apparently, considerably larger than the first. In 1667 and in 1678 galleries were built "above the windows," indicating that the ceiling was high enough to add galleries above the windows for additional seating, and that the building was sturdy enough to carry the additional load. Since Indians and black people were mentioned in the records, it is possible that this gallery seating was specifically built for them, as was often the custom. Standing at William Ford's grave, one is led to believe that the church had its long side to the road. That is because there would not be room for a church to extend to the south from the pulpit, presuming the Deacon Bench was in front of the pulpit, at that point. However, the road was only a dirt cart path then, and could have been on the far side of what is now Ocean Street. Also, Deacon Ford's grave faces east (as do all the graves placed in that section afterward). But whether that means the pulpit faced that direction, or whether he was placed to "face the rising sun on resurrection day" will probably never be known. There was also a cart path on the north side of the church property, and apparently one on the east end, approximately across from the Parish House parking lot, the outline of which is apparent as one stands in the cemetery. This means that the church had its own square, surrounding by cart paths.

In 1670, the records mention that pews were being built. This might indicate simply that more pews were needed because the town was growing. It might also, however, mean a change in the arrangement of the building. Perhaps it also was originally arranged around the communion table, as the first one may have been, or it may have been arranged with facing benches, one side for men, one side for women. But as attendance and membership grew, it was necessary to change the arrangement to the one we are more familiar with pews facing the pulpit. These were no doubt box pews in the style of the day, and probably were furnished by the members with their own chairs or stools. The word "pew" did not refer to the bench, but to the enclosed space. In some churches, "shelf-like" seats hung on hinges and could be raised when the congregation stood for singing or prayers, and to allow family members to enter and leave the box

.

> And when at last the loud Amen
> Fell from aloft, how quickly then
> The seats fell down with heavy rattle,
> Like musketry in fiercest battle.[120]
>
> Anonymous

There must have been at least one fireplace, since Timothy Williamson, probably the member who lived closest, was paid to make the fires for services. [121]

That the windows were glazed is proved by the town records concerning the sale of the building. After the third building was built, this second one was sold for £10. Apparently someone had helped themselves to the "glass boards" in the abandoned

[119] Deacon Ford was born in 1633 and probably came to Marshfield when his father established a mill in 1653. He married Sarah Dingley, who died in 1727.
[120] Earle, *Home Life in Colonial Days,* p.369.
[121] Stoves had not yet been invented.

building, as a committee was appointed to find that person and "agree" with them – probably something like, "Bring the windows back or pay for them." Since plate glass had not yet been invented, these would have been small panes of crown glass, probably leaded together to form larger windows.

Since every piece of lumber had to be hand-cut and adzed, every shingle hand-riven, and every nail hand-smithed, the materials in a building were very valuable. The sale of this one stipulated that it must be moved from town property. It was sold to John Barker and Samuel Thomas. Since Mr. Barker was the town schoolmaster at that time, it is reasonable to think that perhaps it was to be used as a school building. A post and beam building was "modular," standard-sized and held together by pegs, and they could have totally dismantled it and rebuilt it. But more likely it was cut into manageable pieces, then, when the ground was well frozen and snow-covered, the pieces were placed on pungs or large sleds, and pulled to the new site by oxen. If Mr. Thomas owned the property across the street, perhaps that area now occupied by the smaller cemetery, (which it appears he may have), this might well be the school mentioned later as being in the same area when the British army marched through Marshfield and the children turned out to watch.

The Third Building

The third church building, built in 1706-7, was almost on the same spot as the present one. Ocean Street, then the "Neck Road," originally turned sharply right at the present church corner, then left along what is now the parking lot for the building next door to the church, then a tavern and at one time the post office. That this was the case can be easily seen by standing on the west side of the church building and looking at the houses and business along the street. The parsonage house, the old school house, and the "Cranberry" building are all oriented to the street as it was when the street was canted toward that building. A cart path on the north side of the building (behind the 1838 Church building), also apparently met the parking lot there, making a square all around the church. The present Moraine Street is described later as being a lane,[122] or only wide enough for walking or riding a horse, not a cart or wagon road. Exactly at which point it met the road is not exactly clear, but no doubt it was somewhere in the vicinity of the tavern building. The town businesses were oriented to the west of the meetinghouse, out to Main Street and up that road.

While the third building had the same "footprint" as the present building, it was arranged with the pews across the length rather than the width, so the people could be closer to the pulpit and communion table. The pulpit was on the east side, and the main door on the west side, with a second door to the south (where the door to the present building is now.) This would make the façade of the building face out to the west. If we drive from west to east toward the church today, we can picture this building facing us. There is no exact description of the orientation of this building, but it is supported by the fact that the next building definitely had that configuration.

The choice of a spot was not without controversy. As the population was increasing in the north part of the town, a movement was made to locate the new building father west a half mile, north of the South River, by the mill. This would have placed the

[122] Notes of Ebenezer Alden, Church records.

building about where the Lord Randall bookstore now stands. Since the members could not decide among themselves, referees were called from out of town. They decided that the building should be built close to the old location.[123]

This building was 44 feet by 34 feet and 18 feet "between joints."[124] Now well beyond the years of the little thatched church building, this one was surmounted by a "turrett or bellfree." The style of the day was probably to have the "turrett" in the middle of the building rather than to the front as it is today. We don't have a picture of that building, but we do have one of the church at Plymouth, which was built about twenty years earlier. It matches very closely the description of the Marshfield church, including the two doors. The Marshfield building was about six feet wider and two feet taller than the Plymouth Church.

There was a committee appointed by the town to "seat the people." At first it appears that these would be ushers, but in fact they were chosen to decide how the pews were to be assigned to each family.

> In the goodly house of worship, where in order due and fit,
> As by public vote directed, classed and ranked the people sit.
> Mistress first and good wife after, clerkly squire before the clown,
> From the brave coat lace-embroidered to the gray coat shading down.
>
> John Greenleaf Whittier.

There are no records to indicate whether the people actually paid for their pews in this building, as they did the next two, but that may have been the case. But whether they were owned or assigned, the family sat in the same place each Sunday. There may have been a pew set aside for visitors, or visitors may have been invited to sit with different families, when there was room in their pew. The minister's family sat in the front pew. These were probably "box pews," as was the style, and will be further described in the description of the fourth building.

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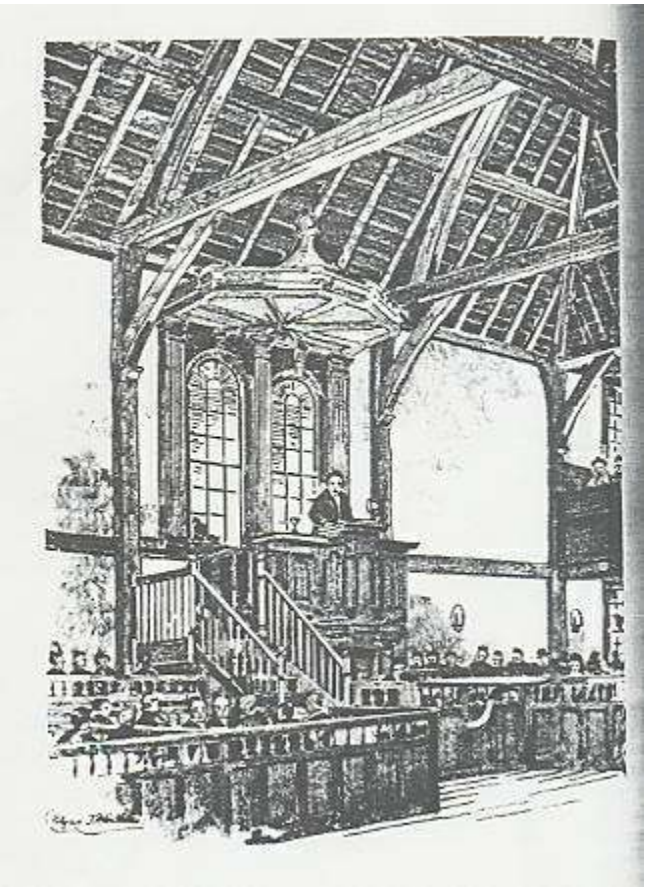
[123] From a history of the church by Rev. Ebenezer Alden. For the text, see Ashley, Linda R., *Your Affectionate Pastor,* pp. 68-74.
[124] About 36 feet tall.

This building also had a gallery, probably around three sides, for the usual use of slaves, free blacks and mulottoes, Indians, and others not invited to sit in the pews. This gallery is confirmed by the fact that it was "shored up" or strengthened to hold the larger crowds expected at several ordinations. In some churches, and perhaps here, groups of boys who considered themselves too old to sit with their families, and not yet ready to attend upon young ladies by sitting with their families, would sit together in the gallery, tended by a "tithing man" to keep them in order.

This building was apparently not heated and so probably had no chimneys. People brought their own metal box of hot coals, or heated stones, to warm their feet. The windows would have been "crown glass," cut in small squares or diamonds, since plate glass had not yet been invented.

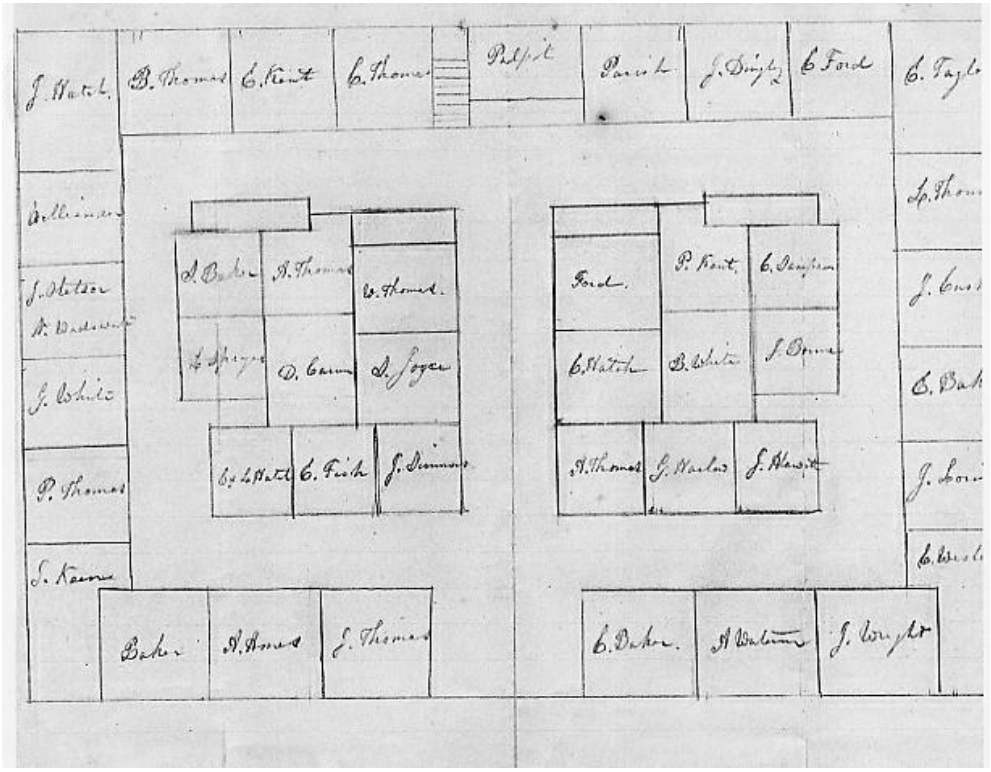
The Fourth Building

After only fifty-two years, the church building was too small to hold all the people, so in 1759 a fourth building was constructed. For a year or two, consideration had been given to cutting the existing building in two pieces and moving them apart, adding a section between them. But that seemed impractical, so the building was razed and replaced.



While we have no drawings of this building, the beautiful word picture from the poem found in Mrs. Bosworth's notebook describes an interior much like the one in this drawing of the Hingham church, though the one in Marshfield was not as large and was probably less elaborate. But the high pulpit with the window and the soundboard above, the steps leading to it, the two levels of galleries, and the ballustraded pews are all the same description.

The new building was larger, 40 X 60 feet. Below is a drawing that shows the pew assignment at the time the building was replaced by the fifth present building. The drawing shows that the sanctuary was wider than it was deep (from the front door to the pulpit), as the earlier one probably was. The figuration of pews is in the old, square, closed-box style. There are two sets of nine more-or-less square pews. In each set, one pew is almost completely surrounded by others, with just a little opening between two others to allow entry. Each of these sets is completely surrounded by an aisle, including the center aisle from the front door to the pulpit. Then around the outside wall there are twenty-four more boxes, for a total of forty-two boxes. The drawing does not show the actual seating in the boxes. The poem tells of that the pews were furnished with chairs and benches. Some may have been fitted with the hinged benches described above, allowing the people sitting in the back of the pew to be seated before the bench in front was brought down into place. Each of these pews belonged to a family, and taxes were paid yearly as with any other property, except that the money went to the upkeep of the church.



The closed boxes helped hold in the heat from the foot warmers each family provided for themselves during cold weather – metal boxes filled with coals from their fireplace. They would also help keep the small children restrained during the long services. This building was definitely not heated otherwise and probably had no chimney.

Matching the names in the pews to the deacons at the time, it does not appear that their seats were assigned particularly and people probably chose their place when they bought the pews, depending upon availability, and bought and sold them from time to time. The deacons apparently sat in the raised area around the pulpit, while their families sat in their assigned pews. It was the custom from the earliest days that the deacons faced the congregation.

The pulpit was higher than the pews, and reached by steps. The drawing of the pew arrangement shows eight, but that may not be exact. It had a soundboard above it to help project the preacher's voice.

Mrs. Bosworth said, "It was a plain building, unpainted, without steeple or bell, with galleries of the style common in those days." Other notes say that it was painted once, "stone color," perhaps during the renovations of 1818. The poem calls it "brown."

When the building was built, "there was a door on the South and on the West side." This was quite confusing, as the pew plan showed no place for a second door. However, a paper describing the renovations made in 1818 solved the puzzle. By that time, the galleries had either become dangerously weak, or there was no one sitting in them. For whatever reason, it was decided to take down the stairs, apparently two sets, and close the galleries. At the same time, the end door, where the stairs had risen toward each upper corner, was sealed off, plastered on the inside and boarded outside. Then eight new pew boxes were built on the ground floor, where the stairs and door had been. The pew plan was drawn in 1838, twenty years later. With this information, it is perfectly clear that the main door was to the west, facing out toward Pembroke, and the pulpit was on the east wall, toward the ocean. The lack of graves in what would have been the front lawn of the church confirms that configuration. When the front door became the only door, a porch was added, but there is no description of it, except that it, or perhaps only the door, was painted yellow ocre.

The bill for the renovations also mentions reshingling the roof and the front and sides, so this building was shingled rather than weather boarded.

The sale of the eight new pews brought $272.00, more than paying for the renovations at $254.31.

Sarah Bourn, in beautiful handwriting, wrote a receipt in 1822:

> Then received of Asa Waterman, Treasurer of the First Parish in Marshfield the sum of two Dollars and ninety Cents in full for my services sweeping and taking care of the Meetinghouse the year of 1821, as witness my hand.
>
> Sarah Bourn

During the long period of Church decline, the building seems to have been neglected. Mrs. Bosworth says, "Mr. Parris was in advancing years and preached in an old and unattractive building."

The Old Meeting House (1759-1838)
Anonymous (was a child about 1800)

This old brown house, in memory's book
We often on its picture look,
And scan the forms we need to know,
Which met therein long years ago.

The old square pews with balustrades,
The windows, with no softening shades,
The high backed chairs for our grandmas
And leaning boards, for our grandpas.

In each front angle too, I see,
The stairs, that led to seats then free,
And higher up, were other nes
For Afric's daughters, Afric's sons.

In our All Father's house, so fair
We read that many mansions are
Who knows but this oppressed race
May fill therein, the higher place?

In winter, 'twas a cheerless place.
No carpets did the flooring grace.
No stoves were there, with coals aglow,
To warm us, in years long ago.

What good could studied sermons do
When we sat shivering through and through,
We think the old and younger then
Oft gladly welcomed the "Amen."

Well turns a leaf, 'tis balmy June
The fields are green, the flowers in bloom
And all are in their best array
The Sabbath after election day.

The little girls come puttering n,
With snow white rocks and rosy skins
With cottage bonnets, snug and neat,
Red 'rocco shoes upon their feet.

Then stamp along the little boys,
So prone to make a louder noise.
Clad in their summer's best, I ween
Made up of blue or buff nankeen.

And following on the good mamas,
The papas and the grandpapas,
All, all were in, save half a score.
Who stops to chat, around the door.

With measured step and reverend brow,
Old Parson Shaw is entering now,
And all is hushed to silence, while
He walketh up the center aisle.

And mounts the steps, that upward led
To the desk, with sounding board o'er head.
He shuts the door, and hangs his hat –
Beside the window, where he sat.

Sancho, who trotted at his side,
Of Marshfield dogs the flower and pride,
Now takes his seat on the broad stair
To guard from harm his master there.

Who takes his book, selects the hymn,
Saying, "To God's praise, we will sing."
Then those we left about the door
Come clattering in – some half a score.

The morning matins now are aid,
The singing done, the sermon read,
Another prayer is offered, then
The benediction and "amen!"

We do not mean to lightly tell
Of those of old, we loved so well,
For we were taught respect to show
To elders, in years long ago.

And Dr. Shaw, with his white wig,
Did seem to me, almost as big
As the Great-Father up above
He taught us long to fear and love.
We thought, if wrong things we should do
He'd surely know, and tell it – too.

Softly, we'll turn the pages o'er
In memory's book, for ancient lore.
Here photographed, is many a face,
That worshipped, in this ancient place.

Much we should like to write of all
Whose features we can now recall,
And register their words of cheer,
Which fell, so kindly, on our ear.
But it would swell our simple song
And make the record quite too long.

We find full many ancient men
And ancient women, too, we ken.
The first, in small clothes we can see
With silver buckles on their knee
A few are covered with cocked up hat –
And auburn wig; to match with that.

The Younger men, then wore a queue,
What good it did, we never knew.
Yet it had a neater look, some how
Than the moustache, in fashion now.

Black bonnets, grandmas ever wore
To meeting, in the days of yore.
And hanging round the front to grace,
Was some quite pretty figured lace.

They seldom had a dress brand new
One damask silk, would last life through.
And often a previous heirloom, be
Descending to posterity.

We'd gaze on one more antique scene,
Engraved our album's lids between,
And see the audience pass away
As they did, on that distant day.

The horses to the door are led,
The black, the white, the roan, the red.
Harnessed in chairs and square topped chaise,
Not carryalls or rockaways.

The elders fill each single seat
And pack the children at their feet.
The few of vehicles in lack
Prepare to mount the horse's back.

And these we by the horse block find
Taking their better halves behind
On pillions scarlet, green, and blue
We thus the double-jaded view.

The lads and lasses move along
On feet, so lithe, so light, and strong.
They deemed not, then, that they must ride
When wearier feet walked the wayside.

I've seen the old brown fabric fall
The ancient people one and all
Are gone – and in death's quite sleep
The grassy graves their ashes keep.

And cooling seasons come and go
As in the years long, long ago.
While those, who were the children then
Are ancient women, ancient men.

Who soon will pass the parting tide,
To meet them on its spirit-side.
Where He who lights that peaceful shore
Will be their temple evermore.

[Perhaps written by Marcia Thomas, but she may have been somewhat too young.]

The Fifth Building

It was a real leap of faith to build this new church building. At the time "over this church there hung a cloud of spiritual desolation."[125] The membership was down, probably to about twenty-five adults. Yet apparently these people decided that to attract new people and encourage the growth of the church, a new building was necessary.

A committee was appointed to choose a style. After visiting several churches, they chose the plan of the First Parish Church of Pembroke. Perhaps it is more than coincidental that the Pembroke church had been designed by Alexander Parris, leading architect of his day, and nephew of the outgoing pastor, Rev. Martin Parris. He had also designed St. Paul's Church in Boston when Daniel Webster had served on the building committee, so Webster may have had some influence here also. Mr. Parris' style was "Greek Revival." Most of his buildings, then, have columns on the front. The simpler church style, used here, has artificial pilasters instead.

If they had followed the Pembroke plan exactly, the new building would have fit precisely on the old foundation. However, the Marshfield church added four feet on the north end. A visit to the Pembroke church confirms the similarities. That church does have a more elaborate wooden arrangement behind the pulpit, and over the years they have closed off the gallery with windows and extended that wall to the floor, adding space to the vestry. That steeple is also different. The Marshfield steeple was replaced after a storm toppled it in 1931, but it may not have been an exact copy before the storm.

The Congregational Association seems to have given some money for the buidling, and the pews were sold at public auction, bringing in most of the needed money.

The building committee, consisting of Proctor Bourne (who owned the building next door), Elijah Ames, and Gideon Harlow, bought a supply of pens, and after giving Rev. White his choice of one to use, sold chances on the rest, 10% down and the remainder to be paid in thirty days in cash or satisfactory security. These might have been the "new" steel nibs, but they are more likely the more expensive jeweled nibs, a luxury item when most people still used quills. They were certainly still "dip pens." Fountain pens weren't available for another fifty years.

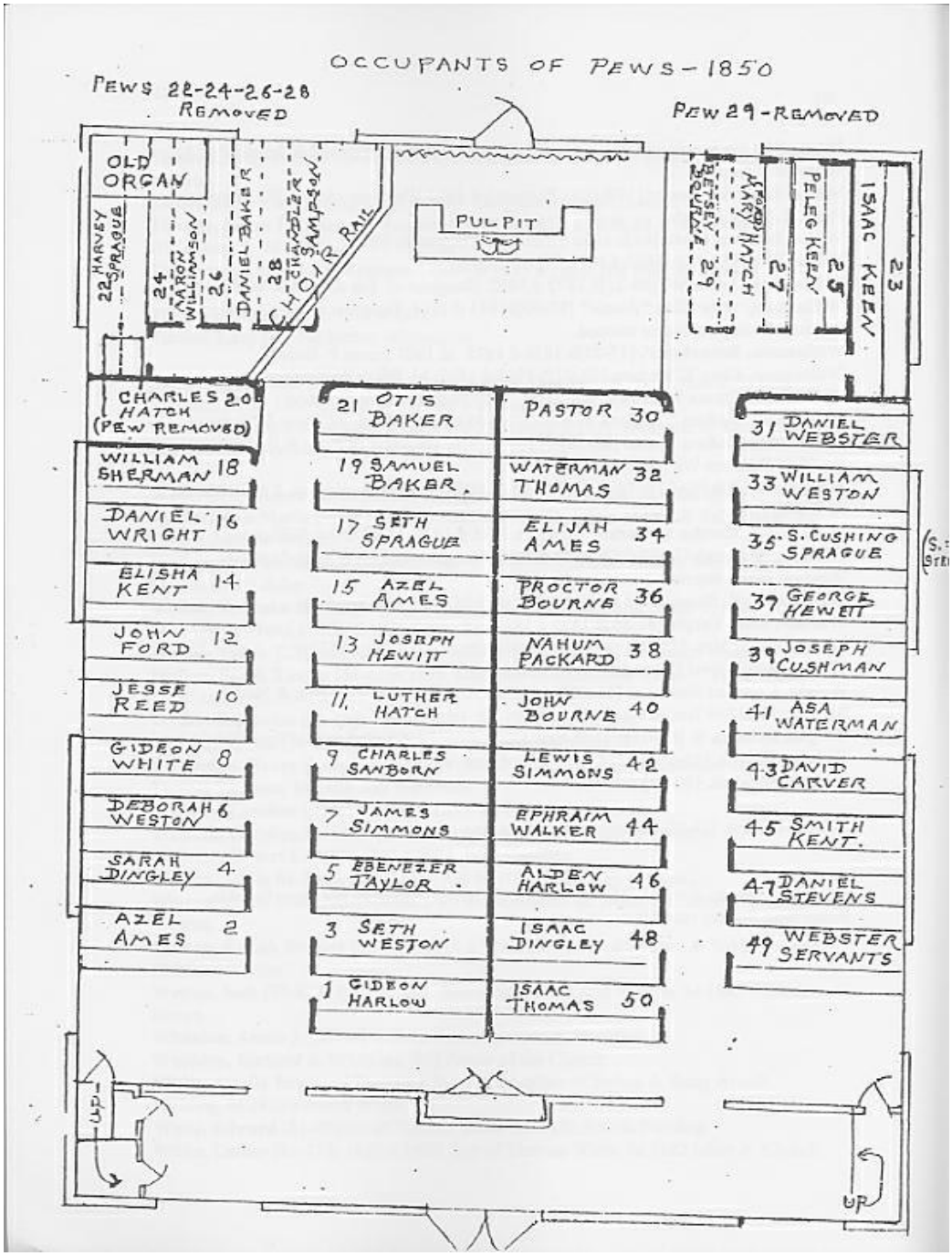
The cost of $4660.12 includes the building and fixtures, even to the oil lamps, curtains, stovepipes, and the bell rope. It does not include the cost of taking down the previous building nor buying out the previous pew owners.

The timbers from the previous building were used in this one. Lumber was still labor intensive and never wasted. Actually, some of it might have been originally used in the third building. Standard-sized posts and beams could be dismantled by pulling the pegs. Then they could be used in a similar or entirely different configuration.

There were fifty pews in the new church, eight more than in the previous one. The configuration was essentially the same as today, except there were pews on both sides of the pulpit, perpendicular to the others. As was the arrangement in the new "New England" style churches at the time, the pulpit is at one end, with the pews facing it, and arranged across the width, rather than the length of the building. This turns the orientation

[125] Bosworth, Handwritten manuscript. P.23.

of the congregation ninety degrees from previous two buildings. These are bench pews, but they were originally closed by doors on the end, again to keep in heat from foot warmers and delineate ownership.



The cost of the building included stovepipes and there is a chimney in the center of the wall behind the pulpit. There were apparently two stoves, but exactly where they were had not been determined. Some people continued to carry their coals in metal boxes on which to set their feet during the service. Families who had no coal boxes carried heated stones or bricks to church. The doors were taken off the pews when a furnace was installed early in the 20th century, so that the warm air could properly circulate and cold air would not settle in the pews.

The pews were assessed for a minimum value, with a premium added, then sold at public auction. The purchasers were:

1	Gideon Harlow	18	Jesse Reed	35	Charles Thomas
2	Azel Ames	19	Samuel Baker	36	Proctor Bourne
3	Nathaniel Pratt	20	Charles Hatch	37	Thomas Hewett
4	Azel Ames	21	Chandler Ford	38	Nahum Packard
5	Ebenezer Taylor	22	Harvey Sprague	39	Asa Waterman
6	John Baker	23	Isaac Keen	40	John Bourne, Jr.
7	James Simmons	24	Bourn Thomas	41	Daniel Webster
8	Gideon White	25	Peleg Keen	42	Lewis Simmons
9	Anthony Thomas	26	Jabez Hatch	43	David Carver, Jr.
10	Joseph Parsons	27	Consider Ford	44	Ephraim N. Walker
11	Luther Hatch	28	Chandler Sampson	45	Peleg Kent
12	Ford John, Jr.	29	Sarah Bourne	46	Molly Tolman
13	Joseph Hewett	30	Parish	47	Jabez Hatch, Jr.
14	Elisha Kent	31	Joseph A. Cushman	48	Isaac P. Dingley
15	Azel Ames	32	Waterman Thomas	49	Daniel Webster
16	Daniel Wright	33	William Weston	50	Isaac Thomas
17	Seth F. Sprague	34	Elijah Ames		

The prices ranged from Daniel Webster's $17.25 for pew 49, to be used by his servants, to $85.50 paid by Proctor Bourne for pew 36. Webster paid $71.20 for pew 41, his front row. This was about average. The Parish pew was for the use of the minister and his family, and was directly in front of the pulpit.

The pews remained in private ownership until about 1935, though many families continued to sit in "their pew." Through the years of ownership, visitors might be invited to sit with a family. Otherwise, they sat in the gallery. The pews were transferred by deed like any other property. For example:

> Know all men by these Presents that I, Franklin W. Hatch, administrator of the estate of Nancy Packard, late of Marshfield….In consideration of thirty-dollars to me paid by M. Herman Kent of Marshfield….do hereby grant, bargain sell and convey unto the said M. Herman Kent his heirs and assignees a certain pew in the First Congregational Meeting House…being a wall pew on the Easterly side of said Meeting House, and numbered thirty-seven with all the privileges and appurtenances unto the same belonging... [1888]

This building was likely the first to be lighted at all. It was generally the rule before this time not to light public buildings, to avoid the danger of fire. A Marshfield man remembered that he never saw a lamp of any kind in town until he was fifteen years old, about the time this building was built. If a meeting was held after dark, very unlikely, it was planned for a full moon. This building probably had whale oil lamps hanging from a chandelier arrangement, and probably some lamps in wall brackets. Lamps are included

in list of charges for the new building. When electricity was added in 1916, there was a large chandelier handing from a rosette in the center of the ceiling. Perhaps that rosette was there in the beginning.

It was said that this was the first painted church in town[126], and we may assume it was white. Most houses in town were not painted, and when they were, red or yellow were the colors of choice. But white was usual for the style of building, just coming into vogue.

It was originally furnished with blinds, which, in 1838, would have been wooden Venetian blinds, often painted green.

This church also has a bell in a steeple toward the front of the building, a style generally called "The New England Style Church." But it was not the first in town in that style; the North Parish church also had a steeple (though the building was not originally painted), and boasted a bell cast by Paul Revere. The bell bought for this new building, and still hanging in the steeple today, has a pattern of fish around the edge. This has a double meaning: the symbol of the early Roman church, the ichthus, and the reliance of Marshfield families upon the sea.

There is a gallery across the back. While there was probably not a regular choir, the space was reserved for choirs that sang on special occasions. The custom was for the congregation to stand, turn, and face the choir during the singing of hymns.

In front of the church was a horse block. This was a stage or block, with several steps, used by ladies in mounting and dismounting horses, when they rode side-saddle, or on pillions behind their husbands to meeting.

The church was redecorated inside in 1883, with fresco work on the wall behind the pulpit. A picture of Rev. Alden and the Sunday School, later in this book, shows the pattern. Two oil lamps in brackets were part of the arrangement. While it is not elaborate, it does show some Victorian influence. In 1916, the fresco was painted over and a door was cut behind the pulpit. The door was covered by heavy red drapery, and the old furniture, removed in 1883, was restored. That included the pulpit and the sofa still on the stage.

There originally were pews perpendicular to rest of the congregation on each side of the pulpit. Those to the right of the pulpit (left from the congregation,) were removed to make a choir space about 1887. Two of those to the left (right from the congregation,) were removed in 1994 to allow for the building of a door to accommodate a ramp for

[126] Is seems that the previous one had been painted once, "stone color."

handicap access. About the same time a cabinet was added for music storage. These were so carefully planned that they look original to the building.

A program for the "reopening of the Church," Sunday, November 5, 1916, included a notation; "Those desiring pew rentals or permanent sittings may apply to Mr. A.F. Delano at the close of the services." There were still deeded pews, and apparently some set aside for rental.

The church suffered a fire on Sunday morning, January 31, 1954. Most of the damage was confined to the front, near the pulpit. Part of the ceiling and all the windows had to be replaced (both frames, sills, and glass). By August 22, the work had been completed, and a service of rededication was held. The topic of the sermon, by Rev. George D. Hallowell, was "Except the Lord Build the House," based on Psalm 127:1. Lawrence H. Mounce was Chairman of the Board of Trustees, which also included Ernest Chander, Benjamin Ellis, John Nangle, Mrs. Ellis C. Rand, and C. Stafford Ryder. The building committee was Mr. Mounce, Chairman, Wilfred Henderson, Louis B. Handy, Helmuth Weber, August Schatz, and Russell Chandler.

Since 1838, the road in front of the church has been widened several times. The last time, during the 1990's, brought the road to within a few feet of the front door of the church. A new stonewall with steps had to be built, and those steps meet those of the church porch. It is apparent that if the road is ever widened again, the church cannot remain at its present site.

A Hymn to the Current Church Building (1838)
Anonymous

Tune: America
(Not all verses shown here)

O, God of love, draw near,
And let thy presence cheer,
    Our hearts to-day.
While we with sacred rite,
On this thrice-hallowed site,
This temple to thy might,
    Our offering lay.

Our sires assembled here
To worship in thy fear,
    Thy praise to sound.
Thy mercies to disclose,
To share each other's woes:
Here, too, their forms repose,
    'Tis holy ground.

Their altars by decay
Like them have passed away,
    To dust have gone;
And on that dust we raise
This altar to thy praise,
Accept, O God, our lays,
    Our offering own.

Here may the contrite bend,
The prayer of faith ascend
    To Heaven and bring
Rich blessings from the skies,
And fervent homage rise,
A grateful sacrifice
    To God our King.

Great God! Thy covenant sure
Through ages shall endure,
    Must ever stand;
And on this pilgrim shore
We trust till time is o-er
Their race shall thee adore,
    And own thy hand.

Thy dwellings here we love,
But to thy courts above
    Our wishes soar.
To see our Father's face,
To rest in his embrace,
And chant redeeming grace
    For evermore.

The Parsonages

The First Parsonage

The first parsonage was apparently built by Mr. Edward Bulkeley, the minister, about 1642. He was married when he arrived in Marshfield, and had two children and a step-child from his wife's previous marriage, so he needed a house. Traditionally, it stood about half a mile west of the church (then at the Winslow Cemetery location), on or near the land given by the Colony for the use of the Church.

The cost of the house may have been the cause of serious contention between the minister and the members, finally requiring the Plymouth Colony Court to send John Alden and Miles Standish to admonish the congregation to support the minister. (see the Ministry of Edward Bulkeley, above.)

Two years after he left, in December, 1661, the Town Meeting agreed that "Lieut. White[127], Ensign Eames, and John Bourne, being raters for the present year shall make a rate of 4 pounds and 10 shillings for Mr. Edward Bulkley, being the residue of the whole sum that is due from the Town of 100 pounds for the houses and lands that he sold to the Town. Final settlement was not made until 1669, almost twelve years after Mr. Bulkeley left Marshfield for Concord, when the town agreed to pay him three pounds "in corn or cattle at the latter end of the summer."

There is no description of the size or shape of this house. It was probably located near the Northeast corner of Parsonage Street and Webster Street. It continued to be used as a parsonage after Mr. Bulkeley left for Concord.

The church and the next pastor didn't agree any better regarding maintenance. To make their position clear, the Town meeting of July 6, 1663 noted:

> …the inhabitants having formerly purchased the lands and houses of Mr. Edward Bulkley for the use of a sufficientable ministry successively and so the Town meeting having possessed Mr. Samuel Arnold in the said house and lands to the said end, - and being known that the said house and land was then wanting in respect to reparations, now so it is, that the said town have agreed that some men shall be appointed to view the defect and reparations and there shall be a speedy course as to the repairing the said house and that Mr. Arnold defray the one half of the charge and the town the other half - and thus being sufficiently repaired the said Mr. Samuel Arnold is to keep them in sufficient repair so long as he shall continue and abide in the same. And further what outhousen the said Mr. Arnold shall build for his "conveniency" that is more than is now upon the land that the town shall be responsible to him or his according to the worth of it as it shall be when the said Mr. Arnold shall decease or depart the place.

In August, 1667, the Town Meeting approved covering Mr. Arnold's house (boarding and shingling); the Town to pay two-thirds and Mr. Arnold to pay one-third. The Town voted 23 pounds - 5 pounds in money and 19 pounds in corn or cattle or merchantable beef.

[127] Probably Peregrine White, born on the Mayflower in December 1621 to William and Susanna White, and step-son of Edward Winslow.

The Second Parsonage

On February 18, 1678, it was voted to record in the Court Records at Plymouth the deeds from Edward Bulkeley and later interest in said lands by "Governor Winslow and Anthony Snow." Further, "…Hereby appoint and assign the said housing and lands to be and remain to the use of the ministry of this town successively forever which was the whole accord to their intent in purchasing the same." Then they authorized Anthony Snow, Nathaniel Thomas, and Nathaniel Winslow to agree with workmen for the building [of] a house for Mr. Samuel Arnold and the use of the ministry of this town successively."

Exactly what they did with the house they had bought from Mr. Bulkeley is not determined. Perhaps it was rented and maybe torn down later. This second parsonage was on the southeast side of Parsonage Street, about half-way between Moraine and Webster Streets. It adjoined the John Dingley house, now owned by the McCracken family. That this is so can be verified by the town records, stating that the town was to build a fence between the parsonage and John Dingley.

This house must have been large. When Rev. Gardner passed away at age 40, he still had young children at home. Apparently the town did not expect his wife and children to leave the parsonage, so they arranged that his successor, Rev. Tompson, and his family would live in the west end of the house (toward Moraine Street), and presumably Mrs. Gardner lived in the east end. It was not uncommon in those days to split a house in this way. There was usually an entry with doors on each side, and also a "good morning staircase" with entrances on both side, so it was simple to divide a house for privacy.

After this house was replaced in 1749, it appears the church rented this older parsonage and farm to tenants to raise money, as it was intended to support the minister.

The church continued to own this property until 1836, when they sold the parsonage farm and meadows. Part of it was divided into lots and sold at auction. Some members of the church, including Joshua Loring, did not approve of this sale, nor of the use of the money for other purposes.

The Third Parsonage

Ebenezer Alden, in his history, says, "A new parsonage was built in 1749. It stood until 1858."[128] Since he was minister in 1858, he can be expected to know that the third parsonage was torn down in that year. This house was not on Parsonage Street, but on Webster Street, north of Parsonage, on the East side of the street, where the Prence Grant Apartments now stand. This can be identified in the Ford map of 1839, showing the home of Seneca White, then the minister.

Of course, the parsonage had a well. In 1823, Bela Lewis charged the church 75 cents for a new well bucket and 25 cents for carrying it to the parsonage and hanging it.

The same year Marshal Bessey worked four days splitting stone for the parsonage house and charged $5.75.

[128] Ashley, Linda R. *Your Affectionate Pastor,* p.72.

Though this house stood for one hundred and nine years, we could find no description of it, except that it was not in good condition. It was apparently neglected during the years of Church decline in the period between 1815 and 1835.

The Fourth Parsonage

In 1850, the church welcomed the new pastor, Ebenezer Alden, Jr., and his family by voting to build a new parsonage. The old one was over 100 years old, and since it was torn town eight years later, it may be assumed to have been in poor condition.

Land was bought for $100 from Proctor Bourne. This property was much more convenient to the church than the previous parsonages. It was also close to the post office, then located in the building next door to the church, originally the Williamson ordinary, and to a store located in the same building. The land is diagonally across the street from the church, near the corner of what is now Ocean Street and Moraine. The lot probably extended across present Ocean Street, since at that time the road was what is now the parking lot of the old post office building. The road toward Duxbury was then only a wagon road, quite narrow, and may have been closer to the house on that side, making the town green much larger than it is today.

This very attractive house, still standing in good condition, was built for about $2000, including a stable. This is a substantial investment for a very small congregation. It is possible that Rev. Alden or his father, Dr. Ebenezer Alden of Randolph, actually subsidized the building. Dr. Alden's house was beautiful and large, and he certainly would have wanted a suitable home for his son, daughter-in-law, and granddaughter.

The house was well appointed and large enough for the growing family. They moved in on December 13, 1850, when daughter Louisa was twenty months old, and she

lived there all her life. Eventually five more children were born and two of them died in the house.

Mrs. Alden loved flowers (she was one of the founders of the flower division at the Marshfield fair), so we may assume the large lawn had flowerbeds as well as attractive trees and bushes. She also kept flowers in the bay window which "was the admiration of all those who passed by."

A charming drawing by their surviving son, Edmund K. Alden, shows a child getting water from a pump[129] and another feeding a horse. There is also a large birdhouse that is probably a dovecote. The perspective of the drawing indicates that this activity was taking place on the lot now occupied by a house with a mansard roof between the parsonage house and the former school/library building. One map seems to show a pond between the house and school. The entrance to the stable, now the garage, was on the back side. Today a fence divides the lots, quite close to the parsonage house.

Edmund also remembered his father's study and the adjoining parlor, which was "seldom entered and never used except on rare occasions like a donation party."[130] Interestingly, it was also not used for the weddings that were often held in the parsonage, as Edmund says they were held in the sitting room. Rev. Alden's daughter[131] said he solemnized more than 250 marriages in Marshfield, many of them for the children of those he had previously married.[132]

While there were fireplaces for heat, in contrast to the previous parsonages this house had a cook stove rather than a fireplace for cooking, and perhaps a heating stove or two. It was lighted by kerosene lamps[133] and occasionally by whale oil.

This was the only family that ever used this house as a parsonage. In 1883, two years before his retirement, Rev. Alden bought the house, and lived there until his death in 1899. At the same time, he bought two adjoining pieces of land, the largest one about one quarter acre. He and Mrs. Alden then modernized the house, probably by installing some conveniences such as plumbing.[134] Their daughter, Louisa, and her husband, Horatio Sprague, inherited the property, and left it to their daughter, Edith Sprague. She lived there until her death in 1969.

In his sermon after twenty-five years at Marshfield, Rev. Alden said, "A good parsonage goes far to make a good pastor. It certainly goes far to make long pastorates."[135]

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[129] City water was not available in Marshfield until 1925.

[130] These were parties where missionaries, abolitionists, or temperance speakers, etc., gave a presentation about their work and then "passed the hat."

[131] Ashley, Linda R., *Your Affectionate Pastor.* p.75-79.

[132] There were apparently no “Church weddings” until after 1900. The Alden daughters were married in the parsonage.

[133] Kerosene was patented as a trade name in 1859, though it had been used as "rock oil" or "coal oil" somewhat earlier. It took the place of whale oil when the latter became more expensive due to the growing scarcity of whales.

[134] As noted above, the water would still have been from the well.

[135] Old Colony Memorial, ND, 1875, p.6.

The Fifth Parsonage

With the money received from Rev. Alden for "the old manse," the church bought from Warren and Eliza W. Kent another house, about a quarter of a mile farther west of the church. The church paid $2300 for the property. At its deepest point, the lot was 370 feet from the road.

That house, still standing, is on a hill above the junction of Main Street and Ocean Street, across from Veteran's Park, then the mill. At the time it was bought, it was on a corner, since Plain Street, now going west from that point, had not been built. The "new road," according to the deed, had been laid out, called "Ocean Street." Those traveling from Marshfield west toward Pembroke turned right at that corner, crossed the South River on the bridge, then turned left onto Old Plain Street. In the Ford map of 1838, there is a road there, with only a small jog. It appears this may have been a foot or horse path, but probably without a bridge where the South River crosses, so wagons or buggies had to follow the road across the bridge.

Rev. Whidden began his ministry in 1885. Apparently he and his family lived in part of another house in town until the Kent house was purchased later in the same year. The Ladies' Benevolent Society noted, "We met all day at Mr. Whidden's and put their rooms in readiness for his coming."[136]

This parsonage served until 1989. The last minister to live there was Rev. Robert Jackson, who was not married at that time. The last minister with children to live there was of Rev. William Cox.

This parsonage was sold in 1986 for $350,000, a remarkable growth in value in almost exactly one hundred years. Part of the money was used to build the new parsonage, part was used for repairs to the church building and parish house, and part was added to the endowment of the Church.

[136] Ashley, Linda R., *The Ladies' Benevolent Society,* p39.

The Sixth Parsonage

After more than one hundred years, the parsonage at Ocean and Main Streets needed extensive remodeling and repair. It was decided to sell that property and build a new parsonage.

The site chosen was two miles east of the church, on the front of the property occupied by Winslow Village, the senior citizen's apartment complex administered by the church.

The house is an attractive colonial style. There are three bedrooms, but two more could be added. There are two and one-half baths and an upstairs laundry. There is also plenty of closet space, a full basement, and a double garage.

Rev. Robert Jackson and his wife, Carolyn, are the first to occupy the house. They invite the church family to join them for an open house each January, and share their home for other church functions. New members classes, youth meetings, and confirmation classes may be held there. And all manner of church property and paraphernalia has found its way into storage in the garage.

Parish Hall

The front and oldest part of the current parish hall was built in 1850. The original name was "Concert Hall," and it was built to serve as a cultural center for the town, and a meeting place or the Ladies' Benevolent Society and perhaps other organizations.

At that time, though most of the members of the Benevolent Society were also members of the First Parish Church, it certainly was not limited to that Church, nor was membership limited to ladies. Several men were at least associate members, and some were working members. Of the names listed below, those who actually contributed or invested in the building, all were either members of the Society, or their wives or daughters were members.

To build the building, shares of ownership were sold. It appears that those marked "Given" donated their shares to the Benevolent Society. Those marked "Bought" received a portion of the receipts of concerts and lectures and perhaps rent until they were repaid.

Joseph Hewett	2 shares	(not shown)
Asa Waterman	2 shares	Given
Nahum Packard	2 shares	Given
Seth F. Sprague	2 shares	Given
John Bourne	1 share	Given
Elijah Ames, Jr.	1 share	Given
Elijah Ames	2 shares	Given
Proctor Bourne	1 share	Given
Alden Harlow	1 share	Given
Lewis Simmons	1 share	Given
Joseph P.Cushman	1 share given, 1 bought	
Elizabeth & Lois Ames	2 shares	Given
Chandler Sampson	1 share	Given
Rebecca Ford	1 share	Given
Harvey Sprague	1 share	Bought
Waterman Thomas	1 share	Given
Ladies Benevolent Society	1 share	
First Congregational Church	3 shares	

This building was located on the town green, directly in front of the church. It was a substantial building, designed to match the church in style. Originally it was on a simple foundation and close to the ground.

The Church paid the "Proprietors" $5 per year to rent the Parish Hall for Church meetings.

In 1876, the town of Marshfield decided to build Centennial Street, diagonally from the corner of Moraine and Snow Streets to Ocean Street to the east. The Concert Hall was moved, with the cost paid by the Benevolent Society, to the current location. At that time, the ladies decided to add more space by setting it above a basement. This basement room was used for cooking meals to be served upstairs. A narrow staircase was

added beside the front door. They did not add a well at this time, so all water for cooking and washing dishes had to be carried from the parsonage.

This view shows the church building, the post office, and Centennial Street, ca 1900. The "Chapel," now Parish Hall, is out of view to the right.

At the same time, the ladies added a sewing room to the back. This section is now divided into two offices and a hallway.

The basement room proved to be too close to the water table and stayed damp. The ladies decided to raise the basement floor three feet, which meant that the entire building had to be raised equally. The sewing room was not raised, explaining the difference in rooflines today.

They originally budgeted $50 for that purpose. Even considering the cost of building then that seems quite optimistic, and it turned out to be so. The men were willing to work, but money was not forthcoming. The original foundation, however, had been good cut stone. F.T. Ewell, brick and stonemason, agreed to rebuild the foundation for $55 if he could have the stone and replace it with brick. They paid him $30 in advance and promised him the stone. Luther White, builder, charged $82 for his work. They paid him $35 in advance. The total cost for all the work done to the building was $236.23.

In March the men gathered and completed the work. By late November they were able to pay the remaining amounts to Mr. Ewell and Mr. White. Some of the "gentlemen...have contributed about $30..., and others have willingly given their work and time to the cause. Otherwise the ladies have been responsible for the entire amount and…we are happy to announce that the whole is paid and we can commence our new year free from debt."

A new addition in 1957 added the section at the back, perpendicular to the original buildings of the Parish Hall. The Fellowship Hall, with a stage and a kitchen, was the main feature. At this time the Sunday School had 200 in attendance each Sunday and needed the additional space, and the membership of the church had outgrown the Parish Hall which could no longer hold all those who would attend church dinners and other functions. This addition was dedicated September 8, 1957.

Parish Hall

Two views of the Parish Hall. The building to the left is the original "Concert Hall," later called the "Chapel." It was built in 1850 and moved to this location in 1876. The lower section is the "sewing room." The longer section is the Fellowship Hall and Sunday School, added in 1957.

Organizations

Ladies' Benevolent Society

During the first two hundred years of the Church, benevolence was not a priority. The town assisted of the citizens who, through "no fault of their own" needed assistance. This included those who were wounded in war, widows, orphans, and the elderly. The general feeling, however, was that misfortune was the result of sin, and it was not wise to interfere with God's punishments. Families who did not provide for themselves were "warned out" of town. That attitude began to change about the time of the American Revolution.

The place of women also began to change. As the country became independent, women also began to claim more independence. They began to seek fulfillment and recreation outside their homes.

By the 1840's, the Christian Churches, and particularly the Congregational Churches, took leadership in social change. This was the beginning of the great missionary movements – sending young people, both men and women, to the "ends of the earth" to carry the gospel to the "benighted." Abolition of slavery and the temperance movement were great concerns.

All these threads came together in the establishment of the Ladies' organizations such as the Ladies' Benevolent Society in Marshfield.

This Society was established in 1848 and continues today, making it the oldest social organization in the town.

At the tenth anniversary of the Society in 1859, Sarah Sampson Bessey Thomas spoke these beautiful words, indicating the difficulties faced during the early years, and testifying to her support of the society. It is almost as if she is speaking to us:

> While we can barely find words to express the thankful feelings we owe our Pastor, we can hardly report the feelings of regret (I might say blame) at the indifference, yea even contempt, shown to us by (even) members of the church which we think should be always ready and willing to aid every good cause.
>
> Some, we are aware, are bitter enemies of such societies, and think that no good comes from them, but we must claim the privilege to differ very widely from them. Having been a working member from the commencement of the formation of this society, I can heartily approve of it as a society to do good, and must say that if evils have arisen from it, I have not been able to see it. We have only to provide the different letters of thanks which have been received to cause our hearts to swell, our bosoms to heave, and a tear to moisten our eye, while thanks go up to the Heavenly Father that we have been willing to lay aside our own worldly affairs (perhaps at a great effort) and work for the poor, the sick, the widow, and the orphan, while the mission of extending the kindness of Christ has not been forgotten.
>
> And can we, do we wish to, forget the gushing tears of warm gratitude which we have seen flow from the eyes of the poor but not forgotten widow? It is among our happiest recollection and one that we believe will go with us to the end of our lives.
>
> I wish to leave my testimony in favor of what has been done thus far, with a longing desire that the film may be removed from their eyes and a glowing warmth of benevolence may spring up in other hearts, so that many that now stand aloof may become warm advocates and supporters of this good cause.
>
> I have been induced to record my feelings here, that in after times, others may know the value I set upon it, and feeling that time with me may be short and if deprived of the use of a pen, I leave this as my last testimony, sincerely believing that there are many recollections of it which will go with me the other side of the river.

There was no full-time minister of the Church when the society was founded, but Rev. Farnham, the interim minister, supported the plan, though his wife was ill and could not participate. Alathia Simmons Cushman was the first president and probably first suggested that the ladies of the community come together for the purpose of assisting the poor and those with no one else to turn to.

The society was not limited to the First (or South) Parish, but invited women from throughout the community. Men could also be members, either "working members" (only one or two) or "paying members" (several) who paid dues and helped out as needed.

The first major undertaking was the "Concert Hall." This was to be a meeting place for the society and also a hall where concerts, lectures, and meetings could be held for the benefit of the community. This building is now the front section of the Parish Hall.[137]

One of the most poignant stories to be found in the archives of the Benevolent Society is that of Harriett Parsons. In 1849, soon after the society was founded, the ladies voted "to bestow five dollars on a widow lady who with feeble health is striving to support herself and children." That gift prompted this beautiful letter of gratitude"

Marshfield, June 20th, 1849

Dear Friends:

It is in vain for me to attempt to describe to you with what feelings I now write. Pen, paper, and language eve, will fail to convey but a faint idea to your minds of the gratitude I feel towards you for your most generous gifts to me. There is no one that can feel the true value of such presents as I have received through your bounty but those placed in such circumstances. Destitute, as it were, with two little children dependent on your exertions for support, when you have not the means of providing even a home for them, or of procuring for them the necessities of life, bearing into consideration the small remuneration a woman receives for her labours, though she toil early and late; finding all your efforts fail to procure the comforts of life; feeling too your strength failing and with that your anxieties increasing.

It is then you look upon your children, your only earthly treasure, and tremble for the future. Even hope will often be obscured by the dark cloud of distrust, and faith in the widows' previous promises is almost obscured by the dark clouds of adversity. "I," say you, "can imagine," but you can never know but by experience. I say this not to murmur at the dealings of God with me. He has done perfectly right and I have reason continually to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all his benefits." But I saw it to give you some faint idea of the benefits you have conferred upon me through your kindness. May your little society be richly blessed, your labours of love richly rewarded. I feel there is but one that is sufficiently able to reward you. That He may, shall be the sincere prayer of your unworthy but grateful friend.

This letter warranted some research. It was apparent that Mrs. Parsons was educated far above most women of her time, yet her situation was obviously desperate. It happens that she was the daughter of Jesse Reed, one of the leaders of the Church. When the current building was built, her father and her husband both bought pews in the new building.[138] Her father owned the lovely home on Old Plain Street, known now as the Reed House, and it was there that she grew up. Her father is known now as the inventor

[137] See "Parish Hall" description under "Buildings."

[138] By 1850, her father had sold the pew he had owned near the front (18), and had apparently bought the one previously owned by his son-in-law and daughter (10).

of the cut nail. Her husband, Joseph Parsons, was a cordwainer, or maker of fine shoes and boots of Cordovan leather. No doubt they had a good income and were prospering.

But adversity had struck the family hard in ten years. Her mother had died. Her father had made some bad investments and had lost his home. After an illness describes as a withering of the limbs, her husband died. And, as she notes, women were not paid much for their efforts. There was no personal life insurance. There was no social security or aid to dependent children, as so she sank into poverty. Within a year Harriett Reed Parsons died. Her daughter is said to have married very young and moved to Maine. The son, Joseph, Jr., was taken in by the Capt. Samuel Baker family, an ancestor of Esther Baker Costello, who raised him to be a mariner.

Within a few years, Jesse Reed recovered his finances and built the large home on Main Street at the beginning of South River Street, across from the Fair Grounds. He remarried and raised another large family. Joseph Parsons did not serve in the Civil War. Perhaps his grandfather paid his commutation fee.

It would be impossible to tell all the stories that reflect the work of the Benevolent Society. But for over 150 years they have sewed, held fairs, cooked, and worked to benefit the poor and less fortunate in Marshfield and across the country, in peacetime and in war. In recent years, it has become more difficult to attract new members, since so many young women work outside the home now. Women continue to contribute to good causes, but prefer to do it with cash since time is now so limited.

Ladies' Benevolent Society, ca 1901

The mission of the Ladies' Benevolent Society:

> In consideration of the wants of multitudes of our fellow beings, who from inability to supply their wants are reduced to distress and suffering, we have been led to inquire if we are going all that sympathy for the afflicted would prompt, or, if of the ability and means which God has so freely given us, we as stewards of His bounty, are keeping inviolate those commands which require us, when seeing our brother have need, "to shut not our bowels of compassion from him" not simply bid him "be warmed, clothed and filled" while we provide not those things which are needful to life, health, and comfort, but to abide by that rule which bids us do to others as we in like circumstances would have others do to us.
>
> Feeling that by the united labours of our hands we might better aid the destitute, we have formed ourselves into a Society for aid in the prosecution of our object.
>
> The society shall be called the South Marshfield Benevolent Sewing Society.[139]

Women's Mission Study Circle

The Women's Missionary Society began on December 29, 1875. Twenty-one women of the church met as part of the Woman's Board of Missions, Boston. The membership dues were 52 cents a year – a penny a week. The object was the "collection of money for missionary purposes and the cultivation of a missionary spirit among its members. In 1912, the name was changed to "Mission Study Band." In 1926, the missionary efforts of the men and the women of the church was combined into the same organization, and the Boston organization, after fifty years, ceased to exist. In 1931 the organization became an Auxiliary to the Pilgrim District, Dept. of Women's Work of the Massachusetts Congregational Conference and Missionary Society. Dues were raised to $1.00 per year and the name Women's Mission Study Circle was adopted.

The first meetings were held in the Chapel (now the Parish Hall) and occasionally joint meetings were held with the Ladies' Benevolent Society and the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Rev. and Mrs. Gross opened the parsonage for meetings in 1909 and 1910, and offered musical entertainment and programs to the group. In 1911, Mrs. Sally Ford invited the circle to make her home their permanent meeting place. Except for special occasions, they met there until her death nine years later.

Special meetings were held on the Regional, District, and State levels, including meetings at the Congregational House, 14 Beacon Street, Boston.

In the beginning, the meetings were all business, but later simple refreshments like home-made candy and cookies were served. Still later, a social period was added, with sandwiches and tea. For several years members who lived at Brant Rock delighted the Circle with a delectable lobster salad luncheon.

The circle supported mission work of the church at home and overseas. In the beginning there was a "penny collection," literally providing 24 cents, or 43 cents, etc. One year they sent $2.00 to Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, where this author's father attended high school and college. Their interest would have been in the fact that this was the first integrated college in Kentucky, founded during reconstruction for the education of black and "mountain white" students.

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[139] For an extensive history of the Society, based on original records, see Ashley, Linda, *The Ladies' Benevolent Society, the First Seventy-five Years.*

In 1947, a guest gave a check for $50, requesting that it be given to the "aid of the Jews in Europe," part of the post-war Reconstruction and Rehabilitation work of the Congregational Church.

For many years, the ladies packed boxes for shipment to many areas of this country and overseas, but in 1940 they concluded that while money is less personal, it is more practical, so thereafter most donations were made in cash.

King Philathea Bible Class

This group was organized in April 1939, by Mrs. Mildred King. It received a charter from the Massachusetts Baraca-Philathea organization, part of a World-Wide Union.

Initially it met before the regular church service on Sunday Mornings, and later in members' homes. The motto was, "Win the one next to you." The slogan was, "We do things." The Text was Phillipians 4:13, "I can do all things though Christ which strengtheneth me."

Through the years the class donated the Cross that hangs over the pulpit; a Communion Set of silver plates, glasses, linen cloth, and napkins; collection plates, and Bibles for the Church School. They contributed to church repairs and to the parsonage. At Christmas they provided decorations and wreaths for the doors and windows.

"The Upper Room" devotional guide was mailed to friends, and shut-ins and sick were remembered with plants and gifts.

The members gradually decreased in numbers until, with regret, the members voted to disband on November 14, 1974.

Sunday School and Youth

Sunday School:

The Sunday School at the First Parish Church began during the pastorate of Rev. Martin Parris. Before becoming a minister after age 50, he had been a teacher and administrator of an academy in Duxbury, and education was his best strength.

Ironically, the Sunday School movement began in England, not entirely as a means of Christian education for children, but as a way to educate the children who were working six days a week and could not attend school. While Sunday School did give the teachers an opportunity to impart Christian teachings and morals (as did all schools at that time), the main purpose was to teach reading and writing and basic mathematics. As the idea spread to America, this purpose was continued in the cities where there was child labor. But in Marshfield and most smaller communities Sunday School basically took the form we recognize today.

As is often the case, the ladies of the church first formed the "Female Charitable Education Society" to promote the Sunday School. The men then followed by establishing their own society, dated May, 1822, which:

> …shall take the name of the male assisting education society. The object of the Society shall be to assist the Female Charitable Education Society in the 1st Parish in Marshfield. We, the undersigned, desirous to promote the spiritual and temporal good of the rising generation do form ourselves into a Society in aid of the female society for promoting instruction in the Sabbath School…

Martin Parris	Frances Gray Ford	Isaac Dingley
Anthony Thomas	Jesse Reed	Azel Ames
Elijah Ames	Waterman Thomas	Elisha Kent
Ebeneser Fish	Eleazer Harlow	Gideon Harlow
Gideon White	Peleg Thomas Ford	Joseph Phillips Cushman

There is, unfortunately, no list of the women involved.

There was a Sabbath School Library in existence, presumably in "The Chapel" (Current Parish Hall) by 1884. In that year, they published a catalog of the 180 books, all suitable reading for young people. Titles include, *The Academy Boys in Camp, Uphill Paths, The Belles of Dumbarton, Ruthie's Venture, Orphan Anne, Rebecca, the Jewess, and My Dog Rover.* A little pamphlet, still in the old records, is a first print of "Early Care, A Heavenly Discipline," by Harriet Beecher Stowe. It is in almost perfect condition, though it must be about 120 years old.[140]

[140] The copy is not dated. The Library of Congress entry also shows no date.

It is not possible to list all those who have served as Sunday School Superintendents and teachers through the years. However, some of those who have served as Superintendent are: Esther Snow, Mrs. C.B. Doub, George Dugan, John "Buddy" Nangle, Alice Chandler, Giselle Coville, Nancy Hicks, Trudy Bennett, and Edward Hicks (Current).

Rev. Ebenezer Alden and the Sunday School. If the child on his left is Edith Alden Sprague, his grandchild, as identified on the back of the photograph, then he had already retired and was serving as Pastor Emeritus. The pulpit has been removed for this special, but unidentified occasion. The pattern on the wall was a fresco. The lamps were oil, as it was more than twenty years before electricity was installed. The top shutters were usually kept closed, and the white curtains probably hung in all the windows, having been made by the Ladies' Benevolent Society.

When "Bud" Nangle retired as Supt. of the Sunday School in 1957, the newspaper reported that there were 250 Children enrolled. Arthur Hart was Chairman of the Diaconate at this time

Arthur Hart and John "Buddy" Nangle, Jr.
1957

In 1967, there were 32 teachers and helpers in the Sunday School. One Sunday School class attended the regular Church service each Sunday. The Senior and Junior High Classes attended Church on Communion Sundays. There were so many children in attendance, that they considered double sessions or "more drastic measures."

George Dugan was Superintendent of the Sunday School, Daniel Pearce was Youth Director of the Church, and Mary Vickers was Secretary. Ruth Sinnott kept the Cradle Roll, with 56 children under three years old on the list.

Today there are 122 children and infants enrolled. Edward C. Hicks is the Sunday School Superintendent and his son, Adam Hicks, is Assistant Superintendent. Teachers are:

Nursery	Gail Tellier, Aleshia Ellingson
Preschool	Kristen Kennedy, Allison Coville
Kindergarten	Sara Hicks, Lindsay Sproul
First Grade	Casey Ochiltree, Amanda Lovell, Melissa Mafio
Second/Third	Pam Mackey, Erica Delaney
Fourth/Fifth	Alicia Blaisdell-Bannon, Katie McCue
Sixth	Michael Rydberg, Michael Lane
Seventh	Nancy Hicks, Georgia Chrisman
Eighth	Frank Wilkins
Young Adults	William Kite

Youth Group

About 1870, a group of young people in the church formed a Youth Prayer Meeting, held during the week. This was probably led by Rev. Alden's own children, three daughters and a son. During the pastorate of Richard Whidden, this group combined with another into the Christian Endeavor. There were both Junior and Senior Groups. The Junior members were between six and fifteen years of age; the Seniors over fifteen.

The Christian Endeavor Youth Movement was a national organization. It still exists and is now worldwide, though this church is no longer affiliated.

The Secretaries of the early "CE" kept minutes of their meetings. These not only chronicle their interests and work, but give us insight into the young people of the times. Consider the entry for July 27, 1905, for example:

> A special business meeting was held at the close of the prayer meeting to consider what steps should be taken toward repairing the damage done to the carpet of the Chapel parlor at a recent social. It was voted to send a letter to the president of the Ladies' Benevolent Society stating their regret at the accident, and, also, meanwhile to repair the damage.

PLEDGE

To please my Savior, consecrate myself to His service, and help others to be Christians, I freely enter into the following covenant with Him and with the other members of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. I will support in every way possible the Young People's Meetings, and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, I promise that I will try to do whatever He would like to have me; I will pray to Him and take the Bible as my guide, and just so far as I know how throughout my whole life I will try to lead a Christian life.

> December 25, 1911: A short business meeting was held after the regular service. The name of Eleanora Bonney was proposed for active membership and those of Charles Simmons, William Bonney, and William Johnstone for associate membership. A letter from the Union was read, asking for a contribution for a New Year's gift for Archie W. Nelson, retired president of Plymouth Local Union. It was suggested that as many as were willing should pay ten cents toward the gift and a collection was taken. Attendance 41.

Surely we would not be able to get forty-one teenagers to attend a meeting after church on Christmas Day.

The young people made money in many different ways:

> Aug. 21-23, 1912: The Tent was conducted at the Marshfield Fair, as had been previously planned. The following were offered for sale – chick and ham sandwiches, hot frankfurts, confectionery, moxie, tonics, hot coffee, tea, ice cream, pop-corn, and peanuts. Many of the Endeavorers gave much of their time and strength to make this Tent a success. Those deserving special mention being Willard Nights, Walter Seaverns, Hobart Morgan, and Mrs. Eldon Bailey. About twenty-five dollars were realized.

In January 1913, the young people voted to pay for the installation of a telephone for Mrs. Barstow. In December they voted to pay for it for another year.

In January 1915, the Endeavor asked the church for permission to install lights in the chapel (Parish Hall). This was accomplished by May 16, when they were used for the first time. "The money for the lights was solicited by members of the society."

We have been unable to find records that fully document the youth groups through the years. It can only be said that many young people in Marshfield through the years have benefited from the experience of attending the meetings on Sunday evenings, the leadership of fine adults and other young people, and the many activities.

Today between eighty and one hundred young people attend youth meetings on Sunday evenings and enjoy retreats and other activities throughout the year.

While the early Church members would no doubt be surprised, the youth groups sponsor dances at the Parish Hall on Friday nights throughout the school year. These not only provide a safe and wholesome activity for Marshfield teens, they are also a source of income to be used for other activities.

There have been many Youth Directors and it would be impossible to name them all. Among them have been: Cliff Thayer, Dan Pierce, George Abssambra, Kendrick Williams, Frank Blackington, Art Chesney, Bob Simmons, John "Buddy" Nangle, Doug Cox, Holly and Kempton Pierce, Alex Brough, Eric Struble, Bill and Margo Kite, Sandy and Ian Millen, and Nancy and Ed Hicks. The current leaders are David and Kristina Kaiser.

Karl Barth, the great Swiss theologian, asked in a graduate class for the most profound Christian truth, simply replied,
"Jesus loves me, this I know: For the Bible tell me so."

Music

"We refreshed ourselves with the singing of psalms making a joyful melody in our hearts as well as with the voice, there being many in our congregation very expert in music, and indeed it was the sweetest music that mine ears ever heard." This was the remembrance of our own Edward Winslow, expressing the love the Pilgrims had for the music of the Church.

The Pilgrims brought with them on the Mayflower the *Ainsworth Psalter.* This was their own book, published for them in 1612 by Henry Ainsworth, a non-conformist clergyman and Hebrew scholar.

The *Ainsworth Psalter* contains 39 tunes, melodies only, notated in diamond-shaped notes. There are 150 psalms, each set into one of sixteen meters. The person choosing the music to be sung chose a psalm and then a tune with the same meter.

Since there were not enough copies of the *Psalter* for each person in the congregation, one person, either the minister or a song leader, "lined" the psalm by singing a phrase that was then repeated by the congregation.

The churches in Plymouth Colony used the *Ainsworth Psalter* until the colony combined with Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1692 to form Massachusetts. Then the S*ternhold and Hopkins Psalter* was commonly used until the publication of the *Bay Psalm Book* in 1698. That was the first book printed in the English colonies in North America. It was used for over 100 years in all New England churches, and even in Britain.

Beginning in the late 1600's, a few hymns began to appear, though the deviation from the Psalms was not immediately accepted. But the period following became known as the "Century of the Divine Songs." Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley, among others, wrote many of the great hymns of the Church, and eventually the Congregational Churches adopted hymnals in addition to psalters. It was the dissenting churches, such as the Congregationalists and the Methodists, who led the development of hymn singing. The Church of England and the Roman Catholics did not participate until late in the 1800's.

Congregational singing increased as the public became more literate and services tended more toward inspiration, so that eventually hymns and choirs became leading elements in the services.

From about 1800, choirs at this church were organized for special occasions, such as the installation of a new minister and the dedication of the church building. Asa Waterman was paid $5 for organizing a choir for the dedication of the fifth (current) building in 1838. However, there probably was not a regular choir until after the Civil War, and then only from time to time. Then Mrs. Annie Whidden arrived with her husband, who became minister in 1885. Mrs. Whidden had several small children and more arrived while she was in Marshfield. Like all mothers of the time, she had no plumbing or electricity, nor easy transportation to the church. Yet she took as her duty the organization of a choir. At her request a "choir loft" was built in the front corner of the building. As far as is known, there has been a choir continuously since Mrs. Whidden organized it.

The Christian Endeavor group had a choir that regularly performed at special events and church services around 1912, and there have been children's choirs since about the same time.

There have been many choir directors over the years. They have included:

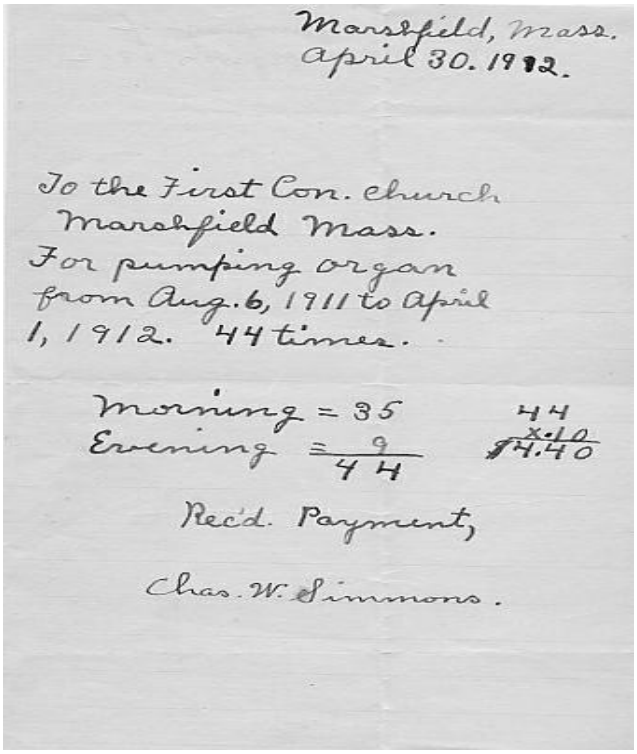
Grace Ryder
Annie Doble
Rev. William Cox
Helen Burgess
Jon Chandler
Holly Pierce
Anne Phillips
Luwen Huang (Current)

The Bell Choir was named in honor of Arthur Hart, Head Deacon and Chairman of the Church's 350th anniversary planning committee, when he passed away in August, 1981. The bells used by the choir were given by his memorial fund. His wife, Virginia Hart, and his daughter, Cheryl Hart Strazdes, have been enthusiastic supporters of the Bell Choir and are talented bell ringers. There are usually eight to ten members of the Bell Choir and their performances are appreciated throughout the year, particularly on the holidays.

While the early congregations probably had a pitchpipe, the first musical instrument in a church in Marshfield was probably used in the fourth building. This was a bass viol. It is mentioned several times in the records. One reference is dated "April the 10, 1813:

> The subscriber wishes to no [sic] what he shall do with the bas vial as he is agoin [to] move out of town very soon + wishes to no if the parish will consider him as in the repares of the same which he has latley [sic] made. A new set of stings 2-18.
>
> I expect to attend this meeting & will have the same if requested.
>
> Yours to serve
> Cyrus White.
>
> On the back – voted to allow the within account.

During the Alden ministry, beginning in 1850, there was a melodeon in the building. It was perhaps the same one his parents had shipped to him as Iowa as a gift when he was a missionary there, but it may have been a larger one bought for the church. A "pump" organ was added in the late 1800's. Little boys were paid to "pump" the organ, since the church had no electricity until 1916.



Marshfield, Mass.
April 30. 1912.

To the First Con. church
Marshfield Mass.
For pumping organ
from Aug. 6, 1911 to April
1, 1912. 44 times.

Morning = 35
Evening = 9
44

44
x.10
$4.40

Rec'd. Payment,

Chas. W. Simmons.

Sometime, probably soon after 1916, a new organ was installed in the building. This instrument was used until it was destroyed by the fire of 1954. In the fall of that same year, the current organ was dedicated in the rebuilt sanctuary. Ernest A. Chandler, Jr., the organist today, researched instruments and recommended the Holbrook Organ. It is a five rank pipe organ. The pipes were installed in the loft or gallery of the building, and the console installed facing the congregation from the side.

The organ was paid for by an organ fund, separate from the rebuilding fund, that had fortuitously been begun before the fire, as the previous organ was showing signs of its advanced age. About 150 individuals and families contributed. While there were a few donations of $100, most were modest gifts of $5 to $20, yet together they were able to purchase a fine instrument. In the early 1990's a second organ fund drive allowed the instrument to be repaired and upgraded, and a repair fund established. This fund was almost ten times the original cost of the instrument, demonstrating the greatly increased cost of pipe organs over the years.

Organists have included:

David Brown (father of Grace Ryder)
Grace P. Hatch
Edward P. Cole
Annie J. Stevens (56 years)
Pauline "Polly" P. Brett
Ernest Chandler, Jr. (Current, for over 40 years).

An unidentified service before the fire. The organist is Miss Annie J. Stevens, and the soloist is Mrs. Grave Ryder.

When Miss Annie Stevens retired, the church gave an afternoon tea in her honor. She was presented a "lovely corsage of red and pink roses with stephanotis and the well wishes of her large circle of friends."

"On behalf of the church members and friends, Lawrence Mounce, chairman of the trustees, presented [her] with a lovely cascade bouquet of red roses, pin carnations and stephanotis. Tied to each streamer of ribbon was a dollar bill, representing her years of service." Those who presided at the tea table and served as hostesses included:

Miss Edith Sprague, Mrs. Grace Ryder, Mrs. Fred Roberts, Mrs. John M. Nangle, Jr., Mrs. Ruth Shattuck, Miss Helen Peterson, Mrs. Clyde Gates, and Miss Rosella Ames. [141]

A BOUQUET FOR SERVICE honoring her retirement a
ter 56 years as organist of the Marshfield First Congreg
tional Church, is presented Miss Annie J. Stevens by La
rence Mounce, chairman of the board of trustees.

[141] Undated or identified newspaper article, probably *Marshfield Mariner*.

Current Church Officers, Board, and Committees

Church Officers:

Clerk	Trudy Bennett
Financial Secretary	Jean Hight
Assoc. Financial Sec.	Audrey Taylor
Moderator	Ron Jordan
Alternate Moderator	Roland Gustafson

Diaconate:

Carl Snook	Faith Jean	Steve Swinhart
Rick Taylor	Audrey Taylor	Lee Wells
Greg Prendergast	David Kaiser	Maggie Benotti
Steve Coville	Giselle Coville	Tim Ribadeneyra
Jim Dolan	Trudy Bennett	Georgia Chrisman
Jack Pattison	Kathy Pattison	B. J. Rothwell

Board of Trustees:

Lee Wells	John Robie	Will Gable
Alan Whitaker	Donna McCue	John Taylor, Jr.
Freya Shoffner		

Board of Christian Education:

Lorraine Sproul	Frank Wilkins	Bob Maffeo
Matt Delaney	Chris Prendergast	Jennifer Swinhart
Kris Farinella	Susan Martin	Gail Teller

Missions and Outreach:

Janet Clifford	Kim Kimball	Karen Daley
Cheryl Morrison	Marjorie Gates	Jean Hight
Barbara Graham		

Music Committee:

Laurie Damon	Bill Morgan	Elln Hagney
Ernest Chandler	Cheryl Strazdes	Henry Plimpton

Stewardship Committee:

Sue Dolan	Marilyn Campbell	Brad Willis
Joan Trinkler		

Scholarship Committee:

Jan Kerns	Linda Ashley	Ed Hicks
Cheryl Strazdes	Kim Kimball	

Growth Committee:

Susan Fay	Edythe Ribadeneyra	Richard Pinel
Georgia Chrisman	Karen Whitaker	Edna Robie
Donna Pinel		

Endowment:

Freya Shoffner	Ron Jordan	John Bennett
Steve Coville	Greg Prendergast	

Library:

Carolyn Jackson	Doris Compton	Alice Chandler
Phyllis Dean	Shirley Smith	

Pastoral Evaluation:

Steve Hight	Trudy Bennett

Flower Committee:

Natalie Shaw	Dot Marshall	Brad Willis
Phyllis Willis	Alice Chandler	Kathy Pattison
Alice Crest		

Lay Delegates:

Mary Ellingson	Carolyn Jackson

Nominating Committee:

Steve Hight	Eliana Kimball	Brad Willis
Margo Kite	Joan Trinkler	Alan Whitaker
Lois Chandler	Alice Chandler	

Historians:

Carl Snook	Lois Chandler	Linda Ashley

Church Council Members-at-Large:

Mary Handy	Mary Jo Loveridge

Short Term Housing Assistance Fund:

Steve Coville	Jack Pattison	Cheryl Morrison
Jim Dolan		

Gifts to the Church

It would be impossible to list all the gifts, beyond normal pledges and donations, that have been received by the church through almost four centuries. However, those that appear in the records are listed here as an example to others and in gratitude for the generosity of the donors.

This does not include all the Bibles and hymn books that have honored so many people through the years, and continue to do so today. Those currently in use have a book plate inside the cover, showing the donor and those being honored or remembered.

Thomas Bird, to support the Communion Table, 1663. (There was $1174 in that fund in 1893)

William Thomas, a communion cloth, nine feet long.

Deacon Israel Thomas, 1732, for pewter and a table cloth.

The Ladies Benevolent Society gave a sanctuary clock in 1855. It is now in the secretary's office. They have also given many other gifts through the years, including the chandeliers, the side lights and carpets.

The silver communion service now in the vestibule case was given in honor of the 50th wedding anniversary, 1875, of Capt. Azel and Mercy Ames by their children.

The pewter communion service now in the vestibule case was given by Edith Alden Sprague in honor of her grandfather, The Rev. Ebenezer Alden. The service had previously been used at the church and had been given to Rev. Alden when the Ames service was received in 1875.

Two ancient pewter tumblers, now in the vestry case, were given by Mrs. Herbert A. Ryder in honor of Deacon David Brown.

Lucy Church, in her will of 1891, left $1,000 to the First Trinitarian Church of Marshfield. It is not clear if that is this congregation or the church in Marshfield Hills.

Asa Waterman left $1500 to the church in his will in 1863. Considering the currency of that day, this may be the single largest gift in Church history.

The family of Rev. Frederick Manning gave the Baptismal Font in his memory.

Mrs. C.A. Kent gave a silver communion set in 1907.

Lucia A. Sampson left $100 to the church in 1925.

Lucy Ames was the daughter of Deacon Elijah Ames. At her death, she left the church $1,000. She also left the Sunday School, the Christian Endeavor Society, the Ladies Benevolent Society and the Womans Christian Temperance Union each $50.00. Her will was written in 1925.

In 1940, Fannie M. Dill left $300 to the church in her will.

At his death in 1941, M. Herman Kent left three legacies to the church. He left $2000 to the Church for the "M. Herman Kent Fund," and $200 each to the Sunday School and to the Ladies Benevolent Society.

Silver bread trays for communion, given by the King Philathea Class, 1955.

A silver communion service, given in memory of Mrs. E. Lloyd Peterson by her daughter in 1958.

The August Schatz Room in the Parish House honors Mr. Schatz.

Audio-visual equipment honors Clarice Marsh.

Two candlesticks in the Parish House were given by William R. Cook.

In honor of Hardy Gates, his family gave the Parish House pulpit, the Bible inside the pulpit, the offertory plates and the candlesticks.

William Rapp Cook gave the pulpit in the lower level of the Parish House in memory of his wife.

A pair of Oriental vases were given by the Philathea Class.

Mrs. Lois Gass was remembered by a silver vase given by the Gay Nine Club in 1955.

Offertory plates were given in memory of Joseph Feinberg by his wife, Ann Feinberg.

The Sanctuary Altar Cross was given in memory of Everett Shattuck by his wife Ruth, and daughters, Christine and Lois.

The Christian and American flags were given by the Junior High Fellowship in 1974.

The Communion Candelabra were given in memory of Diane Staples Henderson by Wilfred and Natalie Henderson.

In honor of Rev. George Hallowell, the King Philathea Class gave the Congregational Church seal in 1965.

The library in the Parish House is named in honor of Cindy Henderson, daughter of Natalie and Wilfred Henderson, and was given by friends and family. It was dedicated on January 23, 1966.

The dishwasher in the kitchen was given by the Herbert Lakehomer Memorial Fund in his honor.

The Kenneth Oakman Memorial Fund gave the Memorial Book, the brass altar candlesticks, the pulpit Bible, the amplification and recording system and the Dossal Curtains.

In 1969, Edith Alden Sprague left the church $1,000 to be called the Ebenezer Alden Fund, after her grandfather, and stipulated that only the interest was to be spent.

Elizabeth C. Garretson left a bequest of $1,000 to the church in 1970.

The Bells were given and the Bell Choir named in honor of Arthur Hart.

The carillon was given in memory of William Chase by his family.

A music file was given in memory of Elisabeth Sears.

The wood-enclosed coat racks in the vestry were given in memory of Daphne and Howard Baker by friends and family.

These two flagons and five chalices are part of the communion set given to the Church in 1875 to honor the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Capt. Azel and Mercy Ames. They were a gift from their children.

The Names of Funds and People For Whom Memorial Funds Have Been Established by Families and Friends

Kenneth Oakman
August Schatz (Sunday School)
Pauline Brett (Organ)
Elizabeth Chandler (Music)
Herbert Lakehomer (Kitchen)
Wendy Barbeau (Bibles)
Ruth Bartlett (Flowers)
May Chase
Elizabeth Garretson
Ralph and Eva Houghton
Clarice Marsh (AV)
Herbert Ryder
Edith Alden Sprague
Lora Belknap
Herman H. Delano
Frederick L. Staples, Jr.
Sam Bates
Ernest Chandler
Margaret Gates
Arthur and Ethel Macker
John Ford and John Ford, Jr.
Frank Dugan
Charles M. Simmons
Verren Ellis
Albert T. and Ella W.B. Sprague
Milton and Myrtle Allen
Walter Balcke
Merrill Garside
Bessie E. Hitchcock
Helen W. Ford
Darius K. Small
Mary Arthur Smith
Arthur Leanard, Jr.
Mrs. Roscoe Adams
Rosa Mae Ames
Mrs. Alice Davis
Avis Ewell
Mrs. Laura Monroe
Ethel S. Peck
Mrs. Rea E. Recknagle
Mrs. Grace Ryder
James Schaffler
Laura Sherman
Dorothy Stockel
Clarence Wheeler
Mrs. Elizabeth L. Stroud
Josephine Adams
Mrs. Haddad
William Jones
Vera A. Newdick
Frank Roberts
John Sorrenson, Sr.
Marjorie B. Weston
William Carver
Sarah Dingley
Gertrude Brown
Grace Burleigh
Ralph and Lillian Ewell
Winifred Nangle
Fred Roberts
Rosella Ames
Wilson Emerson Burleigh
Beatrice Dole
Marion Landers
Neal Sartori
Kimberly Brough
Alice B. Damon
Donald Fish
Lydia and Spurgeon Harmer
Lois Mounce
Althea Staples
Scott E. Staples
Anne Bowden
Lucille Baker
Alfred Hocking
Vera Lindquist
Bessie A. Davis
Ralph T. Davis
Louise Lovegren
Irene Kingsley
Suzanne T. Staples
Howard Baker
Ada Chandler
Marion Ford
Mary Louise Matera
Christine Oakman-Goodwin
Rev. George Hallowell
Carolyn Hallowell
Evelyn Hubbard
Marie Johnson
Janet Rand
Evelyn Simmons
Ola Olsen
Helen Potter
Ruth E. Delano
David Barbeau
Russell Blank
Gertrude Parsons
Eleanor Allen
Edith Elliott

Charles and Elizabeth Sinnott
Richard Nangle
Grandpa Simmons
Russell W. Chandler
Martha Ochiltree
Frances Wang Chin
Raymond Colomy
Kenneth Smith
Ethel Leonard
John Garretson
Pearl C. Whittaker
Ransom Gerard
Dorothy Stewart
Elsie W. Wood
Alton Simmons
Derren Davies
David Mounce
Richard Fawcett
Robert Archer
Everett Chase
Lois Clark
Jeffrey Crane
Louise Gonsalves
Ed Goodwin
Ruth Jaffe
Caitlin Mahoney
Albert E. Ochiltree
Rita Payne
Ellis Rand
Wilfred Roberts
Ruth Seaquist
Clifton Strange
Lt. Col. Teeter
Beverley and William Thomas
Arlene Weir
Marie Schatz (Sunday School)
Arthur Chandler (Camp)
Emery & Viola Dobson (Music)
Ruth Driscoll (Music)
Kay Miller (Music)

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Linda R. Ashley
Marshfield, MA
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