



*The Montague
Millennium*
1000 years of worldwide family history



MEETING
OF THE
MONTAGUE FAMILY

AT
HADLEY, MASS., AUG. 2, 1882.

BOSTON:
FRANKLIN PRESS: RAND, AVERY, AND COMPANY,
1882.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
<u>I.</u> <u>ORIGIN AND CALL OF THE MEETING</u>	<u>5</u>
MORNING.	
<u>II.</u> <u>INTRODUCTORY EXERCISES</u>	<u>6-8</u>
<u>III.</u> <u>ADDRESS OF WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN, MR. GEORGE MONTAGUE</u>	<u>8-11</u>
<u>IV.</u> <u>ADDRESS BY REV. RICHARD MONTAGUE, -- "THE MONTAGUE FAMILY IN AMERICA"</u>	<u>12-35</u>
V. POEM OF MRS. M. J. MERWIN	36-44
VI. THE DINNER. -- VISITS TO OBJECTS OF LOCAL INTEREST,	44-45
AFTERNOON.	
VII. POEM OF MRS. F. G. LINNELL	46-48
VIII. ADDRESS OF PROFESSOR W. L. MONTAGUE, -- THE MONTAGUE FAMILY IN ENGLAND"	49-61
IX. INFORMAL ADDRESSES BY MANY KINSMEN	61-78
EVENING.	
X. REMARKS OF MR. C. S. MONTAGUE	79-81
XI. POEM OF MISS HELEN MONTAGUE	81-83
XII. BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS	83-84
XIII. THE CONCLUSION	84

XIV.	HYMNS WRITTEN FOR THE MEETING	7, 8, 11, 85-86
XV.	MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE	87-88
XVI.	THE BOOK OF REGISTRY	89-95
XVII.	NOTES	97-107



Richard Montague

TO THE FAMILY.

The Editor craves kind indulgence and information touching any inaccuracies in this Report. He has diligently, though not always successfully, sought confirmation of the correctness of every page. The preparation of the Report was undertaken by request of others, and has been much more laborious than was anticipated; but the work has been one of love, -- to be amply repaid, if those who enjoyed the gathering at Hadley find within these pages a satisfactory account of a memorable day of rare pleasure. Courteous assistance has been rendered by many friends; but especial mention should be made of Prof. W. L. Montague, and Messrs. George and Charles C. Montague of Amherst. They have carefully read and revised all the proofs of the Report, and have made many valuable suggestions.

The preparation of the pictures has been supervised by Mr. Charles Montague of Boston.

RICHARD MONTAGUE.

PROVIDENCE, R.I., Nov. 1, 1882.

THE MONTAGUES AT HADLEY.

AUG. 2, 1882.

Early in the winter of 1881-82 thoughts were entertained of a gathering of the Montague family on some day of the following summer. Interest in the family history had been somewhat quickened by the summer researches of Mr. George W. and Mr. Charles C. Montague, sons of Mr. George Montague of Amherst. These brothers had discovered the probable grave of their first American ancestor, and had erected a marble head-stone, fittingly inscribed, to his honor. Correspondence with several gentlemen revealed a desire for a more "tended acquaintance with the members and history of the family, and it was decided to attempt a meeting of the Montagues during the coming summer. Mr. George Montague of Amherst, to whom is due the credit of originating the successful undertaking, was made chairman of a committee of arrangements. Circulars appointing a gathering at Hadley, Mass., on Wednesday, Aug. 2, 1882, at ten A.M., "in commemoration of the two hundred and twenty-second anniversary of the settlement in that place of Richard Montague, our ancestor, who emigrated from England," were sent in all directions; and the many hearty responses that were soon received indicated a wide-spread interest in the plan. The committee was from time to time enlarged until it included representatives from thirteen States; sub-committees were appointed, and at an early date a full order of exercises was arranged. Circulars containing a full programme for the meeting, with necessary notices, and signed by a committee of forty gentlemen, all near or remote kinsmen of Richard Montague of Hadley, were sent to all persons in the Country of the name or blood of Montague, of whom the committee could learn; and the secretary received a common reply, -- a voice of hearty indorsement. The town of Hadley kindly proffered the use

of their public hall for the gathering, and the trustees of the First Congregational Society extended the use of their meeting-house to the committee of arrangements. A careful subdivision of labor, a ready response from speakers, poets, singers, marshals, and all who could lead a helping hand, assured, in case of pleasant weather and a large attendance, a successful meeting.

MORNING.

The morning of Aug. 2 dawned bright and warm. At an early hour conveyances brought scores from all the neighboring towns. The village hotel poured forth its many occupants; and the old town, usually quiet and Solemn, seemed to be alive with stir and good cheer.

The public exercises, which opened at the church at 10.15 o'clock A.M., were attended by an audience that numbered nearly six hundred, and included, as shown by the book of registry and the speeches of the afternoon, kinsfolk from the North, the South, the East, and the West.

The decorations in the rear of the speaker's desk made a pleasing impression upon all as the audience-room was entered. They consisted of a collection of portraits and pictures, occupying a space, eighteen by twelve feet, allowing the pleasant face of Richard of Hadley, the heroic men and women of the Revolutionary period, with those, young and old, of a later date. Conspicuous among the pictures was an excellent drawing of the house built and occupied by the first Richard. Silk banners and potted plants adorned each side. The whole was surmounted by American and British flags, with an American shield at the apex, beneath which was the emblazonment, --

RICHARD MONTAGUE, 1660.

222 ANNIVERSARY, 1882.

The singing of the day, a feature of marked interest, conducted by Mr. R. M. Montague of Hadley, began with the following hymn, written by S. Marie Montague Woodman, of Chico, Cal., and sung by the whole audience to the tune of "Coronation: " --

Page 7

OPENING HYMN.

Let loud hosannas swell the breeze,
And *rapture* fill our days,
While, for this day we celebrate,
The God of freedom praise.

We hail *Old England's* sea-girt shores,
Our fathers' native land:
Wide may her *Commons'* spread,
until In *Peerless'* power they stand.

We hail *New England's* rock-bound coasts,
Her hills and valleys free;
The soil our fathers sought,
to plant The tree of *Liberty*.

We hail *thee*, Hadley, hallowed ground,
Home of our honored sire:
Let joyous anthems fill each heart,
And *Welcome'* sound each lyre.

From Lake to Gulf, Atlantic shores
To where the setting sun
Sinks gently in Pacific waves, --
Her sons and daughters come.

Let hearts grow warm, and hand clasp hand
In pressure firm and true,
While memory lingers o'er the name
Of Richard Montague.

After a very fitting prayer by the Rev. Dr. Ayres of Hadley, the following hymn, written by Miss Adelia Montague of Mount Morris, Mich., was sung by the audience: --

HYMN.

Beneath these grand old elms we meet,
A happy band, in union sweet,
In friendship, love, and harmony,

Like children of one family.

Page 8

Here, on this anniversary day,
Let each glad heart a tribute pay,
Of love and gratitude and praise
For all the good that's crowned our days.

A Father's love in all we trace,
In blessings showered upon our race:
Oh, may our name with lustre bright
Shine ever on the side or right!

Let peace and happiness abound
In our homes, the world around,
And may no stranger hand e'er hold
The home our fathers loved of old.

And when on earth our days are o'er,
May we all meet to part no more, --
Meet in that bright and happy land,
A Joyous, glad, unbroken band! ¹

The Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, Mr. George Montague of Amherst, then gave an

ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE MONTAGUE FAMILY, -- A duty has fallen to me this morning, which is more agreeable in its performance than any in my previous life. It is, in behalf of the committee which I represent, to congratulate you on the arrival of this auspicious day which we have anticipated with so much joyful expectation, and to offer you a sincere and cordial welcome to all the interest which the occasion may develop in its exercises and kindred associations.

This Montague meeting, like many great enterprises, had a very limited beginning. The correspondence of a few friends -- with the inquiry if such a meeting was desirable, and, if desirable, would it be practicable, and meet with general favor? -- brought to us from all an unanimous and enthusiastic approval, and from many a promise of attendance.

Hence our gathering to-day is the spontaneous uprising of all

Page 9

the Montague family in the country. For, although but few comparatively of the great family are here, yet there is a fair representation from many States and cities in response to the nine hundred circulars which have been distributed.

The Montagues from the Far West join hands to-day with their long-forgotten brothers of New England, and the Montagues of the Old Bay State greet with friendly salutations their kindred from the Old Dominion; and we have all returned to this lovely rural town, which our ancestor chose for his residence two hundred and

twenty-two years ago (retracing the diverging lines of scores of years, which have so widely sundered us), to call up the pleasant memories of the past, to gain a new inspiration of joy from the exercises and communications of the day, to make our acquaintance with those whom we have never before seen, and hear names of kindred which we have never before heard.

The universal declaration was "The Montague meeting *must be*;" and to-day we have unmistakable demonstration that IT IS.

We also express our congratulations for the good success which has attended the committee in making arrangements for the meeting. Our thanks are due to the good people of Hadley for the town-hall freely tendered for our use by vote at their annual meeting; and, when it became evident that a larger room would be required, the pastor and parish committee of the First Church yielded to our necessities this pleasant church, with its agreeable seats, gallery, and reception-room. We congratulate ourselves, that, as descendants of the first Richard Montague, we have come to his old home, and have found the descendants of his neighbors so glad to receive us.

Another congratulation we may offer, the expression of which affords us great satisfaction. It is, that the ancient home of the first Richard Montague in this place is yet in the possession of his direct descendants, and has always been held by them. Two Montague ladies now hold the title-deeds to the land on which the first house was erected, by Richard Montague himself, more than two hundred years ago.

It is a matter of congratulation, also, that those of our name have so largely increased, have enjoyed the average prosperity,

Page 10

and have sustained a reputation for honesty and reliability and all manly virtues. We have never heard of a Montague a defaulter, or unfaithful to any pecuniary trust. They have been the depositaries of trust funds for the widow and orphan; they are presidents and cashiers of corporate institutions: but no record has ever shown a misappropriation of funds, or an application of public money to their private use. They have been kind husbands and fathers, industrious and judicious in all practical avocations, and always the firm advocates of all moral reform. Their leading characteristics have been great caution in forming opinions, and great firmness in sustaining them when formed. The motto of the ancient family in England seems to have expressed this peculiar trait: "Through all changes, always the same."

It is also a characteristic of the Montagues, that whenever two of the name chance to meet, who have been strangers, they always inquire in regard to the ancestry of each, with a curiosity to know how nearly they are related.

They have been believers in a divine Christianity, and have sought to regulate their lives according to its requirements. Hence they have attained to a high moral standard.

The ladies of the name have exhibited the same general good characteristics. And you will permit us to say, that we do not make this reference for the poor temporary advantage which a cheap, easy-flowing adulation might afford, but rather to place upon record at this time our high estimation of the worth and excellence of the Montague ladies. Always comely in appearance, often beautiful, they have been kind and affectionate daughters, wives, and mothers, cultivated in mind and heart, generous and sympathetic with the suffering and afflicted, meeting the vicissitudes of practical life with the courage and strength imparted by a firm religious faith, and deeply interested in the elevation of degraded humanity.

Again, it is worthy of remark, that for us this meeting is an original one. Never before in this country, and probably never at any time, were there so many of the name of Montague assembled.

With joyful hearts we enter upon the exercises of this day which we have all anticipated with so much pleasure. And, I

repeat, in behalf of the committee whom I have the honor to represent, we extend to all a cordial welcome. From the citizens of this rural town, whose guests for the time being we are permitted to be, you have a sincere welcome to the enjoyment of its beautiful natural scenery, and its ancient associations.

And now bright scenes adorn the opening day,
Each heart awaits with expectation due,
While History's muse prolongs the joyous lay,
And garlands weave, for Richard Montague.

The audience united in singing the following lines, written by Mrs. Mary Montague Merwin of Newark, N.J.:

--

SONG.

As pilgrims who tarry at night by the stream,
And pitch their white tents where the still waters gleam,
So we, on life's march with our world-weary feet,
Halt here at the old home, our kindred to greet.

CHORUS.

Rome, home, sweet, sweet home!
In this beautiful vale was our forefather's home.

As sailors who gaze on the bright beacon light,
That guides safe to port through the darkness of night,
So joyful this mountain our eager eyes caught,
For we knew at its foot was the home that we sought.-- CHO.

This mountain and river and vale are the same,
As when Richard the Roundhead from Cavaliers came,
And, charmed by the beauty, refreshed by the shade,
A home on this spot for the Montagues made. -- CHO.

With gladness we come to this hallowed place;
With gladness we look upon each other's face:
May we keep our last tryst on Mount Zion above,
There in chorus more perfect to sing of God's love!

CHORUS.

Home, home, sweet, sweet home!
May the Montagues meet in a heavenly home.

THE CHAIRMAN: --Two hundred and twenty-two years ago, the first Richard Montague settled in this place. One Hundred and sixteen years from his settlement, his great-grandson, Major Richard Montague, was with

Washington and the American army before Boston. And to-day, -- one hundred and six years later, -- a great-grandson of this Revolutionary hero, and one bearing his name, is present, and will address you on "The Montague Family in America." I have the honor to introduce the Rev. Richard Montague of Providence, R.I.²

ADDRESS OF REV. RICHARD MONTAGUE,

ON

THE MONTAGUES IN AMERICA.

MR. CHAIRMAN, FRIENDS AND KINSFOLK, FAIR DAMES AND GOOD MEN, STRONG LADS AND BRIGHT LASSES, OF THE NAME AND BLOOD OF MONTAGUE, -- What a goodly company is this! Cousins all to-day, if never before or after. We rejoice in one blood and in a common heritage. "Several blackguards among them, but not one blockhead that I ever heard of," -- this was the terse account of her kinsfolk, which her grandfather gave to the Jane Welsh who afterwards married Thomas Carlyle. It is clear that old Mr. Welsh was no excessive enthusiast in heraldry. Nor is any one of us, perchance, disposed to put undue stress on ancestry. Yet it gives me unfeigned pleasure, and it is, we will all surely agree, an occasion of hearty gratulation, that, after considerable research into our family annals, and a somewhat extended correspondence with the living generation, I can honestly say of our ancestors, at the outset, *Blackguards none, and blockheads none, that I have yet heard of.* We may look one another in the face to-day with self-respect, and with profound gratitude for a worthy succession of progenitors.

Our forefathers may have been plain men, humble men; but they were able men, faithful men, resolute workers, no shirkers of responsibility, living as if God's eye was on them, citizens of time and eternity. There is a story that Matthew Prior was one of a London club of lords and gentlemen, who in their good-natured banter were wont often to rail at what they called his "plebeian ancestry." One day "my lords," knowing little else to talk about,

Page 13

were stirring up poor Prior, and asked him to unite with them in writing epitaphs for their tombstones. With quick wit, when each had ended an account of his noble descent, Matthew penned, these lines: --

"My lords and gentry!
By your leave, Here lies what once was Mathew Prior, --
A son of Adam and of Eve:
Can any of you gents go higher?"

I suppose we must all go to the fountain-head, first or last; and I always had considerable sympathy with the satire of Mark Twain's lament over the tomb of his noble ancestor Adam. And yet it is pleasant, if possible, to discover some connecting links between ourselves and that most ancient and for a time most worthy gentleman. The Good Book, indeed, warns us against fables and endless genealogies. Happily we have facts at our command; and, as for genealogy, the wisest of us loses the link that joins the year 1500 with former generations.³

The popular ridicule of family antiquarians, however, is not quite just. Some men become mere Dryasdusts in their studies, or they revolve about a needle-point for a lifetime. But they see every thing within their narrow range of observation, and men of broader view would be helpless without them. More than thirty years ago a gentleman of our name, who was then a member of the English Parliament, wrote to the accomplished antiquarian who is with us to-day, and to whom is chiefly to be credited the possibility of any trustworthy sketch of our clan, and whose broader studies and wisely-directed energies have greatly enriched the resources of general New England history: ⁴ "Family history, I conceive, may be made very serviceable in

beguiling the intervals which we all have, more or less, during the more pressing occupations of life. I cannot but feel that man is as much connected with the past as with the future; and therefore it is idle to ridicule a desire that every well-bred man should entertain, -- that of knowing clearly as much as he can of what may be found in the page of history, and surely family history in particular."⁵

The history of New England is in great measure the history

Page 14

of her towns. They were the centres of her civic and religious life. The history of a New England town is in no small degree the history of its families. Trace the course of a few of these households, their growing families and varied fortunes, and you have a vivid picture of the past. Musty records, family Bibles, old portraits, precious heirlooms, tax-rates, petitions, genealogies, all available material for the construction of a family history, -- this is the key that opens the cabinet wherein are displayed the thoughts and hopes, the religion and life, the manners and attire, of generations past. Thus, indeed, the past comes to live. Once more the ancients seem to walk and speak on earth. We see them sowing and reaping, milking and churning, spinning and weaving, praying and voting, fighting and advising. They are of our flesh and blood, -- real men, only in another age and guise.

It was perhaps on some bright summer morning two hundred and twenty-two years ago that several wagons, heavily laden, moved slowly along the broad street of Wethersfield, Conn., to the neighboring town of Hartford. Thence they passed on, up the Connecticut River toward Springfield. Some twenty miles above they were to stop, never permanently to return. Each of these wagons contained the family and household effects of men who, for conscience and prosperity, were to settle the Indian Norwottuck, -- the present Hadley.

There was division in the churches at Hartford and Wethersfield. A half-way covenant offended the consciences of some most excellent members, who sought the common welfare by withdrawal and removal. Fifty-nine originally agreed to settle the new town, but several lost heart or were prevented. A few had gone on as pioneers the year before, and had the privilege of selecting the choicest home-lots; and now the others are following on. Forty-seven in all are to be the original owners of the lots that lie alongside yonder noble avenue; of these Richard Montague is one. We could wish for more information concerning him and his. And yet we are not wholly ignorant of him and his family. As they pause at nightfall on their journey, it is an interesting group that we may see.

Richard is a man yet under fifty, in the vigor of a robust

Page 15

life. An extant miniature, painted when he was perhaps about twenty, presents to us a handsome youth with beautiful brown locks falling down his neck and a face at once serious and attractive.⁶ The first thirty years of his life are clouded in some obscurity. He had come to Wethersfield with his wife and two daughters in 1651, and had brought from Emanuel Downing of Salem, Mass., -- a relative of his wife, -- a letter to Gov. Winthrop of Connecticut. Whether he had ever resided at Salem, cannot be said; though this might seem probable from the fact that his wife was at one time a member of the Salem church. He certainly had lived in Boston; for there two of his children were born, and baptized by the revered John Wilson, pastor of the First Church, of which Mrs. Montague was a member. But hardly had the good pastor consecrated the first of these children, little Sarah, when the parents were called to part with their babe, as yet but four days old. When Richard had married, I cannot learn. Their first child, a daughter, is said to have been born about 1642. Richard and his wife removed from Wells, Me., to Boston, about 1646. Mrs. Montague was received into the First Church, Boston, by letter of dismission from Wells, Me. The accounts of the two previous to this are somewhat confused and contradictory. There were, in Boveney, parish of Burnham, Buckinghamshire, England, three

brothers, according to the Heralds' College; viz., William, Peter, and Richard Montague.⁷ A romantic mind may well hesitate before choosing between the varying traditions. Shall we believe the tale that Peter and Richard sailed the same year, 1634, from England, -- the one in a vessel which landed him in Virginia, the other in a craft which brought him to New England; that Richard had left his sweetheart, fair Abigail, behind, and with her the precious miniature which is still preserved; that somewhat later the oldest brother, William, came to America, but, not liking the country, returned to England, carrying with him Richard's message to Abigail, that 'all things were now ready, her youth was a man; let her come, and make with him a home'? Or shall we give our credence to that other yet more romantic tradition that when Abigail Downing's father, who was a grave doctor of divinity, learned of her betrothal to Richard, he was ill-

Page 16

pleased with the match; and to escape his ire the ardent lover, Romeo-like, stole to his lady's chamber-window, and then in the stillness of night took his fair prize, unbeknown to the objecting parents, and with her ran away to America?

You may take your choice of traditions; only bearing in mind that it seems well accredited that Richard came from Boveney, was brother to William and Peter, and married Abigail Downing, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Downing of Norwich, Eng., and the two are, so far as records go, first found in Boston, Mass., 1646, having removed from Wells, Me.

Whether it was a spirit of adventure, a desire for greater prosperity, or a longing for spiritual liberty, that sent our ancestor to these shores, we cannot say. It may have been a union of all these motives.

At any rate, here he is now, in the forty-sixth year of his age, pausing at nightfall with his wife, his children, and his effects, in this journey toward the new settlement, which with others he has undertaken mainly for conscience' sake. The family is not yet a large one. The wife is somewhat younger than her husband, and, though born in comfort, is willing and able to endure hardship. If the traditions cited are of value, they suggest that she is comely and attractive. Mary, their eldest daughter, is a blooming girl of perhaps eighteen; Martha is a bright miss of thirteen; Peter is not quite ten, already showing the practical sagacity and fitness to lead which characterized him in later years; Abigail and John are the two youngest of the family. In that wagon are family plate and precious heirlooms, most of which are now lost or destroyed. It is a religious household; and when the simple evening meal is ended, and the fit precautions against attacks by Indians or wild beasts have been taken, the father doubtless invokes the Divine protection during the night hours, and, having briefly cheered the hearts of all in their great undertaking, he, with his, sweetly falls asleep.

And now the scene shifts. Hadley is reached. The home-lot of eight acres has been assigned to Richard. It is on the east side of the long, wide street, -- that noble avenue which to-day with its majestic elms is Hadley's just pride, -- about midway between the north and middle highway to the woods. A rude



RICHARD MONTAGUE'S DWELLING HOUSE, HADLEY, MASS.
BUILT ABOUT 1660. TAKEN DOWN 1831.

Page 17

log-cabin doubtless met the necessities of the early days; but soon a substantial house, forty by twenty-four feet, of two stories, with a lean-to added at a later date, is needed. It is built with its end toward the street, and has its principal entrance on the south side. The panes of glass are very small, six by eight inches: the chimney, of course, is very large. This house stood for more than one hundred and fifty years: and when it was taken down, within the memory of some present, it was found, that, while the front part was lined with clay-mortar, the rear half was lined with brick; the supposition being that this was to render the rear bullet-proof in case of Indian attacks.

Here Richard and Abigail lived and worked and died. Their course was a humble one, and yet they were not wholly unknown to the outer world; for the Rev. Samuel Peters, who returned to England in 1774, and some thirty years thereafter published his life of Hugh Peters, refers in that book to the Hadley Montagues as follows: "Montague, of the family of the Earl of Sandwich, came to Boston, and settled at Hadley near Northampton, on Connecticut River, the most orthodox town in fanaticism in all Massachusetts. The great genius and shining talents of this noble Montague were not able to correct the manners and stubborn zeal of Hadley and Northampton. He lived near the Rev. Mr. Williams, . . . and was a firm friend to Goffe and Whaley, two of the judges of Charles I., who fled from the cave in New Haven to Hadley, to avoid the advertisements of Charles II., and were by Mr. Williams concealed many years. Montague was one of the few in the confidence of Williams and the judges. His integrity and virtues were equal to those of Rahab of Jericho, who entertained the spies which Joshua sent to search out the land of Canaan; and merits equal praise, and enjoys it. His posterity are not many, but what remain of them -- are valuable characters; and remain Puritans to this day except one, whose name is William Montague,⁸ who made a tour to London about the year 1790, and became an Episcopal clergyman, and the rector of Dedham, near Boston. He has the virtue, honor, and integrity imputed to his noble ancestry."

Now, for people who like to see their names in print, and desire to reckon all imaginary virtues to their ancestors, this

must seem a very satisfactory and quite ancient notice. The only trouble with it is, that the first part of it has scarcely any basis of fact, and Peters must have gotten his information from someone whose family vanity exceeded his accuracy. There is no evidence whatever that Richard Montague of Hadley was of gentle birth. His descent, if it can be traced to a noble line at all, is from the extinct Earls of Salisbury rather than from the Earl of Sandwich. He may have been in the confidence of the judges, and of Mr. Russell, whom Peters confounds with his successor Mr. Williams. Indeed, it is said that the regicides were once secreted in Richard's house, when search for them was made by emissaries of Charles II. This would partially confirm the tradition that Montagues emigration was because of his sympathy with Cromwell's cause. But it is not to be supposed that he ever sought to subdue the Puritanism of Hadley, -- he was a part of it, -- or that he had any "great genius, or shilling talents," or special influence that would have enabled him to control the public sentiment. He was simply a humble man, of good intelligence and fair parts, of deep religion and virtue, but perhaps of less prominence and force of character than his two sons. Nor does he seem to have been among the wealthy men of Hadley. He may have left property in Wethersfield: but, while many of the Hadley settlers were assigned meadow-lands on the basis of two hundred or one hundred and fifty pounds valuation, Montague was among the two who were rated at eighty pounds or less; yet at his death his property was inventoried at two hundred and seventy-seven pounds.

Richard's chief occupation was farming. By trade he was a baker; but there was little call for his skill except during the French and Indian wars, when he baked for the soldiers. And yet that skill is by tradition said to have been so great that "he could stand at the oven-door, and throw his loaves, filling his oven neatly and completely." In that early period flour was bolted by hand; and in 1680 Richard Montague's bolting-mill was valued at eighty shillings, and Widow Montague sometimes bolted flour for others by the barrel.

Richard held some slight offices during his life. He was twice a selectman. In 1681 he was made clerk of writs. In

1661 and 1662 he was chosen hay-ward, or field-driver; and in 1663 it was voted "that Richard Montague should have four shillings for every grave he makes for a grown person, and two shillings for the grave of a child under ten years." In yonder cemetery sleep some of the ancients for whom he prepared, with reverent hands, their last resting-place. For twenty-one years our ancestor dwelt in peace and virtue on yonder homestead. His children married, and the race began to multiply. It was no doubt a happy home over which he ruled; and a little story that has come down to us suggests that he must have been a tender husband and parent, and we judge that he was not without a peculiar interest also in the animal kingdom.

Abigail Downing had been educated by her father as a lady, and on coming to America was forced to learn the details of a housewife's duties. She had not been long in Hadley before she began spinning linen thread, and at first was quite discouraged; but, succeeding at last, in her satisfaction she took a twist in her hand, and started toward dusk to meet her husband returning from the field. He heard her story of failure and triumph, took the thread, and kissed his wife, and then with tender simplicity said, "Why, yes, and now I understand; for as I was working in the field I heard a little bird singing, and he seemed to be saying, 'Abigail, Abigail, continue, continue; Abigail, Abigail, try, try!'" Ah! if every Montague husband would be as encouraging and helpful as that to his wife, family jars would be soon unknown, and the birds would sing with even greater glee. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

It is possible that an occasional correspondence was maintained between the English and Hadley Montagues. There was communication, at least in the early part of the last century, between Richard's children and their kin abroad; and the fact that there is yet preserved, as I am told, an ivory-headed cane, said to have been sent from England to Peter Montague, Richard's son, in 1700, with directions that it should pass from Peter to

Peter, so long as Peters should be born, is evidence that the American emigrants were not forgotten in their native land.⁹

Richard lived to see his daughters married well; and a few mouths before his death his youngest child, John, entered into

Page 20

a union which was abundantly blessed. At last in 1681, in his sixty-seventh year, the first of our family in New England passed away.

He must have died in peace and triumph. There is wont to be no faltering, at that last hour, for men of Richard's faith. Hear these words, taken from the opening sentences of his last will and testament, written but a short time previous to his decease: "I commit my self, soul & body, into the hands of the almighty and eternal God whose I am -- and into the armes of my deare Redeemer in whom I desire forever to repose and stedfastly to believe, for life, Righteousness, and Salvation; leaving my body to be interred with a comely and Christian buriall, in assured hope of a Blessed Resurrection thro the mercy of God, . . . at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The funerals of these early Puritan days were very simple. The people gathered with their pastor to express by their presence their love and respect for the departed. But no Scripture was read, no song was heard, no prayer uplifted, no eulogy pronounced. Our fathers went to the extreme in their horror at any thing that might even faintly suggest to them the Romish prayers for the dead. In barren but conscientious simplicity they laid his form in yonder graveyard, and put no stone above it. It remained for the present generation to honor our ancestor's grave with a fitting monument. Two sons of our venerable, but vigorous, and in spirit youthful, chairman, after patient research, have determined the probable location of Richard's last resting-place, and have erected over it a worthy marble tablet.¹⁰ Abigail survived her companion thirteen years, and then, it is likely, was laid by his side.

Beginnings are always interesting and important, but it is specially gratifying when children rise up to confirm and extend their parents' labor and virtues. It is pleasant to know that Richard's sons, Peter and John, were useful and. honored citizens of Hadley. Peter was thrice married. He was attractive enough to win the hand of very worthy and. prominent women in the town. At twenty-eight he married the widow of John Smith, who was daughter of William Partrigg, both men of prominence and wealth. His other wives seem to have brought to him additional property and position. The women of that

Page 21

day were practical, and sometimes very shrewd. In the tripartite marriage settlement between Peter and his second wife, her business sagacity secured the provision, that, in case of his decease before her, half of his and all of her property should come to her.

These happy alliances, united with Peter's native force and business ability, brought him into honored eminence in town affairs. He became one of the three wealthiest men of the village. He was one of the committee for building the new meeting-house. He was elected a selectman; and for four years he was deemed by his fellow-citizens their worthy representative to the General Court at Boston. He died without issue, in 1725.

Richard's younger son, John, though less active in town affairs than his brother, had doubtless enough to engage his attention in the care of his family. He had married but a few months before his father's death, and it was with him that his widowed mother found a home on the old homestead till her death. She was soon permitted to rejoice in grandchildren. Six were born before she followed her husband and fell on sleep, and within the ten years subsequent to her death four more were added. Three of these ten children were

daughters. Each was named Hannah for her mother; but, as the first two died in infancy, there was never any confusion in the family from repetition of Christian designations. Meanwhile the Montagues had not forgotten their Wethersfield origin. One of Hannah's brothers, Richard by name, had returned to his grandfather Richard's Connecticut home; and from him are descended the Montagues who have ever since been found in Wethersfield. And there too Hannah went as Josiah Williard's bride. A surviving tradition concerning her brings vividly to mind that delusion which so disgraced some parts of Massachusetts, but from which Hadley was so largely free. It was sometimes thought that Hannah was "possessed," that she was indeed a witch. Perhaps she feigned her action in sport, or it may be she was the subject of some nervous disorder. But the story goes that when afflicted she would call on her brother Samuel for help. He would at once arm himself with a great broadsword, enter the room where Hannah was, and when his sister had pointed out the

Page 22

locality of the tormenting spirits, -- to him invisible, -- would cut and slash for very life. And then Hannah, -- the wicked tease, -- noting her brother's troubled air, would say, "No, not there, but there! there! ah, there they are in that corner, grinning and chattering at your blunder! "I am not informed whether that broadsword is here to-day, or not; but of the man who is said to have brandished it, many lineal descendants are present. Hannah's brothers, the seven sons of John, and grandsons of Richard, began with commendable enterprise to push out for themselves.

John, the eldest, remained in Hadley, and became the parent of a long line of descendants, among whom is included the accomplished scholar from whom we are to hear at a later hour.

Richard, as has been stated, -- went to Wethersfield, whence his grandfather had come to Hadley. The interested antiquarian may ride some four miles out from Hartford to this ancient town, and entering the graveyard behind the old church, on a rising lot, may find a stone with this inscription: "Here lies interred the body of Mr. Richard Mountague, who died Decbr. the 24th, 1751, in the 62d year of his age." By his side lies the body of Abigail his wife, the second Richard and the second Abigail. Near by are buried many Montagues, including one captain, who probably served in the Revolutionary war. There are Montagues still living in the town.¹¹

Peter, the third of these sons of John, settled in what is now South Hadley, prospered, and became the progenitor of some here present, whose features, no doubt, confirm the history of their origin.

William lived not far from him, and is the ancestor of the Rev. William Montague mentioned by Hugh Peters, and of this worthy clergyman's son (the venerable antiquarian already named¹²), and also of a numerous succession of recent graduates of Harvard University.

The sixth brother (passing over for a moment the fifth) was Luke, who also settled in South Hadley with Peter and William. It is said that Luke was a very small babe; so small, indeed, that after his birth his father put him in a silver tankard that had been handed down from the first Richard, who

Page 23

brought it from England. This tankard passed into the possession of Luke's brother William, and by one of his descendants was sold to a Boston silversmith for three sets of gold beads. Some of these beads are, I am informed, now in the possession of a Brooklyn lady: perhaps they are here to-day. It must not be supposed that Luke, because diminutive in infancy, was wanting in stature or strength in later years. On the contrary (so genial tradition says), when, in haying-time, the heavy load was stuck fast in the muddy hollow from which the sturdy oxen could not be urged to start the wheels, Luke unyoked the cattle, seized the pole himself, and brought cart and hay to dry and level ground! With him should be named an accomplished kinswoman of this generation, who, though at birth she but tipped the scale at twelve ounces, is now the matron of a numerous

and weighty household.

These three brothers who removed to South Hadley were prosperous farmers. Their children settled in neighboring towns or about the homesteads. Later descendants moved to other States, and the name of our family was soon widely spreading.

Nathaniel, the seventh brother, remained, as did John, in Hadley. He lived on the old homestead on which his father John had dwelt. The original lot of eight acres was divided as early as Richard's death. Upon the southern half of it Richard's grandson John, about the year 1705-10, built a new house, which is still standing. This half has passed into other hands; but it is a matter of great satisfaction, as our chairman has pointed out, that the four acres on which Richard built his first cabin, and subsequent dwelling-house, where Abigail his wife died, passed from Nathaniel his grandson to that Nathaniel's son of the same name, and thus on in lineal descent to the two ladies who now hold the title-deeds to the land. As we may drink to-day from the old well on the Montague homestead, let us not forget the health of these our loyal kinswomen. Should they ever feel compelled to part with the estate, let a Montague, or a "Montague Association," purchase it to be held by some one of the name in *perpetuo*.¹³

Nathaniel was a much-respected citizen, was chosen deacon of Hadley church, and left a fragrant memory. His descend-

Page 24

ants to-day are scattered east and west, and are doing honor to their worthy ancestor.

But the most prominent of Richard's seven grandsons was probably Samuel, who was born in 1695, and died in 1779. He was the first settler of the name in Sunderland, having received from his uncle Peter one of the original home-lots of the town. On this lot Samuel and his successors built their dwelling-houses; and it is interesting to know that, save for a period of about ten years, the original homestead has always been in the possession of some of Samuel Montague's descendants. His great-great-granddaughter is the present occupant. Samuel Montague was a man conspicuous in the life of the town. He was a selectman, a captain, a deacon, "a wise and good man." It is a traditional saying of his in his later years, that, when he lay down at night, he was content to awake in this world or the next. Deacon Samuel, like most of our ancestors, was blessed with a large family of children. But of his nine sons only four perpetuated his name. Of these four, one removed to Vermont, becoming the head of a numerous and now widely scattered progeny. Two others remained in Sunderland; and from the fourth, Major Richard Montague, many of us count a proud descent. With the death of Daniel, the third of Deacon Samuel's sons, in 1814, was closed the life of the fourth generation of New England Montagues.

It is worth our while, for it may relieve your weariness if we pause for a moment to recall the events which these four generations have witnessed. The Puritans had come to America for liberty of conscience and religious peace; but they soon discovered enough to show them that on no shore but that of eternity may men hope to think and act alike in religious matters. Boston and Salem had their disputes. Hartford and Wethersfield were divided by ecclesiastical controversy. Hadley herself was early disturbed by the same views that had sent her proprietors to her quiet interval. Nor was life any idle amusement in those early days. There was plenty of land in this rich alluvial valley ready for the plough; but the grain must be sown and harvested, the farm-buildings must be erected, the institutions of a new community were to be established. It is true that Hadley never suffered so much as some towns

Page 25

from Indian attacks, yet for many years her position must have been one of great anxiety; nor was she without experience of most romantic incidents.¹⁴ The French and Indian wars were a constant drain upon sympathy

and men and substance. Before Deacon Samuel's death the Revolution was crowned with success, and his boys had shared in its glory; and when Daniel his son, the last of the fourth generation, passed away, the "war of 1812" was nearly ended.

Meanwhile Hadley was doing her work in all the sacrifices connected with these trying days. She was growing, too, and colonizing. One after another, Hatfield, South Hadley, Granby, Sunderland, Leverett, Montague, Amherst, were incorporated; and in all these towns Montagues were early found. Research exhibits their patriotism, religion, and industry. As farmers, they increased in wealth, in position, and respect. As soldiers, they cheerfully gave time and life for country. They were sent as representatives to various deliberative bodies. Of Deacon Samuel's sons, for example, one was slain at the early age of eighteen, in what was probably the siege of Fort William Henry, one hundred and twenty-five years ago this very day; another was a captain of the Massachusetts militia, and served during a great part of the Revolutionary war; and of a third martial son, Major Richard, I shall yet have much to say. These are representatives merely, mentioned only because of my own more intimate knowledge of their career. Others of our name, and of different branches, were doubtless equally ready and brave.

It were a pleasant service, could I sketch for you the character and career of many of our kin in this fourth generation. I would gladly talk on, so long as you might consent to listen, concerning the great-grandchildren of Richard the first, -- the sons and daughters of John and Richard and Peter and William and Samuel and Hannah and Luke and Nathaniel, who were all the children of John, who was the son of Richard and Abigail Montague of Hadley. But the limits of the hour prevent: the sun would go down ere the tale were told, and not a word would we have heard of our ancestry in England. And the limits of my knowledge must henceforth somewhat restrict me. My investigations were necessarily so recently undertaken that I count myself but a beginner in our family lore.

Additional text will be included soon.

I displayed the pages by page number for those of you who might have the book.

This should make referencing easier, so that you can help me proofread the text.

Thank you for your interest.

If you think that you might like to help with the Montague 2000 Worldwide Family Reunion please contact me as soon as possible.

If you are considering attending the reunion let us know as soon as possible. I am working toward confirming hotel space, and it would be helpful to know your plans.