

PREFACE.

THE author was born in Windsor, Conn., in a neighborhood then called Haydentown, now Haydens, where his line of the family had lived from the time of the first William. In 1840, during a season of comparative leisure, I set out to find who my Hayden ancestors were before my great grandfather, Deacon Nathaniel Hayden, who was known to many then living. "Aunt Olive," the widow of Ezra, had an impression that the deacon's father's name was Samuel, and his wife Ann. With this clue I went to the town records, and found the work less difficult and far more interesting than I anticipated. I found the father of Deacon Nathaniel was Samuel, the son of Daniel, the son of William, the first settler. And when I had traced out all the Windsor Haydens, and about a hundred of my ancestors in the Hayden and other family names, I became enthusiastic in my search not only for ancestors and kindred, but in the history of the town, its ecclesiastical and civil institutions in which those ancestors had borne a conspicuous and influential part, in their organization, their growth, and their transmission from generation to generation during two centuries. Then I began badgering with circulars those families of Connecticut Haydens who were living elsewhere, and collected about 400 names of the descendants of William Hayden, bearing the family name. Later on, at different times, I added to the record, and it was published in "Stiles' History and Genealogies of Windsor," 1859. When I had reached the age of "three score years and ten" I retired from active business and anticipated sufficient leisure to renew and soon complete a work on the genealogy, which my business had so long obliged me to lay aside. During the years when