

A
GAZETTEER

OF THE STATES

OF

CONNECTICUT AND RHODE-ISLAND.

WRITTEN WITH CARE AND IMPARTIALITY, FROM ORIGINAL AND AUTHENTIC MATERIALS.

CONSISTING OF
TWO PARTS.

- I. A GEOGRAPHICAL AND STATISTICAL DESCRIPTION OF EACH STATE; EXHIBITING A GENERAL VIEW OF THEIR MORE PROMINENT FEATURES, BOTH NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL.
- II. A GENERAL GEOGRAPHICAL VIEW OF EACH COUNTY, AND A MINUTE AND AMPLE TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION AND STATISTICAL VIEW OF EACH TOWN, WITH THEIR CIVIL DIVISIONS, SOCIETIES, CITIES, BOROUGHS AND VILLAGES, ALPHABETICALLY ARRANGED IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTIES: TOGETHER WITH SUCCINCT BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF EMINENT DECEASED MEN.

WITH AN ACCURATE AND IMPROVED MAP
OF EACH STATE.

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HARTFORD:

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1819.

The amount of taxable property, including polls, is \$50,832. The real estate of the town, together with that of Marlborough, in 1816, was valued at \$1,258,024. In 1799, the real estate of Glasten-

bury, which at that time comprised the principal part of Marlborough, was valued at \$454,080. Glastenbury was incorporated as a town, in 1690.

GRANBY.

GRANBY is an extensive irregular township, situated in the northern section of the county, bordering upon Massachusetts, seventeen miles from Hartford; bounded on the north by Massachusetts' line, on the east by Suffield and Windsor, on the south by Simsbury and Canton, and on the west by Barkhamsted and Hartland. The average length of the township from east to west is nine and a half miles, and its average breadth from north to south, is more than six miles, comprising an area of about 59 miles, or 37,760 acres.

This township is characterised by a diversity of features, which are strikingly various; towards its eastern section, the green stone mountain ranges through it from north to south; this mountain here is perhaps more elevated than at any other place in the State, and its characteristic features more conspicuous, particularly in the vicinity of the State prison. Its western declivity, for a considerable distance from its summit, is nearly a perpendicular precipice, and its rocks are naked, and exhibited in disordered fragments. From this range of mountain, to near the eastern border of the township, the surface has a declivity to the east. This section

of the town is a valuable agricultural district; the soil is a rich gravelly loam, generally warm and fertile, well adapted to orcharding, grain or grass. Immediately west of the mountain, the face of the country is hilly, and in some instances, ledgy; but the lands, though hard and stony, are fertile, and well adapted to grain and orcharding. West of this district, there is an extensive tract of plain, the soil of which is generally a light sandy loam. This tract is intersected by Salmon brook, a pleasant and lively mill stream, and extends for a considerable distance west of this stream. The lands here are well adapted to rye, and afford also good orcharding. West of this tract, and towards the extreme western border of the town, it is hilly and mountainous; the lands are rough and stoney, and the soil hard, cold and gravelly. This section of the town, bordering upon Hartland and Barkhamsted, comprises the eastern extremity of the granite range of mountain, which extends through those towns. The natural growth here is oak, maple, beech and some hemlock; upon the tract of plains east of this, it is oak and yellow pine; upon the green stone range, and the district east and west of it, the timber is oak, walnut, chestnut, &c.

Various appearances of minerals have been discovered in the green stone mountain and hills of this town. Sulphuret of copper, or copper ore has been found in various places; and it is well known, that the cavern, now occupied by the State as a prison for convicts, was originally opened and worked as a mine. Copper pyrites, or ore, was found and worked; but gold, which had stimulated the cupidity of the adventurers engaged in the undertaking, disappointed their hopes; and after a very great expense and sacrifice, the business was abandoned.

The Tunxis or Farmington river washes the southeastern part of this town; and it is intersected by Salmon brook already mentioned. Both of these streams afford a number of sites for mills and other hydraulic works, many of which are advantageously occupied.

The Blanford turnpike leads through the town in a northwestern direction; and is intersected by a turnpike, leading from Connecticut river to Norfolk, where it connects with the Hartford and Albany turnpike.

The town contains two located Congregational Societies and Churches, one Society of Episcopalians, which have a house for public worship, two Societies of Baptists, and one Society of Methodists. There are 16 School districts and Schools, and a small village in the centre of each of the located Societies. The population of the town, at the last census, was 2683; and there are 380 dwelling houses, 4 companies of militia, and about 400 qualified Electors. There are two Card Factories,

two Wire Factories, one Powder Mill, six Grain Mills, two Fulling Mills, three Carding Machines, three Tanneries, and four Mercantile Stores.

There are two small Social Libraries, two Clergymen, four Physicians, and four Attornies.

Granby was taken from Simsbury, and incorporated in October, 1786.

The State prison established in this town is, from its novel and peculiar character, deserving of particular notice. The character of this institution, for the imprisonment of convicts, has, by some, particularly foreigners, been regarded as a subject of reproach to the State.

Many erroneous representations have been published, which, instead of exhibiting a just picture of this institution, have presented only the frightful images of caricature.

The idea of a cavern is peculiarly gloomy and horrible; and, when we consider such a place as the abode of man, dark and dreary, excluding every ray of light, and every object of nature, the mind is apt to recoil at the picture; and, forgetting the nature of the institution, and the causes which have filled it with its miserable and gloomy tenants, to regard it as an outrage upon humanity. But upon a more cool survey, and more especially upon an investigation of the subject, however repugnant to our ideas of humanity a subterraneous imprisonment may appear, it will be found, that, practically, it is much less objectionable than we at first supposed. The object of every institution of this description is confinement; and this ought to be effected with as much

regard to the health and comfort of the unfortunate subjects of crimes, and consequent punishment, as may be consistent with their security, and the economy of the public treasure. These caverns are remarkable for their healthfulness, and it is believed, that a less number of prisoners have died here, in proportion to the number which have been confined, than in any other prison in the United States. As it respects the cleanliness and comforts of the prisoners at this institution, it will not probably hold a comparison with many others; but this is more owing to the business which is pursued, (working at nails,) than to the confinement in the caverns. The security of the prisoners here is most effectual; and whether the institution is considered as an economical one or not, the use of the caverns, as a place of confinement, is not a circumstance that has any particular influence upon this subject.

On the whole, although there may be in principle, or in sentiment, objections to occupying a subterraneous prison, yet in a practical point of view, the one under consideration has many advantages; and the objections to this institution apply with more propriety and force to the description of work, at which they are employed, and to other circumstances connected with its management, than to the character of the place in which they are confined.

A succinct account of the origin of this cavern, and its establishment and occupation as a place of confinement for convicts, may be somewhat interesting.

The lands upon which Newgate prison stands, and in the vicinity, were claimed by the original proprietors of the town, in which they were formerly situated; but on account of their supposed value from the copper ore which had been found, and as gold was also supposed to abound, the title was long a subject of contention. To quiet all disputes with respect to these mines, in 1753, the General Assembly appointed a committee to investigate the subject, who confirmed the right and title of the original proprietors, and set off to them the land, or mine, which is now occupied as a public prison, and the other lands in the vicinity which were supposed to be valuable for their minerals. At this time, copper ore had been found; the ore was considered very rich, and it was also supposed, that it contained gold. From these circumstances, the fame of these mines soon reached Europe, and in 1760, a company was formed in England for the purpose of working them; and soon after, several persons, as the agents, or in the employ of this company, arrived from England for this purpose. But the company were obliged, principally, to employ men in the neighbourhood, who were entirely unacquainted with the business; from which circumstance, and various others, the work proceeded slowly, and with great difficulty. The company, however, were enabled to freight two vessels with ore, (it being their plan not to work the ore here, but to ship it to England for this purpose,) both of which were lost; one being taken by the French, and the other sunk in the channel.

These losses were so considerable, and the whole business having been little more than a succession of disasters and sacrifices, the company became discouraged, and were induced to abandon the undertaking. Since this time, the mines have not been wrought for ore. The miners, in digging and exploring, sunk numerous wells, or deep excavations. The principal one was upon Copper hill, so called, and remains at this time, being within the walls of the prison.

These caverns were first occupied as a place of confining convicts, about the commencement of the revolutionary war. There being at that time no prison in the State, other than the county gaols, and the number of convicts having considerably increased, arrangements were made for occupying these caverns as a place of confinement; but no permanent buildings were at this time erected; and it is not probable, that at first it was contemplated to convert these caverns into a State prison; their occupation for this purpose, being regarded as a temporary thing. The confining of convicts having been begun, it was continued; and this being found very inconvenient, the General Assembly, in 1790, passed an act, establishing Newgate prison as a permanent State prison, and providing for the erection of suitable buildings. At the same time, they appointed three overseers or trustees of the prison, authorized to take the charge and direction of the institution. In pursuance of this authority, the trustees erected a wooden paling, enclosing about half an acre of ground, within

which was the principal cavern; they also erected a brick building directly over this cavern, into which there is an avenue from the back room in this building. Underneath the basement floor in this room, and directly over the cavern, there are two strong rooms built of stone; in these rooms, the prisoners are usually kept when they are not employed, and it is not thought necessary, that they should be confined in the cavern. Within a few years past, there has been an extensive work shop, and other buildings erected; and also a substantial stone wall, enclosing the cavern buildings and one acre of ground. This wall is twelve feet high, three feet thick at its base, and one and a half at the top.

The principal cavern is about 26 feet in depth at its entrance, which is a perpendicular descent through an aperture, stoned up square for the purpose. In this entrance, there is a large and strong ladder, resting upon the rock at the bottom, and made fast at the top, upon which the prisoners and others descend into the cavern. On reaching the bottom, you strike a smooth rock, having a gradual descent, upon the sides of which there are cavities sufficiently large to admit of small lodging rooms, which are built for the prisoners, on both sides of the main passage that leads through the area of the cavern. These rooms are built of wood and boards, and are sufficiently large to accommodate 20 men. After passing these rooms, you traverse a large cavern, enclosed on all sides by solid rock; dark, gloomy and horrible! At the extremity of this, there is a

well of water 80 feet deep, which communicates with the cavern, and affords to the tenants of this subterranean abode, a free circulation of air; although from the various windings of the avenues and other causes, it is not cold, even in the severest weather. And as strange as it may seem, it has been satisfactorily ascertained, that the mercury ranges eight degrees lower in the lodging apartments of the prisoners, in the warmest days in the summer, than it does in the coldest in the winter. This phenomenon is attributed to the circumstance, of the cavities in the rocks being stopped with snow, ice and frost in the winter, which prevents so free a circulation of air, as is enjoyed in the summer.

On the 18th of January 1811, at 8 o'clock A. M., the mercury stood in the cavern at 52 degrees; and in open air, as soon after as was practicable for a person to get up from the cavern, (which could not have exceeded five minutes,) it fell to one degree below 0. On the 17th of June, (mid-day,) the mercury stood in the cavern at 50° 10", and in the open air at 76°. This cavern has been remarkable for its healthfulness, which has usually been ascribed to certain supposed medicinal qualities in the rocks;

but it deserves consideration, whether it is not more probably owing to the uniform state of its atmosphere.

The keeper of the prison is appointed by the overseers or trustees, and is accountable to them for his conduct. He receives a regular salary of \$550 per annum; he draws no rations, but has certain perquisites; he is allowed 1 sergeant, 2 corporals and 17 privates as a guard, for the security of the prisoners. The pay of the sergeant is \$12 67 per month; that of the corporals \$11 34; and that of the privates \$10. They are all entitled to rations, and the privates receive a uniform suit of clothes, and the sergeant and corporals an allowance as an equivalent therefor.

The total expenses of the institution and disbursements for stock in 1816, amounted to \$15,007 22. and the receipts } 3,428
the same year to }
leaving a balance
against the State of \$11,579 22.
but at this time there were nails and stock on hand; a part or all of the latter having been purchased, and a part of the former manufactured the same year, to an estimated value of - - - \$5,147 44.

HARTLAND.

HARTLAND is an elevated post township in the northeast corner of the county, 22 miles from Hartford; bounded north on Massachusetts line, east by Granby, south by Barkhamsted, and west by Colebrook in Litchfield county.

It contains an area of 34 square miles, being near 7 miles in length from east to west, and 5 in breadth from north to south. The township is hilly and mountainous, being embraced within the extensive granite range of mountain, which