

In 1865, with the war over, once again there was a move to make Feltonville a corporate town. A number of meetings were held in Union Hall and in the neighboring towns of Marlborough, Stow, Berlin, and Bolton. Petitions were sent to the General Court that a new town be incorporated from an area comprising the northern section of Marlborough with a bit from Stow. On March 19, 1866, the petitions were approved and Hudson was officially a town. It was named for Charles Hudson, a childhood resident who offered \$500 toward a library. Two years later, Bolton sold two square miles of land to the new town for \$10,000, making Hudson's area 11.81 square miles.

The future of the new town looked good. Industries, housed in modern factories, became more diversified and attracted new residents. Within twenty years five new schools, a poor farm, and a wonderful new Town Hall were built. Banks were established, and five volunteer fire companies protected the mostly wooden structures of home and industry.

On July 4, 1894, some small boys, playing with fire crackers at the rear of a factory on the banks of the mill pond started a fire that destroyed more than forty buildings in the heart of the town. But a new town rose like magic, a testament to the courage and will that has characterized the citizens since Hudson's inception.



Town Hall,
1872

The town hall was dedicated in 1872. It houses town offices and a large hall for civic meetings and entertainment. It has housed a library, banking room, schoolroom, and district court.

Hudson Historical Society

Hudson Historical Society—founded in 1916

Hudson Historical
Society

**M e m b e r s h i p
I n f o r m a t i o n**



First Settled in 1698

Incorporated in 1866

The Story of a New England Town

Hudson, a south Middlesex County town of more than 18,000 residents situated on the second waterfall of the Assabet River, became a town in 1866. The story of Hudson began in 1698 with the arrival of John Barnes, a settler. Barnes was granted an acre of the Indian Plantation recently added to Marlborough's acreage. There, on the north bank of the Assabet River, he built a grist mill. Later he added a saw mill and bridged the river so that the road might continue to Lancaster. Lancaster, at that time, reached almost to Wood Square.

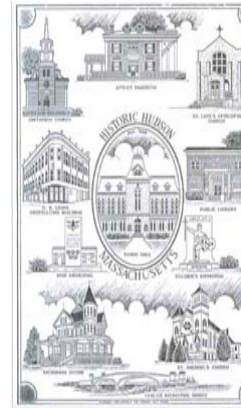
The next 125 years brought slow, steady growth to this section of Marlborough, known as The Mills. Several small industries huddled close to the mill area, while stretching to the north and east were a number of large farms. In the early years, relations with the Indians were very good, but as more and more land was taken from them by the settlers, they tried to take back their land and drive out the settlers.

In June 1743, Samuel Witt, John Hapgood, and others living in the old Indian Plantation petitioned the General Court that their land be set off as a distinct parish



Shoes and box produced in Hudson.

or town, claiming that "it is vastly fatiguing to attend meeting." The Court refused. Samuel Witt later served as a member of the Committees of Correspondence during the Revolution. On April 19, 1775 when word came of the British march to Concord and Lexington, several men from the Hudson area joined their Minute Men companies and marched to Cambridge to contain the British soldiers after their retreat.



Hudson Throw for sale.

By the mid-1800's, the little community now called itself Feltonville, after its wealthiest and most popular merchant. The community boasted a post office and hotel and was linked to Boston by stage coach routes that went by way of Cox Street to Sudbury and then east to the city.

When the 1850's brought the mixed blessings of steam power and railroads to the village, factories popped up everywhere. By 1860 there were seventeen shoe or shoe-related industries. Immigrants from Ireland and French Canada were coming to join descendants of early settlers working at the 975 jobs available in the local plants.

When the call to arms came in 1861, Feltonville citizens were ready, for they were a population of ardent abolitionists. Several local homes were stations in the Underground Railway, including the Goodale Home on Chestnut Street and the Curley Home (then called Rice Farm) on Brigham Street. Many young men went away to fight and 25 died for the Union cause.

Hudson Historical Society

Membership Application

The Hudson Historical Society is organized for the purpose of stimulating and perpetuating an active interest in all historical subjects by collecting and preserving objects, acquiring information and conducting research pertaining to the Town of Hudson, including its earliest settlement. Any person wishing to join the society, whether a resident or non-resident of Hudson, is welcome to join. Dues are \$10 per person, or \$15 per family per year.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Application and check should be mailed to:

Hudson Historical Society & Museum

Hudson Mill Business Center

43 Broad Street, 4th Floor

Hudson, MA 01749

Hudson Historical Society—founded in 1916

The Society meets the last Tuesday of the month, September through April (excluding December) at 7:30 PM in the First Federated Church Hall. The museum is open Tuesdays, 2-4 PM, and the first Saturday of the month from 10-12 Noon.