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August 9, 1981

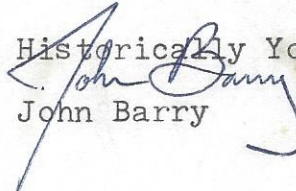
Susan J. Lisk
Curator
Porter-Phelps-Huntington Foundation, Inc.
Forty Acres
130 River Drive
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Dear Susan:

Enclosed please find a photocopy of "The Ministries of Enoch and Daniel Huntington," which forms Chapter III of my senior thesis, "The Starrs, Huntingtons, and Alsops of Middletown, Connecticut: A Study in Family and Community, 1650 to 1830." The thesis in its entirety is currently filed in the Honors College at Wesleyan University, and will be moved for permanent storage to the Wesleyan Archives in the Fall of 1982.

(p. 103) → I hope that you find the passages on Dan Huntington interesting, and I am sorry that I didn't get around to sending you this piece until now. It has been a very busy year for me. Perhaps you could put the chapter on file in the Foundation's manuscript collection -- future Huntington researchers might find it of some use. By the way, I should mention that I did not mean to cast any aspersions on Dan Huntington by referring to him as a "success-oriented professional." If anything, his activities reflected the temper of an age in which the world was beginning to move faster and faster, and the era of Jacksonian individualism was just around the corner.

If you have any questions about the piece, please feel free to write. I hope things continue to go well with your work in Hadley.

Historically Yours,

John Barry

FROM "THE STARRS, HUNTINGTONS, AND ALSOPS OF MIDDLETOWN,
CONNECTICUT: A STUDY IN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY, 1650 TO 1850," -77-
BY JOHN BARRY. HISTORY THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY, APRIL, 1981.

CHAPTER III

THE MINISTRIES OF ENOCH AND DANIEL HUNTINGTON

In seventeenth and early eighteenth century Connecticut, the Congregational minister occupied the center of a religious community which included the majority of his fellow townspeople. Religion played an integral role in their everyday lives: dissent was outlawed, moral laxity was frowned upon, and church meetings were generally well attended. The minister's followers looked to him to promote secular as well as spiritual harmony among them. With the passage of time, however, population growth, doctrinal disagreement, and the spread of dissent disrupted Connecticut's religious societies. The demands of an expanding market economy made it increasingly difficult for men and women to order their secular activities in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel. In response to this tension, they steadily freed the management of their worldly affairs from the constraints of religious doctrine. By the end of the eighteenth century, Congregational ministers no longer occupied the center of spiritual and secular life within their pastoral jurisdictions, and began to understand and conduct themselves accordingly.

Enoch Huntington served as minister of Middletown's First Congregational Church from 1762 to 1809. Daniel Huntington, his second cousin, once removed, succeeded him in the latter year and served until 1816. Together, their ministries

spanned an era from before the Revolution through the War of 1812, and carried the First Church through some of its most trying years. As members of the established clergy, both men shared in the advantages which such a position could afford, yet also bore the brunt of rising anti-clerical sentiment in Middletown. Enoch and Dan Huntington performed the disheartening task of leading the congregation when church attendance was at a record low and, as family men, suffered financial hardship in the care of a struggling society.

If their ministerial experiences were similar in these respects, though, their perceptions of their roles as professional clergymen were not. Whereas Enoch Huntington strongly identified with his parish and the community of his spiritual charges, Dan Huntington allied himself with a translocal, professional community of learned men and ministers. The Middletown pastorate was Enoch's first charge, and he held it until his death. Dan Huntington was thirty-five years younger than his predecessor and earned twice his salary, yet abandoned the Middletown parish after only seven years of service.

Enoch Huntington was born in Scotland Society, Windham, Connecticut in 1739, the sixth son of Nathaniel Huntington, a farmer and clothier. Nathaniel Huntington was a leading Windham Old Light, and raised his children in an atmosphere

of devout religiosity. In 1732, the earliest meetings of the Scotland First Society were held at the Huntington home, and Nathaniel soon donated the land upon which the First Church was built.¹ He was concerned with questions of spiritual doctrine, for in 1735 he volunteered testimony against the religious views of one Robert Breck, who was about to be ordained in the ministry. Breck did not believe in the infallibility of the Divine and Huntington, a devout Calvinist, felt obliged to testify to his heresy.²

The Windham Huntingtons were a prominent family in eighteenth century Connecticut, for many of them held positions of leadership in Church and State. Of Enoch's eight siblings, two were graduates of Yale and three pursued careers in the ministry. His brothers Nathaniel Jr. and Joseph became Congregational ministers in Windsor and Coventry, respectively. Brother Jonathan was a self-taught physician and preacher, and sister Sybbel married the Reverend John Eells of Glastonbury. Samuel Huntington left the cooper's trade to enter the legal profession, became a successful politician, and ultimately served as Governor of Connecticut. Eliphalet Huntington was the only one of Enoch's brothers to remain a Windham resident. Taking over the family farm in 1767, Eliphalet lived in Scotland Society until his death in 1799. Enoch was one of the youngest members of this highly successful family

and, not surprisingly, he sought to emulate his elders.³

He aspired to a career in the ministry and, in the Fall of 1755, entered Yale to train for the pulpit. On the class list (which was ranked according to the social status of the students' parents) Enoch was placed thirteenth out of forty-nine freshmen, indicating that his family was relatively well-regarded by the officers of the College.⁴ In the 1750s, Yale was a bastion of Calvinist conservatism under the administration of president Thomas Clap. In The Religious Constitution of Colleges, Clap wrote in 1754,

Colleges, are Religious Societies, of a Superior Nature to all others. For whereas Parishes, are Societies, for training up the common people; Colleges are Societies of Ministers, for training up Persons for the Work of the Ministry.⁵

Yale was the acknowledged training ground for the Colony's religious leaders, and Clap was committed to preserving its elitist, orthodox integrity. Students were educated in the Bible, the classics, and the sciences, and participated in frequent exercises in memorization and recitation. Despite this rigorous regimen, Enoch's diary for 1757 indicates that he occasionally found time to go swimming or make excursions into the surrounding countryside. In addition, he often socialized with fellow classmates, most of whom later became ministers or learned merchants. Huntington was a conscientious student, and was constantly seeking to improve himself

He was also troubled by his moral condition. For example, in July of 1757 he wrote,

Got up this morning while ye bells were ringing and went to prayers -- I have had this day some bad discourse and thoughts unbecoming ye Sabbath. O! may I reform.

Enoch appears to have "reformed" and upon graduating in 1759, he was awarded the Berkeley Scholarship for his academic efforts. Spiritual devotion and a deep sense of responsibility had been the keynotes of his formative years, and would later reflect themselves in his ministerial career.

With the Berkeley Scholarship, Enoch stayed on as a tutor at the College for two more years. In August of 1761 he was offered the pastorship of the First Church in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. This was shortly followed by an invitation from the First Church in Middletown, whose pastor, the Reverend William Russell, had recently died. In December Huntington decided to accept the offer made by the Middletown Society for, according to one historian, "this call appeared more providential."⁷ The First Church in Middletown was one of the most prestigious assignments in the Colony, and this probably influenced Enoch's decision. In addition, it is quite likely that the Pittsfield Society did not offer him a large enough salary. Soon, even the Middletown pastorship was to prove unsatisfactory to him in this regard.

Huntington was ordained minister of the First Congregational Church in January of 1762. In the early years of his ministry he was a dynamic preacher, especially well-known for his introduction of choral singing into the church services. In the summer of 1771, John Adams passed through Middletown and noted in his diary,

Went to Meeting in the Morning, and tumbled into the first Pew I could find -- heard a pretty sensible, Yalensian, Connecticuttensian Preacher...Went to Meeting...in the Afternoon, and heard the finest Singing, that ever I heard in my Life, the front and side Galleries were crowded with rows of Lads and Lasses, who performed all the parts in the Utmost Perfection.⁸

In addition to his musical interests, Enoch was also an amateur scientist of sorts, and his diaries abound in detailed weather reports. After a visit to Middletown in 1789, Ezra Stiles recorded, "Rev. Mr. Huntington...went and shewed me another Indian stone Gd. [God] about half a mile East of his Meet^g-house...".⁹ During the Revolution, Huntington was an active supporter of the rebel cause and published an anti-Tory sermon on "the happy effects" of colonial union against Great Britain. Throughout his life, he maintained numerous friendships with members of his parish, leading Federalists, former Yale classmates, and people from his native Windham. In his diary for 1786, he recorded visits to no less than 150 different parishioners and acquaintances. On pages 83 through 85 are excerpted entries from this diary, which will provide

EXCERPTED ENTRIES FROM ENOCH HUNTINGTON'S DIARY
FOR JANUARY 1 TO NOVEMBER 3, 1786

- January 2: Goes to Mr. Hart's mill to buy five bushels of wheat, and to Mr. Brooks for three pounds of honey.
- 4: Visits Col. Johnson's mother "with a cancer prevailing fast upon her," takes his wife and Mrs. Young by sleigh to Lt. Tryon's house.
- 6: Takes his wife and Mrs. Young to Newfield.
- 12: Travels to South Farms.
- 16: Attends City Meeting, dines with Mayor Hamlin.
- 21: "Last night Enoch [Jr.] hurt his hand...slipping upon the ice in attempting to get some water at the well."
- 27: Settles accounts with the Society treasurer.
- 29: "Pretty full meeting especially P.M. No Episcopal Chh. to day."
- 31: "Lt. Governour sets homeward. Superiour Court sits."
- Feb. 1: Dines with the Court.
- 17: "Bought tea at Mr. Richard's."
- 19: "At noon my wife informs me Dr. Dickinson informed her [that] Mr. Hubbard had been at Hartford, & heard broth^r Sam^l [Samuel Huntington] was taken in in a fit Thursday before last going from the school houses & remained senseless the last that was heard."
- 21: Society meeting.
- 29: "Went to Durham & preach'd Dr. Goodrich's lecture."
- March 5: "Many people applying for orders to turn rates."
- 8: Travels to New Haven, stays at Dr. Goodrich's.
- 9: Returns home, stays at Dr. Dana's.
- 13: "Town meeting to day."
- 15: "This day & last night 21 sail of vessels come up the river, the first arrivals since the river broke up."
- 22: "Bo't sugar of John Paddock & s."
- 23: Rides to South Farms.
- April 2: Journeys to Upper Houses.
- 5: "A transient person comes in the evening, & desires to lodge, tells me he was cast away beginning of winter in Chesapeake, with one Capt Caldwell wn [when] 20 persons perished, & six were saved. Had been pressed 3 times on board a man of war -- had sailed with Capt Hughes from New Haven & c."

ENTRIES FROM HUNTINGTON'S DIARY FOR 1786, CONTINUED

- April 6: "Gen'l Parsons returned home yesterday from his western journey as a commissioner to treat with the Indians."
10: Society treasurer's meeting.
12: "14 or 15 sail of vessels came up the river at once this day, and wr [were] together in sight between the streights and the city. This day the printer was with me to decide the Proxy Sermon might be printed."
13: "Began to plough & work in the garden. Lm. Sizer, Jonth. Roberts & Tim. Brooks worked for me."
18: Society meeting at the meeting house.
19: Public fast.
28: "Plant peas, parsnips, beets, and carrots."
- May 1: Dines with the troops at Middlefield.
11: Rides to the general election at Hartford.
16: Travels to Meriden.
23: Goes to meet with the ordaining council at Meriden.
- June 3: "Squire Devotion [Reverend Ebenezer Devotion] dined at my house on his way to New Haven."
5: Samuel Huntington visits.
7: Meets with the ordaining council at Middlefield.
10: "Gov'r [Samuel Huntington] dined at my house, rode with him to the upper houses."
11: "No bell rung at the Episcopal Church. Some belonging there at meeting with us."
22: "Mr. Boardman, Parsons, & my brothr Dr. Huntington & Wife at my house. Mr. Adams of Shrewsbury in the evening."
- July 13: "Went to Middlefield to attend the church meeting & council."
15: Goes to Meriden to "exchange with Mr. Willard."
25: Dines with the Superior Court.
- August 7: "Sent to Saml Goodrich by his son who came to borrow my horse 5/2 which I owed him for 1 lb. tea & 2 brooms lately had of him."
12: "Rode to New Haven...waited upon the Presidt [Ezra Stiles]."
- Sept. 1: Travels to the Upper Houses.

ENTRIES FROM HUNTINGTON'S DIARY FOR 1786, CONTINUED

- Sept. 8: "Went fishing with Elisha Atkins."
13: "Attend corporation [Yale Corporation] business."
17: "Bp. Seabury, it is said, is at the Episcopal Chh. today."
22: "Towards night took a walk with my son up as far as the river beyond John Wetmore's."
- October 3: Society meeting at Westfield.
16: "Billy Hobby began to come to study here."
20: "Went to John Ward's: left a bag of grain as I did yesterday at Isaac Hubbard's."
27: "Dr. Gray came in from New Haven."
- Nov. 2: "Snow mostly gone in the streets. Billy Plum at my house in the evening."

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some idea of the range of his activities at the height of his career.¹⁰

In the early 1780s, Huntington was afflicted with a vocal disorder which permanently hampered his ability to speak.¹¹ It is difficult to gauge the seriousness of this ailment, but it does not appear to have stopped him from delivering weekly sermons or kept him from the duties of his office until much later in life. One biographer notes, "His sermons, for years, were whispered from the pulpit, yet so great was his popularity that the people would not assent to his dismissal."¹²

Huntington's experiences in Windham and at Yale imbued him with a traditionalistic understanding of the responsibilities and duties of a Congregational minister. Throughout his career, he saw himself not merely as a minister to the Congregationalists in Middletown but, like a seventeenth century prelate, as a minister to the entire town. He endeavored to bring as many people into the fold as possible, and in the church records he kept careful track of the number of people he baptized, bringing his career total up to date at the end of each calendar year. Unlike a seventeenth century minister, however, he was cautiously tolerant of sinners and dissenters in order to increase the numbers of his flock. The records of the First Church reveal that Enoch was quick to forgive the sins of his parishioners in order to ensure their continued

attendance. Moreover, it was during his ministry that the Church voluntarily released the Separatists from First Society tithes and extended its offer of friendship to leading Anglican Philip Mortimer. Enoch firmly believed that human interdependence and communal harmony were necessary for man's happiness in this world and the next. In a sermon delivered in 1776 he emphasized "the wisdom and great necessity of mutual forbearance and condescension towards one another" and wrote,

in all bodies of men and civil communities whether great or small, whether considered as kingdoms, provinces, cities, towns, or still lesser societies, even particular private houses, and families, their strength and stability is in proportion to their union; and disunion and division among them have the most fatal and destructive tendency.¹³

Similarly, in 1797 he preached,

To cultivate undissembled love is equally incumbent upon all, in point of both duty and interest...The tendency of it is happy, the effects of it glorious in all respects; its influence blessed upon private, personal, and social good, forever durable, and lasting as eternity.¹⁴

Huntington's desire to cultivate "union" and "undissembled love" was fundamentally virtuous. He and his professional peers erred, however, in their attempts to spread this spiritual message through stringent ecclesiastical mandates and the instrument of party.

Richard J. Purcell has written that, "Up to 1815 ...

Connecticut's preachers were politicians and her politicians preachers."¹⁵ If Enoch Huntington was a professional minister, he was also concerned with political affairs and he supported the Federalist platform. His elder brother Samuel signed the Declaration of Independence and served both as president of the Continental Congress from 1779 to 1781 and as Governor of Connecticut from 1786 until his death in 1796. Enoch was elected a member of the Yale Corporation in 1780, and held this post until 1808. As a member of the Corporation, he had a vested interest in Federalist hegemony (although he vigorously denied any associations with party), for the Federalists contributed to the support of the College with state funds.¹⁶ In addition, this position gave him the opportunity to socialize with many of Connecticut's leading ministers and magistrates.

Accordingly, Huntington's views on political matters were highly prejudiced. He believed that the existing order promoted social good and, although he exercised tolerance, he could not (or would not) understand the rationale of the dissenter. He may have feared that, were the payment of Congregational Church tithes made voluntary, he would no longer be able to support his family. In 1786 he delivered a sermon on "political wisdom" to the freemen of Middletown, in which he praised the union of Church and State. He lectured,

Religion is the only solid basis of a just, equitable, and happy government, and that which alone ensures the prosperity of a people...

All intrigues of deceit, all deviations from truth and justice are totally, and equally, opposed to public welfare and private bliss, and where indulged in inevitably sap the foundation of all their happy prospects...¹⁷

In defining "just government" and "prosperity" in these narrow, religious terms, Huntington alienated the very disbelievers whom he was trying to draw back into the fold. By the 1780s, the authoritarian precepts which had governed spiritual and secular life in seventeenth century Middletown were grossly inadequate to the task.

Table F shows the average number of annual baptisms in the First Church at five year intervals from 1761 to 1815.¹⁸ As the table indicates, there was a precipitous decline in the baptismal rate beginning in 1796, suggesting that active church membership was also dropping rapidly at this time. Although it is tempting to link this decline to Huntington's loss of his oratory powers, it actually reflects a more general trend in diminishing church membership. Between 1761 and 1795, the average number of annual baptisms at the First Church remained remarkably constant, averaging about sixty-five per year. Within this same period, the baptismal rate at the Episcopal Church was also relatively constant, averaging about twenty-five per year. In 1815, Middletown

Notes: a. This average may actually have been slightly higher. From August 19 to November 18, 1770 Huntington was suffering from an unknown illness, and made no entries in the baptismal record.

b. This average does not include the baptismal figure for 1809, when the record was interrupted by Huntington's death.

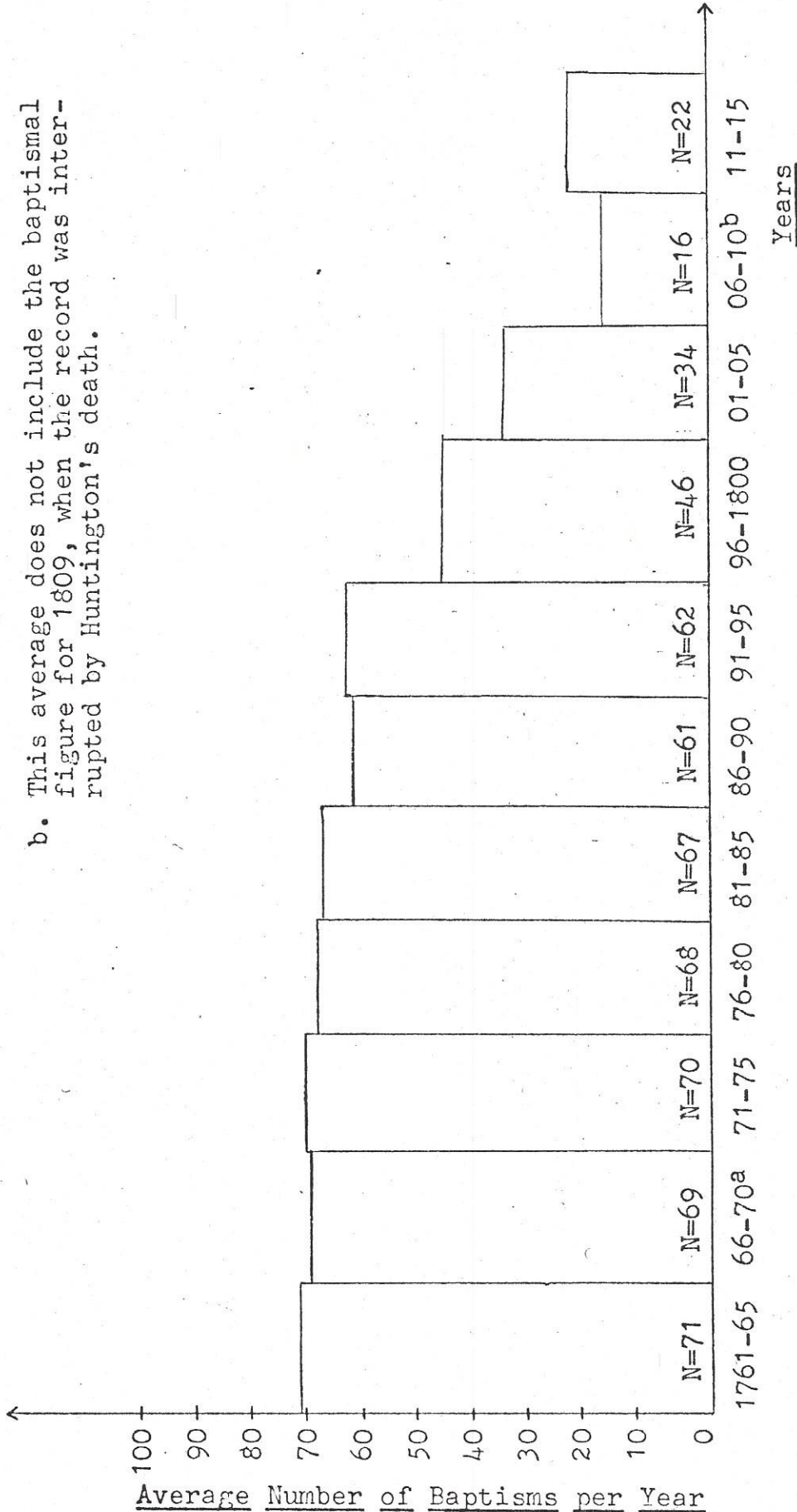


TABLE F: BAR GRAPH OF AVERAGE ANNUAL BAPTISMAL RATE IN THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AT FIVE YEAR INTERVALS, 1761-1815

Congregationalists outnumbered Episcopalians by a ratio of three-to-one, so these figures seem roughly proportional to church membership rolls.¹⁹ Between 1795 and 1810, the average number of annual baptisms in Huntington's congregation dropped from sixty-five to only sixteen, while Episcopal Church records reflect a similar decline.²⁰ These drops do not appear to have been directly related to changes in the size of the local population. Although the decline in the baptismal rate between 1790 and 1800 parallels a decline in population from 5375 to 5001, when the baptismal rate reached its lowest ebb between 1800 and 1810 Middletown's population was growing from 5001 to 5382.²¹

Near the turn of the nineteenth century, attendance in Connecticut's traditional houses of worship dropped sharply. Many were offended by the pro-Federalist stance of Congregational and Anglican ministers; many more simply no longer felt compelled to lead religious lives. The Toleration Act of 1784 had made it considerably easier to dissent from established religion. In Middletown, great numbers of Congregationalists and Anglicans were lost to the newly formed Methodist Society, and between 1812 and 1816 the Strict Society literally disappeared as its followers defected to the Baptist Church. The Methodist Church offered its communicants the spiritual comforts of Arminian philosophy, while the Baptist

Society attracted members with its more democratic ecclesiastical organization.²²

Despite these disappointments, Huntington continued to serve his remaining parishioners faithfully. After 1800, he paid particularly close attention to the activities of Republican members of his congregation. In March of 1803 he penned,

At breakfast was the first yt, ever I heard Capt. Vandeurson had been affronted at my preachings pointed against him, Col. Starr, and Mr. Wolcott: not am I able to conjecture what sermon, nor when, nor from what expressions.²³

Huntington did not want to offend Jeffersonians Van Deurson, Starr (perhaps Nathan Starr?), and Wolcott, but wished to return them to the party of their fathers. In his diaries he noted any contacts he made with them as well as any appearances they made at church meetings. He also noted visits of better known Republicans like Pierrepont Edwards. Enoch hoped that these radicals would be won over to his side, and that political faction and religious dissent would give way to a reassertion of the Puritan social order. In 1806 he visited the graveyard where many of his old friends and former parishioners were buried and wrote,

When I first came to Middletown, as a candidate for settlement it was the first time I had ever seen the place. I had heard of it as a very respectable & peaceable place. My late very good friend, the Hon. ble Titus Hosmer esqr, now deceased, was then settled here, &...gave me a very good account of the place. According to his account, I found the circumstances of the place,

& their union & political happiness, under the conduct of their leading characters, who had, & very highly deserved their fullest confidence.

However I soon perceived a spirit of ambition for rule & posts of honour, which could never be gratified, till it should obtain the place of the leading characters which were in its way...

Two seasons of squirmings, I have seen, in which under religious pretenses, & the cover of Christian love & discipline, a spirit most notoriously opposed to the whole genius and conversation of the Gospel hath been acted out...Such a spirit has done, & is now doing incalculable mischief. The peace & happiness of Society & Churches hath been overthrown...Nothing but the interposition of Heaven will arrest it. This I know will be done in God's Time, which is the best Time.²⁴

In his old age Huntington knew that he was one of the last surviving proponents of a vanishing social order, yet he died convinced that its defenders would ultimately -- if only on the Last Day -- defeat the agents of "incalculable mischief."

The acquisition of cash and capital was just as important to members of the clergy as it was to members of other occupational groups. In 1764, Huntington married Mary Gray of Windham, who eventually bore him two sons and six daughters. Enoch could not bequeath the Middletown ministry to his children, so he was forced to seek other ways to provide for their future support. Although he was related to men of wealth and power, his ministerial obligations prevented him from using these associations for personal gain. Instead, his affiliations with Yale helped secure college educations for his sons, and his social status helped at least three of his children marry

into wealthy families.

When the First Society offered Huntington the Middletown pastorate, he was promised £350 in settlement, £110 annual salary, and "all of his firewood annually."²⁵ By 1767 this sum proved inadequate for his support, and he was forced to petition the Church for additional funds to free himself from debt.²⁶ Throughout his career, he was occasionally given small amounts of money to ease his financial situation, but in forty-seven years the Society never raised his basic salary. In part, this was a reflection of the difficulties the Church encountered in the tithe collection. Many members of the parish were too poor (or at least claimed to be) to pay the annual tax. In addition, many potential tithepayers had been lost to Middletown's outlying parishes and her dissenting sects.

In accepting the First Society's salary offer, Enoch had grossly underestimated his future expenses. On March 6, 1762, he purchased five acres of land in Middletown from Constant and Mary Bozworth of Windham for £174. He was probably more comfortable doing business with these residents of his hometown, who had recently inherited the land from their grandfather, John Ward, a native of Middletown. Remarkably, though, Huntington's first land purchase cost him almost 75% of his first year's earnings. The Bozworth purchase was followed in early 1763 by three more lots costing over £126 -- more

than half his second year's income. In acquiring this land Enoch had seriously overextended himself, for in the summer of 1763 he was forced to sell the Bozworth acres to a Mr. James Brown for one hundred pounds, taking an apparent loss of seventy-four pounds.²⁷ In reselling this lot he was probably paying off a debt to the latter, from whom he regularly borrowed money.²⁸ Between 1764 and 1770, Huntington purchased less than eighty pounds worth of land in Middletown. Evidently, his acquisitive tastes in this area had been soured by experience.

To supplement his salary, Enoch prepared young men for the entrance examinations at Yale. Among his pupils were such future luminaries as Timothy Dwight. Ironically, with the death of Yale president Ezra Stiles in 1795, Dwight was chosen to succeed Stiles over Huntington, his former mentor. Enoch also made extra money by producing crops and other goods for sale to local merchants. In November of 1767, for example, he consigned a number of agricultural products for sale or trade abroad.²⁹ In 1775, he exchanged thirty-four gallons of wine with Reuben Plum for an equal value in labor. His annual income was also increased by gifts of food and clothing which he regularly received from members of the Church.³⁰

Late in life, Huntington reflected on his financial struggles with mixed feelings of anger and regret. On his

sixty-sixth birthday in December of 1805 he wrote a message to his children, which he intended them to read posthumously:

It would have given me great pleasure to have been able to have left you much more. But providence hath otherwise ordered my affairs. I have entertained, & still entertain an inexpressible contempt of that avarice that grasps at money as its principal object and covets it for its own sake. Young & inexperienced as I was when I was first settled, I should have hurt my own feelings & cited (if I had surmised to the contrary) directly under the influence of gross suspicion (had I then been suspicious) of the veracity of numerous, reiterated offers & protestations of a sufficient ample support for me and my family from the ready mind of the people whom I have loved and served, & still love and serve in the Gospel Ministry.³¹

Huntington believed that it was his congregation's responsibility, if not their obligation, to provide him with an adequate income for the support of his family of ten. He distinguished himself from those who sought wealth "for its own sake," and felt that a certain level of material comfort was necessary if he was to conduct his office with any semblance of dignity. In particular, he was angered by the Society's attempts after 1803 to collect money loaned to him in past years.³² He wrote,

When I mortgaged my house & one acre of land, I promised to Col. Hamlin [Middletown Mayor Jabez Hamlin], who was long treasurer of the Society...to have such a sum annually taken from my salary as would not only pay the interest, but in a certain number of years answer the principal. Col. Hamlin replied you cannot spare any of your salary. How can you do without it? Neither that gentleman nor...the principal and oldest members of the Society, ever so much as [suggested that] they wished me to pay any part of it, much less to increase the mortgage by an accumulation of interest.³³

Unfortunately, neither the church records nor Huntington's diaries offer any clues as to which members of the Society initiated the efforts to collect on his mortgage. It is unlikely that this action was politically motivated but, rather, it seems to have been a reflection of the congregation's changing attitudes toward ministerial support.

In Huntington's last years of service his health was declining, and he was unable to perform his duties with any regularity. At times, he felt so sick that he entered cryptic Latin messages in his diary, pleading to God for a swift end to his mortal suffering.³⁴ In 1805, the Church began searching for a new pastor to assist him.³⁵ Given this state of affairs, it is not difficult to imagine the parishioners' frustration. What is more difficult to understand, however, are the steps they took against their aging pastor. The Society appears to have adopted the heartless but pragmatic view that it would be wise to collect the money Huntington officially owed the Church while he was still alive. The Society's members decision was not tempered by any emotional attachments to the man who had served them for over forty years, but was made with financial concerns in mind. If Enoch Huntington was born into an age when ministers were treated with a sense of duty and respect, he died in an age when they were often viewed as self-serving and overly privileged.

Before his death Huntington ordered that his estate be divided at the discretion of his eight children, with the provision that his eldest son Enoch Jr. was to inherit the family portraits, and that his daughters Lydia and Mehetable were to retain equal shares of his house and land so long as they remained unmarried.³⁶ After their mother's death in 1803, Lydia and Mehetable had remained with their father to assist him with his daily activities, and were thus accorded this special share of his estate. Unfortunately, their father's bequest probably proved more of a burden than a gift. In March of 1810, the First Church demanded that the sisters pay the \$750 outstanding on Enoch's mortgage to the Society within three years.³⁷

With the exception of Mehetable, all of Huntington's children eventually married. His eldest son Enoch Jr. married Sarah Ward, who was the stepdaughter of Middletown Mayor Asher Miller. Daughter Mary married Matthew Talcott Russell, the grandson of the Reverend William Russell, who had preceded Enoch Sr. as minister of the First Church. Russell was a Yale graduate and a wealthy Middletown lawyer, and served as Deacon in the First Church from 1798 until his death in 1828. In 1813, Lydia Huntington married local manufacturer Simeon North who, like Nathan Starr, was engaged in the production of arms for the Federal Government. Of the elder Huntington's remaining sons and daughters-in-law, relatively little is known. His daughter

Lucy married Simeon House of Hebron, Connecticut, and daughter Martha married Edward Hulbert of Middletown. Esther Huntington married Benjamin Rosenkrantz of Waterford, and youngest son Samuel married Mary Johnston of Middletown.³⁸

The respective fortunes of Enoch Huntington Jr. and his brother Samuel provide a study in contrast. Enoch Huntington Jr. was graduated from Yale in 1785 and awarded the Berkeley Scholarship. Subsequently, he returned to Middletown to open up a law practice. In many respects he is an enigmatic figure, and the reasons why he pursued a legal career instead of training for the ministry are a matter of pure speculation. Perhaps he was discouraged from the latter after witnessing his father's financial struggles. Huntington Sr. appears to have approved of his son's career choice, and was probably especially glad that he joined the Connecticut bar. As the established clergy lost its religious following, it became increasingly aware of the legal profession's power to maintain social order and the status quo. The Middletown tax records suggest that Enoch enjoyed a steady increase in his fortunes until 1804, when he was assessed the considerable sum of \$402. By 1810, however, his business was on the wane, and this downward trend continued until his death sixteen years later.³⁹ The causes of his failure are unknown. Although he was probably an active Federalist early in his career, it is doubtful that he was foolish

enough to pursue this conservative line after the Republican victory of 1818. However, his career may have been tainted by Federalist associations, and more liberally minded clients perhaps chose to take their business elsewhere. It is also possible that his failure simply resulted from his decision to remain in Middletown during its years of commercial decline.

At first, he appears to have greeted this turn of fate optimistically, for his extant correspondence is generally cheerful in tone. In 1817 he wrote William E. Hulbert (a relative of his brother-in-law Edward) in Hudson, New York on the promising prospects for a "snuff merchant" in Middletown:

I condole with you at the decrease of snuff-takers and you still have my wishes for your success in business. If you would come here and open up a snuff store I have no doubt but you would make an independent fortune for you can hardly ever go into a Grocery Store here without having an old woman say, "I want to get a cent's worth of snuff." With these advantages in mind, I think you cannot fail to make us a visit shortly if you are not wholly blind to your own interest.⁴⁰

Hulbert may well have heeded his cousin's advice, for he later settled in Middletown and married Enoch Jr.'s daughter Mary in 1833. In April of 1818 Enoch Jr, urged his eldest son, who was at Yale, not to worry about the costs of tuition and living expenses in New Haven. By the following August, however, he had only prayers to offer.⁴¹ Enoch Huntington III managed to complete his Yale education, but his father died intestate and insolvent in 1826 at the age of fifty-eight. The Middletown

Court of Probate valued his estate at \$78.86 and ordered it sold to help cover his debts.⁴²

Samuel Huntington also entered the legal profession, but achieved markedly different results. Fifteen years younger than Enoch Jr., he was graduated from Yale in 1800 and, like his brother and his father before him, was chosen the Berkeley scholar of his class. While in New Haven, he lived for a time with his father's friend Simeon Baldwin, who was a well-known Federalist lawyer and judge.⁴³ After graduation, Samuel studied law with his brother, but soon decided against pursuing a career in Middletown. In 1806 he moved to Waterford, New York to establish his own practice, and in 1825 he relocated in Troy. By the time of his death in 1854, he was a wealthy and respected judge.⁴⁴ Unlike his elder brother, Samuel took advantage of the opportunities which his profession offered for geographical mobility, and met with far greater success.

Ironically, Enoch Huntington Jr.'s son Enoch III rejected his Presbyterian heritage and became a minister in the Episcopal Church. It was not that unusual for Old Lights to convert to Episcopalianism, though, for like Old Lights, Anglicans placed more emphasis on religious and moral order than on spiritual conviction. After graduating from Yale in 1821 he moved to Philadelphia, where he was ordained in 1825. In 1827 he wrote his sister Mary who was living with her uncle Samuel at Troy,

I wish you to attend the Episcopal Church. It is politic as you have no objection to it...Keep clear of the disgusting puritanism rant and fanaticism of Troy Presbyterians, men women and children were crazy with fanaticism when I was there and spreading infidelity throughout the village by their extravagances which they called religion.⁴⁵

Enoch Huntington III was appalled by the "puritanism and rant" which accompanied the Second Great Awakening, yet his grandfather probably would have welcomed such a revival twenty years earlier. Young Enoch's views were tempered by developments which he had witnessed in Connecticut after 1818. With the disestablishment of religion, the State's churches had not failed, but had enjoyed increased attendance as well as continued financial support. Moreover, the clergy had stopped making spectacles of themselves in political disputes. For Enoch III, the Second Great Awakening represented a noisy and unwelcome intrusion upon a new era of interdenominational tranquility.

The Reverend Daniel Huntington accepted the pastorship of the First Church in Middletown in August of 1809, two months after the death of his distant cousin Enoch Huntington Sr. The congregation may have sensed some reassuring familiarity in the continuation of the Huntington surname, but their new minister was not closely related to his predecessor, and his views respecting the ministration of the Gospel differed considerably from those of the late Enoch. Dan Huntington

was a highly mobile, success-oriented professional whose chief interests lay in the efficient management of his domestic and pastoral affairs. Born in Lebanon, Connecticut in 1774, he was the youngest child of William and Bethia Huntington. After graduating from Yale in 1794 he taught at Williams College for two years, returned to tutor at Yale until 1798, and then accepted the pastorship of the First Church in Litchfield, Connecticut. In 1801 he married Elizabeth Phelps of Hadley, Massachusetts, who had been introduced to him several years earlier by their mutual friend Timothy Dwight. As their family grew (they eventually had eleven children), Huntington found it increasingly difficult to live on his annual salary of four hundred dollars. In January of 1809 he left the Litchfield parish "for want of support."⁴⁶

If Enoch Huntington had been concerned with temporal affairs, Dan Huntington was obsessed with them. In accepting the eight hundred dollar salary offered him by the Middletown First Society he warned, "whether it will be a maintenance to a rising and expensive family, remains to be proved."⁴⁷ It is not clear why the Society offered him a salary twice as large as Enoch's but, as I indicated earlier, the Society does not appear to have been satisfied with the latter's services in his last years of life, and had even been willing to support a second, assistant pastor if one could have been had

for the right price. Dan Huntington was something of a status seeker, and he intended for his family to "rise" in affluence as well as size. In 1809 he described the Middletown parish to his father-in-law Charles Phelps,

The habits and manners of the people are my own; and those of this place, I can truly say, do not suffer in comparison with those of any other in Cont^t. The inhabitants are enlightened and sufficiently refined. Mr. Dana [Middletown lawyer and congressman Samuel W. Dana] & other men of the same magnitude are members of my congregation.⁴⁸

Although Dan Huntington's followers were "sufficiently refined," they were eventually unable to provide him with an income sufficient to his tastes.

Unlike Enoch Huntington, he does not appear to have been interested in raising crops or distilling liquor to supplement his salary. Like Enoch, however, he ran a boarding school to prepare students for admittance to Yale. On at least two occasions, he received cash gifts of one hundred dollars or more from wealthy parishioners.⁴⁹ He probably also earned a small amount by endorsing a book entitled Bird's Sermons, which was advertised in the Middlesex Gazette in 1814.⁵⁰ Despite these additional sources of income, Huntington requested to be dismissed from the Middletown pulpit in January of 1816, citing want of support and ill-health as his reasons for leaving.⁵¹ His memoirs recount, "I found my income did not meet the expenses of an increasing establishment, in the style

of a city life."⁵² Following his dismissal he moved to Hadley to assume the directorship of the Hopkins Academy. Three of his sons were educated at Harvard, and one at Amherst. He and his wife retired to her parents' farm where, presumably, they enjoyed all the comforts of a life in the country.

Although Dan Huntington preached a Calvinist rhetoric similar to that of his predecessor, he practiced quite a different policy with respect to his parishioners. Enoch Huntington had always extolled the virtues of the Puritan community, and had encouraged people to share in its spirit. Although he often preached "fire and brimstone," he conducted his office leniently, and tried to smooth over individual differences wherever possible. Dan Huntington, however, was a fervent evangelist, and banned the unregenerate from the church aisles.⁵³ In 1810 he lectured,

What have you to object, to evangelical religion, on the ground of reason? What can be more reasonable, I ask, my friends, than to attend to our condition as dying sinners; as accountable creatures; as immoral creatures...? ...You know, that all you say in derision of experimental religion...you say in bitterness of your hearts, and against your better judgement.⁵⁴

In this "evangelical," "experimental" spirit the First Church abandoned the Half-Way Covenant in 1813. In keeping with Huntington's new, strict policy the Society also voted in January of 1814 to appoint a committee "for the suppression of

improper conduct" during church meetings. The motion provided for several men to sit in the galleries every Sunday and report any disrespectful activity to the sheriff.⁵⁵ Dan Huntington was far more interested in running an orderly, pious congregation than he was in increasing its numbers.

There is some evidence to suggest that his departure from the First Church was not entirely related to his financial troubles and ill-health. Huntington was an ardent Federalist, and it is quite likely that his political views caused some friction within the parish after 1810. In addition, although many members of the Church approved of his ministerial style, others appear to have been quite averse to it. In November of 1814 the Huntingtons returned from a visit to Hadley to find that a ball was to be given in honor of Naval Captain Thomas MacDonough, who had recently won a celebrated victory over the British fleet on Lake Champlain. Elizabeth Huntington wrote her mother,

It was said nearly 1200 dollars had been subscribed [for the ball] and no pains or expense would be spared to render the entertainment brilliant -- Mr. H. felt the impropriety of it -- and thot it his duty to bear public testimony against it...his sermon was such as you would imagine nothing irritating but to those determined to go on in their own way -- numbers were offended -- and this morning an anonymous letter was found on our steps telling Mr. H. that his two sermons on the 18th would be a lasting disgrace to him & his & c. -- many on the contrary were highly delighted, and some withdrew their names from the ball subscription and presented the same sum... to the charitable society...⁵⁶

Evidently, not everyone in Huntington's parish was enamored of his evangelical leanings. In all probability, he found such public opposition to his preaching quite disconcerting, and his pastoral experience in Middletown appears to have been more frustrating than the historical record will reveal. After moving to Hadley in 1816, Dan Huntington abandoned the cloth and converted to Unitarianism.

Enoch and Dan Huntington are perhaps best understood as products, respectively, of pre- and post-Revolutionary Connecticut. Enoch Huntington was raised in the heart of an Old Light Society by devoutly religious parents, and received a conservative Yale education. During these formative years, he learned that it was the minister's duty to promote social as well as spiritual harmony and, in his own experience, he probably observed this to be true. Throughout his career, he demonstrated great love and concern for his spiritual charges, and attached more importance to his ministerial obligations than he did to his material wants. He perceived himself as a true "shepherd of his flock," and firmly believed that spiritual devotion was necessary for the conduct and guidance of secular activities. More than just a rhetorician, he subordinated the secular to the spiritual in his own life, and conducted his career accordingly.

Although Dan Huntington may have received an education

quite similar to Enoch's, he came of age at a time when men were increasingly separating secular activity from spiritual concerns. If his primary concern as a minister was to cultivate spiritual devotion, his primary goal as an educated professional was the attainment of personal success, and he tailored his career to accommodate these two objectives. He was occupationally as well as geographically mobile, and was just as content to work as a teacher as he was to serve as a pastor. As minister of the First Church, he does not appear to have become emotionally attached to his parishioners, but treated them with an air of professional detachment. With an eight hundred dollar annual salary and his additional sources of income, it is doubtful that he was in worse financial straits than his predecessor had been. Nevertheless, as a success-oriented professional, he felt compelled to abandon the Middletown pastorship in search of greater gain.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN NOTES:

- MHS = MIDDLESEX HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ARCHIVES COLLECTION, MIDDLETOWN -152-
CHS = CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ARCHIVES COLLECTION, HARTFORD
CSL = CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY, ARCHIVES COLLECTION, HARTFORD
MTCO = MIDDLETOWN TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
PPHF = PORTER-PHELPS - HUNTINGTON FOUNDATION, ARCHIVES COLLECTION, HADLEY

CHAPTER III

- ¹Connecticut Society of the Colonial Dames of America, "The Nathaniel Huntington House," no pagination.
- ²Testimony, Nathaniel Huntington against Robert Breck, 29 September 1735, CSL.
- ³E.B. Huntington, Genealogical Memoir of the Huntington Family, pp. 111-124.
- ⁴Yale University, Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates of Yale University, p. 124.
- ⁵Thomas Clap, The Religious Constitution of Colleges, p. 4.
- ⁶Enoch Huntington, Diary, 24 July 1757, MHS.
- ⁷Franklin B. Dexter, Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College, Vol. II, p. 594.
- ⁸John Adams, Diary of John Adams, Vol. II, p. 31.
- ⁹Ezra Stiles, Literary Diary, Vol. III, p. 354.
- ¹⁰Huntington's Diary for 1786 only contains entries for January 1 to November 3, 1786. CHS.
- ¹¹The earliest mention of Huntington's affliction appears at the end of his Diary for 1784. He closed the Diary by writing, "No grt [great] inward difficulty at my breast but what arises from speaking and straining to make a noise." CHS.
- ¹²E.B. Huntington, Genealogical Memoir, p. 123.
- ¹³Enoch Huntington, The Happy Effects of Union, pp. 11 and 56.
- ¹⁴Enoch Huntington, A Sermon, On the Celebration of the Festival of St. John the Baptist, p. 6.
- ¹⁵Richard J. Purcell, Connecticut in Transition, p. 206.
- ¹⁶On 30 May 1806, Huntington noted in his Diary, "For a Minister of the Gospel to enlist himself in a political party,... I think always was, & I hope always will be the abhorrence of my Soul." MHS.

- 17 Enoch Huntington, Political Wisdom, p. 18,
- 18 Data extracted from First Congregational Church Records, Series I, Vols. I, II, and III, CSL.
- 19 David D. Field, A Statistical Account of Middlesex County, p. 152.
- 20 Data extracted from Church of the Holy Trinity, Records 1750-1813, 1 Vol. and Records, 1750-1937, Vol. III, CSL.
- 21 United States, Second and Third Censuses of the United States, 1800 and 1810, Population Schedules for Middletown, Middlesex County, Connecticut.
- 22 Purcell, Connecticut in Transition, pp. 50 and 57.
- 23 Enoch Huntington, Diary, 26 March 1803, CHS.
- 24 Enoch Huntington, Diary, 30 May 1806, MHS.
- 25 First Congregational Church Records, Series II, Vol. III, Minutes of Society Meeting, 18 November 1761, no pagination, CSL.
- 26 First Congregational Church Records, Series II, Vol. III, Minutes of Society Meeting, 15 December 1767, no pagination, CSL.
- 27 Middletown Land Records, Vol. 18, p. 195, Vol. 19, pp. 34 and 118, and Vol. 20, pp. 137 and 139, MTCO.
- 28 Enoch Huntington, Diary, 15 June and 31 July 1767, CHS. Huntington's Diary for 1767 lists fifty pounds in loans which he obtained from Brown.
- 29 Enoch Huntington, Diary, see entries for November 1767, CHS.
- 30 Ralph A. Christie, "Early Middletown Personalities," pp. 16-17. Christie's paper refers to Huntington's "account books," but he does not indicate where he viewed them. I have been unable to locate any of these books in any of the archives collections I have searched.
- 31 Enoch Huntington, Diary, 26 December 1805, CHS.

- 32 First Congregational Church Records, Series II, Vol. III, Minutes of Society Meeting, 26 December 1803, p. 170, CSL.
- 33 Enoch Huntington, Diary, 11 March 1806, MHS.
- 34 Enoch Huntington, Diary, 16 March and 13 July 1804, CHS.
- 35 First Congregational Church Records, Series II, Vol. III, Minutes of Society Meeting, February 1805, p. 173, CSL.
- 36 Probate Records, Vol. 9, p. 231, MCP.
- 37 First Congregational Church Records, Series II, Vol. IV, Minutes of Society Meeting, March 1810, p. 32, CSL.
- 38 E.B. Huntington, Genealogical Memoir, pp. 174-177.
- 39 Middletown Grand Levy Lists, Vols. 2 and 3, MTCO. See the tax figures for Enoch Huntington Jr., North School, 1800-1826.
- 40 Letter, Enoch Huntington Jr. to William E. Hulbert, 22 September 1817, Hulbert-Huntington Family Papers, Box 10, MHS.
- 41 Letters, Enoch Huntington Jr. to Enoch Huntington III, 30 April and 19 August 1818, Hulbert-Huntington Family Papers, Box 12, MHS.
- 42 Probate Records, Vol. 13, p. 531, MCP.
- 43 Letter, Enoch Huntington to Simeon Baldwin, 3 June 1799, Baldwin Family Papers, Box 10, SML.
- 44 E.B. Huntington, Genealogical Memoir, pp. 176-177.
- 45 Letter, Enoch Huntington III to Mary Huntington, 2 March 1827, Hulbert-Huntington Family Papers, Box 12, MHS.
- 46 Decision of the Litchfield Ecclesiastical Council, 12 January 1809, Dan Huntington Papers, PPHF and Franklin B. Dexter, Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College, Vol. V, pp. 109-111.
- 47 First Congregational Church Records, Series II, Vol. IV, Dan Huntington's acceptance letter of 17 August 1809, copied in Minutes of Society Meeting, 22 August 1809, p. 21. CSL.

- 48 Letter, Dan Huntington to Charles Phelps, 16 August 1809, Dan Huntington Papers, PPHF.
- 49 Letters, Elizabeth Phelps Huntington to Elizabeth Phelps, 23 November 1813 and 24 March 1814, Dan Huntington Papers, PPHF.
- 50 Middlesex Gazette, 15 December 1814, p. 3.
- 51 First Congregational Church Records, Series II, Vol. IV, Minutes of Ecclesiastical Council Meeting, 6 February 1816, p. 54, CSL.
- 52 Dan Huntington, Memoirs, Counsels, and Reflections, p. 59.
- 53 In one instance, a woman by the name of Sally Rawson was expelled from the Church for "breach of Covenant engagements" and "the sin of intemperance." First Congregational Church Records, Series I, Vol. III, Minutes of Church Meeting, 30 March 1814, no pagination, CSL.
- 54 Dan Huntington, A Sermon Preached at Wethersfield, p. 25.
- 55 First Congregational Church Records, Series II, Vol. IV, Minutes of Society Meeting, January 1814, p. 51, CSL.
- 56 Letter, Elizabeth Phelps Huntington to Elizabeth Phelps, 14 December 1814, Dan Huntington Papers, PPHF.