

Herrick Address 10 August, 1915

ADDRESS AT HUNTINGTON
HOME-COMING, BY HON.
MYRON T. HERRICK, AUG. 10,
1915.

"I am extremely flattered, that there should be a contest as to which town I really belong in, whether Wellington, Huntington, Ashland, or Cleveland. All I personally know about it is from hearsay, as I was so young at the time I that I can remember very little of the circumstances, but the records show that I was born in Huntington, and by my antecedents I belong there. My grandfather Herrick, who was in the war of 1812, was taken prisoner at the battle of Sackett's Harbor, and carried off to Canada. On his return he found his little fortune had disappeared, and he had only his land warrant from the government. He walked out to Ohio, chopped a clearing, and made himself a little farm, then walked back to his home in the east, and brought out his family to the home that he had made. My mother's father, Oren Hulbert, who was also in the war of 1812, followed the same pioneer course, and located in LaGrange, went back and brought out his family. My grandfather and grandmother Hulbert are buried in the cemetery at LaGrange, where they lived their lives through. My Herrick grandparents are buried here in Huntington. My wife's father and mother, and grandfather and grandmother, are buried in Sullivan. My own father and mother are buried in Wellington. So it can truly be said that by my antecedents, I am of this locality.

"I see that I am down on the program for an 'address.' That seems like an impossible task, for in this place the memories of other years, of those who peopled this town of our birth, crowd out all thought of the world of to-day, and we are again children standing before our elders. And who of all the boys and girls of fifty or sixty years ago would have the courage to step out and attempt to deliver an address, before the great people of that day.

"Huntington enjoys in common, with the rest of the Western Reserve, the right to trace back to the fine New England stock, which has produced so many fine men and women, for this state and for the nation. I can recall many of the leading citizens of Lorain county in the earlier days. There was the Hon. S. S. Warner, who was first elected a member of the legislature from here, and made his first entry into political life. I remember very distinctly, the pride and pleasure that we all took in his election, for he was a ability. The Horr family of Newark, is a name known throughout the country. Abram Holland was one of those stable members of the community, whose memory _____

There was the remains of the Kelsey band, which has thrilled us all today, and has handed down its talent from generation to generation, for its music was the first, that my feet ever tried to keep step to. It was a grandson of Hugh Mosher, who was the leading figure in "Yankee Doodle," that great painting by Arch Willard, a famous Lorain county man. As nearly as I can ascertain, Kelsey's band was here when the Indians were, and I hope they may survive for a long, long I time to come.

"We are boys and girls again to-day, and for us the township of Huntington, holds again those wonderful persons of our childhood, who were then to us, the real great ones of the earth, before whom one could not stand unabashed and unafraid. There is fresh in my mind one attempt to face even a lesser audience, - it was in School District, No. 5, known as the Herrick School House. The subject was, "Mary's Little Lamb." That little poem, descriptive of the mutual attachment of Mary and her lamb, though recited often to my mother, was forgotten when I faced that audience, made more formidable than usual, by the presence of Ansel Clark, and I retire in shame and

confusion. That was an obscure corner of Huntington. But Huntington Centre, which was the very centre of the universe, anything like an address would be quite impossible, and I can only ask that you go with me for a few minutes, back into the land off memories, and recall the days of our youth, when imagination was active and aspirations ran high.

"Huntington Centre, of that time, was a place of great men, and of great questions, and the churches were the places for the warmest argumentation. There were three churches, the Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian, great stately buildings of white with green shutters. On Sundays, there raged a fierce competition of argument, in which deep doctrines of infant baptism and damnation, of immersion and sprinkling, of election and predestination, were expounded, and the creeds of each of the other two churches were condemned. For warmth of argument it was like the political discussions, at the approach of the Civil war. After the morning service, we had Sunday school; then we ate our lunch, went to another long sermon, and at last we were set free, late in the afternoon, to go back to the green country, where we could take off the Sunday shoes, and press our tired feet upon the cool sod, beneath the shade of the sheltering elms.

"Huntington Centre, was then quite a manufacturing place; it had a great wagon-shop, - two, I believe; - there were two or three blacksmith shops; there was a tin-shop, where the utensils for the countryside were made; and boot and shoe shops, where we were measured for our boots in the fall. Then there was Parks' store, one of Santa Claus' branches, more wonderful to us youngsters, than any Wanamaker's or Marshall Field's. Through the town there ran a great street, the Centre road, far more magnificent to my youthful vision, than any Euclid Avenue, or Champs d'Elysees, has ever seemed since, running to the

horizon north and south. On that road was Cases' Tavern where Squire Case presided. What a splendid metropolis Huntington was in those days, and what an adventure it was for me to go to the hotel, and hear "Pappy" Wells, and my Grandfather, Timothy Herrick, and Captain Warner, and other war veterans, whose names I do not remember, fight over the battles of Sackett's Harbor, and those other great struggles, in the war of 1812, over glasses of Case's ale and hard cider. The battles grew fiercer, as the day wore on, and the glasses were replenished. Those old soldiers have long since gone to the little church yard, but I have never forgotten how the smoke rose from their pipes as they argued, as thick as ever it rose, over the fateful battlefield of Sackett's Harbor.

"But aside from the vanishing visions of youth, change has come over Huntington, with the passing of the years. The people have become more tolerant, and have lost interest in the sectarian arguments of the churches; and the carriage sheds that used to be full of a Sunday, are not so now. The rise of manufacturing and transportation, has ended much of the local manufacturing; the tin ware comes from distant cities Studebaker and the wagon factory that followed in his lead, have ended the making of wagons in the town. The honk of the automobile is heard on the village streets. The blacksmith shops are less busy; and our shoes now come from New England factory towns.

"It was the coming of the mechanical age, substituting machine work, for the old hand processes, that worked this change in our village. It has worked a change also in our social life, and has carried us far away from the times of our fathers and grandfathers. We have given up the debates, the spelling, husking and raising bees, the picnics and parties, that used to give us so much pleasure. Many of our boys and girls have gone away to the cities; all the education until recent years has taught us how to live the artificial life of the city, and there has been a great neglect of rural education.

"I have been wondering whether we are now going back to that simpler life, that we have left so far behind;

whether we shall not re-create in some measure the Huntington, of a half-century ago. There is already apparent, a change in methods of education; the rural high school and the state agricultural school are teaching the things that will make country life attractive; to the boys, they are giving a knowledge of soils, of cultivation and fertilization, of seed selection, of live stock, of roads, and all the thousand and one things, that a farmer must know, if he is to be a good business man, and that he must be in order to succeed. To the girls, they are teaching cooking and housekeeping, the care of children and of the home. They are introducing both boys and girls, to the pleasures of the intellectual life, and with our mail facilities of today, bringing books, magazines and papers in abundance. The county dweller need not be shut out from the source of knowledge.

in the cities are beginning to realize that the pleasures of life are not to be found in the cities alone, and there are as great compensations to be had on the farm. They are joining the back-to-the-land movement, and in so doing, they find that true happiness and contentment are in the country, as well as in the city: that the pleasures and luxuries that once were to be had only in the city, are now being distributed everywhere, and that the man on the farm, has an equal chance, or more than an equal chance, as his longings and ambitions may be satisfied, on his own broad acres.

"In years past the nation has been laid under a heavy debt to the stalwart men, who have come out of the rural districts, to do the great tasks that needed to be done, and in the years to come we shall need their assistance no less, - their strength of mind and body, their self-control in times of stress, their patience and perseverance in the accomplishment of large undertakings. The past year has thrown a great burden on this nation, of preserving the rights of neutral peoples in the midst of a great war. Let us continue strong in the faith, that we are guided by the Unseen Hand. Other great

problems face us in the future. For their right solution, the country needs the help of all-American people, of the town and of the farm alike; and having that, we can go forward with confidence and high hopes of whatever fortune the future may hold."