



HARTFORD

Connecticut's Capital An Illustrated History

ABOUT THE BOOK

The genesis of Hartford is directly attributable to a problem—bothersome but undramatic—in Massachusetts. It was only about a decade after the Pilgrims' landing at Plymouth Rock, but the residents of Newtown (now Cambridge) were beginning to feel crowded in their little village on the Charles River. As a further irritant, theological differences were straining relations between one of Newtown's leaders, the Reverend Thomas Hooker, and the Reverend John Cotton of the Boston Church. A separation was inevitable. After the Massachusetts General Court granted the Newtown inhabitants permission "to seek out some more convenient place," they chose a site in the Connecticut River Valley, at a place the Indians called Sukiag. In 1635 the first handful of settlers arrived, and Hartford became the latest outpost of British civilization.

Fashioning a concise, lively narrative out of the material of more than 350 years of history, the authors tell the very human story of Hartford's development from a collection of crude dugout huts, almost too small to be called a village, to what is today a highly-developed metropolitan area.

Drawing on the rich pictorial and archival collection of the Connecticut Historical Society, readers are transported back in time. Experience the early years when most Puritan settlers lived in fear of Indian raids, poor harvests, and sickness. Later visit a quite different town—a colonial market center which was home to Patriot publisher Thomas Green, whose *Courant* helped light the torch of rebellion throughout the colonies, and which was soon hosting the likes of Washington and Lafayette during the Revolution.

The Hartford of the 19th century was a city of manufacturing genius and greatness; a hotbed of Abolitionist activism; and the city of literary personalities like Mark Twain, who wrote some of his most acclaimed books while living here. The First and Second World Wars, Prohibition, and the struggles and triumphs of the latter part of the twentieth century have done much to alter the "city of steady habits." *Hartford Connecticut's Capital: An Illustrated History* is an important contribution toward bringing Hartford historiography up to the 21st century.

More than 350 vintage and color illustrations—photographs, paintings, lithographs, maps, and advertisements—vividly recreate the life of Hartford's distant and recent past while celebrating the present. A special chapter, "Chronicles of Leadership," provides the individual histories of many of Hartford's leading businesses and organizations and helps to do away with at least one misconception: there's more to Hartford than insurance!

Finally, an illustrated timeline of significant events in Hartford's history puts it all in perspective.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

The late **Glenn Weaver** was a longtime member and full professor of the Trinity College faculty. He served as the official archivist of the College from 1967 through 1970, during which time he wrote his *History of Trinity College*.

Specializing in colonial America and American church history, Dr. Weaver (who, in addition to his A.M. and Ph.D. degrees from Yale also earned a bachelor of divinity degree from Lancaster Seminary) published numerous works and articles on these subjects. Besides the history of Trinity, his published books include a biography of Connecticut's Jonathan Trumbull.

Glenn Weaver's articles and book reviews appeared in the *William and Mary Quarterly*, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, *Pennsylvania History*, and the *Catholic Historical Review*.

A member of the editorial board of the *New England Historical Bibliography*, Glenn Weaver was the editor of 35 historical booklets dealing with Connecticut Revolutionary history for the State Historical Commission. His many other credits include serving as a member of the board of trustees of the Connecticut Historical Society and as chairman of the publications committee of the Society. He also was a member of the Association for the Study of Connecticut History, the Institute of Early American History and Culture, and the American Antiquarian Society.

Michael Swift, staff writer with *The Hartford Courant*, graduated from Colby College in Waterville, Maine where he majored in English literature. Swift joined *The Courant* in 1987, and began covering downtown Hartford regional issues as the "Future of Hartford" reporter in 1992.

The New England Society of Newspaper Editors named Swift a Master Reporter in 2001. He has won or shared numerous other awards from *The Courant*, the New England Associated Press News Executives Association, the Associated Press Sports Writers and the Education Writers Association. Swift has also worked as a staff writer for *Northeast Magazine*, *The Courant's* Sunday magazine. He currently covers metropolitan affairs for *The Courant*, in which he reports on the region's economic, population and immigration trends, with an emphasis on the results of the 2000 Census.