



## Tales from a Dedham Graveyard 2- "Snatched from the tomb..."

Posted October 16, 2016 by Jim Parr

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*This is the monument to the Shuttleworth family. The elder Jeremiah ran a general store and operated the post office out of his house on High Street, which was located where the Dedham Historical Society building now stands.*

I am James L. Parr. I grew up on Tower St. and went to St. Mary's and Dedham High (Class of 1977). I teach school in Framingham and co-wrote a book of Framingham history, which led me to write a book of weird Dedham history called *Dedham: Historic and Heroic Tales from Shiretown*. That book led to this blog. To order your own copy of the book, e-mail me at [jamesparr@yahoo.com](mailto:jamesparr@yahoo.com)

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***The Shuttleworth House, late 19th century. The house was later moved to Bryant Street and torn down in the 1970s.***

Hannah Shuttleworth became the niece of Dr. Nathaniel Ames the 2<sup>nd</sup> (son of the famed almanac publisher) when he married her father's sister Metiliah. When he died in 1822, Dr. Ames' substantial estate went to the unmarried Hannah, his closest living relative. Upon her death in 1886, Hannah bequeathed \$10,000 to the Dedham Historical Society, for the purpose of building a headquarters. She also donated funds that allowed for the construction of the Dedham Public Library on Church Street, as well as \$30,000 to the Town of Dedham to be used as aid to the poor.

Don Gleason Hill, town clerk and president of the Dedham Historical Society, understandably wanted to honor this generous benefactress and desired to have a portrait hung in the new society headquarters. However, no photograph of Miss Shuttleworth had been made in her lifetime. That didn't stop Hill from executing a plan that, in his own words created a portrait that was "literally snatched from the grave."

Hill describes the plan in an introduction to *Dedham Records*, published in 1888 on the occasion of the town's 250th anniversary:

*"The morning following her funeral, a cold blustering February day, Gariboldi, the statuary manufacturer, was summoned from Boston, and inside the receiving tomb a plaster cast of her face was taken, and from this alone, with the descriptions which a few friends who knew her best could furnish, Miss Annie R. Slafter, of Dedham, made the crayon portrait which now hangs in the place of honor over the great mantel in our Historical Society room."*

...all the old familiar places

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**Jim Parr**



*The portrait "snatched from the grave."  
Dedham Records, 1888.*

The receiving tomb in which Miss Shuttleworth lay before burial was in fact, the Ames family tomb, featured in the previous post.