

Proclamation



CITY OF NORTHAMPTON COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

CALEB COOLEY DICKINSON DAY SEPTEMBER 16, 2015

- WHEREAS The time has come to honor Caleb Cooley Dickinson, an industrious and humble shoemaker, farmer and lifelong bachelor with solid business judgement and prudent investment decisions that raised him from the depths of poverty to the heights of prosperity; and
- WHEREAS Caleb Cooley Dickinson has been largely ignored as a man because of his reputation for being eccentric and strange for his time, living miserly and having little relationship with neighbors or family; and
- WHEREAS upon his death on September 16, 1882 Cooley left the majority of his estate, valued at \$100,000 to create a hospital for the "sick poor" of Northampton, Hatfield and Whately and disinheriting his family; and
- WHEREAS Cooley's family challenged this will and destroyed his reputation by attempting to prove him insane in a two week trial that made public every detail of Cooley's life that was labelled as crazy and bizarre; and
- WHEREAS Cooley's legacy was insured when the will was upheld, but the man who had a penchant for wearing women's hats in public and who sought treatment for a mental illness essentially disappeared as a person, being replaced in name only as an institution; and
- WHEREAS If alive today, Caleb Cooley Dickinson would be considered a generous philanthropist worthy of our respect, admiration, and appreciation; and
- NOW,
THEREFORE I, Mayor David J. Narkewicz, do hereby proclaim **September 16, 2015** to be **Caleb Cooley Dickinson Day** and invite citizens to don festive hats as a celebration of his life and legacy accepting and embracing our long neglected benefactor.

*In Witness whereof, I have set my hand and imprinted the seal
of the City of Northampton.*



David J. Narkewicz
Mayor