The background of the book cover is a detailed landscape painting. On the left, two tall, dark evergreen trees stand prominently. In the center, a calm lake reflects the sky and the distant mountains. The mountains are layered, with the nearest ones in shades of blue and purple, and the farthest ones appearing as soft, hazy outlines. A small, light-colored building is visible on the far shore of the lake. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall color palette is dominated by blues, purples, and greens, giving it a classic, somewhat somber feel.

Choice White Pines and Good Land

A History of
Plainfield
and Meriden,
New Hampshire



View of Mt. Ascutney and Plainfield Village from above Stage Road, before 1900. Courtesy Philip Read Memorial Library.

**Choice
White
Pines
and
Good
Land**

A History of
Plainfield
and Meriden,
New Hampshire

Peter E. Randall
PUBLISHER

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Land**

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and Meriden,
New Hampshire

earliest arts and crafts industries in the country. Similarly, the Meriden Bird Club, established by Ernest Harold Baynes in 1910, is the earliest bird club in America. Corbin's Park, partly situated in Plainfield, is one of the largest private game preserves in the eastern United States.

Supported by Plainfield voters and a grant from the Mascoma Savings Bank, *Choice White Pines and Good Land: a History of Plainfield and Meriden, New Hampshire* is written by its people for all those interested in the 230-year story of a New Hampshire Grant town.



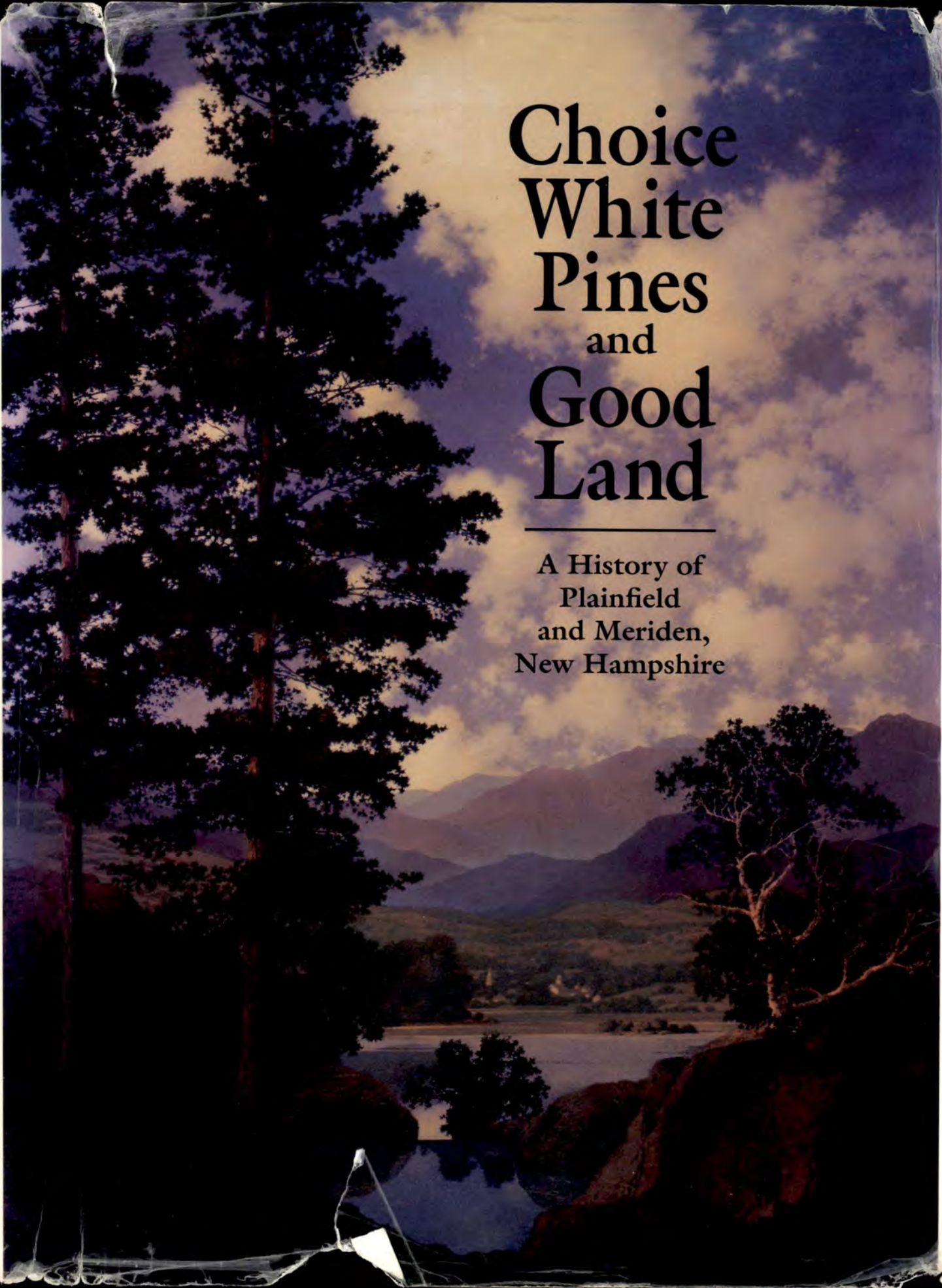
View of Mt. Ascutney and Plainfield Village from above Stage Road, before 1900. Courtesy Philip Read Memorial Library.

Choice White Pines and Good Land

A History of Plainfield and Meriden, New Hampshire

Peter E. Randall
PUBLISHER

Cover: "Thy Templed Hills" by Maxfield Parrish.
Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel.



Choice White Pines and Good Land

A History of Plainfield and Meriden, New Hampshire

Choice White Pines and Good Land: A History of Plainfield and Meriden, New Hampshire

Choice White Pines and Good Land is the long-awaited history of Plainfield and Meriden, New Hampshire, in the Upper Connecticut River Valley. Settled before the Revolution, the region is dotted with communities celebrated in histories written before World War I. Despite (or perhaps because of) the wealth of public and private documents and photographs, the people of Plainfield have failed to record their town's formative years and succeeding achievements until now. In describing the transition of Plainfield from a great sheep farming town before the Civil War to a comfortable bedroom community today, the book underscores the importance of Plainfield as a case study for community growth and urbanization in western New Hampshire.

Written by fifty-six townspeople over the past five years and edited by Philip Zea and Nancy Norwalk, the book includes 230 maps, photographs, and color plates. The authors describe the landscape, settlement, controversies, religion, agriculture, and schooling in Plainfield as well as the town's architecture, biographies, and changing lifestyle. Appendices of town officers and soldiers are included. No dry dissertation, the book is laced with stories that are mostly true.

Plainfield's importance is demonstrated by chapters of regional interest. Many members of the Cornish Art Colony resided in Plainfield, including Maxfield Parrish and Willard Leroy Metcalf. One of the oldest private secondary schools in the nation, Kimball Union Academy in Meriden has educated thousands of students since its charter in 1813. The Mothers' and Daughters' Club in Plainfield, founded in 1897, was among the

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Choice White Pines and Good Land

A History of
Plainfield and Meriden,
New Hampshire

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Plainfield and Meriden,
New Hampshire

Written by the Townspeople

Edited by

Philip Zea
and
Nancy Norwalk

Philip Zea
Nancy Norwalk

PETER E. RANDALL PUBLISHER
Portsmouth, New Hampshire

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CIP

This Book is Dedicated
to the Memory of

Clare and Fiske Boyd
and
Vernon Hood

whose research and unpublished manuscripts
are the foundation of this history of Plainfield and Meriden

and to

Howard Zea

for his long commitment
to preserving the documents of Plainfield history.

Preface

The seeds for this history of Plainfield were sown in the early 1970s at a time when the town was beginning to change dramatically. New residents and natives alike sensed that Plainfield had a rich and interesting history and that many parts of the town's heritage were either lying around unprotected or just slipping away with the passing of each older generation.

The prodigious writings of Vernon A. Hood had been turned over to Baker Library at Dartmouth College after his death in 1971. These were to become the foundation of much of the research and writings that went into this volume. Clare and Fiske Boyd's collection of monographs, articles, and other materials had been gathered over their lifetime and it, too, provided depth and insight that were essential to the completion of this work.

And there were many other sources to draw upon as people began to explore Plainfield's past: family diaries, town records, private collections of papers and artifacts, archives of the New Hampshire Historical Society and Dartmouth College, and distinguished scholars of history such as Professor Jere Daniell of Dartmouth.

Plainfield's serious efforts to build a comprehensive historical record began in 1974 when the two town libraries and the New Hampshire Humanities Council sponsored the Plainfield Oral History Project. Some forty older residents were interviewed and their narrations were tape recorded and later transcribed into a written record. The oral history was supplemented with the gathering of many photographs, maps and other materials.

The Plainfield Historical Society was organized in 1978, and it immediately became a magnet for all sorts of historical material and a vehicle for discussion and analysis of the many aspects of the town's history. In the early 1980s, the development of a new town master plan was the occasion for development of a comprehensive inventory of the town's natural resources, public records, historical information, and other important data.

All of these endeavors led to the formation of a committee in 1986—the 225th anniversary of the founding of the town—to prepare a history of Plainfield. The selectmen appointed the committee and charged it with gathering appropriate materials, writing, editing, and then publishing the book. Town funds were appropriated to defray costs as the work progressed.

Vital to the success of the entire undertaking was the steadfast support of the two libraries, and most especially the librarians, Nancy Norwalk and Bettyann Dole, who have handled myriad tasks and chores over the nearly five years the book has been in preparation.

The committee wisely chose to hire an editor to give direction to the research and preparation of the chapters, to scrutinize copy to assure clarity and accuracy, and to provide cohesion to what has turned out to be an effort involving some 56 individual contributors. Philip Zea accepted the committee's challenge and skillfully and tactfully pulled and shaped the efforts of a large and unwieldy band of writers into an organized finished work.

To all who contributed in this effort, the committee extends sincerest thanks. To those who will read this history of Plainfield in the coming years, we hope this book is informative, interesting, and valuable to understanding how our town reached this point in its life.

Respectfully,

Plainfield Town History Committee

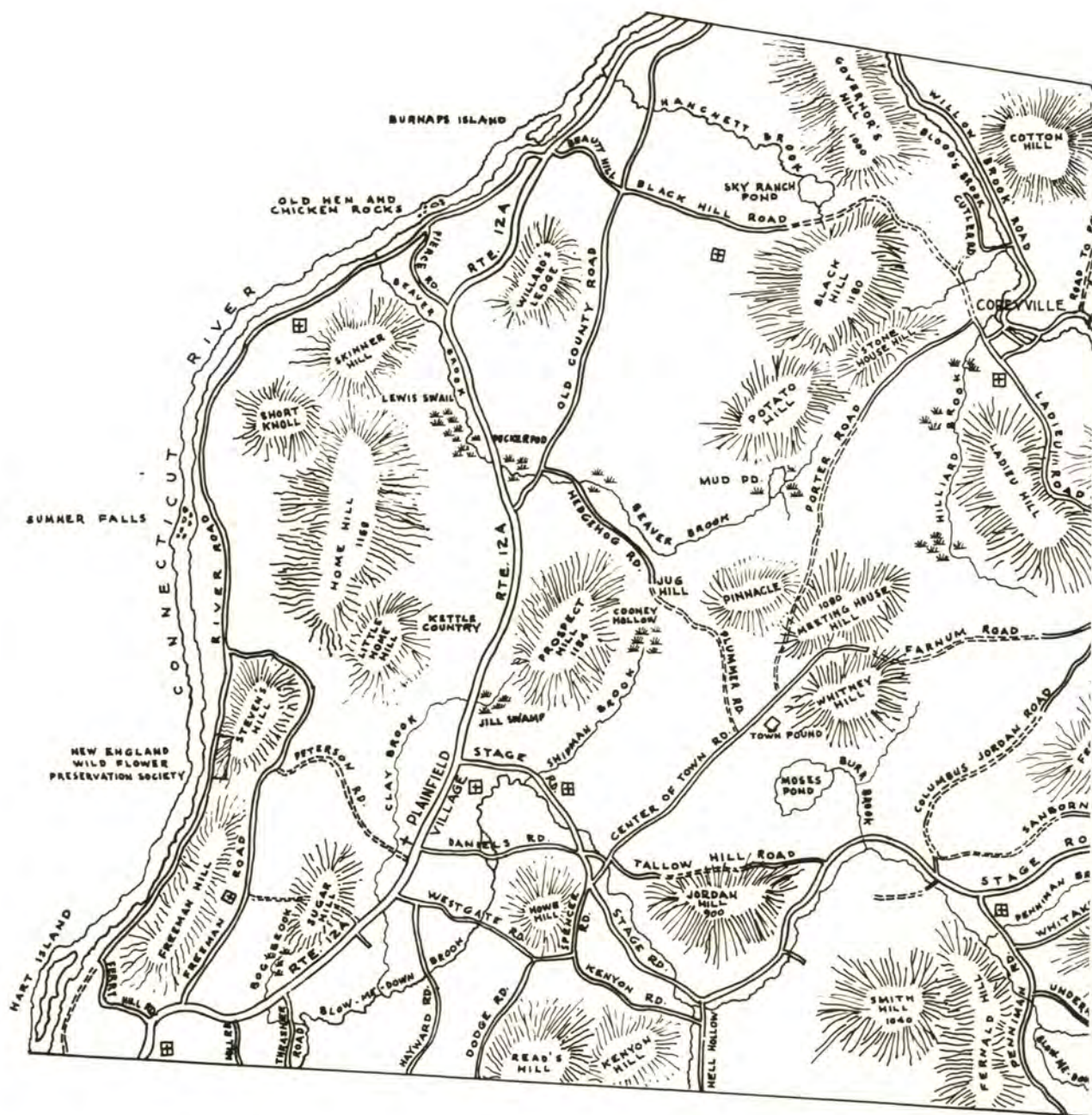
Stephen H. Taylor
Bettyann N. Dole
Kathryn F. MacLeay
Nancy Norwalk
Howard W. Zea
Philip Zea

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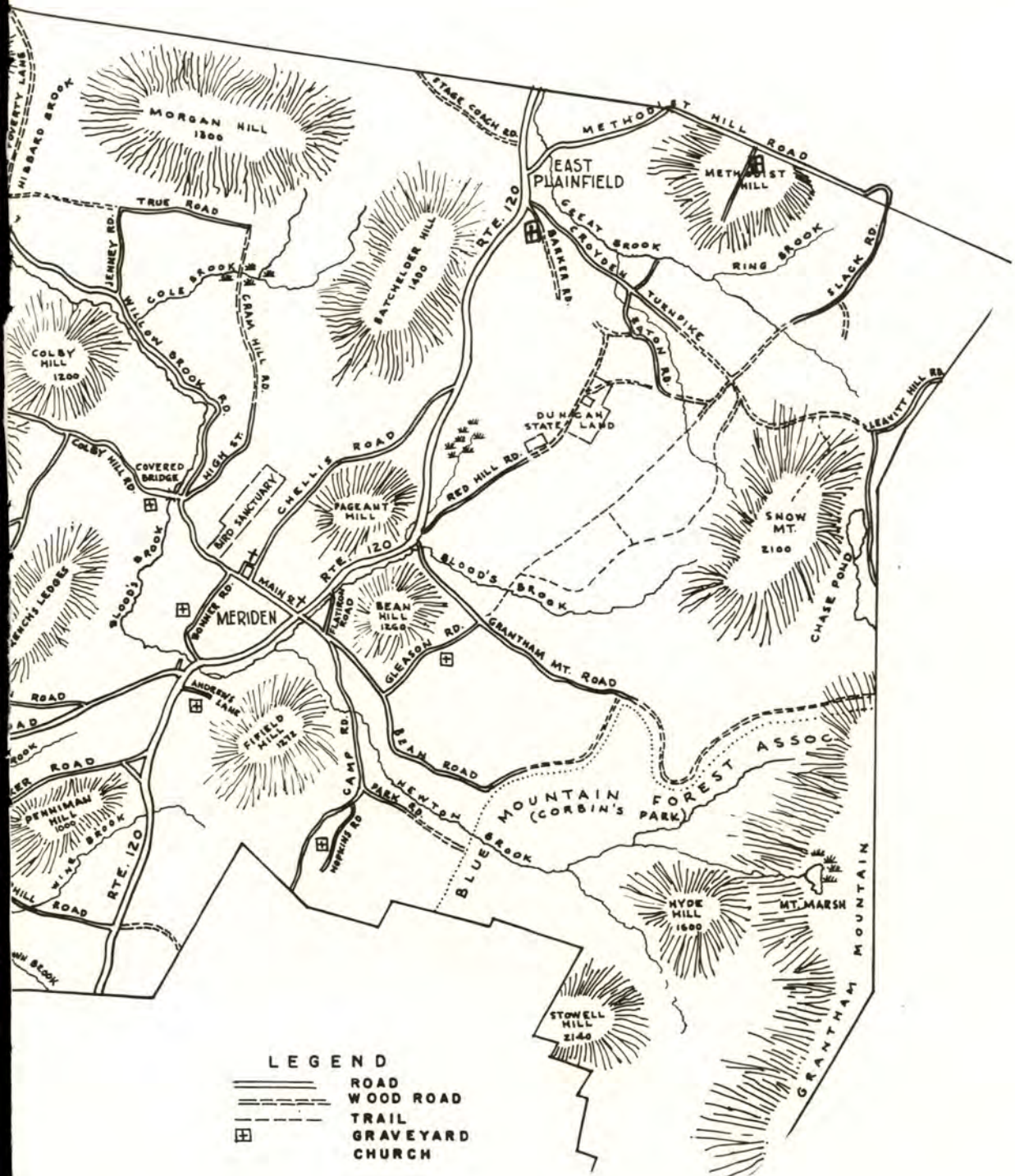
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KNOW YOUR TOWN PLAINFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

THIS MAP WAS ADAPTED FROM AN ORIGINAL BY VERNON HOOD
BY THE PLAINFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
WITH SUPPORT FROM THE HUNTLEY N. SPAULDING CHARITABLE TRUST

Map of Plainfield by Vernon Hood, about 1956.



Introduction

by Philip Zea

Benning Wentworth (1696–1770) was appointed the royal governor of New Hampshire in 1741, but he had to wait twenty years to develop the natural wealth of the Connecticut River Valley and beyond. Fort Number Four at Charlestown was the last outpost, and few towns to the west were chartered under Wentworth's name. The land held promise and danger for prospective settlers.

European politics rather than provincial policy deterred the governor and the investors waiting to act in his name. The volleys of distant battles during the War of the Austrian Secession (1744–1748) and the Seven Years War (1753–1760) were far beyond earshot of colonial Portsmouth, but the global strategies of kings made fighting transatlantic. As if to redirect the blame, the English colonists gave different names to these conflicts: King George's War and the French and Indian War. For a lifetime, the French and Indians poised in Quebec had made the frontier of western New Hampshire a dangerous place to live.

Wentworth sought control of the region in order to exploit its resources, especially the white pine timber. He planned to settle the land with people beholden to the province of New Hampshire. Situated on both sides of the Connecticut River, the region covered several hundred square miles and roughly constituted today's Upper Valley and much of Vermont. Between 1749 and 1774, royal governors Benning Wentworth and his nephew and successor, John Wentworth (1737–1820), chartered 280 towns called the New Hampshire Grants.

Benning Wentworth put his plan into action immediately after Montcalm's defeat on the Plains of Abraham outside Quebec City in the autumn of 1759. Within months, the royal governor commissioned Joseph Blanchard and Josiah Woodward to survey the Connecticut River Valley north of Charlestown. They identified the features of the landscape and marked the corners of potential towns at roughly six-mile intervals along the river.

The land had been admired by troops on their way to Lake Champlain. Its natural resources were impressive, and many soldiers awaited the end of warfare to secure their futures by settlement. A map was published by Blanchard and the Reverend Samuel Langdon in 1761, the year that Plainfield was chartered. It shows no town boundaries in the New Hampshire Grants, but illustrates the untapped wealth desired by many in the crowded towns of southern New England. The London engraver's burin wrote the words "Choice White Pines and Good Land" over the tract that became Plainfield, New Hampshire.¹



Detail, “An Accurate Map of His Majesty’s Province of New Hampshire in New England” by Joseph Blanchard and Reverend Samuel Langdon, London: engraved by Thomas Jefferys, 1761. The map describes the Plainfield region with the phrase “Choice White Pines and Good Land.” Courtesy New Hampshire Historical Society.

Until the close of the Revolution, the New Hampshire Grants remained the frontier. But life was not like early historians and movie directors have led us to believe. Real hardship by eighteenth-century standards was rare. While loneliness was common, isolation and independence were rare. Branches of families moved to the Grants. They lived near one another in permanent framed houses



"And then the Settlers Came....," Plainfield Historical Society float, July 4, 1986. L-R: Basil McNamara and Eric Morin with "Runt." Photo by Larry Crowe. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

(not in log cabins) within several months of settlement. Speculators like Jonathan Chase (1732–1800) of Cornish sought to improve the quality of life in the Grants as quickly as possible in order to speed the return on their investments. As a merchant, Chase sold items like chocolate, ginger, knee buckles, spelling books, fine thread, mohair, and silk to customers in Cornish and Plainfield as early as 1768 and 1769, within three years after permanent settlement.²

In reality, the New Hampshire Grants were populated by three kinds of people: speculators like Chase, intermarried families of younger sons with little hope of advancement in the crowded towns of southern New England, and the down-and-out people always found on the fringe of society. The Bible-toting settler with his long rifle and large family is an inaccurate image promoted by the celebratory centennials held since 1876. Individualists with the farseeing gaze of movie stars like Spencer Tracy generally did not settle in the New Hampshire Grants.

While many impressions of life in the eighteenth century are the products of the Colonial Revival begun a hundred years ago, some conditions have descended to us unchanged. Politics, for example, remain confused and confusing. From the time of settlement until the 1780s, factions representing the interests of New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, and a special interest group calling itself New Connecticut or the College Party vied for political control of the Upper Valley.

Open warfare was another concern. The British threatened to attack the Grants in 1777 and in 1781. Paying for the Continental cause was costly in an economy lacking hard cash and young men with time to serve. Finally, the give and take between neighbors to improve schools and roads and to support

religion and meeting places have remained consistent in Plainfield since settlement. All of these concerns were addressed in Town Meeting, which endures as the forum for review and change. Its structure and trappings are another legacy of the first people of Plainfield.

Many local conditions faced in the 1990s were defined in eighteenth-century Plainfield. They are understood after a thorough reading of the written record and the surviving landscape. Nevertheless, generalizations about early Plainfield and the New Hampshire Grants are easy to write, but hard to prove. A range of questions, from the broad to the obscure, come to mind. Some facts remain clouded, like the origins of the names of Blow-Me-Down and Blood's Brooks. Other inquiries are explained. Why is Plainfield part of New Hampshire rather than Vermont? Why is Plainfield larger than most of the towns around it? Why are there two principal villages rather than one? Who were the local heroes when Plainfielders went to war?

The aim of the early chapters is to describe the town's topography and to recount the concerns of Plainfield people within memory of settlement. We will explore the town's social and political roots in the eighteenth century. What was a New Hampshire Grant and how was it chartered? What kinds of people moved here in the 1760s? And why? What was the impact of a threatened civil war and revolution? In short, what defined life on the New Hampshire Grants?

The following chapters describe the growth of the town's economy and its social institutions. How did farming change during the nineteenth century? What businesses developed in Plainfield? Who operated them? What was it like to attend a district school? (They survived longer than one might think.) What are "summer people?"

The authors' inquiries are supported by the uncommon survival of virtually all of the town's records since the 1760s and many business papers, letters, and diaries of private individuals. Vernon Hood's four-volume compendium of historical notes and genealogies of Plainfield, in the Dartmouth College Archives, is an invaluable source of local history. This documentary evidence makes Plainfield an excellent case study for understanding the development of all of the New Hampshire Grants.

This book was researched and written by the townspeople of Plainfield, but it was not accomplished in one sitting. Many local antiquarians and teachers have contributed to it. The genesis of the book lies with the love of Vernon Hood, Blancha Daniels, and Clare and Fiske Boyd for the history of Plainfield begun fifty or more years ago. Since then, Howard Zea and Mary Cassedy have taken a special interest in preserving the public records and recording the character of life in town. In 1974, several townspeople worked on an oral history of Plainfield and Meriden under a grant from the New Hampshire Humanities Council. These recordings are an invaluable resource for learning about Plainfield.

Many names in the early records were written inconsistently in an age before spelling was systematized. Consequently, a person's name can appear in several different versions. To avoid confusion and to make reading easier, we have

standardized these spellings. The first word in each row of the following list is our selection.

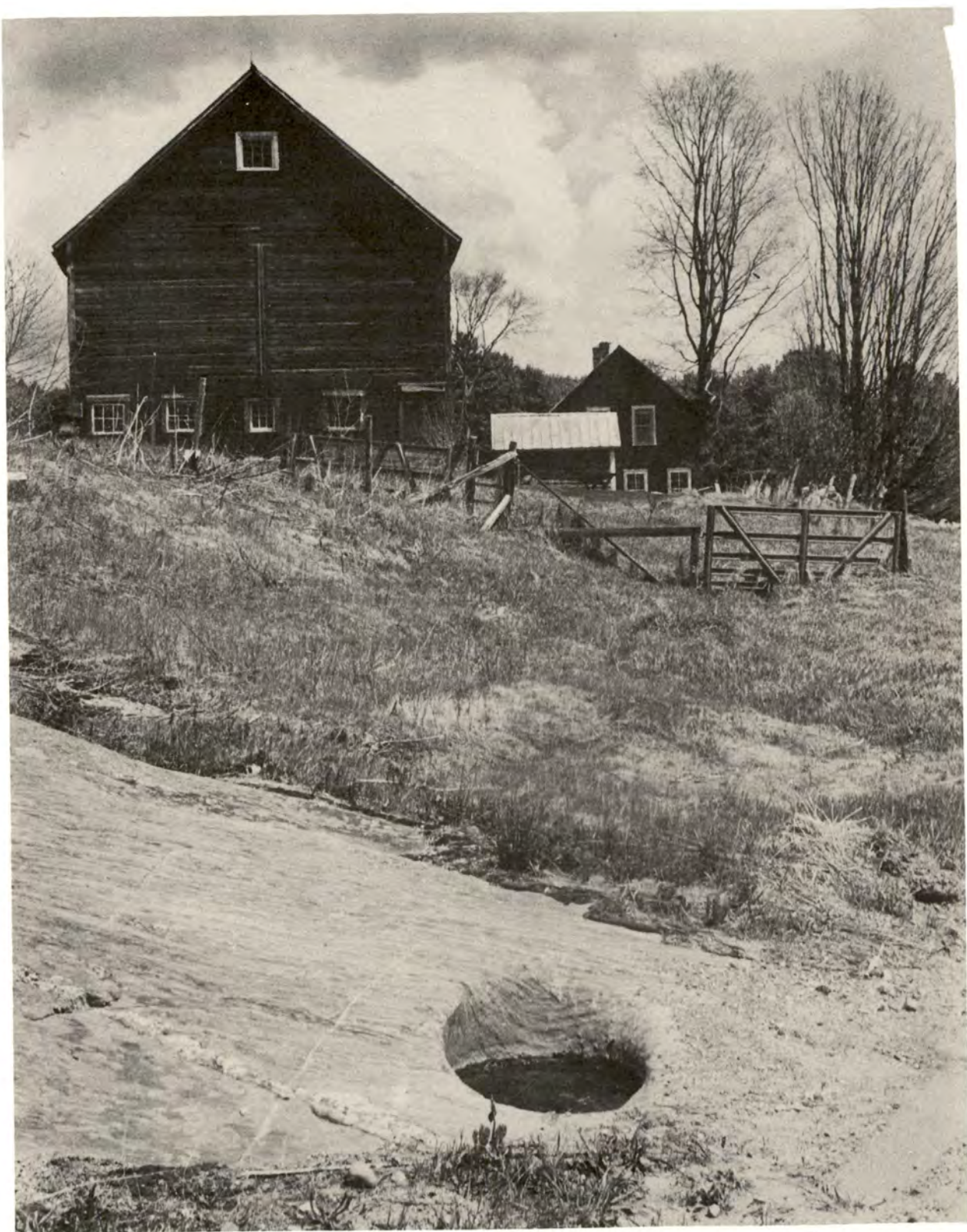
Champeon, Champin
Converse, Convers
Bugbee, Bugbie, Bugby
Dimick, Dimic
Eliphalet, Eliphelet, Eliphallet
Farnum, Farnam, Farnham
Jordan, Jorden, Jordon
Kimball, Kimbell, Kimble, Kimbol
Merrit, Merit, Merritt
Penniman, Pennyman
Perley, Pearley
Philip, Phillip

Both Spalding and Spaulding are used since two distinct branches of the family were consistent in their spelling.

This volume is the product of a sense of place. It is a testament to local history as a way of learning about one's niche in the landscape and in society. The project is also a product of community interest and committee work. Many people invested time and their own resources in this book. The authors listed in the Table of Contents attended many Sunday night meetings with the co-editors and spent thousands of hours in research and writing. The executive committee sacrificed more evenings of *60 Minutes* and *Murder, She Wrote*: Steve Taylor, Kay MacLeay, Bettyann Dole, Nancy Norwalk, and Howard Zea. Mary Cassedy, Rosemary Mills, Ruth Stalker, and Eugene Wheeler were careful readers of a draft of the book for both content and style. Erich Witzel and Jeffrey Nintzel donated their skills in the dark room to reproduce many antique photographs. Sally Rub designed the flyer. Bettyann Dole and Nancy Norwalk, who performed many important tasks during this project, made their village libraries centers of research. Most importantly, voters in Plainfield Town Meetings showed broad interest in the history of their town and directed tax dollars to support the project. A grant was also obtained from the Mascoma Savings Bank in Lebanon, New Hampshire.

Since publishing this book took decades, it is appropriate that testing it will also require time. The forum will be the supper tables and classrooms of future Plainfielders. People will pose questions about Puckerpod, Maxfield Parrish, or the Poor Farm. Chances are that only this book will hold the answer. We hope that worn copies of *Choice White Pines and Good Land* will stand the test for years to come.

Philip Zea
July 1, 1991



Glacial pot hole at the corner of Penniman and Underhill Roads near the William Franklin Farm. Photo by Erich Witzel.

. 1 .

The Landscape

Henry Beck
Mary Cassedy
Arlynn Grearson
Nancy Mogielnicki

Most of New England's landscape is represented in Plainfield's hills, mountains, ledges, streams, fields, swamps, and plains. From the Connecticut River and its low terraces, Plainfield rises through a mixed terrain of steep slopes, swamps, and upland plateaus to the heights of Grantham Mountain in the east. This topography is typical of many upper Connecticut Valley towns. There is even a glacial pot hole located at the corner of Penniman and Underhill Roads in Meriden.

The Connecticut River has been an avenue for travel since pre-historic times. The first roads paralleled the river and led eastward over the hills and to the proposed center of town. They merged with other roads laid out in neighboring towns. Settlement developed near good mill sites and tillable land which were critical to the social and economic development of Plainfield.

Plainfield is bounded by the western shoreline of the Connecticut River and the town of Hartland, Vermont. The northern boundary is shared with the town of Lebanon. It is marked by a series of hills. Governor's Hill, Morgan Hill, and Methodist Hill are most prominent. Today the eastern boundary is marked by the Grantham Range. This boundary was established in 1856 when the western part of Grantham was annexed to Plainfield after sixty-two years of heated town meetings and several petitions to the legislature.¹ There still exists a stone boundary marker just east of the Baptist Parsonage in Meriden marking the original line.² The southern boundary of Plainfield is shared with the town of Cornish. Hills such as Fernald's Hill and Stowell Hill dominate the horizon.

The landscape has undergone numerous changes since Plainfield's settlement. The Indians used the land in common and burned parts of the forest to keep it open for planting crops of corn and beans. The cleared fields and intervals created good browse for deer which in turn provided food and clothing.³ There was little underbrush in these established forests, and travel was easier than we imagine.

Scattered evidence of Indian activities has been found along the Plainfield section of the river near Sumner Falls and on Edgewater Farm (Lockwood Sprague,

1991). Sites have been investigated on the Vermont side of Sumner Falls, just over the Lebanon line at the mouth of Blood's Brook (Robert True, 1991), and to the south at the mouth of the Sugar River in Claremont. "Written evidence for prehistoric activity along the river in Plainfield and vicinity includes a reference to an 'old burial ground,' reports of surface finds, and site reports from archeological excavations."⁴ According to Vernon Hood, no mention of Indian trails or campsites are found in early records, although travelers portaged around the falls.⁵ Daniel Cassedy writes,

Probably one of the first travelers through Plainfield to keep a written record of his activities was Reverend John Williams [1666-1729] of Deerfield, Massachusetts. At the close of February 1704, French-led Abenakis raided Deerfield and captured Williams, his family and others. The group was taken via the Connecticut River to Canada, and ultimately Williams published an account of his captivity. According to this diary, the party traveled upstream on ice, and would have passed through what is now Plainfield on March 7, 1704. On that date, the Indians killed forty-year-old Mary Brooks because she was too weak to travel, having suffered a miscarriage as a result of falling on the ice.⁶

Possibly the best known traveler is Robert Rogers and his Rangers on their return from the attack on the village of St. Francis in 1759. Their ill-fated journey is well documented in fact and fiction. Sumner Falls, as the rapids are known today, afforded them one last challenge before reaching the safety of Fort Number Four at Charlestown.⁷ The rapids were named for David Sumner of Hartland, Vermont. Cassedy adds:

Sumner Falls is the most distinctive feature of the stretch of river between Plainfield and Hartland. There is no deep vertical drop, but the rapids are treacherous through a long, rock-strewn channel. The falls present a formidable hazard to navigation on an otherwise calm section of the river. On the 1805 map they are called 'Quechee Falls.' In articles on steamboat activity and locks, they are referred to as 'water-Quechee Falls.'⁸ Both names are apparently related to the Ottaquechee River which enters the Connecticut River from Vermont some two and one-half miles above the falls.⁹

The locks for steamboat use were constructed on the Vermont side by 1805. A wooden dam and sawmill were also built. Blancha Daniels remembered her father's description of how the dam was held in place with posts set into holes drilled into the ledges of the rapids. The dam (and perhaps the locks) were washed away in 1857 by a spring flood.¹⁰



"Old Hen and Chickens," outcropping of rocks in the Connecticut River, 1991.
Photo by Nancy Norwalk.

Ferries were established north and south of Sumner Falls. A bridge was built in the mid-1800s to Hartland, just north of Hart Island, but it was washed away long ago. Other ferries operated across the section of river between Burnaps Island and the mouth of the Ottaquechee and the group of rocks in the river known as the "Old Hen and Chickens." At the end of the twentieth century, the Plainfield stretch of the Connecticut River remains free-running except for the erosive fluctuations in the water level due to the power dam at Wilder, Vermont. Environmentalists want to protect the river corridor. Some land adjacent to the river in Plainfield is already secured.

The existence of unoccupied land, used seasonally by the native Americans, was misunderstood by the early settlers. After White settlement, the land was opened, carved into privately owned plots, and put into production. Timber was cut quickly for fuel and building materials. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Upper Valley was deforested, and agriculture peaked. If one walks along one of the many forested hiking trails in town, stone walls and cellar holes testify to the extent that land was cleared. The exodus to the West coupled with soil depletion and hard money problems brought the end to open farmland. Once farming ceased, nature quickly reclaimed open space. The 1987 Town Report lists Plainfield as having 1,987 acres in farmland out of a total 32,847 acres, or 6 percent. Naturally, the terraces nearest the river remain the most

productive agricultural land in town. These fields have been kept under cultivation for more than 200 years. They are irreplaceable prime agricultural lands. Such soils are rare elsewhere in Plainfield.¹¹

A series of hills between 800 and 1,300 feet mark Plainfield's western border on the Connecticut River. Many were named for the families located on or near them. The names of others record events long forgotten (see chart). The first peak encountered southward from Lebanon along the Connecticut River is Governor's Hill. Partly in Lebanon, it has an elevation of 1,116 feet and is joined to Black Hill with an elevation of 1,100 feet. The name of Governor's Hill was derived from the 500-acre parcels reserved by Governor Benning Wentworth for himself in both Lebanon and Plainfield when the towns were chartered.

An early road ran eastward over the south side of Home Hill (1,169') and Prospect Hill (1,184') towards the designated center of town. These two high hills dominate the landscape in the west central part of town. Home Hill, according to Vernon Hood, was named by early settlers because it is the first prominence in Plainfield clearly visible from downriver. To the south of Home Hill, near the river, are Stevens Hill and Freeman Hill (767' and 800'), named for John Stevens, Sr., (1720–1797) and Daniel Freeman (1727–1806), early settlers from Plainfield, Connecticut. To the east of Freeman Hill is Sugar Hill close to the southern end of Plainfield Village. Short's Knoll and Skinner Hill lie directly to the west and north of Home Hill and are named for more recent residents. Directly east of Home Hill, across Route 12A and north of the village, Prospect Hill rises abruptly. The lovely vistas of this prominence and those facing south near its base toward Mount Ascutney enhance the beauty of Plainfield Village.

In the central section of town a string of hills are found along the southern side of town: Read's Hill, Kenyon Hill, Jordan Hill, Smith Hill (1,300'), Fernald Hill, and Penniman Hill (1,689'). All are named for early residents. Meeting House Hill (1,080') is close to the geographical center of the town and north of the above hills. Land set aside here for a meeting house and graveyard was never developed, but the name remains. Close by is the Pinnacle, and to the north is Potato Hill, Stone House Hill, Black Hill (1,157'), and Willard's Ledge. Except for the last one, these names reflect a physical feature or appearance. Stone House Hill was named for a mysterious stone structure on its south face. This shed-like affair reportedly was formed of upright slabs of stone with a large flat slab as a roof and open to the south. It was destroyed by vandals, and its exact location has been lost over the years.¹² Black Hill seems obvious, but the reason for the "black" is explained in a hand-written account by Emma (Hall) Daniels, who grew up nearby:

Mansur Cory [an early resident] lived on the east side of Black Hill and had a large family of children. In the fall of the year when he wanted his winter supply of meat and any time he wanted

he set fires around the hill except at one end where he would station himself and shoot the game as it went past him. He repeated it frequently so that the hill had a black look, hence the name Black Hill.

Slightly to the east of Meeting House Hill lies Whitney Hill, named for a more recent owner, and to the northeast are Ladieu Hill and Colby Hill (1,200'). Still further east are found French's Ledges (1,310') which are clearly visible from many spots in town and remain a popular scenic outlook with maintained trails. The ledges overlook Meriden Village from the west. From its rocky outcroppings, one can see almost 360 degrees of countryside. The dates of Kimball Union Academy's classes are carved into the rock, and turkey buzzards circle the top riding updrafts from below. The family of Hezekiah French (1744-1832) lived to the west of it. Closer to the Lebanon line are Morgan Hill (1,437') and Batchelder's Hill (1,400'). Religious connections named Methodist Hill (1,466') in the northeast part of town. Located near East Plainfield, it is shared by Grafton and Sullivan Counties where the four towns of Plainfield, Lebanon, Enfield, and Grantham join. Ardent supporters of the local Methodist Church lived on its slopes during the mid-nineteenth century.

The village of Meriden is perched on a lesser hill. Close by is Pageant Hill, so-called for the site of a commemorative pageant. Visible from here are Bean Hill (1,264') and Fifield Hill (1,306') which dominate the foreground and record early families. To the northeast, Snow Mountain (2100') is located on the eastern border of Plainfield next to Chase Pond. It is named after Philip Snow (1825-1877) who farmed nearby. Views farther southeast include Hyde Hill (1,609') and Stowell Hill (2,141'). The eastern horizon is dominated by the long ridge (2,660±') of Grantham-Croydon Mountain. Grantham Mountain presents the highest elevation point in the town of Plainfield.

Plainfield's landscape is enhanced by numerous brooks and a few ponds. The largest is Moses Pond of about twenty-five acres. The origin of the name is unknown, but legend holds that it was claimed by a man named Moses whose oxen broke through the ice while crossing the pond. He and the oxen sank into the mud at the bottom of the pond and were never found.¹³ Not far from Moses Pond is smaller Mud Pond which was once the scene of logging activities. This pond is now in a protective easement.

Bryant Pond, an artificial pond constructed by John D. Bryant (1829-1911), is located just south of Meriden Village where Route 120 intersects Blood's Brook. After crossing the bridge north on Route 120, one may still see to the east parts of the dam and earth embankment that contained it. About 1930, Camp Meriden used the pond as part of its summer program for young ladies.¹⁴ The primary use of the pond, however, was for cutting ice. Kimball Union Academy had first cutting rights. Sky Ranch Pond, which is now included on recent maps, is a man-made pond near Black Hill at the headwaters of Hanchett Brook. The number of small, private, man-made ponds has

increased in recent years. These are not usually on existing streams, but are created in swampy, spring-fed locations.

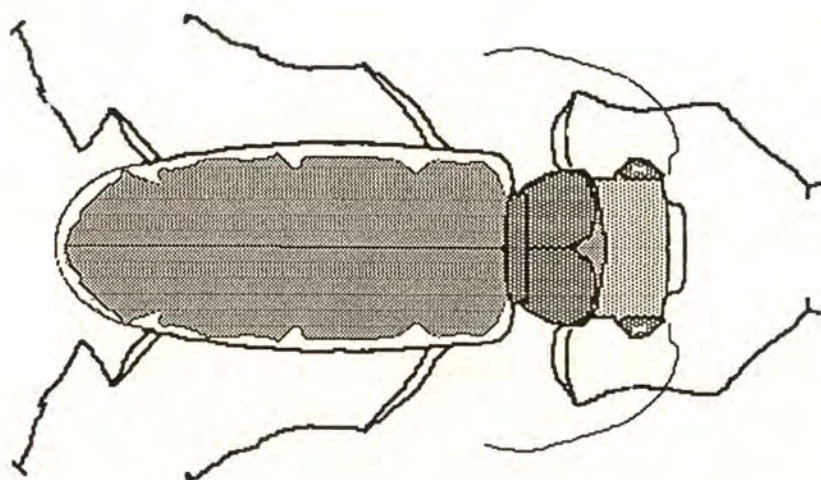
Chase Pond is located to the east between Snow Mountain and the Grantham town line. It was named after the Chase family who lived nearby when the Croydon Turnpike was constructed. One may still walk, ski, or snowmobile to view this lovely pond and its surroundings.

All of Plainfield's streams eventually lead to the Connecticut River (see chart). Blow-Me-Down Brook is one of the largest. It originates on the slopes of Croydon Mountain in the town of Cornish and enters Plainfield on the southern border, east of Smith Hill. The brook meanders through the southwestern corner of town passing around Jordan Hill on its way to Plainfield Plain. It flows into Cornish again and then into the Connecticut River. A number of mills were established along the brook. The origin of the name Blow-Me-Down Brook is unknown, but it may refer to Cape Blomidon in the Maritime Provinces.¹⁵ Within Plainfield, Blow-Me-Down Brook is augmented from east to west by the following lesser streams: Wine Brook, Penniman Brook, Burr Brook which drains Moses Pond, Bryant Brook, Shipman Brook, Clay Brook which drains Jill Swamp north of Plainfield Village, and Bog Brook.

The origin of the name of Blood's Brook is unrecorded, but may refer to an early settler. The name is recorded in the 1760s in the town papers. Blood's Brook rises on the slopes of Snow Mountain at the northern end of the Grantham Range. It flows through the village of Meriden and then below French's Ledges. The course continues between Colby and Morgan Hills and exits Plainfield by the eastern foot of Governor's Hill in the northwestern corner of town. From this point, Blood's Brook flows briefly through Lebanon and into the Connecticut River. Blood's Brook was the site for a number of mills including Kimball's gristmill and French's sawmill. Its course determined the location of Meriden Village.¹⁶ The feeder streams of Blood's Brook from east to west are Newton Brook, Cole Brook, Hibbard Brook, Hilliard Brook, and Daniels Brook. Lastly in East Plainfield, Great Brook flows north to the Mascoma River and is fed, in Plainfield, by Ring Brook.

Hanchett Brook, a short stream near the Lebanon line, drains westward from the base of Black Hill and Sky Ranch Pond directly into the river. Not too far to the south, Beaver Brook rises on the east side of Potato Hill. Its course flows through Mud Pond, by Hedgehog Ledges, from there to Chaos (a rocky sheep pasture), westerly through Puckerpod Swamp, into Lewis Swail, past Lewis Common, and finally into the Connecticut River.

These bodies of water and especially the Connecticut River support a complex eco-system that includes endangered species found in only a few places in the world. In the spring of 1985, an article appeared in the *Valley News* entitled "Burnaps Island Named to List." The article described the Nature Conservancy's request that this island, owned by the town of Plainfield, be listed on their Natural Heritage Inventory in order to protect a rare species of beetle that inhabits the island. The Cobblestone Tiger Beetle (*Cincindella marginipen-*



Cobblestone Tiger Beetle (*Cincindela marginipennis*), the Plainfield Town Insect.

nis) is a fast, attractive, rare, predatory insect that lives in a very special habitat: small islands located in swiftly flowing temperate rivers with a gravel cobblestone beach at one end and a smooth sand beach at the other. One of the few such habitats in existence today is Burnaps Island. This island supports one of the few remaining populations of these beetles. Nearly all other swiftly flowing rivers of this sort in the northeast have been interrupted by hydroelectric dams.

It was clear to the townspeople that the Cobblestone Tiger Beetle and Plainfield had a special relationship. Accordingly, a petition signed by ten Plainfield residents requested the selectmen to place an article on the 1986 Town Warrant: "Resolved: That the People of Plainfield designate the Cobblestone Tiger Beetle, an endangered species that inhabits Plainfield's own Burnaps Island, the 'Plainfield Town Insect.'" Article XXVI passed—almost unanimously—and the Cobblestone Tiger Beetle became the official Plainfield Town Insect.

Since 1986 was the 225th anniversary of the town, the annual Fourth of July celebration included many creative interpretations of our town insect. There was a mobile, Volkswagen-sized beetle in the town parade. Tiger beetle T-shirts were sold and given as prizes for many events. A life-sized, solid gold tiger beetle, created and donated by Paul Gross, was raffled. And as Plainfield residents gathered for their official town portrait, they raised their voices to sing "The Tiger Beetle Anthem" written by Sara Townsend and Phoebe Chardon.

With this success, nomination of another species for town recognition was considered. Consultants were unanimous in their view that the Dwarf Wedge Mussel (*Alasmadonta heterodo*)—another Connecticut River species—would be an appropriate choice. The Dwarf Wedge Mussel, also known as the Ancient Floater, is a one to two inches long, greenish-brown, clam-like organism that lives below Sumner Falls. It is a primitive creature, unable to adapt to pollution or changes in water temperature and flow. Because of this, its numbers have been dramatically depleted over its entire range in the eastern United States and Canada. Once numerous, its range is now restricted to a small handful of “stations.” Like the Tiger Beetle, the Wedge Mussel is rare and found in only a few places other than Plainfield.

Accordingly, the following resolution was presented at our March 1987 Town Meeting: “Resolved: That the People of Plainfield designate the Dwarf Wedge Mussel—a rare bivalve for which Plainfield provides one of the last remaining habitats—‘the Plainfield Town Mollusk’.”

Once again, the resolution passed and *Alasmadonta heterodo* became the Town Mollusk. The celebration was not quite as elaborate, but once again familiarity with an unusual species and yet another type of river habitat grew. Mussel T-shirts were designed and printed and their sales supported a new environmental education program at the Plainfield Elementary School, directed by the Montshire Museum, and staffed by volunteers. The children have named it the BEAR Program (Be an Earth Aware Resident).

In 1877, Professor Henry Griswold Jesup, who was a botanist at Dartmouth College, identified a rare plant on the banks of the Connecticut River in Plainfield. This plant, a member of the pea family, was subsequently named Jesup’s Milk Vetch. It has long been considered one of the rarest plants in New England.

Jesup’s Milk Vetch requires a very specific habitat—rocky riverside outcroppings which are scoured by ice every year. The plants thrive at the junction between the barren rock and the more vegetated areas of the riverbank. At present, there are only two other sites in the world, downriver in Claremont, New Hampshire, and in neighboring Hartland, Vermont. The plant blooms in May and June with an attractive blue-violet flower, followed by a distinctive seedpod.

Jesup’s Milk Vetch was designated an endangered species in 1987 under the federal Endangered Species Act. It is one of only three plants in New Hampshire that are listed as endangered at the federal level. It is also covered by the New Hampshire Native Plant Protection Act. A “Jesup’s Milk Vetch Recovery Plan” has been published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The goals of this plan are, first, to prevent extinction of the species by protecting known populations, and second, to increase the numbers of the plant to ensure long-term survival. So far no one has been able to raise Jesup’s Milk Vetch from seed, but botanists are hopeful that this will be possible.

At the 1990 Town Meeting, the following petition was presented: “To see if the town will vote to designate Jesup’s Milk Vetch, a rare and endangered



Elm tree (*Ulmus americana*) on River Road, formerly the largest of the species in New Hampshire, 1987. Photo by Albert K. Read III. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

species found in Plainfield, the 'Plainfield Town Plant.'” This was approved unanimously.

Beneath the fun, songs, and T-shirts lies a serious issue that does have implications for land development, dam proposals, beetle collecting, and even some Connecticut River recreation. Before, most people were unaware and ignorant; now they are armed with knowledge and zeal. But there are other events that encourage the belief that the status of these species is becoming increasingly more secure. First, in August, 1986, the state of Vermont named the Cobblestone Tiger Beetle the first-ever officially protected state insect and implemented plans to protect the state's impact on the beetle's island habitat. Second, both the Cobblestone Tiger Beetle and the Dwarf Wedge Mussel have been added to the New Hampshire and Vermont lists of threatened and endangered species and are nominated for federal listing as well. Finally, the recent Nature Conservancy's focus on the length of the Connecticut River is promoting recognition of these species and may further protect their habitat.

In 1987, Plainfield boasted for a short time the largest American elm tree (*Ulmus americana*) in the state of New Hampshire. Years before, the Elm Research Institute had designated the tree an "Historic Elm" and had enrolled it in the National Register of Historic Elms. In 1988, the tree died from Dutch elm disease. It stood 60 to 70 feet tall, had a girth of about 20 feet, was 7 feet thick, and had a crown spread of 107 feet. The tree had a plaque attached stating it began growing in the eighteenth century. The tree was located on River Road on the property of Edward Moynihan (1991). Part of the trunk has been sculpted into a modern design and is still on the site.¹⁷

Plainfield's visual appeal as a rural residential town is created by the combination of hills and valleys. It is accented by brooks, glimpses of open fields, and the presence of rare species. Over the last century, most open fields have disappeared. The forest has since reclaimed its own. If we are careless, the next century will bring the loss of almost all of the remaining views in Plainfield. The lay of the land remains a foundation on which to build and to preserve.

For a listing of road names, see Chapter 8: Transportation.

Notable hills and brooks with their locations and the origins of their names are condensed in the following chart:

| Name | Location | Origin of Name ¹⁸ |
|-------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Batchelder's Hill | Northeast of Meriden Village | Phinehas Batchelder |
| Bean Hill | East of Meriden Village | Samuel Bean (1750/1-1825) |
| Bog Brook | Southerly from Sugar Hill near Thrasher Road and Route 12A | Its location |
| Clay Brook | West of Plainfield Village | Clay in bed of brook |

| Name | Location | Origin of Name |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Colby Hill | Northwest of Meriden Covered Bridge | Merrill (1768–1845) and Charles (1813–1902) Colby |
| Cole Brook | Between Morgan and Batchelder Hills | Parker Cole (1756–1839) |
| Cotton Hill | On the Plainfield-Lebanon border-west central | Cotton family of Lebanon |
| Daniels Brook | Northern section, east of Black Hill | John Daniels (1755–1833) |
| Fifield Hill | South of Meriden Village | Edward Fifield (1747/8–1831) |
| Great Brook | East Plainfield | Largest stream in area |
| Gates Hollow Brook | Between Stevens and Freeman Hills | Thomas Gates, Sr. (1718–1784) and Thomas, Jr. (1755–1824) |
| Hanchett Brook | Southwesterly side of Governor's Hill | Bailey Hanchett |
| Harriman Hill | South of Methodist Hill | Harriman family |
| Hibbard Brook | Northern tributary of Blood's Brook, upstream from Coreyville | An early settler of Lebanon |
| Hilliard Brook | Southern tributary of Blood's Brook, downstream from Coreyville | Benjamin Hilliard |
| Howe Hill | Southeast of Plainfield Village | John and Jonas Howe, original grantees, but never lived here |
| Hyde Hill | Southeast in Blue Mountain Forest | Hyde family |
| Jug Hill | Center of town | A jug of rum that rolled length of hill and survived |
| Kenyon Hill | South central near Hell Hollow | Joseph Kenyon (1737–1829) |
| Newton Brook | Westerly side of Grantham Mountain | Newton family |
| Pageant Hill | Northeast of Meriden Village | Kimball Union Academy held pageants here |
| Pinnacle | Center of town | It is a pinnacle. |

| Name | Location | Origin of Name |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Potato Hill | Near Stone House Hill and Black Hill | Either the crop grown here or its shape |
| Prospect Hill | North of Plainfield Village | For the view or prospect visible from it |
| Read's Hill | South central on Cornish line | Harvey Read (1828–1922) |
| Ring Brook | Branch of Great Brook, from Methodist Hill | Jonathan Ring |
| Shipman Brook | North of Stage Road, east of Plainfield Village | Ellen Shipman (1869–1950) |
| Skinner's Ridge | North of Home Hill | William Skinner (1866–1941) |
| Smith Hill | South central near Blow-Me-Down Brook | Jacob Smith (1772–1855) |
| Stevens Hill | Beside Connecticut River | John Stevens, Sr. (1720/1–1797) grantee and leader in formation of Plainfield |
| Stowell Hill | Southeast in Blue Mountain Forest | Stowell family |
| Tallow Hill | East of Mill Village | Possibly after a slippery clay deposit |
| Whitney Hill | Center of town | John W. Whitney (1889–1951) |
| Wine Brook | Tributary of Blow-Me-Down Brook along Underhill Road | Captivating quality of the water |

The Settlement of Plainfield “Upon Ye New Hampshire Grants”

Philip Zea

When New Hampshire was separated from Massachusetts in 1741, Benning Wentworth became the governor of the new royal province.¹ He was a shrewd businessman and politician who saw little distinction between the two careers. Wentworth established a government with no room for controversy, but ample allowance for the growth of his family's wealth and power. His goals were fueled by harvesting the colony's natural resources. An “inexhaustible” supply of tall white pines was spread across the hinterland, especially in the upper Connecticut River Valley. This timber became the masts and spars of His Majesty's Navy.²

Wentworth secured his position through a close relationship with John Tomlinson, the British naval agent, who allowed the Wentworth family access to favored trade abroad. Local geography also played into Wentworth's hand. New Hampshire's short coastline is dominated by one harbor at Portsmouth. From his mansion at Little Harbor, near the mouth of Piscataqua River below Portsmouth, Wentworth could sniff the material wealth of the uplands as it floated beneath his nose.³

Close regulation of trade was facilitated by New Hampshire's one-crop economy. The emphasis on lumber removed conflicting interests. As a result of his timber monopoly, Wentworth was financially independent of the General Court (legislature) which sat in Portsmouth. He also controlled the courts of law through his appointees. Finally, the Wentworths had lived in southern New Hampshire since 1637 and had developed an extensive family network which laid the foundation for political dominance of the colony.⁴ This firm grip on government and on private interests, which other royal and proprietary governors generally did not enjoy, was maintained by Benning Wentworth and his nephew, John Wentworth. They controlled New Hampshire from 1741 until the Revolution.⁵

In 1749, the Crown commissioned Benning Wentworth to grant charters for thousands of acres of unimproved land in the colony. Settlers had to peti-

Plainfield v

PROVINCE of NEW-HAMPSHIRE.

G E O R G E the Third,

By the Grace of GOD, of Great-Britain, France and
Ireland, KING, Defender of the Faith, &c.

To all Persons to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.

KNOW ye, that We of Our special Grace, certain Knowledge,
and meer Motion, for the due Encouragement of settling a *New Plan-
tation* within our said Province, by and with the Advice of our
Trusty and Well-beloved BENNING WENTWORTH, Esq; Our
Governor and Commander in Chief of Our said Province of NEW-HAMPSHIRE
in *New-England*, and of our COUNCIL of the said Province; HAVE upon the
Conditions and Reservations herein after made, given and granted, and by these
Presents, for us, our Heirs, and Successors, do give and grant in equal Shares,
unto Our loving Subjects, Inhabitants of Our said Province of *New-Hampshire*,
and Our other Governments, and to their Heirs and Assigns for ever, whole
Names are entered on this Grant, to be divided to and amongst them into
equal Shares, all that Tract or Parcel of Land
Sixty six situate, lying and being within our said Province of *New-Hampshire*, containing by
Admeasurment, *Twenty Two thousand three Hundred*
Acres, which Tract is to contain *one hundred*

Almost Six Miles square, and no more; out
of which an Allowance is to be made for High Ways and unimprovable Lands by
Rocks, Ponds, Mountains and Rivers, One Thousand and Forty Acres free, ac-
cording to a Plan and Survey thereof, made by Our said Governor's Order, and
returned into the Secretary's Office, and hereunto annexed, butted and bounded
as follows, *Viz. Beginning at a Pine Tree marked with the*
figures 34 A - Standing on the Bank of Connecticut River, ab-
out five miles from the Northern End of Charles town, and
in the South West Corner of Lebanon, from thence South
Twenty Two Degrees East Six Miles to the South Westerly Corner
of Enfield then South forty Two Degrees West Six Miles to
the South Westerly Corner of Grantham, thence North Seventy Six
Degrees West Six Miles to Connecticut River as aforesaid to a Pine
marked with the Figures 24 B thence up the River as aforesaid
to the Round first mentioned

And that the same be, and hereby is Incorporated into a Township by the Name of
Plainfield And the Inhabitants that do or shall hereafter
inhabit the said Township are hereby declared to be Enfranchized with and
Intituled to all and every the Priviledges and Immunities that other Towns within
Our Province by Law Exercise and Enjoy: And further, that the said Town as
soon as there shall be Fifty Families resident and settled thereon, shall have the
Liberty of holding *Two Fairs*, one of which shall be held on the
And the other on the
annually, which Fairs are not to continue longer than the
following the said
respective
and that as soon as the said Town shall consist of Fifty Families, a Market may be

Facsimile of the Charter of Plainfield, as recorded by the provincial secretary of
New Hampshire, August 14, 1761. Courtesy town of Plainfield.

opened and kept one or more Days in each Week, as may be thought most advantageous to the Inhabitants. Also, that the first Meeting for the Choice of Town Officers, agreeable to the Laws of our said Province, shall be held on the *Second Tuesday of September next* which said Meeting shall be Notified by *Mr John Stevens* who is hereby also appointed the Moderator of the said first Meeting, which he is to Notify and Govern agreeable to the Laws and Customs of Our said Province; and that the annual Meeting for ever hereafter for the Choice of such Officers for the said Town, shall be on the *Second Tuesday* of March annually, To HAVE and to HOLD the said Tract of Land as above expressed, together with all Privileges and Appurtenances, to them and their respective Heirs and Assigns forever, upon the following Conditions, viz.

I. That every Grantee, his Heirs or Assigns shall plant and cultivate five Acres of Land within the Term of five Years for every fifty Acres contained in his or their Share or Proportion of Land in said Township, and continue to improve and settle the same by additional Cultivations, on Penalty of the Forfeiture of his Grant or Share in the said Township, and of its reverting to Us, our Heirs and Successors, to be by Us or Them Re-granted to such of Our Subjects as shall effectually settle and cultivate the same.

II. That all white and other Pine Trees within the said Township, fit for Masting Our Royal Navy, be carefully preserved for that Use, and none to be cut or felled without Our special Licence for so doing first had and obtained, upon the Penalty of the Forfeiture of the Right of such Grantee, his Heirs and Assigns, to Us, our Heirs and Successors, as well as being subject to the Penalty of any Act or Acts of Parliament that now are, or hereafter shall be Enacted.

III. That before any Division of the Land be made to and among the Grantees, a Tract of Land as near the Centre of the said Township as the Land will admit of, shall be reserved and marked out for Town Lots, one of which shall be allotted to each Grantee of the Contents of one Acre.

IV. Yield and paying therefor to Us, our Heirs and Successors for the Space of ten Years, to be computed from the Date hereof, the Rent of one Ear of Indian Corn only, on the twenty-fifth Day of December annually, if lawfully demanded, the first Payment to be made on the twenty-fifth Day of December, 1762

V. Every Proprietor, Settler or Inhabitant, shall yield and pay unto Us, our Heirs and Successors yearly, and every Year forever, from and after the Expiration of ten Years from the above said twenty-fifth Day of December, namely, on the twenty-fifth Day of December, which will be in the Year of Our Lord 1772 One shilling Proclamation Money for every Hundred Acres he so owns, settles or possesses, and so in Proportion for a greater or lesser Tract of the said Land; which Money shall be paid by the respective Persons abovesaid, their Heirs or Assigns, in our Council Chamber in Portsmouth, or to such Officer or Officers as shall be appointed to receive the same; and this to be in Lieu of all other Rents and Services whatsoever.

In Testimony whereof we have caused the Seal of our said Province to be hereunto affixed. Witness BENNING WENTWORTH, Esq; Our Governor and Commander in Chief of Our said Province, the *14th* Day of *August* In the Year of our Lord CHRIST, One Thousand Seven Hundred and *Sixty one* And in the *Fifth* Year of Our Reign.

By His EXCELLENCY's Command,
With Advice of COUNCIL,

Thodore Atkinson Secy

James Northampton August 14th 1761
Recorded according to the original under the
Province Seal
Thodore Atkinson Secy

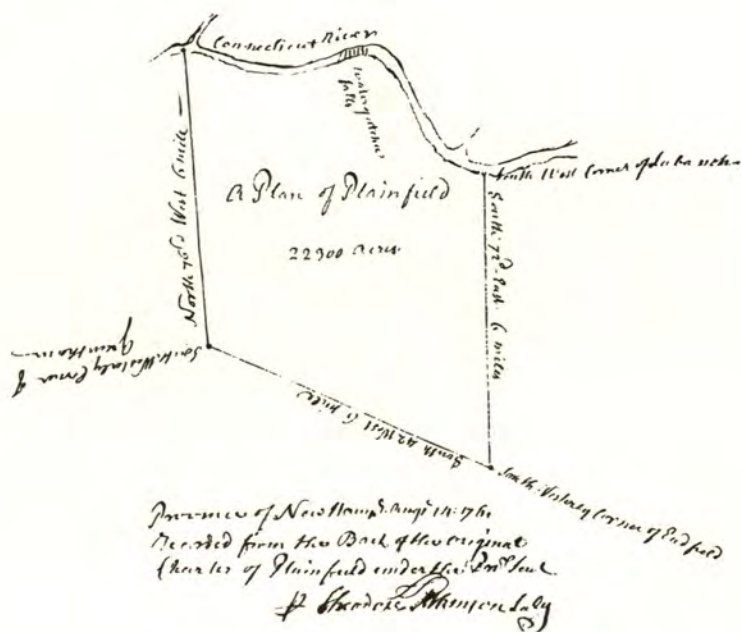
The Names of the Grantees of Plainfield V^y

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Benjamin Molechum | Stephen Warren | Martha Smith |
| Daniel Woodward | Stephen Rungley | Moses Smith - Galesburg |
| Ezra & Cady | Joshua Frink | John Stevens jun ^r |
| James Bradford | William Edward | Samuel Gordon |
| Robert Dixon | Elizabeth Gallup | Samuel Spaulding |
| John Stevens | Daniel Clark | Joshua Dunlap |
| Thomas Gallup | Samuel Hill jun ^r | Isaac Spaulding |
| William Kennedy | Jeremiah Cady | Abel Stevens |
| John Hall | John Spaulding | Isiah Spaulding |
| Joseph Spaulding | James Matthews | Moses Warren |
| John Gallup | Moses Tufts | Francis Smith |
| James Dean | Waterman Gift | Joseph Smith |
| Joseph Farnum jun ^r | Oliver Woodward | Thos ^t Atkinson Esq |
| Jonathan Phillips | Amos Frink | W ^m H ^y Winthrop Esq |
| Stephen Hall | Bryce Hutchins jun ^r | Bennings Winthrop Esq |
| William Carter | Joseph Williams | & John Winthrop Esq |
| Charles Spaulding | Saml ^l Knapp Berry | |
| Andrew Spaulding | Nath ^l Whinn | |
| John How | Cyprian Stevens - Killenby | |
| Jonas How | Bry ^l Spaulding Killenby | |
| Thos ^t Heard | Isabel Shupard | |
| Zach ^l Frink | John Nellson | |

His Excellency Benjamin Winthrop Esq & Trust of Land to
 Contain Two Hundred Acres as marked in the Plan B^y which
 is to be divided Two of the within Shares one whole Share
 for the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
 in foreign Parts one Share for a Glebe for the Church of England
 as by Law established one Share for the first settled Minister of
 the Gospel one Share for the Benefit of a School in the said
 Town —

Witness my Hand & Seal August 14th 1761.

Recorded from the Back of the original Charter
 of Plainfield & Shroder Atkinson Esq



Reproduced from the original Book of Charters in the N. H. Historical Society,
for the Plainfield Bi-Centennial, August 12-14, 1961,
Evans Printing Company, Concord, New Hampshire

Reprinted for the 225th Anniversary of Plainfield
July 4, 1986

tion Wentworth, rather than the General Court, for land. The most desirable acreage was in the Connecticut River Valley and beyond. The region was well known to provincial troops from all parts of New England who had marched northwesterly to the battles of the French and Indian Wars.

As the name suggests, Bennington in southern Vermont was the first town chartered by Wentworth in 1750. The French and Indian War began in earnest four years later, and Wentworth was only able to establish sixteen towns west of the Connecticut River before the collapse of New France in 1760.⁶ That year the governor commissioned Colonel Josiah Woodward and Joseph Blanchard to survey the Connecticut Valley from Fort Number Four in Charlestown northward to the Coos intervalles.⁷ Word of safe land of great agricultural potential spread quickly to the crowded towns of southern New England.

John Stevens, Sr., made his way to Portsmouth from his home in Plainfield, Connecticut, in the summer of 1761. The prosperity of the timber trade showed well around Portsmouth in the merchants' grand Georgian style houses and busy wharfs. One of the grandest structures had just been completed on the waterfront in the South End. Built for Thomas Wentworth by his mother, Madam Mark Hunking Wentworth, the facade of the framed house was scored to look like cut stone. The doorway was embellished with a scrolled pediment and carved Corinthian capitals.⁸ Stevens probably took a bed at one of the city's taverns and walked its noisy streets between appointments. His Plainfield and the capital of New Hampshire were interesting to compare.

It is unknown when or for how long Stevens stayed in Portsmouth awaiting an audience with Wentworth's bureaucrats, but his mission was clear. Earlier in the year, a group of investors in Plainfield and surrounding towns near the Rhode Island border had chosen him to go to New Hampshire as their agent to petition Governor Wentworth for a grant of land. Each of the fifty-six would-be proprietors paid six pounds to defray the cost of Stevens' journey and to darken the palms of the governor's underlings. Stevens was successful, and the charter for a new Plainfield in New Hampshire was granted on August 14, 1761.⁹

Investment in such a venture was no simple undertaking; six pounds was a lot of money in 1761. Men of substance with access to credit were drawn to the New Hampshire Grants with different goals in mind. Most were interested in speculation and hoped never to see the tall white pines. They planned to buy shares, only to sell them after improvements on neighboring parcels increased the values of their own untouched plots. Some wished to establish younger sons who had no future at home. Most proprietors remained comfortably in Connecticut. Only a few saw the chance for a fresh start in the Grants and invested their whole beings in the future of New Hampshire.

The land was made available to individuals through the purchase of proprietary rights in one of the newly surveyed towns. A proprietary was a joint stock company; shares were bought and sold. As a shareholder, an individual was liable for taxation to support common improvements in the grant. The pro-

prietary as a whole was responsible to Benning Wentworth for the settlement and development of the land. If certain requirements were not met, control of the grant reverted to the governor for repartition.¹⁰

The organization of the grant towns before the Revolution was usually initiated by proprietors from the same locale. For example, the proprietors of Plainfield, New Hampshire, lived in Plainfield and the neighboring towns of Voluntown, Killingly, and Canterbury in eastern Connecticut. The proprietors of Hanover and Norwich in the Upper Valley came from the Mansfield, Connecticut, area and so on.

Investment was complicated. The unimproved land lay at some distance from the settled towns of southern New England and was under the jurisdiction of another colonial government. Auctions of grants of land, such as were held in Connecticut during 1738 to populate its western towns, were impractical for Wentworth's purposes.¹¹ He could exercise greater and longer political influence over the new towns if would-be proprietors had to petition him for their charters. Wentworth could directly draw revenue from the proprietors as well as secure their allegiance in disputed territory.

The Wentworth government and John Stevens apparently did not exchange a fixed amount of cash for land. A uniform price for a grant was never established. Instead, there were nagging fees authorized by the Crown and set by the governor and council. Wentworth charged his estimate of what each proprietary could pay, so that almost no one would be discouraged. A charter might cost as much as 100 Spanish milled dollars or nothing at all.¹² More importantly, Wentworth reserved the right to reclaim the grant for resale and more service fees if the charter requirements were not met. The investors in Cornish faced recharter in 1768.¹³ The approximate cost of the grant of Plainfield to its proprietary is measured by the £ 336 conveyed to John Stevens by the fifty-six investors for travel, food, lodging, and Governor Wentworth's purse.

The charter of Plainfield is a form document typical of the grants awarded by the Wentworths. In this case, the proprietary was comprised of sixty-six shares. Most were destined for ownership by the Connecticut investors in Plainfield. However, the governor reserved a lot of 500 acres, which was in the northwestern corner of the town and which was contiguous to a similar plot kept by Wentworth in the southwestern corner of Lebanon. The land included the 1000-foot prominence still called Governor's Hill. Wentworth also authorized proprietary rights for his friends and relatives. Consequently, Mark Hunking Wentworth, John Wentworth, Benning Wentworth (a nephew), and Theodore Atkinson, secretary of the province, were awarded equal shares by the governor. Their interests were purely speculative, and these men never came to the grant. When New Hampshire ceased to exist as a Royal Province in 1775, the proprietors in the grants added these properties to the remaining undivided or "common land" in each town. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the Glebe for the Church of England, the first settled minister, and the school also received separate

shares under the conditions of the charter.¹⁴ In the case of Plainfield, the Connecticut proprietors controlled less than 85 percent of the land in their grant at the outset.

The conditions of the charter further prescribed the immediate election of officers in the proprietary in order to hasten settlement. Wentworth required each proprietary to bring 10 percent of its land under cultivation within the first five years. A centralized village was to be laid out before any division of the common land was made. Although the site of the village was surveyed in Plainfield, it was never the center of community life. Today, the proprietors' attentiveness to this requirement of the charter is only recorded by the name of Center-of-Town Road. A quit-rent paid at the rate of one shilling per one hundred acres of land was also demanded by the provincial government. However, like the requirements that the King's white pine be spared the ax and that an ear of Indian corn be sent to Portsmouth as a symbol of loyalty, this demand was unenforceable and usually ignored.

The following men (and woman) signed the charter that Stevens carried back to Plainfield, Connecticut, in the late summer of 1761. The names of the Portsmouth politicians mentioned above were later subscribed at the end of the list.

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Benjamin Hutchins | Thomas Heard | Benjamin Spaulding |
| Daniel Woodward | Zachariah Frink | of Killingly |
| Eleazar Cady | Stephen Warren | Caleb Shepard |
| James Bradford | Stephen Kingsley | John Nelson |
| Robert Dixon Esq. | Joshua Frink | Martha Smith |
| of Voluntown | William Edwards | Moses Smith |
| John Stevens, Sr. | Ebenezer Gallup | of Canterbury |
| Thomas Gallup | Daniel Clark | John Stevens, Jr. |
| William Kennedy | Samuel Hill, Jr. | Samuel Gordon |
| John Hall | Jeremiah Cady | Samuel Spaulding |
| Joseph Spaulding | John Spaulding | Joshua Dunlap |
| John Gallup | James Matthews | Jesse Spaulding |
| James Dean | Moses Tufts | Abel Stevens |
| Joseph Farnum, Jr. | Waterman Clift | Josiah Spaulding |
| Jonathan Phillips | Elias Woodward | Moses Warren |
| Stephen Hall | Amos Frink | Francis Smith |
| William Cutler | Benjamin Hutchins, Jr. | Curtis Spaulding |
| Joseph Williams | Joseph Smith | Andrew Spaulding |
| Samuel Kingsbury | John Howe | Nathaniel Main |
| Jonas Howe | Cyprean Spaulding | |
| | of Killingly | |

Among the proprietors was Martha Smith, a widow and an active investor in the proprietary until she sold her share to Lemuel Smith early in 1764. The presence of a woman in the proprietary of a New Hampshire grant is rare. Her



Reenactment of the signing of the Charter of Plainfield, in front of the Plainfield Town Hall, July 4, 1986. L-R Sara Townsend, Paul Franklin, Joseph Salsbury, Basil McNamara, Albert K. Read III, Robert Taylor. Photo by Ira Townsend. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

husband may have been interested in the venture at its inception, and she had simply carried on. Perhaps, she was a respected matriarch and was permitted to participate on her own with the encouragement of the three male Smiths who were also investors in the company. As a proprietor, she was entitled to vote in meeting and theoretically to hold office. Both privileges were exceptionally rare for women in the eighteenth century. Although Mrs. Smith's involvement seems enlightened, it may have been only practical. The other investors probably could not afford to reject the added financial resource that she could bring.

The propriety of Plainfield was typical in its close-knit character. The town charter shows that only four of the fifty-six original Connecticut proprietors came from towns other than Plainfield and that thirty-four of them (60 percent) shared their surname with at least one other original proprietor. Noting incomplete vital statistics, the unity of the group was nevertheless built on extensive cousinage. Thirty-two of the families were intermarried with other families which also contained either original proprietors, secondary proprietors who purchased the rights of the first investors, or non-proprietors who settled in Plainfield, New Hampshire, before 1775. For example, eight heads of family named Spaulding were original proprietors. A ninth was a secondary proprietor. Five more were non-pro-

prietors who settled in Plainfield before the Revolution. Collectively, they married into at least five other families which enjoyed status as either original proprietors or secondary proprietors of Plainfield.¹⁵ Only after 1775, in the second decade after settlement, do names appear in the town records that are not an extension of the initial maze of inter-familial relationships.

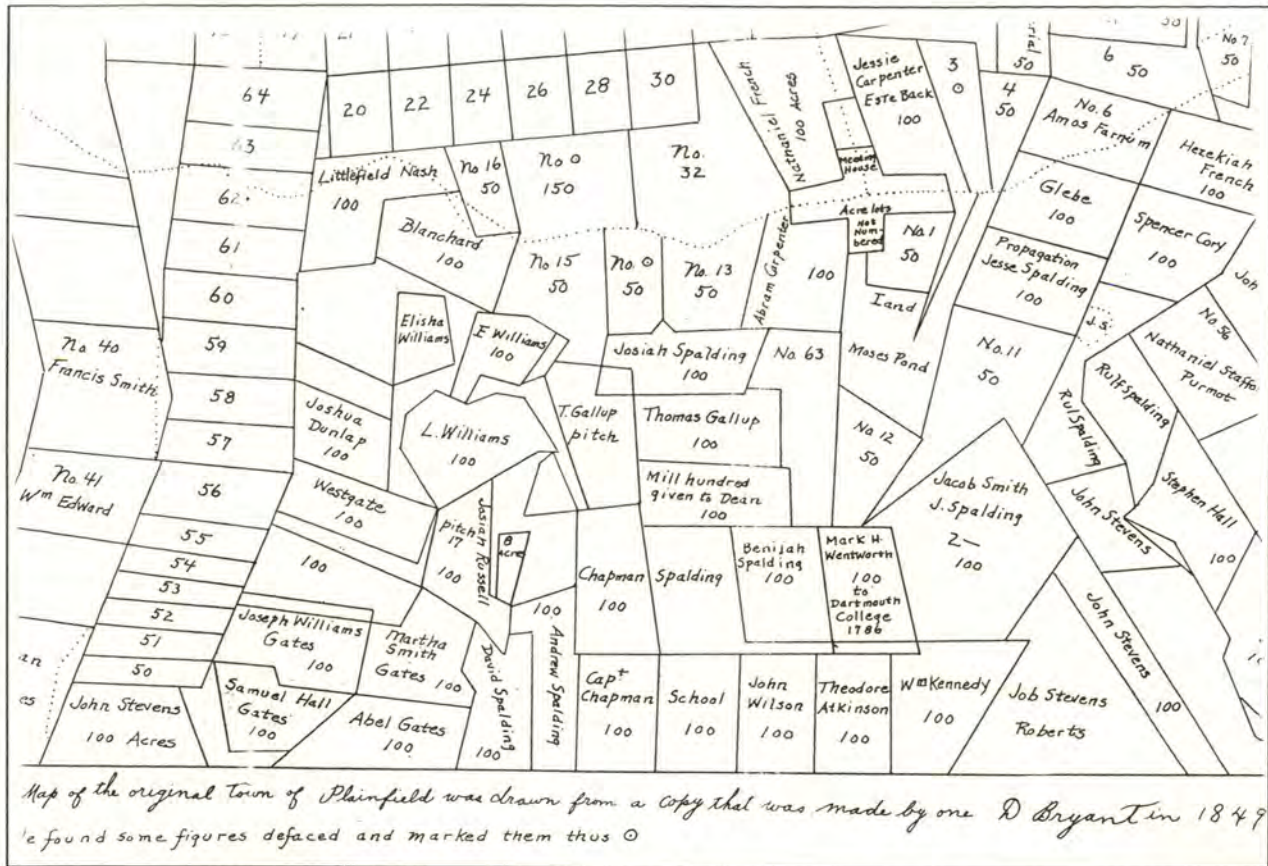
The number of transactions within this proprietary of cousins and in-laws made it a closed corporation that permitted the investments of only four men from outside of their Connecticut town. Of the non-Plainfielders, only Robert Dixon did not share his name with another original proprietor. A consolidation of family names leaves a total of thirty-three families, which included several established Plainfield clans. Eleven of the thirty-two families (minus Dixon) appear as freeholders in Plainfield, Connecticut, as early as 1702 and 1706.¹⁶ One-third of the families originally involved in the proprietary of Plainfield, New Hampshire, were well-established scions of extensive clans. Their pooled resources, rather than their mythical independence, explain how investment in the New Hampshire grants was funded.

As prescribed in the charter, John Stevens warned these proprietors to their first official meeting a few days after his return to Plainfield, Connecticut, from Portsmouth. They met on September 8, 1761, to elect the officers of the proprietary and to "lay out all Such Lots of Land in Sd Township as had Bin or Should Be By Sd Proprietors Allowed To Be Laid Out."¹⁷

The first division of land was made that October. Two tiers of lots were surveyed along the Connecticut River. The assignment of "River Lots" was done by lottery. Each proprietor received a number, one through sixty-four. Subsequent divisions of the common land were "drawn to a River Lot" or, that is, to the number assigned to the share that first autumn. Each of the sixty-four shares (minus the "Governor's Farm" of 500 acres) received parcels adjusted in size according to the quality of the land. Therefore, the actual number of acres per lot was deceptively uneven. The smaller lots included better land. A copy of the proprietors' map, drawn in 1849, shows how the land was divided.

Shares changed hands rapidly as original proprietors sold out to secondary proprietors and as actual settlers sought to consolidate their holdings. Some men owned more than one share. Consequently, there became fewer proprietors than there were shares in the company. The heaviest investor in the proprietary was Francis Smith, who was one of the few original proprietors to settle in Plainfield. He acquired shares #8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 27, 40, and 62, all before March of 1765 when he moved to the New Hampshire Grants.¹⁸ Most of the more speculative transactions were made within the first six years of the proprietary.

The two major concerns of the proprietors were to realize their investments and to meet the prerequisites of the charter before it was rescinded. On February 1, 1763, the proprietary voted to offer its members an encouragement to improve land in the grant. If ten or more proprietors would go to the new Plainfield, clear three acres of land each, and build one house for every five volunteers by the following November, they would be allowed to choose



Detail, copy of the Proprietor's Map, 1849. Courtesy town of Plainfield.

the location of their second division of 100-acre lots. The only stipulation was that the land had to be "in One Intire piece." Furthermore, the volunteers were assured of financial assistance from the propriety.¹⁹

Several people accepted the offer, but the opportunity to claim 100 contiguous acres anywhere in the town caused problems for a couple of generations. The pioneers selected the sites of their "second hundreds" in irregularly shaped lots fashioned to include the best possible land. When the time came for later divisions in the common land, these parcels made the simplicity of a grid impossible. As a result, disputed boundaries and pockets of unclaimed land existed into the nineteenth century.

Seventeen proprietors took advantage of the February 1 resolution. Only a dozen of them, however, eventually settled in the new town. They were original proprietors Thomas Gallup, Francis Smith, both John Stevens, Sr. and Jr.; secondary proprietors Lemuel Williams, Isaac Main, Abel Gates, Robert Miller, the two Josiah Russells, Sr. and Jr., Isaac Smith, and Lemuel Smith. They were accompanied by John Greeton, Josiah Lawrence, Jonathan Howe, Stephen Warren,



Plow, probably Preston, CT, about 1760. This plow traditionally belonged to Joseph Kimball and was one of the first used in Plainfield. Photo by Erich Witzel. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

and none other than Martha Smith. This group went to the New Hampshire Grants during the summer of 1763 to improve their estates. It is impossible to know whether Mrs. Smith sent someone in her stead. In either case, she certainly was not among the least ambitious of the proprietors.

At a proprietary meeting in Connecticut the following December, two important topics were discussed. First, the efforts of "the seventeen" were confirmed. During the summer, they had cleared at least fifty-one acres of land and constructed three or four shelters in Plainfield, New Hampshire. It was also voted that "there be a Highway Laid out through Sd Township from the South to the North. . . ." ²⁰

The next summer, approximately seven men went to the grant to survey and to improve their "seventeens," as the second 100-acre lots were called. They also worked on the proposed road along the Connecticut River, but permanent settlement came slowly in the New Hampshire Grants. Captain Josiah Russell and Littlefield Nash, both veterans of the French and Indian War, stayed during the winter of 1764–1765 in a hut probably at the southern foot of Freeman Hill. They are recognized as the first settlers of Plainfield. ²¹

The last proprietary meeting held in Connecticut took place on March 12, 1765, and addressed impending settlement. Most of the business was devoted to the election of town officers (as opposed to the officers of the proprietary)

and to raising the money needed to improve the road that passed through the grant. To encourage settlement that summer, they also voted that each proprietor who went to New Hampshire could choose the location of another 100-acre lot. This time, however, the proprietors had to wait to claim their land until "the Same is Laid Out."²² This stipulation arrested the confusion that the irregular lots of "the seventeen" had created.

Despite preparation and encouragement, only about eight families headed northward in the spring of the following year. Life was hard in the New Hampshire Grants, especially for women. John Mann, who passed by on his way to Orford in 1765, wrote of encountering only one family in Plainfield. He related that Francis Smith's wife, Eunice, had said that she was "terribly homesick" and that she "would not stay there in the woods."²³ Despite Mrs. Smith's sadness, it is a mistake to picture these first Plainfield families on the edge of an untouched forest. Fort Number Four, twenty miles down the river, had been established prior to King George's War (1744-1748). A weakened band of Rogers' Rangers had floated by Plainfield on crude rafts after their famous attack on St. Francis in Quebec in 1759. A year later, Colonel John Goffe and his New Hampshire militiamen had built a road (of sorts) from Fort Number Four across Vermont to Crown Point.³ Towns had been chartered simultaneously to Plainfield forty miles to the north. They were under improvement each summer by small bands of proprietors who passed by Eunice Smith's door on their way to and from their own New Hampshire grant.

The first Town Meeting held in Plainfield, New Hampshire, took place on March 17, 1766. The town meeting and the proprietary meeting were superimposed because all of the settlers at that time held proprietary shares. Original and secondary proprietors took the leadership roles because no one else was available or better qualified. They continued to establish "their" town and were annually returned to office. There was no reason to replace them with willing newcomers. Consequently, few new men held town office before the first set of leaders had their chance. Men like John Stevens and Francis Smith led the town during the colonial period. Their power was based on successful land speculation and on extensive family ties. The elite among the proprietors controlled local affairs.

At the annual March meeting of the town in 1770, it was "entered & made a precedent By the Selectmen...that no Inhabitants shall vote in town meeting unless he owns Land in Sd Town."²⁴ The erosion of proprietary power had begun. Non-proprietor, non-landholding men were living in Plainfield five years after settlement. These people were transients or the mature sons of landowners still living at home.

A non-proprietor was an enfranchised voter in town meeting if he was a tax-paying citizen, but the same man could not speak nor vote in the proprietary meeting unless he owned shares. Land ownership alone was not a prerequisite to proprietorship. Non-proprietors purchased common land directly from the proprietary or lots subdivided and sold by individual proprietors. However, they did not become proprietors themselves by purchasing land, only by purchasing a share. The town charter made it clear that the creation of new shares was ille-

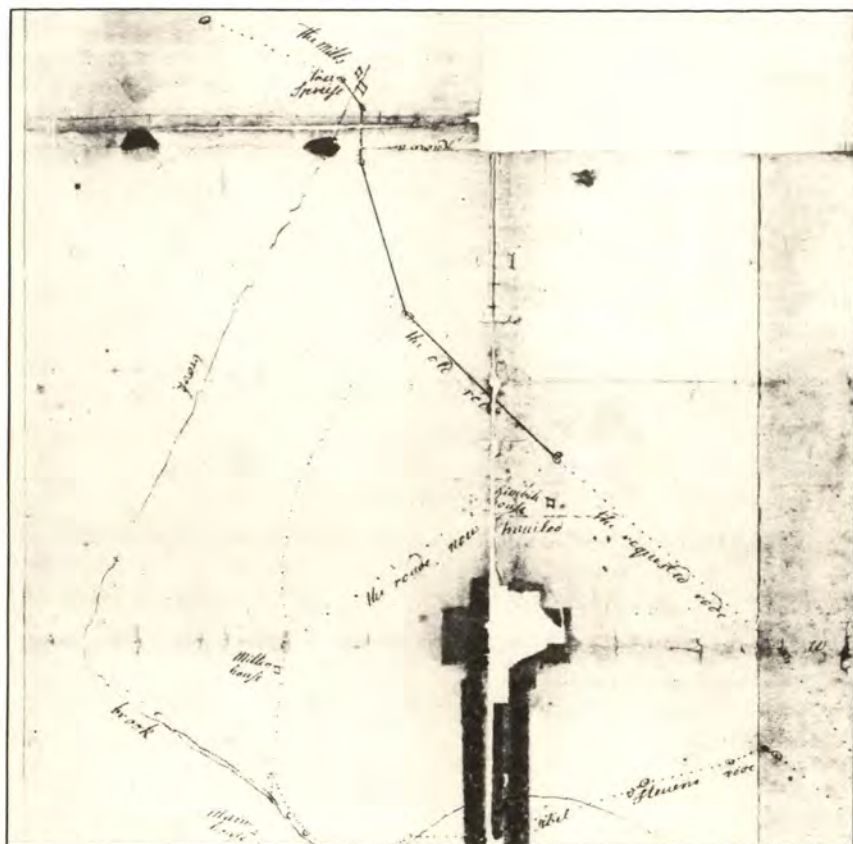
gal, even if the proprietary was so inclined.²⁵ The proprietary, however, occasionally sold random lots of land to meet their corporate expenses and to create company dividends. This practice eliminated the confusing gores of land created by the irregular lots of "the seventeen." On September 29, 1770, for example, the proprietary voted: "that they sell 10 1/4 acres of land at the N.E. Corner of How hill So Called for Either cash or Land equivalent thereto."²⁶

Once in New Hampshire, the proprietary moved quickly to meet the requirements of the charter and the careful division of common land. The resolutions of the 1766 annual Town Meeting illustrate these concerns. Committees were appointed "to Lay Out a Meeting House & Burying Ground" and "to Lay a Road where it thought Needful."²⁷ The first action sought to satisfy the charter requirement that a centralized village be surveyed. The second shows the need to make various parts of town accessible for settlement and improvement. More inhabitants meant that individual tax loads would be less (for the time being, anyway) and that the social and economic quality of domestic life would grow more rapidly. For each proprietor, a healthy pace meant that the value of his share(s) would further appreciate.

Another nagging concern of the first people of Plainfield was the boundary disputes with the neighboring towns of Lebanon and Cornish. These confrontations continued for several years and impeded the division and improvement of land. They were the result of three circumstances. First, when the towns were laid out, the markers referenced by the surveyors were sometimes impermanent dead elm trees and the like. The problem was compounded by changes in the river bank. Secondly, the surveyors initially established only the corners of the grants, which allowed for considerable elasticity between points. It was impossible to define the boundaries of a lot on the perimeter of the town until it was established just where each town was. Lastly, mistakes were likely to go uncorrected because the rugged landscape resulted in inconsistent remeasurement. The genealogical portion of Child's *History of the Town of Cornish* records the consternation of Eliphalet Kimball (1730-1805) whose loyalty and taxes had been long misdirected:

When he settled he supposed his farm was within the limits of the town of Plainfield, but afterward when the lines were established, it was found that it ran about 20 rods north of his house, thus placing his home outside of Plainfield, and in the town of Cornish. This was a great grief to him.²⁸

Early town meetings also addressed the development of industry in order to encourage settlement and to meet the needs of those already in town. The construction of mills shows that settlers were producing grain and living in permanent framed houses within five years of initial settlement. A subsidy for Nathaniel Dean's proposed grist mill was appropriated by the proprietors on March 8, 1768, to match the sawmill which Aaron Chapman had built at Mill Village sometime before that spring.²⁹ By September 1770, Dean had taken over Chapman's operation and had constructed the grist mill.



Map, Road Improvements, Meriden, about 1780. Courtesy of the town of Plainfield.

At the Town Meeting on October 29, 1768, the citizens in the eastern end of the town had voted to give 100 acres of land “adjoining the falls on bloods brook towards building a sawmill.”³⁰ The following March, for further encouragement, “ten Pounds in money & ten Pounds in Vendable Specia” were added to the kitty.³¹ Eventually, the eastern sawmill was built. In 1772, Benjamin Kimball was granted a five-year extension for constructing a grist mill at the same site.

Difficulty in obtaining necessary ironwork for the mills and the high premium placed on labor slowed the establishment of these businesses. Few could afford the specie or produce to pay a hired laborer, assuming that one could find a man free to take time away from his own work. Consequently, men like Dean and Kimball had to undertake most of the work themselves with the encouragement of prizes offered by the town and the proprietary.

The settlers of Plainfield were forced to work together by the desire to establish a prosperous community. In the earliest years, the proprietary was the town, and its members controlled town affairs in the absence of anyone else. Their venture relied on the rapid division of common land to men whose improvements would increase the value of the remaining property. When non-propri-

etors moved into Plainfield and purchased land from the proprietary, social distinctions arose between the "haves" and the "have-nots." The realization of profits by the proprietary through these sales to non-proprietary filled their purses, but eventually weakened the role of the proprietors in town affairs. By the mid-1780s, the best land was no longer held in common by the proprietary. Once the town was established, the proprietors were simply outnumbered and voted down.

The decline of the proprietary can be traced through an examination of local leaders during the last quarter of the eighteenth century (see Appendix B). The tiny core of elite proprietors, who controlled town affairs before the Revolution, lost their hold on local offices when they assumed regional leadership roles in the military and in the New Hampshire Grants controversy. Their sons and other proprietors filled a larger proportion of town offices. Plainfield's colonial leaders—John Stevens, Francis Smith, Joseph Kimball, Thomas Gallup, and Amos Stafford—all served in the militia or were members of the Committees of Safety and Correspondence. The men who rose to take their places in government were Lemuel Smith, Benjamin Kimball, and Robert Miller. They were all secondary proprietors who did not serve in the Revolution. After war and controversy ended, these men were joined by other younger proprietors like Captain Josiah Russell and Lieutenant Charles Spaulding who had filled the remaining positions of leadership in the militia or on various civil committees. Their return to town affairs meant that men like Benjamin Kimball and Lemuel Smith held fewer offices.³²

In achieving their economic goals, the proprietors removed themselves from preeminence. Non-proprietary like Lieutenant Abel Stone, Champeon Spaulding, and Joshua Bayley established themselves as respected citizens with marked leadership abilities and began to assume town offices. They were joined by other non-proprietary like Daniel Kimball, Asa Gallup, and Thomas Gates, Jr., who had their fathers' colonial service upon which to build. Unlike before the Revolution, few men held more than one office in a given year, so more individuals with different viewpoints were thrust into the simmering pot of local government.

The strength of early Plainfield lay in the homogeneity of the proprietors and first settlers, extensive family networks, the mutual drive for economic expansion, and the familiar institution of New England town government. The economic priorities of the original citizens of Plainfield had been clear. Grist mills took precedence over the expense of religion and education, which became domestic concerns rather than social ones. The realization of investments, which were slowed by the Revolution, the New Hampshire Grants controversy, and the decentralization of community life, ironically impeded the steady development of the town as a whole. When conflicts arose over taxes, roads, and meeting houses, the proprietary was powerless, and the town officers were as diverse as their constituency. The least controversial course for the citizens of Plainfield was simply to return the same group of leaders to office year after year. Unfortunately, the realization of private goals in the New Hampshire Grants slowed the development of a cohesive community within the memories of the first settlers.

Plainfield's American Revolution

Philip Zea

Plainfield was settled only a decade when America's colonial era closed in 1775. The new town was home to 308 people who were rapidly improving their farms. The minutes of town meetings record complaints about the roads and the lack of them. There were at least two sawmills and two grist mills, so lumber and flour were available. A potash works may have been in operation. Nathaniel Dean, who ran the two mills at Mill Village in the western end of town, was also a blacksmith. His skills reduced the need for imported ironwork. The economy grew, and Plainfield was no longer a frontier town. Unfortunately, the Revolution, the new state government, and the New Hampshire Grants Controversy crippled growth during the next decade. The townspeople relied on family ties and on numerous special town meetings to solve their problems. Plainfield's revolutionary consciousness was awakened soon after the Boston "Tea Party." Early in the summer of 1774, the Committee of Correspondence in Portsmouth circulated a "covenant" to sign in all of the grants. It called attention to the hard times that had befallen Boston and asked all citizens to boycott British goods. The settlers were made aware "of no alternatives between the horrors of Slavery, or the carnage and Desolation of a civil War." Plainfielders signed the non-importation agreement and returned it to Portsmouth.¹

The Plainfield subscribers joined men in all corners of the province in a common protest against the designs of the English Parliament. They organized illegally to prevent fellow colonists from buying British goods. Yet, as residents of the distant New Hampshire Grants, what had they risked? Any English retaliation against Portsmouth would have had little effect on their lifestyle 100 miles away. Although frontier self-sufficiency is a myth of history, the basic needs of food, clothing, fuel, and shelter could be devised locally, if need be. Some political risk was involved, and certainly courage and patriotism were required. But the settlers' support was verbal at best. If sentiment alone counted for something, the number of subscribers—fifty-seven men—and the fact that only two people who saw the document did not sign it show the enthusiasm of Plainfielders for the coastal revolution.

Why did they bother to risk anything by signing the covenant? After all, most of the settlers of the grants were from Connecticut and did not maintain strong ties with New Hampshire and eastern Massachusetts. Rhetoric may have raised consciousness. Perhaps, they remembered the lack of opportunity in their crowded home towns. They were also influenced by a barter economy, which handicapped development and made paying taxes difficult. Plainfielders and others in the New Hampshire Grants connected their financial problems to parliamentary policy that asked them to pay the bill for the last French and Indian War. During the course of the previous ten years, the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act, the Coercive Acts, and the Quebec Act had forced American colonists everywhere to evaluate their purses, their rights as Englishmen and women, and their status as British subjects.²

Revolt became reality in New Hampshire that winter. On December 14, 1774, a company of Portsmouth men under John Langdon and John Sullivan seized Fort William and Mary near the mouth of the Piscataqua River and made off with its munitions.³ Soon after the assault, the selectmen of Plainfield received another communication from the Portsmouth Committee of Correspondence. A second Continental Congress was planned, and Plainfield was requested to send a delegate to Exeter to choose New Hampshire's representatives.⁴ At a special Town Meeting on January 17, 1775, the citizens voted that "the Town acquiesce in What Shall Be Done at the meeting of the Delegates."⁵ The townspeople either felt too poor or too distant to send a delegate to Exeter. Without Plainfield's vote, New Hampshire sent Langdon and Sullivan to the Continental Congress at Philadelphia in May.

Although it was impractical to support the Portsmouth rebels, Plainfielders justified defensive steps at home. At the annual Town Meeting on March 14, 1775, the citizens debated the fifth article on the warrant: "To grant a Tax to Git a Town Stock of amonition."⁶ On April 28, after Lexington and Concord, the selectmen warned a special Town Meeting. The value of liberty was measured against added taxation.⁷

Province of Newhampshire

Plainfield

County of Cheshire

April 28th 1775

These are to Notify & warn ye inhabitants of this Town to take into Serious Consideration what is most proper to be Don Consarning Defending of our Rights & Privileges in Liberty and what is Best to be Don with ye Tax that is a gathering for the Province Treasury and to meet at the house of Mr Nathaniel Dean...on...ye 8th of May next... to act in ye hool afare as Shall be thought Proper.

Benjn Kemball

Thomas Gallup Selectmen

Lemuel Williams

Joseph Kemball

At the meeting on May 8, the revolutionary process accelerated in Plainfield. The town organized its own Committee of Correspondence, diverted tax money from going to Exeter, and authorized "ye Present Select men to take Care and git a town Stock of Amminition." The tax levy was applied to buying munitions for use where they would do the most good. The choice of supporting the government or themselves was no choice at all. Plainfielders continued this pattern throughout the war. Although they could not afford heavy taxes, the people did not want to act independently of the government. They voted to send Francis Smith to the Fourth Provincial Congress of New Hampshire.⁸

Rebellion occupied the minds of people in the New Hampshire Grants. When there was no turning back, the number of town meetings increased. A meeting was held on July 22, 1775, to deal with the military needs of the town. Money was appropriated for 100 pounds of powder, 300 pounds of lead, and 200 flints. A Committee of Safety was created to deal with military matters.⁹ It was combined with the Committee of Correspondence because of the small number of men available to serve.

Although open conflict had begun only three months before, people in the grants prepared for war. There was no choice if they expected to survive political pressure or actual attack. Plainfielders pooled their resources and hoped for the best. On August 10, all of the Committees of Safety from the grants east of the Connecticut River met at the house of Francis Smith in Plainfield "to Consult Such Measures as may be Proper to Secure these fronteers against futer Invation."¹⁰ Although no record of this meeting has been found, it is clear that people in the New Hampshire Grants seriously considered the military threat. They were more concerned about the British and Indians in the fourteenth colony of Canada than with the troops besieged in Boston.

The expedition led by Richard Montgomery and Benedict Arnold against Quebec failed the following winter. A British counterattack was expected in the spring. The people on the New Hampshire Grants braced for the uncertainty of war. Both the Hudson and the Connecticut Rivers were the obvious avenues toward the more populated colonies to the south and east. At the Town Meeting on July 17, 1776, Plainfielders voted to divide part of the ammunition among those men who had weapons. They also decided "that those of this town that Shall go a scouting Shall have Six Shillins a day—they finding thare prouvisions and other necararies."¹¹

Despite the threat, the town could not afford to supply its scouts. The minutes of this meeting and the statement in the census of 1775 that the selectmen "find 85 men and 36 of them has guns" show that the New Hampshire Grants, like the colonies in general, were unprepared for war. A musket did not hang over every fireplace, and every male on the frontier was not a rugged woodsman. In fact, the expense and difficulty in maintaining weapons limited their presence where they were most needed. If a part became broken or lost, there were few gunsmiths to make repairs.¹² Against all odds, neither the

household, the town, nor the province could adequately supply the militia to protect the New Hampshire Grants.

One of the handicaps of the war effort was that neither Congress nor the General Court could maintain their troops in the field for extended periods of time. The events following the July 17, 1776, Town Meeting and concluding with the winter dismissal on November 9 show the seasonal pattern of mobilization. The same inability to keep soldiers at the front plagued the Continental cause during the summer of 1777. Lack of pay and seasonal farm work drew soldiers home when the immediate threat passed.

In the late summer of 1776, the General Court demanded that the towns give up their best resource. The call came to raise 2,000 men. For the time being, the western towns complied with their quotas because the most immediate military threat faced them and because someone else was helping to pay for it. Fort Ticonderoga, which Ethan Allen had captured over a year before "in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," was in poor condition. Invasion from the north was a matter of time, and Plainfield and surrounding towns mobilized their militias.

Josiah Russell of Plainfield was elected captain of the Second Company of Rangers in the regiment commanded by Colonel Jonathan Chase of Cornish.¹³ The precise movements of this little army are unknown during the summer of 1776, but the men walked to Lake Champlain and supported the campaign to check the attack expected in the wake of Montgomery and Arnold's failures in Lower Canada the previous December.¹⁴ There was camp sickness, including small pox, but no Plainfield men had been lost when the Rangers were dismissed on November 9, 1776.¹⁵

The New Hampshire Grants found themselves in the Revolution regardless of whether they could afford it. A call for men also came from the Continental Congress via the province of New Hampshire for the regular army, and the state continued to muster and to dismiss its militia. At the Town Meeting in Plainfield on April 14, 1777, the citizens gathered "to hear the order that General [Nathaniel] Fulsom _____ has Sent for men and to See if the town will give any More Incoridgement than what is given by the Continental Congress all Redy." The townspeople responded by granting a bounty of fourteen pounds to every man who enlisted in the Continental Army for three years.¹⁶ Late in the summer, Plainfield recorded the men who had answered the national call:

A Return of the men of Plainfield that is in the Contanantel Servis

| | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| Wilder Willard | |
| Darick a Negro | in Capt houses Compe |
| Lemuel Dean | |
| Eire Evers | n Capt fairwell Comp |
| Jesse Roberts | |

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Ziba Roberts | |
| Simeon Short | in Connecticut Servis |
| Ephraim Dunlap | |
| Ebenezer Re _____ | |
| Mr Hall | with Major Waite |
| Oliver Washborn | in the Bay State |
| Asa Briggs | |

Sept 4th 1777 ¹⁷

In May, the selectmen had received urgent appeals from Generals Philip Schuyler and "Mad" Anthony Wayne for the militia to reinforce Ticonderoga against the British advance from Montreal. In the Connecticut Valley, Colonels Jonathan Chase, Samuel Ashley of Keene, and Benjamin Bellows of Walpole raised 380 men and left for Lake Champlain.¹⁸ Ten days prior to dismissal on June 18, Chase wrote home to his wife:

To mis Sale [Sally] Chase &c &c &c.
June 8th 1777

Thare is Nothing Remarkabel with us as to News. I Epect to be Discharg in a few Days. have this Day obtaind a Discharg for 27 men: Dresser & Whiden are got Home. I sopose thay Desarted and are Returned as Such. it is a Helthy time in the Army. my Regement are Chefely well save some who has Got the meezels But None as yet Dangelos. the Enemy Came Down ye other Day as far as Split Rock whare thay understook By the Inhabetence the meleshe [militia] was rived in Grate Numbers. fired Near 100 Canon and Returnd. By the Best accompts we Can git thare is Now 4 or 5 Scouts out Some of which Bound to [for] Canada. one Came in yesterday from Beyond Split Rock. Mad[e] no Discoverys of the Enemy. we Expect General Saml Chase Every [h]our. tis thoat we Shall Be Relesd when He arrives. — — —

I am as Harty as the Day is long. Have Not had an Ill Day Sence I left Home for which I Desire & Have abondence Cawse to Bless God: I Hope you and All frind are well. may the Good lord presarve our lives & Helth & Grante in Due time we may se oneanother in Pese. I am in Grate Hast. Can ad no more.
am yours &c

Jonth Chase ¹⁹

Before June was out, there was another alarm. This time nearly 600 men set out from east of the Connecticut River to reinforce Fort Ticonderoga. A second alarm was called on the first anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and more troops were mustered in the New Hampshire Grants. Before their deployment, the militia learned that General Arthur St. Clair had been forced by British General John Burgoyne to withdraw the 3,000 men garrisoned at "Ti" on July 6.²⁰ After taking Ticonderoga, the British moved to the head of the lake at Skenesborough (Whitehall, New York) and feigned advancement into New England. The Battle of Hubbardton was fought on July 7 as the remnants of St. Clair's army withdrew into Vermont.²¹ Although their precise movements are unknown, Plainfielders were in the field for at least a month.²²

Colonel Chase and his men also served the following month under General John Stark at the Battle of Bennington on August 16. Burgoyne had instructed Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich Baum with over 600 Hessians and Indians to proceed to the Connecticut River on a foraging expedition for food and transport. He created the semblance of an advance guard in a British expedition against Boston. Instead, Stark routed Baum and his German mercenaries, and the militia returned home.²³ In hindsight, Stark's men thwarted the only military thrust at the New Hampshire Grants during the Revolution.

The climax of the war in the northern colonies was Burgoyne's surrender to Horatio Gates at Saratoga on October 17, 1777. Colonel Chase and his militia once again crossed Vermont on September 26. Their exact movements are unrecorded, but the regiment did receive a written commendation.²⁴ At least twenty men and seven horses from Plainfield participated in the campaign:

Leut Reuben Jerold Return of the men that march from
Plainfield to Saratoga in Col Chases Regiment In Sept 26th
1777 With there names

| Titles | Names Serves | In Wagers miles @/3 pr Travel Miles | Total |
|--------|--------------------|--|-------|
| Leut | Reuben Jerold | 32 [days] | |
| Sargt | Elias Gates | 32 | |
| Sargt | William Cutler | 32 | |
| Corp | Nathan Gates | 16 | |
| | Nathaniel Stafford | 32 | |
| Drumr | Benj Chapman | 32 | |
| | John Andres | 32 | |
| | Timothy Vinson | 32 | |
| | James Walker | 32 | |
| | Isaac Williams | 32 | |
| | Wilard Smith | 32 | |

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Laben Hall | 32 |
| Cristopher Hall | 32 |
| Zadock Blose | 32 |
| Rulof Spaulding | 7 |
| Stutley Stafford | 7 |
| Josiah Rushel | 16 |

| Return of Bagege Horses | Day Sarvis | Wagers pr day | Total |
|---|---------------|------------------|-------|
| Leut Reuben Jerold 1 Horse | 9 | 6 | |
| Rulof Spaulding 1 horse | 15 | | |
| William Culter 1 horse | 15 | | |
| Hezekiah French 1 horse | 15 | | |
| Cristopher Hall 1 horse | 15 | | |
| Job Catlan 1 horse | 15 | | |
| Capt Josiah Rushel himself and horse | 6 | | |
| Abel Stafford dito | 3 | | |
| Charles Spaulding dito | 2 | | |

Reuben Jerold paid feridge for 21 men and 6 horses going out @ /5 each Returning home for feridges for 17 men and 6 horses Reuben Jerold paid for Rum dealt out to the above mn 5 quarts and 1 pint pr q £ 3.6.0 ²⁵

Aside from the militia, several Plainfielders filled the ranks of the "Continental Sarvis." Four had served in Lower Canada during the spring of 1776. Six others had enlisted in the service of New Hampshire in the spring of 1777 while five more had served in other state regiments.²⁶ Despite this turnout for extended service, plus the frequent militia musters, the state was dissatisfied with the contributions of the western towns to the war effort.

On January 2, 1778, the General Court demanded that the towns fulfill their Continental quotas for the coming year or be assessed "the Expencc of raising such Proportion [which] shall be added to the next Tax of such delinquent Town or Place."²⁷ Plainfielders voted two weeks later "that this Town will Raise their quoto of Continental men if posable to be Had."²⁸ The Committee of Safety and Correspondence could find no one to enlist. On January 26, the town offered an inflated bounty of thirty pounds to anyone who would enlist for three years.²⁹ The citizens voted on April 15 "that the Town will be Divied into Six Classes and the Each Class Shall provide one able Boded Man to Searve in the Continental army Duering the Team of Nine Months or Three years."³⁰

Six names appear for May and June of 1778 on "A Return of the Quota of Continental men Belonging to Plainfield in Col Jonth Chase's Redgerment," dated February 17, 1779.³¹ Only two of these men enlisted for three years. The rest served only seven or nine months.

After Burgoyne's surrender, the theater of war moved south, and the people of the New Hampshire Grants lost enthusiasm when the threat of attack subsided. Exhausted by taxation and committed to making a living on their farms, the militiamen turned to more pressing economic and political concerns at home.

As warfare faded to memory, the grants slowly lowered their guard during 1779 and 1780. The Tories and Indians in Canada remained a menace, but they kept their distance until raiding parties were sighted in Vermont during the early autumn of 1780. Plainfield scouts were sent to Haverhill, Newbury, and Windsor. These reconnaissance missions did not save the settlers of Royalton on October 16 when six people and all of the livestock were killed. Twenty-five inhabitants were carried off to Canada.³²

The spirit of the early war years returned. At the Town Meeting on January 9, 1781, Plainfielders voted to share the expense of "the Late alarm to Royalton and Newbury" by a tax on their estates.³³ With a threat at hand, men volunteered for extended service. At the February 27 Town Meeting, it was voted to pay ten silver dollars or ten bushels of wheat to five men for one month's service. There were volunteers the same day.³⁴ Men in Meriden formed their own militia company after four years of minding their own "consarns." They petitioned Colonel Jonathan Chase to "grant us our desire and issue orders accordingly." Sixty-three men signed the pledge.³⁵

Protracted warfare never returned to the New Hampshire Grants. Lord Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown the following October. Six years of exhausting labor, distracting war, internal controversy, and a crippling economic situation did not dampen a sense of duty in the Grants when it coincided with survival.

Plainfield and the New Hampshire Grants Controversy

Philip Zea

The defeat of Montcalm at Quebec City broke the back of New France and ended the last French and Indian War in 1759. In Portsmouth, Benning Wentworth commissioned the survey of the New Hampshire Grants and awaited inquiries from potential settlers to secure the untapped wealth of the upper Connecticut Valley and beyond. In 1761, Wentworth accelerated the creation of grants under his name. He issued town charters daily in order to increase his jurisdiction over timber land. New York protested these charters. The "Yorkers" claimed that the land was theirs under the Duke of York's Patent of 1664.¹ Although Governor George Clinton had a strong legal claim, the land was slowly improved by men whose charters read at the top, "Province of New-Hampshire."

The Grants grew rapidly. In Vermont alone, the number of inhabitants increased from only 120 families in 1763 to about 20,000 settlers by 1776.² Once people had invested in land under the sponsorship of Benning Wentworth, they turned a deaf ear to the government of New York. As early as 1761, the year that Plainfield was chartered, the sheriff of Albany County was ordered to list all men who illegally occupied New York land. Violence was threatened, and the two governors referred the case to the Crown for arbitration. In 1764, it was decreed that the boundary between New Hampshire and New York was:

to be the western banks of the Connecticut River from where it enters the Province of Massachusetts, as far north as the forty-fifth degree of Latitude.³

The New Yorkers interpreted the infinitive "to be" to mean that the river had always been the boundary. In Portsmouth, they could not afford to read the words that way. The New Hampshire men interpreted the text to mean "would be, but had not always been." In the Grants, the settlers were unconcerned. They assumed that their titles would be transferred to New York.

Unfortunately, there were conflicting personal claims on land in some towns. The New York legislature required Vermonters to petition the colony for the renewal of their charters with new fees and larger quit-rents. With too much to lose, Ethan Allen and his brothers organized the Green Mountain Boys to terrorize settlers with New York grants in order to force the withdrawal of their claims. The Allens and other investors were not about to surrender to a gaggle of Dutchmen in the Hudson Valley. It was too late for reconciliation between the citizens of the New Hampshire Grants in Vermont and the government of New York. Armed resistance continued and prompted New York in 1774 to demand the surrender of these rowdies who otherwise would face execution upon capture and conviction.⁴

In the spring of 1776, only eleven years after permanent settlement, talk around Plainfield must have been poignant. Conversation could roam between where the meeting house might be located, what revolution would bring, and whether the Grants would be part of New Hampshire, Vermont, or New York. No one felt isolated when the state Committee of Safety sent the so-called Association Test to the selectmen in every town in New Hampshire. The committee was uncertain about the loyalty of the citizens in the grants who seemed to enjoy an informal regional association of their own. The committee also distrusted some towns, like Plainfield, which had withheld tax money in May of 1775 to buy munitions for defense. The "test" demanded a pledge of allegiance to the Continental Congress and the United Colonies.⁵

Several Plainfield men, including four members of the local Committee of Safety and Correspondence, refused to sign the Association Test. While most voters were willing to give a "yea" in town meeting to buy ammunition for protection, only a few were bold enough to subscribe to rebellion. After all, in the spring of 1776, the United Colonies themselves had not burned all of their bridges behind them. The finality of the Declaration of Independence in July erased, or at least submerged, the doubts and practical concerns of hesitant men.

Some voters refused to sign the Association Test for a more practical reason. They disapproved of the new state constitution of New Hampshire, which had been adopted on January 5. When the last royal governor, John Wentworth, fled with other Loyalists to Nova Scotia months before, the government required revision and sanction by its constituency. The Fourth Provincial Congress, which Francis Smith of Plainfield attended, recognized this need. The Fifth Congress had conceived a new plan of government by November of 1775 and had presented it for adoption in the New Year.

The people in the New Hampshire Grants were unhappy with the new government. Ironically, they felt liable to taxation without fair representation. The politicians around Portsmouth and Exeter wished to keep the General Court a manageable size and to prevent a shift in power away from the seacoast. Their formula was to group towns with fewer than 100 voters.⁶ Plainfield was cast with Cornish, Grantham, and Prospectworth (Springfield) and charged to

elect a single representative. Denied full representation, the settlers felt that their say was muffled in forming state policy.

Discontent in Plainfield appears in the warrant for the Town Meeting held on February 27, 1776: "to see if the Town Dont Think it Expedent to Chuse a Committee to Cooperate with other Committees in order to git some Redress of our Grevinences which is Not have a full Representation."⁷ The committee was appointed and joined others from the dissenting towns of Lebanon, Canaan, Enfield, Lyme, Cardigan (Orange), Orford, Haverhill, Bath, and Landaff for a meeting in College Hall at Hanover on July 31, 1776. Their consensus opinion was published in a pamphlet, which was printed "back home" in Norwich, Connecticut.⁸

That every town has a right to a voice in the formation of a government, whether it be large or small;...to unite a number of towns for the purpose of choosing a representative is as absurd as to take the souls of a number of different persons and say they make but one, while yet they remain separate and different. To consent to be governed by a body elected in this way is...to accept in their towns the very thing against which they are contending abroad — taxation without representation.

At the Town Meeting on December 9, 1776, the citizens of Plainfield showed their conviction. They voted "that we wont comply with Cornish New Grantham and protect worth Chusing a representative and counsellors" and "that we wont pay the warrant that is Dated September ye 27 1776."⁹ The second resolution addressed the reality that people in the new settlements could not afford to pay increased tax bills. They turned their poverty into political black mail to force a re-writing of the constitution.

The problem for both sides was a lack of currency to support the local economy and the war effort. As time went on, the value of scrip diminished. The policy makers in Exeter had planned to finance the Revolution by printing currency, encouraging taxable trade and transaction, and then collecting the money through new levies. The state printed over £ 80,000 alone in 1776. However, the demand for goods and the loss of overseas trade, coupled with the volume of Continental and counterfeit bills, made inflation inevitable. The General Court legalized paper money as payment for all debts and cancelled invoices when creditors insisted upon hard money for settlement. Then, in 1777, New Hampshire issued another £ 770,000 in currency. By the end of the year, £ 100 in New Hampshire scrip was worth only £ 30 in silver.¹⁰

The General Court of New Hampshire needed a united constituency if there was any hope of funding the Revolution. The government also wanted to keep control of the military in the New Hampshire Grants to guard against invasion from Canada. A letter was sent to the selectmen in each of the western towns inviting them to dispatch a representative to Hanover on February 13,

1777. A committee of legislators, led by New Hampshire's "president," Meshech Weare, promised to hear their grievances.¹¹ Despite the conciliatory tone, nothing was resolved. On March 11, 1777, Plainfielders voted to "proceed and Join with other Committees from other Towns...to obtain our Liberties and privileges."¹²

At the same time, several meetings were held in the Grants west of the Connecticut River. It was resolved at Westminster on January 15, 1777, that the New Hampshire Grants ought to be a separate state, called "New Connecticut, alias VERMONT." On July 8, a state constitution was adopted at the convention in Windsor, and the republic of Vermont was born.¹³

The eastern grants now had an option to the fiscal demands of New Hampshire's war effort, which had taken a nasty turn. The General Court had begun to tax the most abundant resource in the Grants: unimproved land. The tax itself was not high: only an annual levy of one-half of one percent on the real value of the land. But it was another tax in hard times, and it seemed directed at the newer towns in the state. Furthermore, the General Court adopted a policy of confiscating Tory estates for the revenue obtained from their sale. Eventually, all uninhabited property was liable to seizure and resale. This policy threatened soldiers and absentee proprietors and was a sensitive issue in the Grants.¹⁴

The representatives of sixteen eastern New Hampshire grants met sometime during the fall of 1777 and voted to join Vermont. The citizens of these towns knew that they could play a larger role in the government of the nearby republic. When the military threat ended that autumn, the eastern grants sent a committee to the Vermont Assembly to present their case for admission.¹⁵ On December 4, 1777, Plainfielders "Eccepted the Return of the Committee."¹⁶

Although the eastern grants rebelled against New Hampshire, there was no confusion about allegiance to the Continental Congress and the national war effort. Only colonial freedom would permit the opportunity to decide the state constitutional question and to reduce the heavy tax load. At the same December 4 meeting, Plainfielders decided to "Come into a avererridg with those that have been in the War in Respect of Damiges." The voters showed support for the Revolution by offering local mutual aid to those who had served in the military. A month later, they "Eccepted of the Articles of Confederation Adopted By the Honorable Continental Congress."¹⁷ Although towns like Plainfield sought secession from New Hampshire on economic and constitutional grounds, their stand was not a rejection of the American cause.

Plainfielders voted on March 10, 1778, to approve "the Result of the Convention held at Cornish."¹⁸ Secession was at hand. This meeting produced a petition for the withdrawal of the eastern towns from New Hampshire and their annexation to Vermont. The legal position was that the Declaration of Independence was a precedent for such action and that the tie between New Hampshire and the Grants was null and void because the towns had been chartered west of the Mason family's patent line of 1629.¹⁹ Twenty eastern grants favored the petition, including Plainfield. Eleven tentatively supported it.²⁰

The territory in question constituted a sizeable portion of New Hampshire, which could not afford to lose any economic or military support. But that was a moot issue for people in the grants. The state had offered little protection. Practically speaking, the eastern grants had been forced to function independently of the General Court. Most of the fighting had occurred north and west of the Connecticut River. The frontiersmen had organized their own defense and were now on the verge of organizing their own government. Eight days after the March meeting in Plainfield, the United Committee of the eastern grants circulated the following letter to its constituency.²¹

Cornish March 18th 1778

Gentlemen,

The Committee appointed to confer with . . . the State of Vermont have had an interview with Their Assembly and Mutually agreed to propose Articles of Union to the Towns . . . on each side of Connecticut River Therefor notwithstanding the proposal in our late convention that the report should be made to Seperate Conventions in the Counties of Cheshire and Grafton . . . considering that this will likely be the last Convention previous to the Union . . . [The members of the committee] have agreed and do hereby request a General Convention of Deligates to be held at . . . Lebanon on ye Last Wensday [sic] in May next. . . . [to] agree to the Sd. Articles of union in behalf of their Towns

Your most obedient and humble Servants

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Samuel Chase | [Cornish] |
| Neh[emia]h Estabrook | [Lebanon] |
| Jona[than] Chase | [Cornish] Committee |
| Elisha Payne | [Lebanon] |
| Beza[leel] Woodward | [Hanover] |
| Abel Stevens | [Grantham] |

Many awaited a formal declaration of the union. The letter hints, however, that sentiment for the merger was uneven in the two western counties of Grafton and Cheshire.²² The United Committee probably hoped that the two New Hampshire counties would be joined to Vermont as they stood rather than annexed to existing Vermont counties. Men like Bezaleel Woodward and Elisha Payne saw no reason to subordinate themselves to Vermont's politicians. They had all been in the grants for roughly the same length of time, and many of them knew one another. Woodward and Payne became leaders of the College Party (so named because it was based at Dartmouth College) and hoped that Hanover would become the capital of the new Vermont.²³

The opposing faction was the Bennington Party, controlled by Ethan and

Ira Allen. They had extensive holdings and interests west of the Green Mountains and were loathe to form a trans-Connecticut River government that would shift the balance of power to the east. For the time being, they had no choice. When several Vermont towns in the Connecticut Valley threatened to withdraw from the legislature, the republic of Vermont was jeopardized, and the Allens' Bennington Party was silenced.²⁴ Consequently, the General Assembly of Vermont resolved on June 11, 1778, at Bennington that:

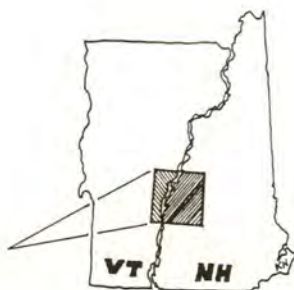
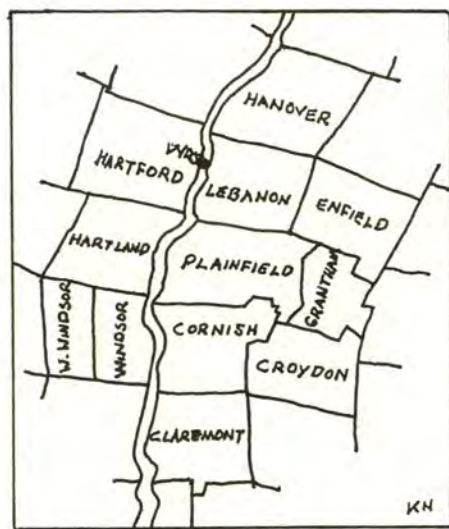
the sixteen Towns...Cornish, Lebanon, Enfield, Dresden [Hanover], Canaan, Cardigan [Orange], Lime, Apthorpe [Littleton], Orford, Piermont, Haverhall, Bath, Lyman, Cauthwaite [or Gunthwaite, now Lisbon], Morristown [Franconia], and Landaff, be and are hereby entitled to all the privileges and immunities vested in any Town within this State.²⁵

At a convention of the seceding towns held in Orford on June 25, the following "Declaration of Independence" was drafted and forwarded to Exeter.²⁶

The Convention...take[s] this opportunity to transmit to you [Meshech Weare] as President of the State of New Hampshire a Resolve of the Assembly of the State of Vermont relative to a union of said Towns with them....We hope that notwithstanding an entire separation has now taken place between your State and those Towns, an amicable settlement may be come into at a proper time between the State of New Hampshire and those towns on the Grants that unite with...Vermont relative to all civil and military affairs...so that Amity and Friendship may sub-sist and continue between the two States.

The course of events had led to the brink of changing the geography of New England. What happened? The towns listed above do not match those on the petition of the eastern grants to the Vermont General Assembly on March 17 (see Endnote 20). The towns of Plainfield, Surry, Lempster, Marlow, Acworth, Grantham (or New Grantham), and Plymouth are missing from the June 11 resolution. These towns are located more to the south and east in the grants. All but Plymouth were in what was then Cheshire County. Their citizens were closer to the seacoast and more sympathetic to the position of the state of New Hampshire.

The turnabout within three months occurred because several towns split on the question of annexation to Vermont. A constitutional convention had been called under pressure from coastal factions disenchanted with New Hampshire's government. The chance for reform cooled enthusiasm for merger with Vermont in some of the grants.²⁷ Plainfield's citizens finally rejected the



Plainfield and surrounding towns by Kenneth Norwalk, 1991.

idea of union. They also refused the most recent request to send a representative to Exeter a week before the sixteen eastern grants were accepted into Vermont's jurisdiction.²⁸ Although the convention failed to reform the constitution in June, the distraction defused the College Party's plan to join Vermont.

Local tension over choosing New Hampshire or Vermont is illustrated by the following deposition of Francis Smith of Plainfield. Although undated, it refers to an incident in the spring of 1778 when the military threat had ended and neighbors formed conflicting ideas about allegiance.²⁹

I the subscriber of Lawful age on oath & say that about the time of forming the Union of the sixteen Towns in this state with the State of Vermont Samuel Chase Esqr of Cornish was at my house in Plainfield, when a discourse was introduced between said Chase & myself concerning the Expediency of forming the above union when said Chaise said much in favor of it and against being subject to the State of New Hampshire he said that he

had much rather be subjected to the servitude of digging Pine [s]Tumps under a good master than have a seat in the court of New Hampshire. And farther saith not Francis Smith.

While the balance teetered on the local scene, the Continental Congress expressed unhappiness at the secession of the eastern grants from New Hampshire. The delegates wished to discourage internal squabbles and to preserve what remained of the fiscal foundation of New Hampshire. Simultaneously, all of the states, except New York, which still maintained its eastern claim, favored bringing Vermont into the Confederation where the national government could directly command its resources.

This policy favored the Bennington Party, and Ethan Allen went to Philadelphia to convince Congress of Vermont's merit. Josiah Bartlett of New Hampshire offered Allen support in Congress in exchange for Vermont's expulsion of the sixteen eastern grants. The Allen brothers quickly convinced the Vermont legislature that the Continental Congress would deny statehood and make reprisals if the eastern grants joined Vermont.³⁰ The Allens were driven by their extensive personal investments to maintain control of the region regardless of Vermont's status as an independent republic or a member of the Confederation.

The majority in the Vermont legislature grew cold to expanding east of the Connecticut River. Only the sixteen towns were still enthusiastic about annexation. When the General Assembly convened at Windsor in October of 1778, the representatives of the eastern grants were seated. Their first request, a logical one, was incorporation as a separate county or merger with an existing one. The motion was defeated.³¹

Angry at the change in policy, the disenfranchised legislators met with sympathetic representatives from eastern Vermont towns at Windsor on October 23 to plan their next move. The result was a pamphlet, authored by Woodward, Payne, and General Jacob Bayley of Newbury, Vermont, called "A Public Defence of The Right Of The New Hampshire Grants...To Associate Together, And Form Themselves Into An Independent State."³² They argued that the grants on both sides of the Connecticut River had been conceived in the same manner by people of similar backgrounds, and they called upon each grant to send a representative to Cornish on December 9, 1778, either to "agree on measures whereby we may all be united together, by being a distinct State,...or...claim the antient [ancient] Jurisdiction of...New Hampshire."³³ The leaders of the College Party believed that the next best thing to establishing an independent state was to increase their legislative clout in Exeter by bringing more towns into New Hampshire's General Court.

The leaders of Vermont were concerned that many towns west of the Connecticut River were inclined to join the eastern grants and New Hampshire. They declared that the issue should be referred to the Continental Congress

for arbitration, if the government of New Hampshire would agree.³⁴ The willingness to compromise showed Congress that Vermont's government could not control its constituency. The Allens' bid for admission to the Confederation was jettisoned, and the controversy was prolonged.

Ira Allen acted quickly. He went to Exeter to ascertain the position of New Hampshire and published his report, "To The Inhabitants Of The State of VERMONT," on November 27 in Hanover under the very noses of the College Party. The tract shows how strong personalities can compensate for weak government. In a straightforward letter, he addressed all sides of the controversy and quietly defused each position. Allen pointed to New Hampshire's strong claim to the eastern grants, which had been represented in the Provincial Congresses, had sent troops to the New Hampshire Line (as the state regiments were called), and were already represented in the Continental Congress. He noted the inclination of Congress to accept Vermont as she stood and the problems that the eastern Vermont towns would have in joining an established state, like New Hampshire, which was deeply in debt. He demonstrated that Vermont proper had shown itself capable of self-government and did not need the resources of the eastern grants.³⁵ Allen showed the delinquent Vermont towns that they could only hurt the public welfare by supporting the eastern grants.

When December 9 arrived, delegates from fourteen eastern grants joined representatives from eight Vermont towns in Cornish. They recommended to the New Hampshire government that a boundary between New Hampshire and the Grants be established by mutual agreement or independent arbitration. If a settlement could not be reached, they urged the merger of all of the grants with New Hampshire, if the Exeter government would alter its formula for representation.³⁶

The minutes of town meetings in Plainfield during 1778 show the indecision that immobilized the Grants. The voters passed over two articles on November 18 which asked them to consider uniting with New Hampshire.³⁷ Yet, on December 2, they voted against sending a delegate to the December 9 meeting of "the Protesting Members of the Assembly of the State of Vermont" at Cornish.³⁸ Uncertain about what the constitutional convention might produce, Plainfield simultaneously weakened the position of the College Party, but did nothing to strengthen the power base of New Hampshire.

Benjamin Bellows and Samuel Ashley, two militia colonels from Walpole and Winchester who had served terms on the President's Council of New Hampshire, moved to end the controversy to the state's fiscal advantage. New Hampshire had to expand its tax base in order to stay afloat. The British had threatened Newport, Rhode Island, the previous summer, and all of the New England states had been ordered to send men and supplies to the Narragansett Bay.³⁹ New Hampshire's treasury was empty; inflation was spiraling out of sight. The government was hard pressed to answer the call.

Ashley and Bellows' plan promoted the annexation of all grants to New

Hampshire in response to the conciliatory tone of the Cornish meeting. After all, Vermont had been considered part of New Hampshire by the provincial government of Benning Wentworth, who had chartered 128 towns west of the Connecticut River. In their statement of January 14, 1779, Ashley and Bellows argued for a united front in the national emergency. They reasoned that Vermont was small and its leaders inexperienced. Vermont's contribution could be better utilized if it were handled by a well-established state government already represented in Congress. Such a union would also solve the conflict between the western grants and New York over duplicate claims.⁴⁰

These arguments did not carry much weight on either side of the Connecticut River. Plainfielders voted at the annual Town Meeting on March 9, 1779, not to send a representative to Exeter rather than passing over the article as they had done before.⁴¹ In the Town Meeting on April 20, they voted against coming "under the Laws...of Newhampshire Relative to the Collecting of State Taxes" and sending a delegate to the state constitutional convention at Rumford (Concord), which had reconvened from the previous year (and would eventually fail at reform).⁴² It was costly to join the grants west of the Connecticut River, but the price was less than the constant hounding for men and money from Exeter.

The Grants moved into the sound bargaining position that had emerged before. Their defense of the right of choice and the evasion of heavy taxes reunited the towns on both sides of the Connecticut River. The controversy continued, and New Hampshire's war effort weakened. In the May 20 Town Meeting, Plainfielders spoke against state taxes and formulated their own fiscal policy. They voted "that this Town will Raise the Sum of one Thousand and Eaight Hundred Pounds...By a Town Tax to Be paid into the Town Treasury for this Towns Euse to pay Public Charges."⁴³ Although expensive, public charges were not state taxes.

One charge was Plainfield's share of the expenses, £ 225, in sending Bezaleel Woodward and Peter Olcott of Norwich to Philadelphia in order to negotiate a settlement against the annexation of all of the grants to New Hampshire. Woodward and Olcott took the position that "the people in these parts...will cheerfully acquiesce on anything Congress may judge proper, but ardently wish a union of the two sides of the river. New Hampshire will be their choice, if a new state be not admitted." Leaders of the College Party even planned an independent attack against British Canada in order to gain the approval of the Continental Congress.⁴⁴

Despite these theatrics, Congress was unimpressed even though a civil war was feared if the Bennington Party and the towns west of the Green Mountains were annexed to New Hampshire. Most delegates were concerned with more pressing problems or hoped that the controversy would resolve itself.⁴⁵ The lack of action illustrates that Congress was also too weak to act decisively, regardless of civil war. For the Allens, possible annexation to New Hampshire prompted them to consider secret negotiations with another government: the British in Canada.⁴⁶ The following summer, Meshech Weare commanded the towns in New Hampshire to send their treasuries to Exeter. The state econ-

omy was near collapse, and the men in the New Hampshire Line were starving. One hundred pounds in New Hampshire bills were worth about £ 3.6.0.⁴⁷ On September 5, 1780, the citizens of Plainfield voted not to "Provide the Beef that is Demanded of the town by the State of Newhampshier."⁴⁸ They had no beef nor money to spare. Even if they did, neither would go to Exeter. The town clerk simply headlined the minutes of Town Meeting throughout this period, "Plainfield upon the Grants."

The inability of Congress to arbitrate the New Hampshire Grants Controversy caused a general loss of faith. West of the river, people were further irritated by the hesitation of Congress to admit Vermont into the Confederation despite substantial contributions to the American cause. Hearsay continued about Vermont's negotiations with the British in Canada through the winter of 1779-1780. Defection was the one fear of the weak Continental Congress in the entire issue. If Vermont became an ally or even a benign avenue for the British to enter New England, the war might be lost.⁴⁹

The British military itself thwarted Ira Allen's unofficial diplomacy. In the autumn of 1780, the people in the New Hampshire Grants learned why negotiation with the British was impractical. On October 16, Tories and Indians burned Royalton, Vermont. Six people and livestock were killed. Several captives were marched to Canada.⁵⁰ The British had offered no hand for negotiation.

A month after the raid, the New Hampshire Grants Controversy took another repetitious turn. A meeting was held in Walpole and chaired by Benjamin Bellows. The conclusion was a modification of the Ashley-Bellows proposal for the annexation of all grants to New Hampshire in January 1779. This time local voters would have a say in the matter. Like a broken record, the convention resolved that the Connecticut River boundary line of New Hampshire, established by the Crown in 1764, was discretionary. Since the Grants were resolved to unite, they should join under the jurisdiction of New Hampshire or again submit to the arbitration of the Continental Congress. Bellows' committee called for another convention in Charlestown on January 16, 1781, "to unite in such Measures as the Majority shall judge most conducive to consolidate a Union of the Grants, and effect a final settlement of the Line of Jurisdiction."⁵¹

Forty-three towns on both sides of the Connecticut River sent delegates to the Charlestown Convention in January. Late in the first day, Bellows' supporters moved for a union of the grants with the state of New Hampshire. Bellows hoped to capitalize on the sentiment that the frontier should join New Hampshire for the best protection. The final vote was held over to the following day when the printed proposal would be ready.

Passage of the motion would severely cripple the positions of both the Bennington Party, which at the very least wanted statehood, and the College Party, which wanted to control the fate of the eastern grants by establishing an independent state with the capital at Hanover. Despite their differences, Ira Allen and Bezaleel Woodward made a deal while Bellows and his Cheshire County friends were celebrating the day's apparent victory. Allen would see to the read-

mission of the eastern grants to Vermont in return for the support of the College Party in repelling the annexation of the grants to New Hampshire.

Allen and Woodward worked magic with the local printing press that night. The published proposal the next day was made to read that the grants ought to join Vermont instead of New Hampshire! All of the men present, except those from Cheshire County whose towns were already represented in the New Hampshire General Court, were delighted. The convention voted to recommend the establishment of trans-Connecticut River Vermont. Only eleven delegates voted in the negative.⁵² At an ensuing meeting in Cornish on February 8, 1781, the convention voted to extend the eastern boundary of the new Vermont to Mason's Line, about forty miles east of the Connecticut River. They left a loophole in this aggression toward Exeter by stating that they "do not exercise jurisdiction for the time being."⁵³ This stand was the price that Woodward had extracted from Allen for his influence with the College Party in Charlestown. It gave Woodward some valuable bargaining power with New Hampshire should the controversy ever be resolved (which must have seemed unlikely after a generation of haggling).

On April 5, a joint meeting of the members of the Charlestown convention and the General Assembly of Vermont was held. Only seven of the forty-nine towns in Vermont, with six abstentions, opposed the union. All thirty-four towns east of the river favored it.⁵⁴ The General Assembly adjourned with the declaration that it would receive the representatives of the eastern grants when it reconvened in the autumn. Meanwhile, counties were organized. Courts were established. The militia was restructured. Fulfilling the worse fears of the Bennington Party, their influence could not stop the election of Elisha Payne of Lebanon as Lieutenant Governor of Vermont.⁵⁵

In Plainfield, the voters had decided on March 13, 1781, to accept the Articles of Union drafted by the joint committee of the Convention and the Vermont General Assembly on February 22.⁵⁶ They elected their representatives, John Stevens and Josiah Russell, over a month before the legislature voted to seat men from the eastern grants. Another Town Meeting was warned for May 10 to continue reorganization under the laws of Vermont. The heading above the minutes conclusively reads, "State Vermont Plainfield. May ye 10th 1781."⁵⁷

New Hampshire again responded vigorously to the theft of about one-fourth of its territory. The General Court commanded its sheriffs to arrest town officers acting in the name of Vermont. Across the river, the Vermont Assembly ordered the same treatment for the officers from New Hampshire. Civil war was again a possibility, and New Hampshire once more referred the dispute to the Continental Congress.⁵⁸ On August 20, 1781, a Congressional committee reported to the floor. It resolved that before Congress could admit Vermont as a state, all claims east of the Connecticut River would be relinquished.⁵⁹ Indignantly, the Vermont General Assembly declared on October 18 that it intended to hold the Articles of Union inviolate and that it would submit to the directives of Congress when Vermont was a member of the Confederation.⁶⁰

The possibility of local conflict increased as the national struggle concluded in Virginia. New Hampshire and Vermont escalated support for the authorities acting in their names. On December 5, Meshech Weare ordered Benjamin Bellows and Moses Nichols of Amherst to mobilize their regiments and proceed to the rebellious grants.⁶¹ The Vermonters took similar action on December 14.⁶²

As a last resort, none other than George Washington was prevailed upon to write a letter to Governor Thomas Chittenden of Vermont in January 1782. The general re-emphasized that statehood was out of the question until Vermont agreed to the boundaries proposed by Congress.⁶³ When the Vermont Assembly convened at Bennington on February 19, 1782, no representatives had made the journey from the eastern grants. Washington's letter was read and well-received. His influence had a deep effect. With the approval of the Allen family, the legislature dissolved the union with the eastern grants while their representatives were absent.⁶⁴ Despite accordance with Congress, the republic of Vermont remained politically, if not economically, independent until statehood was granted by the new federal government in 1791.

The people in the eastern grants were again adrift. The town clerk began to write "Plainfield Newhampshier Grants" in his book. A meeting of the expelled representatives was warned to convene in Dresden (Hanover) to debate their next move.⁶⁵ Three times Plainfielders postponed discussion of the article that would send a representative to the meeting.⁶⁶ Despite several town meetings in Plainfield during the spring of 1782, little was accomplished. The Hanover meeting was postponed to accommodate the lack of direction in many towns. There is no record of any conclusive business when the meeting was finally held.

The following autumn criticism of the revolutionary leadership reached its height in coastal New Hampshire. The government had been sanctioned originally to function only for the duration of the war.⁶⁷ Now, the Revolution was over, and the state was mired in debt. In 1781, uncollected taxes totaled nearly £ 400,000. Most of it was delinquent in the eastern grants.⁶⁸ The General Court appeased the towns somewhat by allowing payment of back taxes in specie, state loan certificates, rum, wheat flour, beef, leather shoes, cloth, yarn, felt hats, blankets, and hose.⁶⁹ Much more was required to put the state's economy back on its feet.

A new plan of government was presented in August 1782 which restored town representation in Exeter. Each community with 150 polls was awarded a representative. The new constitution was passed into law on June 28, 1783, with an amendment requiring an oath of allegiance from each citizen. The old plan of government would expire on June 10, 1784.⁷⁰

The New Hampshire Grants Controversy and Plainfield's response to it remained at a standstill through 1783 and 1784. The following year, however, the state demanded the inevitable: the unpaid taxes. Plainfielders turned a deaf ear. Finally, a state officer seized a cow and a yoke of oxen from Lemuel Williams as partial payment, and a claim of £ 750 was issued against the town. On May 2, 1785, the warrant for Town Meeting asked if newcomers would

be exempt from the tax and if the town would reimburse Williams. The first article was voted down, but Mr. Williams received £ 20 for his cattle.⁷¹

Rejected in Town Meeting, the men who had come to Plainfield and Cornish after 1780 petitioned the General Court for exemption from the back taxes.⁷² The legislature was loathe to act on the petition because it placed a greater strain on the remaining inhabitants and lessened the likelihood of payment. Meanwhile, the sheriffs continued to press for reimbursement. The petition of Samuel Reed of Cornish about 1782 illustrates the pressure placed on recent settlers.

The petition of Samuel Reed and others Humbly shews that during the late unnatural and expensive war your petitioners were inhabitants of Norwich [Norwich] in the State of Connecticut in which place we paid our full proportion of Taxes to Defray the Expenses of War the burden of which reduced us to a necessity of leaving our native place and with the little remains of our substance to betake ourselves to an uncultivated Spot in this Wilderness part of New Hampshire to support our families where we are called upon by the collectors to pay large sums of arrerage taxes which were due the same years in which we suffered in the general Calamity of paying taxes in Connecticut and which if collected will reduce us to a state of want.⁷³

In January 1786, Plainfield sent Benjamin Chapman to Exeter to request a deferment. At first, the General Court refused.⁷⁴ Then, the politicians agreed that private enterprise needed encouragement at government expense if the state economy was to recover. The legislature withdrew many of its demands for unpaid taxes and passed laws protecting debtors from imprisonment.⁷⁵ At the annual Town Meeting on March 14, 1786, the town clerk resumed heading the minutes "State of Newhampe. Cheshire SS Plainfield." One of the articles asked "3dly to chuse a Representative to Represent Sd. Town at ye general assembly next June."⁷⁶ After twenty-five years of revolving allegiances on the New Hampshire Grants, Plainfield and the other eastern grants returned to the fold. Although the townspeople retained stronger social, cultural, and economic ties with their neighbors in the Vermont towns across the river (and still do), the sphere of politics centered on Exeter and, after 1816, on Concord.

The people of Plainfield and the old New Hampshire Grants now turned to the postponed potential of their villages and farms delayed by revolution and internal controversy. But their effort to develop strong local institutions and to promote new growth was thwarted by another entangling debate that confronted most towns. The relationship of church and state, inseparable by law and tradition, forced towns like Plainfield to decentralize its government and economy just when the opposite was needed.

Religion in Plainfield

Reverend Warren C. Biebel, Jr.

Kathryn F. MacLeay

Nancy Norwalk

Robert Sodemann

Edith Taylor

Ruth Williams

Wallace Williams

Howard W. Zea

Philip Zea

Part 1: Before the Separation of Church and State

Prior to 1819 in New Hampshire, religion was supported by local government. Taxes were paid to the town for the minister and the established church, which was usually Congregationalist and independent of any regional governance. No church buildings per se were owned outright by religious groups. The town's minister held services every Sabbath in the meeting house (or sometimes in private homes). This centrally located public building belonged to the town and was the symbolic center of the community. It was also used for secular gatherings, like town meetings.

This system was based on the seventeenth-century Puritan church-state. By the time of the Revolution, the Congregational Church had become an ineffective, controversial branch of government. Ministers learned their annual salaries at town meeting and watched their social status and political influence shrink with each vote. Lacking local prestige and external governance, the ministry was unable to settle dispute. The established church was intolerant of divergent opinion and was strained by community growth that flourished better without the structure of religion. Secular laws that taxed voters for the support of "the Standing Order" further fanned the flames of dissent. Although this important part of life in early Plainfield and other New England towns seems focused on religious belief, it is really a story of economics, geography, and community development.

Local politics made religion difficult to support. Few ministers taught a philosophy acceptable to all taxpayers. The potential for dispute over freedom of

choice, the taxes levied on non-believers, and the location and use of the meeting house was fully realized in Plainfield. All of New England debated the cost and the role of the church in government. The issue was not settled in New Hampshire until the separation of church and state in 1819.¹

Rural society fractured under the pressures of growth and religion throughout the eighteenth century. The early settlers of Plainfield "upon ye New Hampshire Grants" grew up with conflict in Connecticut. The erosion of religion was painful in each community. The transfer of power from independent congregations to district consociations appeared to draw the legal first church away from the spiritual needs of the people.

Furthermore, Connecticut was crowded. Entire towns were filled within a couple of generations. People often found themselves miles from the meeting house for a Sabbath meeting or for town meeting. The legislature was besieged with petitions for the incorporation of parishes in which the neighborhood offered to tax itself for the maintenance of its own meeting house and minister. The tax base of each town was upset.

The tensions in early Plainfield were rooted in the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s. Ministers like Jonathan Edwards of Northampton, Massachusetts, released the frustrations of sinners who were excluded from full membership in the orthodox Congregational Church because they lacked evidence of God's predetermined grace. Edwards was a leader of the New Lights and emphasized the individual's direct relationship with God and personal conversion. These New Light principles were often taught by fervent itinerant preachers. Their method of revival religion and their doctrine threatened the Standing Order.²

The controversy between New Light and Old Light Congregationalists was heightened by separatist sects, like the Baptists, which had long since forsaken the sanctioned church. The ministerial taxes imposed by each town to support the meeting house and minister forced voters to measure their distance from the issue in miles and in dogma.

Religious controversy in eastern Connecticut was especially intense. Towns like Plainfield, which was settled by 1705, were part of a buffer zone. To the east were the Baptists and other separatist sects in Rhode Island. To the west were the New Light leadership in the Connecticut River Valley and the staunch Standing Order of Old Light ministers in many established churches throughout Connecticut.

In Plainfield, the majority of voters were New Lights, but the Old Lights momentarily found themselves in control of a parish meeting in 1744. They voted to invite their candidate for minister to settle. The consociation ordained him, but the New Light majority refused to levy taxes for his support in subsequent town meetings. The Old Lights sued with the contention that the first meeting had been a duly warned, legal gathering. Their opinion was upheld in court. The New Lights promptly withdrew from the Congregational Church and formed a society of their own under the pastorship of the Reverend

Thomas Stevens. The controversy resurfaced after Stevens' death in 1755 and was only partially resolved by the incorporation of a parish in 1758. On the eve of planning a new town in the New Hampshire Grants, some citizens of Plainfield were still arguing over the taxes due to the parish by New Light members who had just withdrawn to rejoin the First Church.³

The charter for Plainfield, New Hampshire, which John Stevens (a cousin of the minister) brought back to Connecticut in the late summer of 1761, assured that the controversy would be carried by the settlers to their new town. The charter specified proprietary shares to support the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the Glebe for the Church of England, and the first settled minister. The document also required the proprietary to survey a central village before any common land was divided for private ownership. However, the laws governing religion in New Hampshire provided no legal framework for building the traditional church-state demanded of each new community. Although three shares in the joint stock company of Plainfield were awarded to religious concerns, there was no formula in the charter or elsewhere for establishing a church, nor a requirement that the first settled minister be learned and orthodox.⁴

As time passed, apprehension grew about meeting the requirements of the charter. The central village was finally surveyed (with village plots never used) north of Moses Pond in 1769. The location was central, but it was also wet, rocky, and far from the river, good land, and most of the mill sites. The construction of a meeting house at the center of town was considered too costly by the townspeople for several years to come. Religious concerns were close to the hearts of some settlers, but the taxes to support the minister and the memories of disharmony in Connecticut made the price of church and state burdensome on the New Hampshire frontier. Religion only became popular after people developed their farms and realized that land values would rise more quickly if they could show mills, meeting houses, and ministers to potential investors.

Although there was no secular meeting house for Sunday services, Plainfielders voted on August 8, 1771, to appoint a committee to engage a minister. Tythingmen were also elected, but the people decided to reject the meeting house lot and burying ground that the proprietors had surveyed two years earlier.⁵ In 1772, the town attempted to make Isaac Smith, who was a proprietor and lay preacher, the first settled minister. He refused the offer and settled in the older, established town of Gilmanton.⁶

In 1773, Abraham Carpenter, another lay preacher, moved to Plainfield and began to hold services in private homes. His appointment as the first settled minister was not considered in Town Meeting until March 14, 1775, when voters tabled the motion "to grant Mr. Abraham Carpenter of Sd Town the Right of land allowed for the First Settled Minister."⁷

Abraham Carpenter was born in Rehoboth, Massachusetts, on September 23, 1739. He served in the Seven Years War during the 1750s at Crown Point

and probably saw the potential of the upper Connecticut River Valley during his travel to Lake Champlain. He returned to Rehoboth and married Elizabeth Bliss on February 28, 1759. They moved to Killingly, Connecticut, near Plainfield, between September 1760 and late 1765. His reputation was probably known to old neighbors who preceded him to the New Hampshire Grants. By 1768, Carpenter had moved his family to Woodstock in northeastern Connecticut where he was appointed a Baptist deacon "by a laying on of hands."⁸ Abraham Carpenter was apparently a New Light revivalist who lacked formal religious training. Only a minority of voters saw him as an acceptable candidate for the pulpit, town taxes, and proprietors' land awaiting the first settled minister.

The following uncirculated petition was prepared in 1775 in anticipation of Carpenter's possible appointment by the voters. The spirit of compromise for public harmony was packed with concern for orthodoxy and taxes. It was all too familiar for people who had lived in the discordant towns of Connecticut:

Province of New Hampshire
December Ye 8th 1775

Plainfield

To Mr Abraham Carpenter Paster of ye first church

Where as God has in his providence has seted you here the first settled orthodox minister...we the Subscribers being the majer part of the voters in Said town; that we are of the mind that you Should as grantee Cultivate...and impruve on the right of land that is by Charter of Said Town allowed for the first Settled Minister. And as we are of the Congregation persuation and the Miner part of the inhabitants...[are] out of our principles yet it is our minds that you give a Deed to said Miner part a part of Said right as Shall be Devided to them...accourding to thare [tax] Lists and ourers upon thare Settling a orthodox minister of the Gos pell ...with in three year.⁹

Carpenter remained among his uncompromising and apathetic neighbors through the Revolution. There was no further mention of religious matters until the Town Meeting on November 18, 1778.¹⁰ The citizens voted to accept the meeting house lot at the center of town, but the plan was jeopardized again at the annual meeting on March 9, 1779, when Abraham Carpenter was voted the first settled minister of Plainfield.¹¹ A protest was immediately filed with the town clerk:

We the Subscribers do Protest against the foregoing Vote for the following reasons (Viz)

1st Because Mr Carpenter was not ordained Neither had [he] the Charge of the People of this Town as a Town and there-

fore it is Inconsistant Reason that ye Town should pas Such a Vote

2ly he is not Endowed with Authority which every Minister of the Gospel ought to have Especially amongst a People that is So much Divided as we are in this Town

3rd Because we think that the only View that can be had in passing Such a Vote must be to bring Mr Carpenter into possession of ye Minister Right and to give him a Sallery both which are inconsistant with ye Principles that He was Ordained upon

4th Because we think and it has always been Considered as Very Inconvenient and Almost Impossible for this Town to meet all at one place for Reasons well known to every one in Town

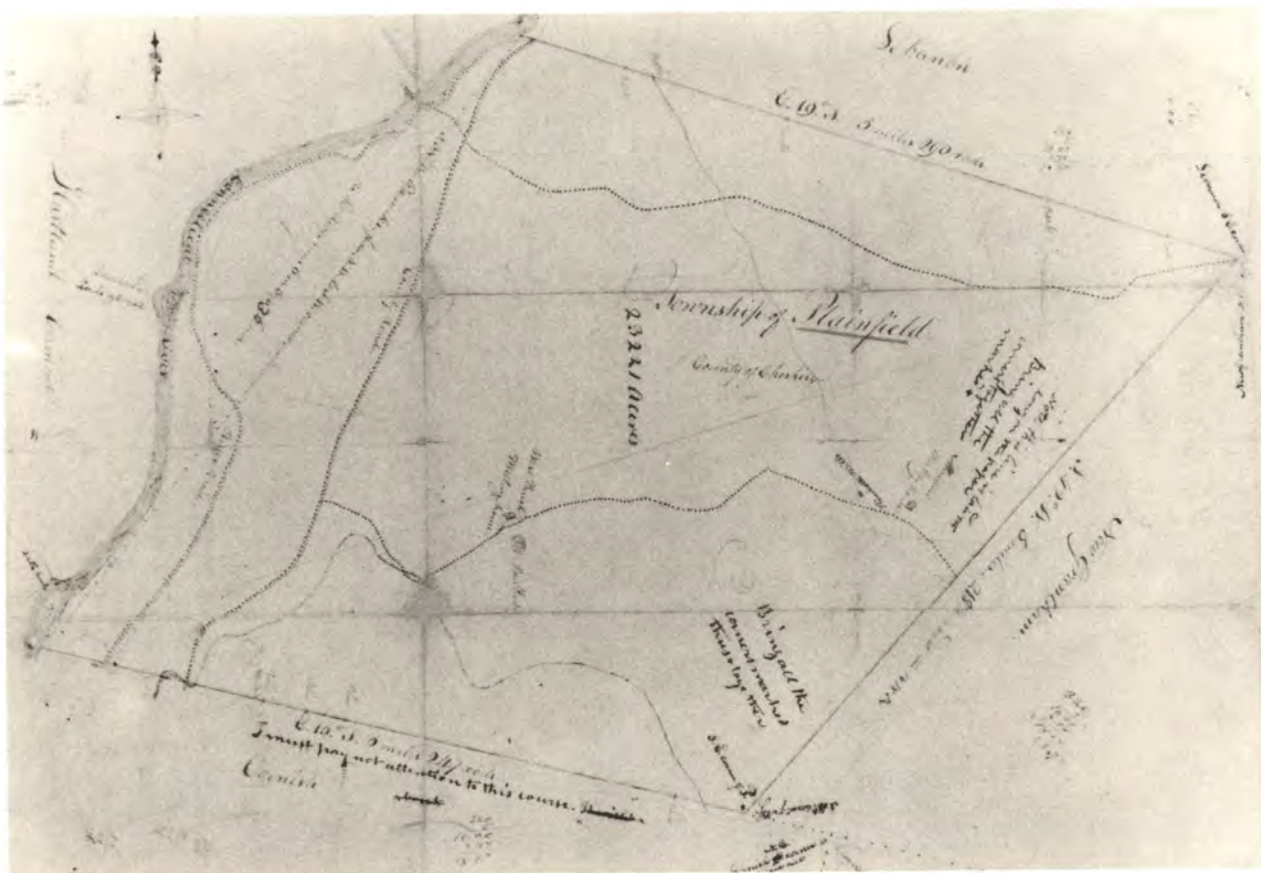
5th Because we think that Mr Carpenter is not Qualified to have the Charge of a people as he has not in our opinion a Gift of Explaining the Scriptures

We could make many more objections against the Vote but these we think our [are] Sufficient

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Charles Spaulding | Rulof Spalding |
| Thomas Gates | Nathaniel Stafford |
| Robert Miller | Daniel Kimball |
| Amos Stafford | Josiah Russell jr |
| Reuben Jerold | Perley Roberts |
| David Gitchell | Simeon Short |
| Willard Smith | Thomas Gates jur. ¹² |

The mandate of the town fathers and the proprietary was to promote the general welfare by maintaining an established minister and a centralized meeting house, but these goals encouraged fragmentation and consolidation. By the time that Carpenter arrived in Plainfield, settlement had been scattered by the random selection of the best land. The political lifestyle of the town became determined by the distance to a proposed meeting place. People held different opinions about what was centrally located, and they maintained one of several religious beliefs learned in Connecticut. There was no single site where a cohesive community could grow and compensate for the social pressures of the Revolution and the New Hampshire Grants Controversy. Public harmony and a sense of community was mustered only in the presence of an outside threat. Objection to Carpenter's appointment simply arose from religious dissent and the lack of an accessible meeting place in Plainfield.

The center of town ironically was too distant for many people in Plainfield. At the eastern end, the mill site and the people around it lived just a mile from the town line with Grantham.¹³ The location of a practical meeting place was



Map, Plainfield with its two meeting houses and principal roads, about 1805.
 Courtesy New Hampshire Division of Records Management and Archives.

also a live issue with the people of Grantham. Their problem was infinitely complicated by the looming presence of Grantham Mountain which divided the town. The families on the western slope were more attuned with neighbors near Benjamin Kimball's mill in Plainfield than to the center of population in their own town. The voters of Grantham met at the "house of Abel Stevens at candle lighting" on July 25, 1779, "to see if the Town will set off the West part of the Town to Join With the East Part for Plainfield to make a religious society." The article passed, and "the highth of ridge of the Mountain in this Town [became] the Eastirn line of sd society."¹⁴

At the next Town Meeting in Plainfield on September 7, some voters promoted the article "to See if the Town Will Come into Measures to Divide for the Purpose of Accommodating a Parish in the East Part of Plainfield and New Grantham."¹⁵ It was defeated. Subdivision of the town into two parishes — east and west — threatened to decentralize the tax base of the town, which was already strapped by the Revolution, and to intensify the issue of accept-

able religious philosophy raised by Carpenter's appointment the previous March.

The eastern families in Plainfield took matters into their own hands. On October 8, 1779, forty-one people from both Plainfield and Grantham met at the house of Benjamin Kimball and organized a religious society.¹⁶ To confirm their allegiance across the town line, they signed:

A Covenant

We the subscribers Inhabitants of the Towns of Plainfield and New Grantham Considering our Local situation from any place of Publick worship and our own contiguous situation for that purpose and having a due sense of the great obligation all men are under to meet together for social worship do in a solemn manner covenant[,] associate and agree with each other for the following purposes, Viz,

1st That we will be ready at all times to do according to our abilities in procuring and supporting the Gospel Among us according as God has appointed in his word

2dly That we will when it shall be thought that the subscribers are able to do our proportion towards building a house for public Worship on sd hill by Mr. Ben Kimball's Barn as nigh where sd Barn now stands as the Conveniency of the land will admit of,

And for the further confirmation of this our Covenant we all say Amen by subscribing our names. Dated at Plainfield afore Sd this 8th Day of Oct 1779.

With the religious society an established fact, the parish issue was reconsidered at the Town Meeting on February 17, 1780. Plainfielders voted to allow anyone to "Joine into a Society With the Western part of New Grantham," but the consensus was not to divide the town by an arbitrary line "for the Better Support of the Gospel."¹⁷ The people who lived closer to the river did not wish to lose financial support for Abraham Carpenter. The easterners did not wish to support two ministers and eventually two meeting houses.

At the annual Town Meeting on March 14, the third article on the warrant read: "To See if the Town Will Chuse a Committee to Settle the Line Between the West Society and the East So as to Include Mr. Abraham Roberts and Mr. Joseph Spalding to the East of Sd Line." The townspeople voted yes.¹⁸ On May 12, the surveyors, Francis Smith and Joseph Kimball, described the boundary to the Town Meeting, and notice of the division was forwarded to Exeter for ratification.¹⁹ "An Act to Erect a Parish in the Westerly part of Grantham and easterly part of Plainfield" under the name of "Meriden" was signed by

Meshech Weare, President of New Hampshire, on June 22, 1780. The General Court, however, did not officially endorse the parish until December 24, 1782.²⁰

Within the parish, a Congregational society of fourteen members had been formed on May 2, 1780, under the auspices of the Reverend Isaiah Potter, who was the first settled minister of Lebanon. The new church members hoped to install the Reverend Samuel Wood as their pastor. Raised in Lebanon, Wood had graduated from Dartmouth College as valedictorian of the class of 1779. His inspirational preaching that spring had won praise and caused a religious awakening. The church members gave Wood the honor of naming the new parish. His reason for selecting "Meriden" is undocumented, but may have been inspired by Meriden, Connecticut. Despite the flattery of naming the village, Wood moved to Boscawen, New Hampshire. The name of the parish was first recorded locally on December 12, 1780, when the citizens "Met at Meriden...to Chuse Customary Parish officers."²¹

Within the context of eighteenth-century New England, the term parish had as many secular overtones as religious ones. The people of Meriden were allowed to elect civil officers and to levy property taxes for the construction and maintenance of a meeting house and for the support of an orthodox minister. However, they remained under the jurisdiction of the selectmen of Plainfield or Grantham where they were liable for secular taxes and for militia duty.

None of the first elected officers of the parish were charter members of the church. On March 5, 1781, the warrant posted for the parish meeting included articles to purchase land and to engage a minister. Benjamin Kimball of the established church joined Nathan Young and Abel Stevens on the committee to procure a preacher.²² On June 9, the parish voted "to apply to Revd Mr. Nathaniel Merrill to preach....on Probation of Settlement." On September 3, Merrill was unanimously selected to assume the religious concerns of the parish. The people of Meriden offered Merrill an annual salary of £ 40 in specie and grain with raises of £ 5 per year to a limit of £ 70. They further proposed a bonus of £ 100, half of it payable in December. Finally, the parish voted to entertain the discretion of Mr. Merrill in bringing his wife to the New Hampshire Grants. Merrill turned them down. No meeting house had been built, and the parish could not promise him the proprietary share that had finally been awarded to Abraham Carpenter in 1779 as the first settled minister.²³

During the winter of 1781-1782, plans for a meeting house in Meriden were formulated. The pews were highly speculative bits of real estate that illustrated an individual's prominence in the community.²⁴ The allotment of pews was often achieved through an elaborate point system that assured community leaders the most visible seats. Instead, the voters of Meriden decided to sell seating in the unbuilt meeting house to the highest bidders in order to defray the cost of construction. There was no regard for military rank nor longevity in the town. Only two men who purchased pew rights in 1782 were members of the newly established church.²⁵

The parish met for the first time in the unfinished meeting house on September 17, 1782. The voters resolved to pay a Mr. Foster £ 1.14.0 in wheat for ten weeks of preaching. Another year passed, and the parish still had not retained a permanent clergyman. On August 19, 1783, Reverend Peter Powers received the same payment for fourteen weeks of preaching. In 1784, Abel Stevens failed to obtain a portion of the ministerial lands in Plainfield and Grantham from the General Court in order to enhance Meriden's attractiveness to prospective ministers. Consequently, when Thomas Russell and Nahum Sargeant were invited to take the pulpit in 1785 and 1786 respectively, they also declined. The parish became apathetic in 1786 when the voters of Meriden decided to table a motion to repair or replace the unfinished, barn-like meeting house.²⁶

The following year, the Congregationalists consolidated their position as the sanctioned church of the parish. On March 22, 1787, they invited the Reverend Experience Estabrook to become the first minister of the church and recommended "the same to the people of this Society [parish] deSiring their concurrence, as also their help and assistance for the temporal support of the said Reverend Experience Estabrook." Four days later, the parish "voted that we Join with the Church...to Chuse the Revd Expe Estabrook for our Minister." The parish also paid Estabrook a settlement of £ 100 to quit his claim on the town's ministerial land and appointed a committee to repair the meeting house.²⁷

After his ordination on June 6, 1787, Estabrook nevertheless applied some pressure of his own. A parish committee was chosen on November 15 "to treat with Mr Abraham Carpenter Concerng the Ministerial Land in the Town of Plainfield," and a week later Lieutenant Joseph Kimball was chosen "Agent for sd Parish to get the Ministerial Lands." Kimball only succeeded in spreading ill feelings between the various neighborhoods in Plainfield and Cornish.²⁸

Like Plainfield, the town of Cornish was divided into two parishes in 1780. Six years later several families living along the border of the two towns petitioned the General Court to incorporate another parish. Their reasoning was repetitious. The petitioners alluded to "the great Diversity of Sentiment in matters of Religion and the jarring Opinions concerning the most suitable plan for Buildings for Religious Worship render it impossible ever to effect such union either of said Towns." Fifty-four men signed the document. Such a large number of dissenters threatened to erode the tax bases of Plainfield and Cornish. The petitioners anticipated this objection and the fact that they were "so intermixed in their settlements that Parish Lines would not effect the desired purpose." Therefore, they asked the General Assembly to create a poll parish, which would support the maintenance of a local church by a poll tax on its members only.²⁹ On June 28, 1787, John Austin, a house joiner and cabinetmaker in Plainfield, debited David Reed "for fourteen Days and a half a framing the meeting house £ 386.0.0."³⁰

The matter of recognizing this parish and the continued loss of support for the construction of a central meeting house in Plainfield was considered in a Town Meeting on December 18, 1788. The citizens of Plainfield (and

Meriden) voted to pass over the article probably to avoid further hard feelings and because fewer than twelve of the withdrawing families lived in the town.³¹ The new poll parish eventually failed, and the site of its meeting house is now obscure.

Religious turmoil persisted in Plainfield, Cornish, and Grantham and sometimes reached extreme limits. Violent conversion experiences were deemed noteworthy and underscored the direct work of God in the community. Some were published, like the eight-page pamphlet written by the Reverends Eden Burroughs of Hanover and Experience Estabrook, which was printed in Exeter in 1793:

A FAITHFUL NARRATIVE OF THE WONDERFUL DEALINGS OF GOD TOWARDS POLLY DAVIS, OF NEW-GRANTHAM . . . TAKEN FROM HER OWN MOUTH, AND THE TESTIMONY OF SEVERAL WITNESSES OF ESTABLISHED AND APPROVED VERACITY, WHO WERE PRESENT WITH HER THROUGH THE SCENES OF DISTRESS, AND THAT SUDDEN AND SURPRISING RECOVERY . . . TAKEN . . . ON THE 12TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, 1792.³²

The Devil was no less active in the New Hampshire Grants. During a church meeting of the eastern society in Cornish about 1790, the membership resolved "that the reports which have been circulated respecting Sally Kimball, a member of this church, viz that she is a witch and has bewitched the daughter of Nathan Whiting, a member of this church, are, in the opinion of this church wholly false and without foundation."³³ Even an allusion to witchcraft a century after the hysteria in Massachusetts illustrates the tension, poverty, and superstition of many people in the upper Connecticut Valley during the eighteenth century.

On July 6, 1790, Reverend Abraham Carpenter sold his property to his son and moved to Rutland, Vermont, where he died on August 21, 1797.³⁴ Tradition says that he was dismissed by his congregation. Perhaps, it was Carpenter who had grown weary of the constituency too small to support him or of the town too unsettled to construct a meeting house around him. Carpenter may have received a better offer from the prosperous market town of Rutland.

In 1794, the western society in Plainfield was still searching for a minister. The issue of building the town's meeting house was again introduced to the voters. Although the proprietary lot had been accepted by the town in 1778, enough change had occurred to warrant a fresh start. The one consistent condition was the lack of money. As citizens of Plainfield, the townspeople in the parish of Meriden were also levied for funds. They protested because the proposed meeting house was outside of the parish and because they had been

"Exempted from . . . Supporting the Gospel in any other part of this Town" on February 17, 1780.³⁵

Antagonized by the motion for funds, Meriden voters introduced measures to form a separate town. The Grantham people in the parish agreed. They were still subject to the secular demands of their distant neighbors across Grantham Mountain for taxes and militia duty. The warrant for a Town Meeting in November 1794 read: "To See if the Town will give their Consent that the Parish of Meriden Should be Incorporated With Town Privileges."³⁶ The meeting was never held, and the issue was dropped until 1799. On October 7, an article asking for the incorporation of the town of Meriden was voted down.³⁷ The people of Meriden nevertheless forwarded a petition to the General Court. The voters in the western part of Plainfield countered by sending Abel Stone to Exeter to argue against the division, which would have permanently crippled the tax base of the town. Nothing more was heard on the issue until 1843. Finally, after considerable debate, that part of Grantham which formed half of Meriden Parish was annexed to Plainfield in 1856, and our town assumed its present shape.

During the late 1790s, the western society of Plainfield was forced to look elsewhere to finance their meeting house. The sale of pew rights in the unbuilt church proved unsuccessful.³⁸ An attempt to secure pledges also failed. Then, the citizens eyed the land reserved by the charter for the Church of England and for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. They believed that the claims of the Church of England had been voided by the Revolution. The sale of this land would raise a significant sum. The issue was referred to the state for arbitration. In the end, the legislature upheld the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire as the owner of the proprietary rights.³⁹

With available money, the western parishioners raised the frame of a meeting house and roofed it at the center of town during the autumn of 1798. An article in the Town Meeting of April 16, 1799, asked the citizens to finance the completion of the building and to allow those displeased with the site to arrange for a portion of church meetings in more convenient locations. The meeting house was also opened to all denominations.⁴⁰ Although the building was never completed, warrants for town meetings show that it was used for gatherings until 1810 when it was dismantled and moved to the village at the Plain.⁴¹

With some semblance of a building to offer a prospective minister, ten people organized the "first Congregational Church of West Plainfield" on September 20, 1804, and offered the pulpit to the Reverend Micaiah Porter.⁴² He had preached in Voluntown, Connecticut, near Plainfield, from 1781 to 1800. At the Town Meeting on December 24, 1804, the voters appropriated an annual salary of \$200.⁴³

Meriden's organized resistance to taxation for Plainfield's meeting house in the late 1790s stretched the law because the parishioners were having a difficult time themselves. They had consolidated civic and religious affairs within their

parish, but had not solved them. While the voters in the western side of Plainfield were left to hold a half-filled purse for the "town's" meeting house and minister, the eastern side also lacked the money and harmony to construct their own permanent meeting house and to retain a minister. The growth of the Congregational Church in Meriden to sixty-one communicants by 1788 only institutionalized the religious and social strife within the parish and made funding their own meeting house nearly impossible.

The authority of the Standing Order in each town or parish was above change, but not challenge. There was no room for liberty of conscience because every shilling was needed to support the parish and the church. The standing religious society was the local agency responsible for insuring harmony and civic responsibility by punishing those who strayed from the straight and narrow. The power of arbitration lay with the deacons of the church.

One of many cases illustrative of unrest in Plainfield was the censure of Simeon Hovey of Meriden in 1787 for breaking the covenant of the Congregational Church.⁴⁴ On July 13, Hovey spoke against "the Morality of the Sabbath." Although he was a member of the established church in the parish, Hovey apparently subscribed to the belief of Seventh Day Baptists that the Sabbath is observed on the seventh day, Saturday, rather than on the first day. Hovey was suspended until October, the time of the next communion. Meanwhile ministers from neighboring towns were invited to cross-examine Hovey and to investigate his complaints against Deacon Micaiah Adams, to whom he had voiced his concerns in "a warm dispute" regarding the Sabbath, infant baptism, and the incompetence of a presbytery. Hovey was readmitted to the church on October 6, 1787, but discontent remained.

Secular complaints were also the concern of the Standing Order. As the only quasi-legal judiciary within the parish, the established religious society tried to enforce the strict codes of morality inherited from the Puritan theocrats of the seventeenth century. During the winter of 1791-1792, for example, Benjamin Kimball's mill mysteriously burned at Meriden. At the church meeting on February 7, 1792, the membership voted to admonish Mrs. Zibia Minor for bearing insufficient testimony against Daniel Kimball, Benjamin's son, "for suggesting [the] suspicion...that Roswell Minor had had a hand in Burning the Mill." At the same meeting, a request was made to excommunicate Benjamin Kimball, who had been charged by Deacon Israel Ballard the previous summer of accusing Reverend Estabrook of lying to God.⁴⁵

The authority of the deacons to investigate and to publicize private matters knew no bounds. On June 3, 1791, a committee reported in church meeting that "Considerable uneasiness has existed in the minds of Church members regarding unbecoming conduct which our Brother Daniel Kimball has been supposed to be guilty of toward Lois Wheeler a Girl who ther lived in his house." The accusation was proven groundless.⁴⁶ Although it is impossible to determine what actually occurred, the written records show that the church played a major role as a public forum for private complaint.

The combination of religious dissent and social malaise within the standing church, which was charged with controlling both, led to predictable dissatisfaction with Reverend Estabrook. After a series of parish meetings, the voters decided to dismiss him on June 13, 1791. Since the Congregational Society could not support Estabrook alone, the members finally concurred on May 9, 1792, although they voted on August 22, 1793, "that Revd Experience Estabrook administer the Ordinance of this Church occasionally."⁴⁷

Although the Congregationalists maintained the First Church, they were not the only religious people in the parish. The dismissal of Estabrook proved that. The voters of Meriden sensed that the stability of the parish ironically meant weakening the standing religious society, the Congregationalists, who were sanctioned to use the meeting house every Sabbath to the exclusion of others. A month after Estabrook's removal as the parish minister, the people of Meriden voted on June 9, 1792, "that the Baptists shall have an Equal Right and privilege according to what they pay [in taxes] with any other inhabitant in the Meeting house & preaching and Shall have Liberty to Supply the pulpit in their turn with preachers of their own choosing." Jonathan Cram, a Baptist, was among the three men selected that day "to find out the minds of the people respecting Building a meeting house."⁴⁸

The Congregationalists acquiesced in the parish decision that lowered cries for tax exemption and that created more revenue for the parish and the maintenance of a meeting house. The Baptists in Meriden, however, tasted autonomy. Recognition by the parish spurred them to meet formally on September 6, 1792, at the house of James Kimball and to organize a church with the assistance of Elders Jedidiah Hibbard and John Drue of Lebanon. On April 29, 1793, the new Baptist Society "met at Br. Blanchard's to consider...proposals sent from the Congregational [Society] to our Church, respecting union in worship." The Baptists rejected commitment to religious solidarity within the meeting house on the hilltop in Meriden. The Baptist Society joined the Woodstock Association on August 10, 1793, and Jonathan Cram was ordained on May 4, 1795, with the approval of many Baptist leaders from surrounding towns.⁴⁹

The regional associations of the Baptist societies in New England were more powerful than the loose consociations that monitored the Congregationalists. Although the resources of wealth and numbers often resided with the independent Congregational churches because they were older, the authority and organization of the Baptist Associations surpassed the effectiveness of the Standing Order in keeping order. The Baptist belief that "Every offence that is publick it is the duty of the Church to take up a labour with an offender agreeable to Timothy 5:20" was designed in theory to invoke self-improvement rather than punishment.⁵⁰

The Baptists built popular appeal on the right to religious dissent, a belief in adult baptism, and a distrust of college-trained strangers who, unlike the Baptist elders, assumed the Congregational pulpits and seemed answerable only to the

local elite. On November 15, 1783, Elihu Hyde of Lebanon wrote to the prominent Baptist minister, Isaac Backus of Norwich, Connecticut. He described the progress of the Separatists in the upper Connecticut Valley since the Revolution.⁵¹

There is a Great fall of Bigitry Since I Came to the Town about five years ago when all [dissenters] was Reprobated that Did Not fall in with the Traditions of the Fathers and Believe in the Desent from Peter and ministers must be Lecensd by those that had Regular ordination and that the Civil Law must be Exerted for the Support of their [Congregational] Teachers otherwise all Religion would fail and None may speak in a Congregation without Liscence and a Baptist Elder ought Not To be heard by No Means . . . Sir, I am more and more Convinced of this Truth that it is the Holy Ghost that only Can Quallyfie and Prepare men for the ministry.

Like the Congregationalists, however, the Baptists and their regional associations possessed no balm for soothing human nature. For example, Simeon Hovey ran afoul of his Baptist brethren in Meriden after he had challenged the Congregationalists. He argued that "Dea. Cram Publickly held up or delivered erroneous Doctrine" and "accused Br. Blanchard of taking him by the throat." Hovey was excommunicated on September 15, 1794.⁵² Like the Congregationalists, the Baptists tried to control the social behavior of their communicants:

We the subscribers . . . in behalf of ye [Baptist] Chh. [church] to visit and treat with our Sister M. Crossman . . . report as follows. . . . 2ly She owns that she lied in saying that her nose & lips was besmeared with snuff, when it was not, & at ye same time asserting she had not taken any thing beside, altho she affirms she had liberty to take as much Drugs as she pleased, some of which looked much like snuff, which liberty both ye Doctr [Oliver Baker] & his sife assert was not given her [in their home]. 3ly After she owned she had taken Madder, which stained Her lips that She repeatedly denyd, & was then ask'd whether She had taken any thing beside she answered, no; yet after Examination of Bottles, & repeated accusations from the Dr & his wife, She owned She had taken considerable of ye oyl of Olives.⁵³

Despite belief in voluntarism, the Baptists in Meriden Parish narrowed their toleration of divergent opinion after their church became established in the community. Gideon Baker was excommunicated on December 14, 1802, for declining communion, preaching the Doctrine of Freewill Salvation, and "For

maintaining that one's Doctrine ought not to be of any weight, respecting Chh Communion or Discipline." Mrs. Knights Cutler voiced the trend toward the rejection of any church-state when she requested a letter of dismissal in 1802 "Because she desires to be without the Yoke of Chh Discipline."⁵⁴

Although there were two established churches in the parish, everyone was responsible by law for the maintenance of the public meeting place. A vote was finally obtained during the parish meeting on October 10, 1796, to build a larger meeting house and to replace the building constructed in 1782. They decided to finance the project through the sale of the pews. On January 2, 1797, the parishioners reached the compromise that allowed them to proceed.

The [Meriden] Meeting House when completed Shall be Equally free for all denominations of Christians as a house of Publick worship and any Proprietor [purchaser of a pew] Shall have a right to introduce a preacher of his own denomination into the desk and Sabath when not supplied by the parish provided he does it at his own Expense, and any proprietor Shall have a right to Introduce a Preacher of his own Sentiment on any week Day unless taken up by a previous appointment.⁵⁵

The pew rights in the unbuilt meeting house were sold for a total of about \$3,000. The average box pew on the ground floor commanded a price of £ 23.9.4, a large investment when farm labor was worth less than two shillings per day in western New Hampshire during the late 1790s. The twenty-one pews in the gallery sold for an average of \$29.54. Nine men invested in two or more pews. Six others shared the cost of a pew. The remaining expense of finishing the meeting house was met with a poll tax and the sale of the old building. John Stevens, Jr., bought the frame of the 1782 meeting house for reuse as a barn in March of 1797 for \$21, about twice his payment for pew #6 fifteen years earlier.⁵⁶ The frame of the new building was raised during the summer of 1797. The meeting house was finished at a cost of \$4,400.⁵⁷

The minutes of the parish meeting on January 26, 1797, show that the voters had firm ideas about the appearance of the building and, for a change, agreed that the meeting house should compare favorably with the meeting houses in other prosperous towns:

The Person [builder] . . . is to Build Said House Sixty fut by forty [-]seven with 28 fut Posts with a Steple at one end & a Porch [enclosed and clapboarded] at the other end, the Steple and Porch to be thirteen fut Sqare, the Steple to be the Same highth as Lebanon meeting hous and in the same mode the undertaker to complete Said hous in Every respect with a Good Bel well hung which Shall weigh 750 weight with a Conducting rod.⁵⁸



Map, Meriden Parish in 1808 by Dr. Elias Frost, Meriden, 1853. Courtesy Dartmouth College Archives.

The rare survival of the building contract for the Meriden meeting house also allows us to flesh out Dr. Frost's tiny drawing of the large edifice found in his journal. The contract describes that the clapboards were to be painted white, and the roof colored red. Inside, a mahogany shade was the choice for the "Breastwork" or facade of the gallery above the main floor and for the "Desk [pulpit], Pillar and Posts." The pews below were all numbered on the doors.⁵⁹

Although the parishioners in Meriden came together to fund the construction of the meeting house, they voted to table the article "to procure preaching for the future" nearly a year after the completion of the building. Not until August 19, 1799, was the Reverend Siloam Short, the nephew of John Stevens, Jr., invited to climb into the mahogany colored pulpit at an annual salary of \$260.⁶⁰

As the eighteenth century closed, the new meeting houses at the center of town and in Meriden stood for both discord and progress. By 1804, fourteen years after the departure of Abraham Carpenter, all of the people of Plainfield and Meriden had access to established religious societies. Nevertheless, the social influence of religion upon the decentralized character of the town was negligible. The total population of Plainfield in 1800 was 1,435, but fewer than 150 adults held church memberships two generations after settlement.⁶¹

Both the Baptists and the Congregationalists lost support during the first years of the nineteenth century. National politics diverted members who realized that the old autocratic church-state was at odds with the democratic principles of the New Republic. Continued squabbling among church members also quickened the erosion of religious power over social control. In Meriden, the women of the parish sought to stabilize the community. On March 1, 1815, the Female Cent Society was founded to raise money for civic projects and to sew clothes for the needy. Later, the proceeds from their lectures and dues helped to support poor students at Kimball Union Academy and missionary work among the western Indians. The group did not operate wholly independent of the church. They voted some of their treasury to support the Congregational minister.⁶²

By the following year, the cycle of discipline and dissent had bankrupted the credibility of the religious societies in Plainfield and Meriden. The Congregationalists and Baptists alike had lost members, and their groups were threatened with financial ruin. In Meriden, thirteen well-to-do Baptists sold their pew rights in the meeting house to the Congregationalists.⁶³ Religious freedom was traded for revenue.

Plainfield was a microcosm of all of New Hampshire on this issue. The role of church and state was a heated topic throughout New Hampshire in 1816. As election day approached, "A Baptist" argued the case in a series of editorials in the *New-Hampshire Patriot* (Concord):

The question between the parties at our next election is reduced to a much smaller compass than in past years. Formerly, it was a question between federalists and republicans ...Now...it is a

question solely between friends of religious toleration and universal freedom of conscience and a combination of men who are determined at all hazards to impose on the people a law religion [church-state] — who are determined to make the tenets of one sect the only standard of orthodoxy and that orthodoxy the sole qualification for office.⁶⁴

William Plumer of Epping, a former Baptist, was elected governor. A bill to end religious taxation was introduced to the state senate by Daniel Young of Lisbon in June of 1817. The Toleration Act was passed by the New Hampshire legislature on June 25, 1819, by a vote of ninety-six to eighty-seven. The law made religious taxation voluntary and allowed towns to use public money to repair meeting houses for secular use only.⁶⁵

The passage of the Toleration Act forced change in the government of local religious societies. They became separate, private, self-supporting churches, as we think of them today. Although the financial lives of the churches in Plainfield and Meriden were tenuous, the removal of arbitrary discipline and public taxation allowed church members to assess the value of religion to their way of life. The strength of character earned during sixty years of consolidation and dissent in western New Hampshire was now directed toward molding a community spirit.

Part 2: After 1820

The passage of the Toleration Act in 1819 separated church and state in New Hampshire and made each religious society a private, self-supporting group. Believers focused on faith and on perfecting their churches to answer the community's spiritual needs. Without the support of local taxation, the two state-sanctioned religious societies in Plainfield and Meriden were forced to meet their expenses from private sources, like today. Since the late eighteenth century, these congregations have been joined by a range of faiths that together strengthen the character of Plainfield. With the advent of the automobile, Plainfielders also attended religious services in surrounding towns. The growth of religious toleration and perspective since 1819 is illustrated by the history of each Plainfield church. They are arranged alphabetically in the following pages: Catholic, First Baptist Church, Grace Episcopal Church, The Hermitage, Meriden Congregational Church, Plainfield Community Baptist Church, and Singing Hills Christian Fellowship.

• *Catholic Congregation*

In the early 1960s, in a casual conversation, Father Edward MacDonald of the West Lebanon Parish (which includes Plainfield) asked Florence Barto and Ernest and Anita Barrett if they would like mass held in Plainfield and if they knew of a building large enough to use. "Needless to say," reports Anita Barrett, "we were all elated and quickly set ourselves in motion to see what

we could set up. The Mothers' and Daughters' Clubhouse immediately came to mind."

The request to use the clubhouse on Sunday mornings for Catholic mass was voted on by club members and approved. Father MacDonald had a portable altar made which was dismantled when the clubhouse was scheduled for other activities.

The first mass was held on October 7, 1962. Father MacDonald was the first celebrant, followed by the LaSalette Fathers and Father Raymond Isabel, M.S. The sisters from the Hermitage on Stage Road set up the altar at the beginning. Later Anita Barrett performed this task. Kevin Barrett and Eugene Vigneault were trained as altar boys. The Catholic children in town were taught religious education by Anita Barrett, Florence Barto, and Lucia Bryant.

Mass was offered at the clubhouse until the late 1960s. The congregation dwindled, and the LaSalette Fathers were assigned to larger churches. Eventually the Parish Council cancelled the Plainfield mass, and the congregation returned to attending liturgies in the surrounding communities of West Lebanon, Lebanon, and Windsor.⁶⁶

In 1978, Father Robert Campbell, M.S., of the West Lebanon Parish again approached the Barretts about holding mass in Plainfield. One day, a group was discussing the possible use of the Mothers' and Daughters' Clubhouse. Reverend Hazel Roper of the Community Baptist Church was present and suggested the Community Baptist Church. The idea was discussed at a full church meeting, and the members of the Baptist Church voted unanimously to invite the Roman Catholics in Plainfield to use their church.

The Catholic Congregation contributes to the expenses of the Baptist Church. Father Campbell was the first celebrant, followed by Father Roger Plante and Father Rene Gelinas. Alice Hendrick, organist of the Community Baptist Church, volunteered to serve as organist for the Catholic service as well. Douglas Clark was the first altar boy followed by Matthew Koehler and Amanda and Alicia Daigle, the first altar girls in the Plainfield Church.

At first, religious education classes were taught in their homes by Elaine Wheeler, Nancy Norwalk, Norma Jerry, Carol King, Kathleen Garrison, and Sally Dinan. Eventually, the number of children grew, and they joined the classes at the West Lebanon Parish Hall.

Doris Mercier began a Catholic Women's Club, which met regularly until 1989, and sponsored various activities for the benefit of both Catholic and Protestant Congregations.

Both churches have worked for a better understanding of one another's beliefs and have held a number of ecumenical services together. They also share the summer Bible School. While some temporary emergency sharing of churches has occurred in the past around New Hampshire, this regular sharing of a Protestant Church by a Catholic Community is the first of its kind in the state.⁶⁷

• *Grace Episcopal Church*

This church was organized in 1804 as "The Church in Plainfield." The first settled clergyman was the Reverend Russell Catlin of Windsor, Vermont. Although it was admitted to the Convention August 21, 1805, it had lapsed about 1808. Reorganized by the Reverend B. C. C. Parker of Woodstock, Vermont, and incorporated as the Grace Church, December 19, 1840, once again the church attended the Convention of June 28, 1843. The place of early meetings is not known.

From 1841 through 1844, services were held every other Sunday in the Union Meeting House (now 1991, the Community Baptist Church), which was used on the alternate Sundays with the Baptist and Methodist Societies. From October 6, 1872, through May 4, 1873, regular evening services were held in the Congregational Church (now the Blow-Me-Down Grange Hall). The clergymen who officiated here were always settled elsewhere: St. Paul's Church, Windsor; the Trinity Church, Cornish; or the Union Church, Claremont. In 1873, the church was reported as practically dead. In 1874, the church was reported vacant and nothing further is known of it.

At one time there was a Sunday School, Bible classes and a choir. The Sunday School collection had 150 volumes.⁶⁸

• *First Baptist Church-Meriden*

The church was organized on the sixth day of September 1792. On May 4, 1795, Jonathan Cram was ordained to the ministry of the gospel and became the first one to administer regularly to the church. These meetings, sometimes four hours long, were often held in schoolhouses around the eastern end of town by Elder Cram. In 1803, they combined their worship service with the Congregationalists for a short time. However, their beliefs were different, and they returned to separate meetings. Elder Kendrick from Cornish often supplied the pulpit.

In 1821, the church voted to take formal steps to establish the Baptist Society. A subscription paper was circulated to secure funds for the support of preaching according to Baptist belief. Elder Coburn was hired as the minister, and he stayed for about five years. From 1826 to 1830, Elder Kendrick from Cornish returned as the principal preacher. In 1829, steps were taken to build a church at East Plainfield. In May 1832, the church was dedicated with a sermon by Reverend Oren Tracy. In 1832, Reverend Joseph Hough of Bozrah, Connecticut, became the minister for two years. Reverend J. E. Strong of Gilford was called. Under his leadership, a protracted meeting resulted in the conversion of thirty or more parishioners whose ages ranged from thirteen to thirty-two years. In the year 1835, the reported membership was fifty-seven with contributions amounting to \$115.22. Reverend Strong stayed about a year. Substitutes filled the pulpit until Reverend Gibbon Williams came in November 1838.

On March 26, 1836, the decision was made to sell the meeting house at East Plainfield and to build a new one in Meriden Village. The present brick



Meriden Baptist Church, built 1838; 1985. Photo by Erich Witzel.



Reverend Samuel Miles of the Meriden Baptist Church, about 1855. Reverend Miles was born in Newport, South Wales. He served as the pastor from 1842 until the late 1850s. He died April 10, 1862. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

church is the one that the society began to build that year on a part of Dr. Elias Frost's garden. It was finished sometime in December 1838. The auditorium is forty by fifty-five feet with a symmetrical steeple.

The opening sermon was preached by Paster Gibbon Williams on the first day of January 1839. Devotional exercises conducted by Elders Ira Person of Newport and Reuben Sawyer of New London were accompanied with singing by John D. Ford of Cornish.

Reuben True was the principal agent in building the church along with his brother Osgood, Clement Hough, and Captain Moses Eaton. In 1839 the True brothers presented the parsonage property to the society, consisting of a comfortable house, outbuildings, and sixteen acres of land just north of the junction of Bean and Dodge Roads. Pastor Gibbon Williams held a series of revival services and forty-seven people were converted and added to the church. In 1841 the membership was 119. Reverend Samuel W. Miles, of Newport, South Wales, became the next pastor and served until the late 1850s.

For nearly five years, Reverend Daniel F. Richardson was pastor of the Meriden church. He was succeeded by Reverend S. L. Elliot of Claremont, who stayed only for a year. Then, Reverend Charles H. Green came to serve as minister, but died at the parsonage after a year's service. At the time of Brother Green's death, there were only thirty-two members.

In 1861, Plainfield Plain organized a Baptist Church and thirty parishioners took letters to join with them.

In the autumn of 1862, the membership was again reduced. Several in the supportive Hough family were dismissed to aid in the formation of a church in Lebanon.

To succeed the Reverend Green, the church recalled the Reverend S. L. Elliot, whose pastorate continued about two active years. In 1865, Reverend Stephen G. Abbott succeeded him and encouraged many important improvements. A pipe organ was purchased and installed in 1867 at a cost of nearly \$1,000. It is still in use. The vestry was also added at this time. Membership began to grow again.

The next pastor was Reverend Horace G. Hubbard who remained five years and resigned in April 1876. The next in the line of leaders was Reverend Albert Heald, who also stayed for about five years; followed by Reverend B. F. Lawrence. At the close of his pastorate, the membership was sixty. The church was without a minister for a short time. Reverend William P. Bartlett of Campton Village came here for two years and four months. For several months, the church was supplied with preaching by the Reverend George C. Trow of Plainfield Plain and others until August 1889 when the Reverend O. Wilson Kimball of Cottage City, Massachusetts, was unanimously invited to become pastor. The parsonage buildings were repaired and painted, and a new piazza added to the house. The church was also refurbished inside. The Ladies' Aid Society was started by the pastor's wife. Twenty-five members were added to the church during the first three years of Reverend Kimball's ten-year tenure, which included the one hundredth anniversary of the church in 1892.

Following Reverend Kimball into the second century was Reverend J. F. Blacklock who resigned after two years in 1900; Thomas Adams of Deerfield who resigned in 1903; A. L. Powell of Saxtons River, Vermont, who resigned in 1907; Reverend Stephen S. Huse, Jr. (the brother to the local doctor, Ernest Huse) who resigned in 1910; Reverend Horace F. Brown who resigned in 1913; Reverend George C. Junkins who resigned in 1918; Reverend Winfield G. Hubbard who had been baptized in Meriden and who resigned in 1929. In 1929, Reverend George C. Junkins returned for about five years and then resigned in 1934. In 1936, Reverend Philip D. Chamberlain became minister. During his pastorate, the young people broadcasted several times over Station WNBX, Springfield, Vermont. He resigned October 8, 1939. Reverend Jonathan Lewis followed in 1940, but died the same year. Reverend Herman A. Childs supplied the pulpit until he became the regular pastor in June 1941. Reverend Childs brought twenty-five new people into membership, which had grown to sixty-seven when he retired to Claremont in 1946.

Reverend Forrest K. Emerson and wife Dora came in 1947 and served the church until 1951. The average attendance in the Sunday School reached a high of forty-five. Reverend S. A. Barton Clark and wife Mildred followed, staying two years.

The church was without a pastor until 1954 when James Watson and wife Caroline came to serve after their graduation from Providence-Barrington Bible College. James was ordained at the Meriden Church in 1955 and closed his ministry here in 1958.

Ray Leavitt, Jr. and wife Betty accepted the call to the church in 1959. They were also graduates of Providence-Barrington Bible College and worked hard with children in Meriden. In 1962, they felt the call to go as missionaries to Trinidad and left in July to prepare for their mission.

That same year, one of the young church members, Elizabeth Camp, completed missionary training at Providence-Barrington Bible College and was commissioned by the church to go as a missionary to Bolivia under Wycliffe Bible Translators. Betty still serves with Wycliffe, but in a new field in Brazil with her partner, Millicent Liccardi.

In 1961, the church voted to withdraw its affiliation from the liberal United Baptist Convention of New Hampshire and to become an independent Baptist church.

John and Darlene Carpenter followed the Leavitts and came from Northfield, Vermont. They were here for eight years. Reverend Carpenter was ordained in the Meriden church in November 1963. Their ministry closed here in 1969, and they left for Peabody, Massachusetts. Mr. Donald King and wife Sharon came as pastor in August 1970, but they stayed only three months.

From December 1970 until 1972, Reverend Warren Biebel of the Windsor Baptist Church supplied the pulpit. In 1972, he and his wife Marian accepted the call to become the pastor of the church. In October 1973, the large parsonage that had been home for ministers since 1839 was sold. Part of the money was reinvested and part used for needed repairs to the church. The Biebels closed out their ministry with the Meriden church in June 1978 and the youth director of the church, Harold "Dewey" Jones, Jr., a graduate of Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, accepted the call as pastor. He was ordained in the church in October 1980. The church voted to join the Conservative Baptist Association of Vermont-New Hampshire in 1984. Two years later the church members voted to purchase the former Donald King, Sr., house on Camp Road as a parsonage. The church had rented places for the pastor and his family for eight years. In May 1986, the Joneses moved into the new parsonage.

Over the years, there have been improvements, additions, and alterations in the church building. When the church purchased the pipe organ in 1865, it was placed in the balcony. It was later moved to a raised pedestal in the front of the building where it now rests. In 1970, Mr. James Ingerson, a music teacher at Kimball Union Academy, helped to clean and restore the old organ.

In 1979, a project was started to excavate the area beneath the church. This newly created space is used to house two oil/wood/coal furnaces which replaced the wood furnace installed in 1916; a kitchen, and a large multipurpose room were also fitted in the new basement. In the nineteenth century,

wood stoves at the back of the church with long pipes running the length of the sanctuary to the chimneys provided the only heat in winter.

A major alteration was projected for the church in 1985–86. This project was the creation of a nursery in the balcony area. A wall was erected in the balcony and soundproofed. Two rooms were built in the old balcony for use as a Sunday School room and a nursery for the children.

One of the distinctive beliefs of Baptists is baptism by immersion. Prior to 1900, those who came to faith in Jesus Christ and who wished to make a public testimony of their faith were baptized at different locations around town. Blood's Brook where it runs along the road next to the church was one site. The majority of the baptisms, however, were held at the place known as the "Baptist Swimming Hole" farther down Blood's Brook a half-mile below the covered bridge.

The First Baptist Church of Meriden has been very fortunate to have had those men in the pulpit who were and are concerned for the souls of the people, proclaiming the good news of God's Word.

• *The Hermitage*

During the 1960s, four Carmelite nuns from the St. John of the Cross Monastery rented the Herbert Adams' house, then owned by Frederick Daley and called the Hermitage, on Stage Road (James Jerry, 1991). The Carmelites were a contemplative order who wanted "to retire, to retreat, to pray, to be present to God." Traditionally the Order sewed vestments for priests. Coming to Plainfield was an experiment in entering the world from a cloistered convent environment.

The sisters assisted the weekly mass which, at that time, was celebrated at the Mothers' and Daughters' Clubhouse. Everyone was welcome to borrow religious books from the nuns and to join them in prayer and meditation. The nuns also supported themselves by making and selling cookies. There was no other involvement in community affairs. They depended on townspeople for help with transportation and errands, but some neighbors were unreceptive. When their Monastery closed, the nuns moved to Bucksport, Maine, where there was a seminary of Oblate fathers. Here they began a craft cooperative called Homemakers Organized for More Employment (H.O.M.E.).⁶⁹

• *Meriden Congregational Church*

The Meriden Congregational Church is Plainfield's oldest religious organization.⁷⁰ Forty-one people met on October 8, 1779, at the house of Benjamin Kimball in the eastern end of town to discuss the need for public worship. The following spring, on May 2, a Congregational society of fourteen members was formed in Meriden by the Reverend Isaiah Potter of Lebanon.⁷¹

The Congregationalists enjoyed stature as the so-called Standing Order in Meriden Parish until the separation of church and state in 1819 (see Part 1). As the first religious society in the parish, public taxes were levied to support



Meriden Congregational Church and town hall, with the Barrows-Monroe House and the school building, about 1865. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

their minister. In truth, however, the laws drafted by the early Puritan church-state only fueled resentment of the Congregationalists. Beliefs varied within the parish, and the Baptists justifiably fought hard for the right to support their own elders rather than the Congregational minister.

The repeal of state laws to support the orthodox minister through public taxation brought financial catastrophe and theological debate on the heels of disruptive dissent. After 1819, the Congregational Church was challenged, as every religious group is today, to raise its own funds to support an acceptable minister, the sanctuary, and parsonage. As the Baptists and others organized their religious lives during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the Congregationalists in Meriden were forced to test their own faith against the evolving orthodoxy of Calvinist beliefs no longer sanctioned by a church state.⁷²

The history of the Congregationalists in Meriden as a self-sustaining religious society is best organized into three phases. First, there was a period of reorganization as an independent church after 1819. Next came a period of uncertain leadership and changes in the building that occurred after the Civil War. Finally, in the twentieth century, there has been a period of beneficence and consolidation. This story is traced by the cycle of longevity and brevity in the careers of the ministers of the Meriden Congregational Church, by fluctuation in membership, and, to some extent, by the nature of the buildings occupied since the separation of church and state in 1819.



Meriden Congregational Church and town hall as it appeared between 1873 and 1890. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

Like all of the so-called first churches in each town and parish in New Hampshire, the passage of the Toleration Act disenfranchised the Meriden Congregational Society. Physically, the society was left where it had been for two generations. Its home was the second meeting house of the east parish of Plainfield constructed in 1797 on the hilltop in Meriden for both secular and religious meetings. It stood on the site of the present stone church and replaced a small, barn-like meeting house finished in 1784 at the southeast corner of the green.⁷³ Inside, the Congregationalists and the Baptists met at different times on the Sabbath because the building was a non-sectarian public meeting place. Local (parish) taxes supported the Congregational minister, but not the Baptist elder. The resulting resentment made it difficult to select and to afford a minister.

Kinship ties determined the Congregational minister who took the pulpit in the new meeting house in 1799, two years after its construction and seven years after the resignation of the Reverend Experience Estabrook. He was the Reverend Siloam Short, who was ordained on November 7, 1799. Short had grown up in South Killingly, Connecticut, but had been born in Hartland, Vermont, on March 18, 1772, the son of Daniel and Experience (Stevens) Short. His grandfather and uncle, John Stevens, Sr. and Jr., were original proprietors of Plainfield. Reverend Short had not received extensive formal training, but



Meriden Congregational Church, built in 1898; 1985. Photo by Erich Witzel.

was a known quantity with family connections. He passed away on September 29, 1803, during a scarlet fever epidemic.⁷⁴

David Dickinson followed Short as the Congregational minister in Meriden. He was ordained on May 14, 1804. Like Short, Dickinson lacked formal theological training. He did bring experience as a physician. Dickinson was the last minister to serve the parish under the combined sanction of church and state. He was dismissed before March 23, 1819, and went to a church in Palmer, Massachusetts.⁷⁵

Dickinson's fifteen-year service may be a testimony to compromise rather than to strong leadership. His tenure saw the final decline of the sanctioned church and the near collapse of formal religion in Meriden. By 1816, the Congregationalists of the Standing Order and the Baptists had lost disillusioned members and were both threatened with financial ruin. The two sides met in committee to see what might be salvaged. The result was financial settlement rather than the resurrection of a communal ideal. The Baptists sold their pews to the Congregationalists and moved out.⁷⁶ Consequently, when the separation of church and state was achieved three years later, the legacy of the Standing Order for the Congregational Society in Meriden was poverty and dozens of empty pews in the old meeting house.



Interior of the Meriden Congregational Church, about 1900. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

Four influences developed to save the Meriden Congregational Society. One was reorganization under the new state system. With the passage of the Toleration Act and the disestablishment of the orthodox church in New Hampshire, members met on February 17, 1820, "to form themselves into a Society for the Purpose of supporting Public Worship agreeably to an act passed at the last session of the General Court." The Baptists also reorganized themselves in September after three years of suspended activity.⁷⁷

The second influence was Kimball Union Academy. It was founded on the green in 1813 by early church member Daniel Kimball with the intent of training young men for the Congregational ministry.⁷⁸ The local Congregational Church had to be a solid model for the Academy boys. Succeeding headmasters of the school also had solid theological backgrounds which, in effect, gave the congregation two trained ministers.

The third influence was the Kimball family itself. Daniel's will in 1817 made important bequests to the trustees of the Academy, including a fund for "the support of a Calvinistick Preacher of the Gospel of the Congregational or presbyterian orders."⁷⁹ The endowment produced \$150 annually for the minis-



175th Anniversary Pageant, Meriden Congregational Church, 1955. L-R unidentified, Morris Penniman, Dorothy Pringle, Bonnie McNamara, John Duncklee, James McNamara, Hazel Chellis, Annamay Chapman, Constance Zea, Howard Zea, Howard Chellis. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

ter's salary. Consequently, Kimball's executor, John Bryant, and the Academy trustees were influential in the selection of the local Congregational minister.

The support of Kimball's widow, Hannah, further solidified the financial base of the church and its relationship with the Academy. In life, she was "desirous of contributing towards the support of the preaching of the Gospel in this place" and on October 25, 1837, initiated a fund of \$200 to support the minister.⁸⁰ After Mrs. Kimball's death in 1847, more monies were bequeathed to the Academy and the church.⁸¹

Lastly, in 1821, the Congregationalists hired a trained cleric, the Reverend Dana Claves, a graduate of Middlebury College and Andover Theological Seminary. As if to signal a healthy beginning, the ordination sermon delivered in Meriden by the Reverend Rufus Bailey of Norwich, Vermont, was published by subscription.⁸² The new minister's formal religious training provided both moral and secular leadership to the newly revised, independent church. Claves and his successor, Amos Blanchard, who was ordained on January 8, 1840, brought a long period of stability to the church that lasted until the latter resigned in 1865. They added over 260 members to the rolls.

By 1842, the growing membership was confident enough to sever the final political relationship with the town: their tenancy in the old parish meeting house. They voted to request that the selectmen warn no further town meetings in the church. Instead, the town offered the Congregationalists part ownership of the building and \$755.34 towards its renovation.⁸³ In 1846, the frame of the building was turned, so that the gable end faced south toward the green. Beneath the sanctuary, a second auditorium was outfitted for town meetings.⁸⁴

Between the Civil War and World War I, the Congregational Church and its membership faced inconsistent leadership. Eleven ministers — Woodbury, Abbot, Palmer, Mellen, Dean, Holmes, French, Robinson, Bailey, Fifer, and McCartney — served on the hilltop over the next fifty years. Heavy expenses were also incurred to maintain the building. The appearance of the church was modernized, and a more imposing steeple was added in 1873 and 1874. Thirteen years later, a slate roof was installed. The deacons continually went to the membership to subsidize repairs.⁸⁵ The parishioners were also regular supporters of organized missionary work in the world outside Meriden.⁸⁶ Finally, two fires in 1890 and in 1894 severely damaged and then destroyed the building. The membership held their services at the Academy for five years. The new stone church in the Romanesque Revival style was dedicated on May 23, 1899, thanks to the generosity of John D. Bryant, the son of Kimball's original executor.⁸⁷

In the twentieth century, the Meriden Congregational Church has enjoyed a second period of stability. The Reverend Noble O. Bowlby was a strong influence in the pulpit for the twenty-five years between the beginning of World War I and the end of the Great Depression.⁸⁸ The bequests of John D. Bryant, which included the use of his summer home on the west side of the green as a parsonage, and of Annie H. Duncan, whose generosity provided the Duncan Parish Hall in 1963, steadied the course in the same way that Daniel and Hannah Kimball's beneficence had done in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The double role of the Meriden Congregational Church as a place of worship for some members of the community and as a chapel for the Academy students diversified the parishioners and strengthened the leadership in the pulpit.

The expense of maintaining the physical plant and filling the pulpit with excellent preaching has forced some retrenchment in recent years. After thoughtful discussion, the decision was made in 1971 to join the United Church of Christ and to concede the traditional Congregational tenets of self-government in exchange for stronger administration and collegiality. The church enters the next century conscious of its heritage and of its ongoing contribution to a viable community life in Meriden.

• *Ministers of the Meriden Congregational Church*

| | |
|-----------|----------------------------|
| 1780–1781 | Samuel Wood, interim |
| 1781 | Nathaniel Merrill, interim |
| 1782 | _____ Foster, interim |

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| 1783 | Peter Powers, interim |
| 1785 | Thomas Russell, interim |
| 1786 | Nahum Sargeant, interim |
| 1787-1792 | Experience Estabrook |
| 1799-1803 | Siloam Short |
| 1804-1819 | David Dickinson |
| 1821-1837 | Dana Clayes |
| 1834 | Edward Cleveland, interim |
| 1840-1865 | Amos Blanchard |
| 1866-1867 | Frank P. Woodbury |
| 1868-1873 | Ephraim E.P. Abbot |
| 1873-1881 | Charles M. Palmer |
| 1882 | William Mellen, interim |
| 1883-1886 | Benjamim A. Dean |
| 1886-1888 | Henry M. Holmes, interim |
| 1888-1892 | George H. French, interim |
| 1893-1900 | Charles F. Robinson |
| 1901-1904 | Amos Judson Bailey |
| 1907-1909 | Harry N. Fifer, interim |
| 1909-1913 | Henry R. McCartney |
| 1914-1939 | Noble O. Bowlby |
| 1939-1943 | Marshall Owen Eck |
| 1945-1946 | Roy B. Chamberlin, Jr., interim |
| 1948-1951 | James C. Glasser |
| 1952-1955 | Norman R. Farnum |
| 1956-1964 | Jack Hemenway |
| 1964-1968 | James H. Link |
| 1969-1979 | Mason Ellison |
| 1980-1986 | Gregory Marshall |
| 1987- | Karen McArthur |

• *Plainfield Community Baptist Church*

The Community Baptist Church has roots in the First Congregational Church of Plainfield. In 1773, Reverend Abraham Carpenter, a "strict Congregationalist" came to Plainfield. Six years later, the town voted to accept Reverend Carpenter as the first settled minister of the town. He preached in the western end of Plainfield until 1790. His church was his own kitchen and other private homes in the winter, and in the summer, the unfinished meeting house in the center of town or the open air. In 1782, there was more than usual attention to religion and several neighboring ministers assisted him. In a few years, Reverend Carpenter was dismissed, and there was no stated preaching west of the middle of the town for the next twelve to fourteen years.

On September 20, 1804, a church of ten members organized the First Congregational Church in West Plainfield. The same day, the church voted a



Plainfield Congregational Church, built in 1839, now the Blow-Me-Down Grange, 1991. Photo by Erich Witzel.

call to Reverend Micajah Porter to settle with them in the work of the ministry. After nine months, Mr. Porter answered their call, and was installed July 16, 1805, in the unfinished meeting house at the center of town. In the following October, Francis Smith and Ebenezer Cole were chosen deacons. This group was the parent congregation of the Plainfield Community Baptist Church. In 1811, the first meeting house in West Plainfield was built at the Plain Cemetery using the frame of the meeting house at center of town. Reverend Porter lived here for twenty-five years, but the people depended on others to preach for four or five years before his death in 1829. After much perseverance, the church began a generation of redefinition. The articles of faith and the covenant recommended by the Union Consociation were adopted, and in 1831, the church adopted the articles of faith and covenant used at Lebanon. Mr. Cook from Deering preached one year, and then Reverend Jacob N. Loomis labored here for two years. Reverend William Hutchinson was installed May 28, 1839, and died April 24, 1842.

During Hutchinson's brief tenure, dramatic change occurred which still marks the village. In the years 1839 and 1840, two meeting houses were built. The church records state that a meeting was held on November 20, 1839, at West Plainfield to debate repairing the old meeting house. It was agreed



Main Street in Plainfield about 1940 with the Community Baptist Church, built in 1840. Courtesy Doris Plummer.

to build a new Congregational church (Blow-Me-Down Grange, 1991).

Thomas and Ruth Stevens deeded a tract of land to the new proprietors of the Union Meeting House in Plainfield for the sum of \$32. The record states that the Union Meeting House was built by Silas Reed in the summer of 1840 at a cost of \$2,318. In the early days the custom was to sell pews in order to raise money to pay for building. A bill of sale exists for one-quarter of a pew for which William D. Colby paid \$10 in 1842. The pew was number 20. This second meeting house was built by the Universalists, Baptists, and Methodists. Within a year or two, several parishioners organized an Episcopal Society. (This is the building which became the Community Baptist Church.) The Union Meeting House was used by several congregations until 1861.

The second church, built about the same time as the Plainfield Community Baptist Church, and of similar architecture, continued as the Plainfield Congregational Church. Reverend Jacob Scales began preaching there in October 1842. The church closed its doors in 1899, and the building was purchased by Blow-Me-Down Grange for its hall.

On March 30, 1861, thirty members of the First Baptist Church of Meriden, who lived in West Plainfield, left that group and formed themselves into a Baptist Church at Plainfield. They were joined by five Baptists who had been

attending the Union Church. The other three denominations using the Union Meeting House had dwindled in numbers so radically that the Baptists were able to negotiate a takeover of the building and land. The group adopted the New Hampshire Articles of Baptist Faith and Covenant. That year the church record book stated: "We have virtually become two bodies having separate meeting houses, separate congregations, separate communions and separate church action." The record further shows that the members from Plainfield decided to devote their full religious attention to the meeting at the Union Meeting House. After the acquisition, the building was called the West Plainfield Baptist Church.

The first deacon chosen by the West Plainfield Baptist Society was Earl Westgate. The Reverends Williams, Miles, and Richardson each served both the Meriden and Plainfield churches. After the departure of Reverend Richardson in 1865, each church had its own ministers. William Johnson (1815-1897), a man of great musical talent, led the church choir for forty years.⁸⁹

Church records list Reverend Richardson as receiving \$4 per Sabbath. This stipend was raised to \$6 in 1865. Two years later, Brother Deming received \$400 per year. In 1877, Brother G. B. Smith was paid \$500. Reverend George Trow was paid \$500 per year throughout his entire pastorate, from 1886 to 1909. In 1921, Reverend William E. Baker's yearly stipend was \$1,000. The pastor was given housing, a wood supply, and possibly a horse, and was expected to grow his own vegetables.

Traditional baptism by immersion took place in Blow-Me-Down Brook.

The 1940s were a difficult time for the church; membership and funds were low. On August 14, 1949, a meeting of the Prudential Committee was held at Jan Nyboer's home and the idea of forming a community church was presented. At the annual meeting in 1950, Clerk Blancha Daniels was instructed to write the twenty-one remaining members to determine their feelings on becoming a community church open to Christians of all denominations. Throughout the spring, Reverend Laura Berthold, accompanied by church members, visited every household in Plainfield to explain the new mission. On April 9, 200 people attended the morning service and 100 attended the evening service. On May 7, 1950, the name was officially changed from the West Plainfield Baptist Church to the Plainfield Community Baptist Church. Within a few months, membership grew to 125. Members voted to continue the affiliation with the American Baptist Churches of New Hampshire whose support had been very beneficial to the church.

The former Daniel Kingsbury house (built as a tavern) was owned by George Westgate until 1875 when it was sold to the church. This house still serves as the parsonage for the Baptist Church next door.

In 1978, the members of the Community Baptist Church voted unanimously to invite the Roman Catholics in the town to use their church for mass. Sharing is not a new concept to the Community Church. Since its erection as a meeting house, it has been home to: Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Baptists, and Unitarians.

• *A list of ministers of Plainfield Plain*⁹⁰

Early Congregational Pastors on the West Side of Town:

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| 1772-1773 | Reverend Isaac Smith |
| 1773-1783 | Reverend Abraham Carpenter |
| 1783-1804 | None |
| 1805-1829 | Reverend Micaiah Porter |
| 1830 | Reverend Mr. Cook |
| 1831-1832 | Reverend Jacob N. Loomis |
| 1833-1837 | No record |
| 1838-1842 | Reverend William Hutchinson |
| 1842-1862 | Reverend Jacob Scales |

West Plainfield Baptist Pastors:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1839-1842 | Reverend Gibbon Williams |
| 1842-1861 | Reverend S. W. Miles |
| 1861 | Brother Frank R. Morse (temporary) |
| 1861-1865 | Reverend D. F. Richardson |
| 1865 | Brother Samuel Bell (temporary) |
| 1866 | Brother D. P. Deming (temporary) |
| 1866 | Brother J. A. Baskwell (temporary) |
| 1867-1872 | Brother D. P. Deming |
| 1872-1875 | Brother E. H. Smith |
| 1875-1877 | Reverend G. F. Paz |
| 1877 | Brother Hubbard (temporary) |
| 1877-1881 | Brother G. B. Smith |
| 1881-1882 | Itinerent ministers |
| 1882 | Reverend Tilton |
| 1882-1886 | Reverend J. D. Graham |
| 1886-1909 | Reverend George C. Trow |
| 1909-1913 | Reverend G. Stewart Campbell |
| 1913-1919 | Reverend O. R. Hunt |
| 1920-1921 | Reverend A. W. Atwood (temporary) |
| 1921-1923 | Reverend William E. Baker |
| 1923-1924 | Reverend A. W. Atwood (temporary) |
| 1924-1942 | Reverend Thomas J. Ingram |
| 1943 | Reverend Marshall Eck (temporary) |
| 1943-1944 | Fred D. Berthold (temporary) |
| 1944 | Reverend Lawrence Vincent (temporary) |
| 1945-1947 | Reverend Herbert Taylor |
| 1947-1948 | Reverend Harold Hanson (temporary) |
| 1948-1949 | Reverend Herbert W. Dickerson |
| 1950-1952 | Reverend Laura B. Berthold |
| 1952-1955 | Reverend Paul C. Mills |
| 1955-1956 | Reverend Laura B. Berthold and Reverend Fred D. Berthold |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1956-1958 | Reverend Edward W. Cantwell |
| 1958-1959 | Reverend Harold Hanson (temporary) |
| | Reverend Fred D. Berthold (temporary) |
| | Oake Winter (temporary) |
| 1964 | Reverend Mark Hull (temporary) |
| 1964-1984 | Reverend Hazel Roper |
| | Student Ministers: |
| | Polly Shamy |
| | Joseph Wadsworth |
| | Kathy Mapstone |
| 1984-1985 | Reverend David Garrecht (Interim Minister) |
| 1985-1988 | Reverend Gordon Umberger |
| 1988 | Reverend Sara Cram (Interim Minister) |
| 1989- | Reverend Suellen Leugers |

• *Singing Hills Christian Fellowship, Inc.*

Singing Hills Christian Fellowship is a nonprofit, nondenominational Christian retreat and conference center. It grew from the gracious gift of land by Mr. and Mrs. Earl King in 1971. Reverend Warren C. Biebel and Marian Biebel were the founders of the ministry. They purchased a separate piece of land for their home and began to build Singing Hills.

Prior to moving to Plainfield, Reverend Biebel was the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Windsor and the Protestant chaplain at the Veterans' Administration Hospital in White River Junction, Vermont. After moving here, he became the pastor of the Meriden Baptist Church for six years. In May 1972, Singing Hills became incorporated in the state of New Hampshire with a board of directors to administer its affairs.

The initial phase of development consisted of clearing land and constructing level recreational fields and roads. Since the organization began with no financial resources, the first work was done with hand tools by volunteers. Churches and other organizations began to use the area for picnics and outdoor events. A pond was constructed to provide swimming. The town recreation program was held at Singing Hills for a number of years. In 1975, volunteers cut timber from the land to construct the main lodge, the first facility.

The first phase of construction was completed in the spring of 1976, and the dedication was held on July 4, 1976. Since then, new buildings make it possible for Singing Hills to house 250 overnight guests.

In keeping with the original goal and philosophy, Singing Hills now ministers to churches, schools, and other nonprofit groups, including the New Hampshire Youth Orchestra, Alcoholics Anonymous, and handicapped camps. More than 1,000 organizations have utilized Singing Hills during the past five years. Today, Singing Hills has a staff of twelve to fifteen workers. Singing Hills is open to individuals and groups for retreats every day of the year but Christmas. Plans are afoot to build an expanded facility.

On May 26, 1990, Reverend Biebel resigned as president and chairman of the board after eighteen years of service. He was replaced by Donald Jordan, a lifelong resident of Plainfield and graduate of Kimball Union Academy. Leif Arvidson, member of the Singing Hills staff, was elected vice president. The board of directors now consists of nineteen members and represents the entire New England area.

• *The Union Church on Methodist Hill*

Although the Union Church stood just across the road from the Methodist Hill schoolhouse in Enfield, it played an important part in the lives of the people who lived in Plainfield. In 1908, Thomas Hills, author of "Two Country Cemeteries in New Hampshire," describes the church as follows:

[The] little church building [was] unused for some years before its removal and its conversion into a dwelling house in Plainfield in 1906...The bible long used in the little church, which is still cared for in a neighboring farm house, has this inscription: "Enfield and Grantham Union Meeting-house. This book is presented, for the use of all religious denominations, who may wish to worship the Supreme Ruler of the Universe in this house, according to the Dictates of their own Consciences, by Daniel Stickney, Jonathan Howe, and Moses Flanders, the last and only surviving Soldiers of the American Revolution now resident in this vicinity. August 17, 1837."

The church was a union of residents of Enfield, Lebanon, and Plainfield, as well as a Union Church used by the Methodist and Free Will Baptist. There were two Methodist churches in Grantham. In the records of the Grantham Village Methodist Church, an entry records the quarterly district meeting of the churches held in the West Enfield church. In a taped interview with May (Fellows) Cole, she states that the church was Free Will Baptist and that her grandfather, John Hall Calif (1806-1902), was the last deacon of the church. He had the care of the communion service and gave it to his granddaughter when the church closed. It is now in the possession of the Meriden Congregational Church.

Mrs. Cole had a vivid memory of the church and described it as painted white with green trim without blinds. There was a steeple with a ball on top, but there was no bell. The interior was painted white. The slip pews had doors on the end and were divided down the center. They were painted brown. The organ and choir were in the back of the church. There was a sofa behind the pulpit. The little church supported its own minister. The last one was Elder Moodey. The parsonage was just south of the cemetery. The church was moved south of the Methodist Hill schoolhouse and converted to a dwelling. It burned about 1915.

Plainfield in the Nineteenth Century

Gilbert Williamson

If a modern observer traveled back in time to Plainfield at the start of the nineteenth century, it would be a trip of surprises. Given today's old houses and occasional fields, one might expect that Plainfield looks much as it did in 1800. Nothing is further from the truth.

In the year 1800, Plainfield had been settled for only thirty-five years. The land had been cleared, and it was a time of growth and prosperity. Americans had only begun their great migration into the prime agricultural lands of the Genesee country and the Midwest. New England still held an eminent place in American agriculture. Plainfield is not blessed with the world's best land, but it is certainly no worse than average in rocky New England.

One of the major changes during the first half of the nineteenth century was in the community structure of Plainfield itself. The charter had required that the town's center of population, meeting house, and school be located near Meeting House Hill at the geographical center of town. A north-south road and an east-west road were to be laid out from this point. Good on paper, this plan failed in reality. Surrounded by steep hills and swampy land, the center of town was isolated and uninhabitable. By 1800, when the settlement of Plainfield was effectively completed, the Meeting House Hill area was one of the most sparsely settled locales in town.

An unfinished meeting house did stand on the south side of Meeting House Hill, more or less where the town fathers had planned. It had been erected there in 1798, following thirty years of debate in town meeting. After siting their meeting house, however, the residents of Plainfield were still unhappy with the location. Nobody wanted to pay for a meeting house that was out in the middle of nowhere, so the frame was moved to the Plainfield Plain graveyard in 1810.¹

It was an inevitable fact of life in New England that villages sprang up in every town. Even an agricultural society required merchants and tradesmen to provide goods and services. In Plainfield's case, it was a foregone conclusion that at least two major population centers would arise because of the barrier of hills that cuts through the middle of town. By 1815, it was clear that Plainfield would have a major village in each of its parishes. But Plainfield Village and Meriden Village grew where they did for two different reasons. Plainfield's location was



View of Mt. Ascutney and Plainfield Village from above Stage Road, before 1900. Courtesy Philip Read Memorial Library.

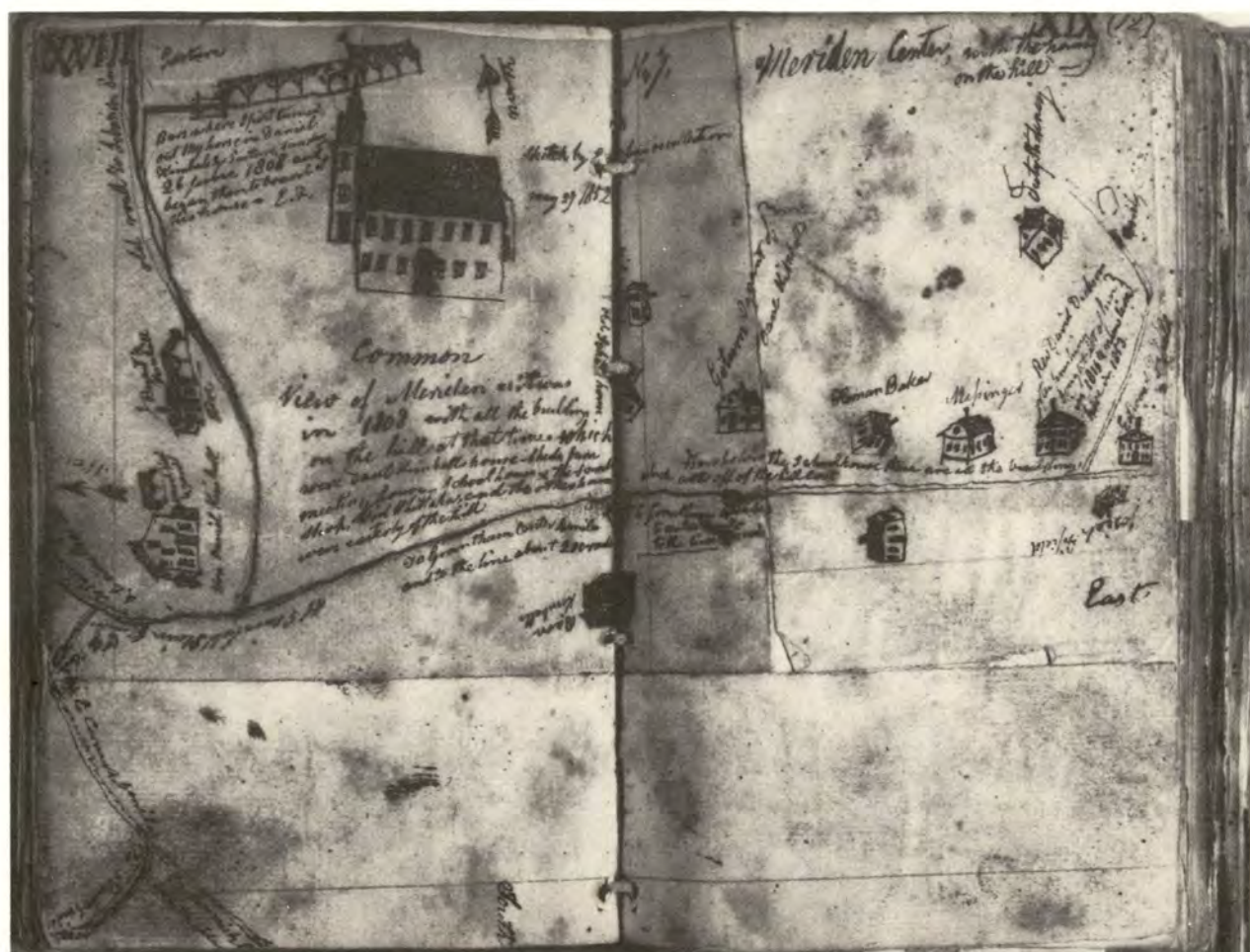
dictated by ample flat land. Meriden's location was decided by Benjamin Kimball's will and later the legacy of his son, Daniel, to establish an academy.

During the eighteenth century, the main road ran from West Lebanon south along the Connecticut River. Called the County Road, it roughly followed the course of Route 12A. The only flat piece of land along the road's Plainfield segment is in the southwest end of town, long known as "The Plain." Back in 1800, the town's main east-west road intersected the County Road at the north end of The Plain. It was near this crossroads that Plainfield Village grew.

In 1802, Asa Kingsbury built a large tavern on the east side of the County Road on a knoll north of the crossroads. Within the next few years, Kingsbury's brother, Daniel, and Silas Read also erected nearby taverns of their own. Aaron Gage built a store and mercantile business, and Calvin Spalding set up a cabinet-making shop. Houses started going up, too. A large number of the fine homes along Plainfield's main street were built around 1820.²

Meriden Village was a different story. At the start of the nineteenth century, the only population center in that part of town was a small cluster of dwellings around Edward Fifield's tavern near the junction of Bean Road and Camp Road on the east side of Blood's Brook.

There is an old map of Meriden and vicinity in 1808 drawn from memory by Dr. Elias Frost nearly a half-century later. Frost's map shows Daniel Kimball's farm, as well as a store operated by Kimball and John Bryant as the only buildings in the vicinity of where Kimball Union Academy and Meriden Village now stand.



Map, Meriden Center in 1808 by Dr. Elias Frost, Meriden, 1853. Courtesy Dartmouth College Archives.

That situation changed when Kimball died in 1817. His bequest secured the future of the Academy that bears his name. As Kimball's Academy grew, the village of Meriden expanded around it to accommodate the faculty and students and to provide local services. Even though the sloping terrain around Kimball's farm was not ideal for building sites, the Academy's presence made the location of Meriden Village a foregone conclusion.

Meriden's main growth spurt occurred between 1828 and 1835. During those eight years, property values in the school district corresponding to Meriden Village expanded from \$42,713 to \$110,659, a 159 percent increase. By contrast, the grand list for the rest of Plainfield rose by 63 percent over the same 8 years.³ In fact, Meriden Village became more of a commercial center than its counterpart on the Plain. By 1850, Meriden boasted three stores, a hotel, a paint shop, two blacksmith's shops, two cabinet shops, and two practicing physicians.



Plainfield Village, 1953. Courtesy Doris Plummer.

The growth of Meriden and Plainfield Villages worsened the political split between the east and west sides of town. This division flared up in the long debate over where to locate the town hall. Each village wanted the meeting place for itself.

The meeting house moved to the Plain in 1811 and was ready for the next town meeting. This arrangement was satisfactory for the citizens of the western half of town, but it left the Meriden faction out in the cold. They had built their own meeting house in 1797. The first of many relocation plans surfaced when it was voted to choose a site near Amos Farnum's farm on the west side of French's Ledges. The plan died within a year. For the residents of the west side of town, the proposed meeting house would have been harder to get to than the old one had been.

After that proposal failed, an informal agreement was reached to hold town meetings in the new west meeting house one year and in the Meriden parish meeting house the next. This arrangement kept the peace until 1841 when the town hall question reared its ugly head again. For three straight years, articles proposing a new town hall were placed on the town meeting warrant. In 1843, a pro-



Meriden Village from Sunset Hill, about 1865. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

posals to raise money for a town hall were actually accepted and then rescinded by the voters. Finally, it was decided to select a committee to choose a site.

The committee settled on a piece of land near where Hell Hollow Road intersects the Stage Road along Blow-Me-Down Brook. At a special Town Meeting on April 29, 1843, it was voted to purchase the plot of land and to relocate the west meeting house (for the third time) there. The issue seemed settled until two days later when a group of influential Meriden citizens led by Thomas Penniman angrily called for another meeting to reconsider the previous vote.⁴ In the face of this formidable opposition, the town selectmen decided to postpone further action until the next regularly scheduled town meeting.

The town did meet again, on March 9, 1844. The result was practically a pitched battle between the Plainfield and Meriden factions. Even before the articles on the Town Meeting warrant were discussed, the entire town took sides in a fight between Ai Read and Elias Frost for Plainfield's seat in the New Hampshire General Court. Read, a prosperous west-side merchant, and Frost, a well-to-do Meriden doctor, fought it out for nine ballots, neither getting the majority needed to win. Finally, the voters got tired of the struggle, declared the seat vacant, and moved on to the main event.

There were twenty articles on the warrant that year. Most dealt with the construction or discontinuance of roads. The entire slate was given a thorough scrutiny. The voters refused to consider eight articles and referred three others back to the selectmen. Article 16, dealing with the town hall, was among

the casualties.⁵ The townspeople were so divided by the controversy that no solution seemed possible.

The issue was settled in 1845. It took four town meetings to get the job done. The town hall was passed over at the regular town meeting, then referred back to the selectmen at the next two. Finally, on October 15, 1845, a cease-fire was reached. As a compromise, there would be two permanent meeting houses: one in Plainfield and one in Meriden. It was a costly solution and one that must have pained every penny-pinching Yankee at the meetings. But the relative peace at subsequent town meetings indicates the solution was a prudent one. The concept of a single town hall might have been a New England standard, but in Plainfield's case, it just was not worth the trouble.

Just as Plainfield was coming to grips with the thorny meeting house issue, another divisive issue entered the political arena. In 1844, a group of Grantham residents living on the western side of Grantham Mountain petitioned the New Hampshire General Court to permit the annexation of their land to Plainfield. This request was based on strong geographic and historic considerations. Back in 1779, the eastern half of Plainfield and the western third of Grantham had joined together for religious purposes to form the Meriden Parish. During the 1790s, a group of Meriden Parish members headed by Plainfield town constable Philip Spalding attempted to form a new town, separate from both Plainfield and Grantham. The proposal was voted down at Plainfield Town Meeting in 1799, and in 1800, town voters sent an agent to the General Court to argue against legislation that would have created a new town from parts of Plainfield and Grantham. The proposal died in committee.

While Plainfield's Meriden residents were apparently willing to bury any separatist desires, the unrest on Grantham's western flank continued. The problem was caused by the looming presence of Grantham Mountain, a long, rocky ridge, 2,400 feet at its highest point, stretching some twenty miles from its southernmost end in Newport to its northern end in Grantham. The ridge was a constant source of annoyance to the Grantham people living near Meriden.

Today, there is no passable road over the mountain between Plainfield and Grantham. Even in the mid 1800s, when that area was more thickly settled, there were only two roads, the Croydon Turnpike and the Grantham Mountain Road. By either route, it was a long five-mile haul, uphill and downhill, to Grantham's population center along the Sugar River. By contrast, it was an easy mile or two to Meriden Village for the Grantham residents west of the mountain. Those residents had already been going to church in Meriden for more than a generation. As Meriden developed into a commercial center during the 1820s and 1830s, it was a matter of convenience for the Grantham people west of the mountain to take their business to Meriden as well. Those ties were cemented by marriage and the expansion of farms across the Plainfield-Grantham town line.

A group of residents from the western side of Grantham restarted the annexation process in 1844 by petitioning the state General Court. The first name

on the petition was that of Charles Gleason (1780–1852), a prominent farmer whose family name is preserved through the Gleason Road and the Gleason Cemetery. In another petition presented to the General Court two years later, Gleason's group expressed their disaffection.

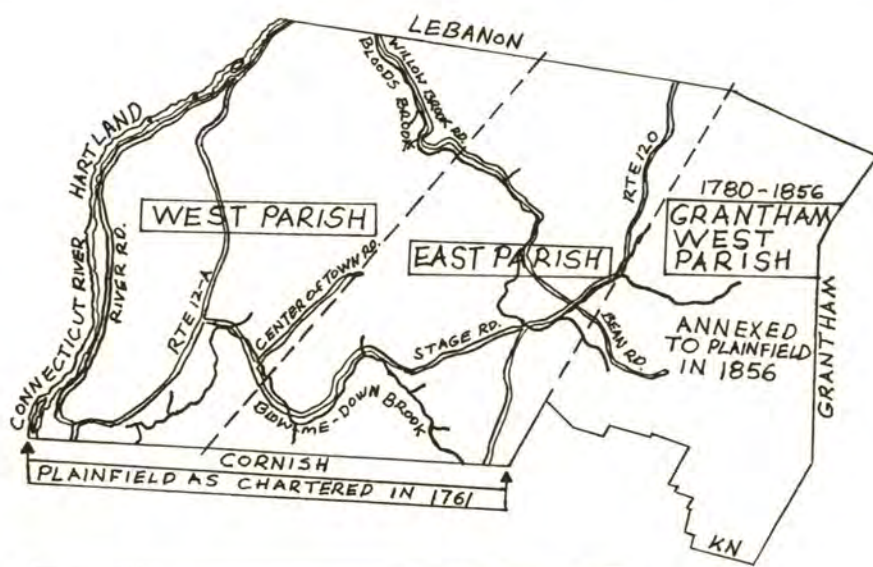
The inhabitants of said town residing on the westerly side of Croydon Mountain...have ever been, and still are, greatly incommoded in attending town meetings, in sending to and from the Post Office in said town [Grantham] and in much other business unavoidably connected with the residence of the inhabitants on said west side, and that they might be much better accommodated in their business transactions by being annexed to the adjoining town of Plainfield . . .⁶

Gleason's group did have some precedent on its side. A sizeable section of Croydon had been annexed to Cornish in 1819 because of the impassibility of Croydon Mountain to the south, and several farms were passed from Grantham to Cornish in 1844 for the same reason. However, Gleason's group was proposing to lop off nearly one-third of the town of Grantham. Grantham's town officials were not in a giving mood and most Plainfield voters were not in a receiving mood, either. The Grantham annexation proposal was another unwelcomed ingredient to settling the meeting house controversy.

When the annexation issue was brought up at a special Town Meeting in November 1844, Plainfield voters rejected the proposal, 117 to 76. The decisive negative votes came from the western half of Plainfield where the annexation was viewed as a threat to the tenuous balance of political power in town. Plainfield's opposition, combined with the protests of Grantham town officials, led the state legislature to table the annexation proposal in 1844 and 1846. Charles Gleason was in his grave by the time the question came up in 1856. By then, circumstances had changed dramatically. With sheep farming in a ten-year decline, property values on the west side of the Grantham range were falling rapidly. When the annexation question was presented before the 1856 legislature, Grantham was willing to get rid of its troublesome western residents in exchange for a newly-created seat on the General Court.

In the meantime, Plainfield's warring political factions had reached a truce. Without even polling the voters on the question, Plainfield's selectmen sent a statement to the legislature, stating in part: ". . . we are in the full belief that said petitioners ask nothing unreasonable, and wish that their prayers may be granted—and we are of the opinion that Plainfield would not oppose in the least the wish of the petitioners."⁷ The political winds had indeed changed. On July 12, 1856, the legislature passed an act annexing the portion of Grantham west of the mountain to Plainfield.

In the 1860 census, it appears that the annexed portion of Grantham added approximately 250 residents and 1,200 sheep to Plainfield's tax lists.⁸



Map, annexation of Grantham in 1856 by Kenneth Norwalk, 1991.

On the negative side, three of the four school districts transferred from Grantham to Plainfield suffered from deteriorating buildings and declining enrollments, according to the district reports published in the years following the annexation. The brief revival of the woolen industry between 1856 and 1871 temporarily halted the economic decline of the sheep farms on the rocky slopes of Grantham Mountain. When Austin Corbin started buying land for his game preserve in the 1880s, there was an abundance of willing sellers. The decline proved so severe that the lands involved in the annexation were virtually depopulated by the end of the century.

The hard times were felt by all in Plainfield, but the town had enjoyed a long spell of prosperity. Sheep and wool kept the cash flowing through Plainfield's economy during most of the 1800s. Although farmers continued to grow large quantities of corn and grain, as they had in the past, the introduction of Spanish Merino sheep to New England in 1810 made sheep raising the dominant agricultural industry. The subsequent breakthroughs in New England's textile industry brought increased demand for wool and woolen products. Since the western range lands had not yet been settled, New England sheep farmers had very little competition.

Plainfield's farmers had taken to sheep enthusiastically. In 1829, sheep were first included in the tax inventory list. Except for poultry, most livestock was taxable during the 1800s. Plainfield shepherds counted about 1,150 sheep. In 1835, just six years later, the sheep count was up to 10,000. The number fluctuated between 10,000 and 13,000 until 1847 when wool prices began their decade-long decline.⁹



Sheep on Daniels farm, Freeman Hill, about 1910. Courtesy Mary Cassedy.

The rise and fall of sheep farming had a profound effect on the town's social and economic structure. In early Plainfield, as in the rest of New England, the major crops were oats, wheat, and corn, which were labor intensive. The introduction of reapers, combines, and tractors was still at least a half-century in the future. However, sheep farming represented a drastic departure from the past. It required large acreage for pasturing and hay production, but little labor was needed except at wool-shearing time. The result was the rise of a landed gentry comprised of families whose names are still etched on every map of Plainfield: Farnum Road, Penniman Hill, and Daniels Cemetery.

The king of Plainfield's sheep farmers was Merrit Farnum (1798–1854), who kept 600 sheep on his 700-acre spread on the west side of French's Ledges. Farnum might have had the most sheep, but his brother-in-law, Dimick Baker (1793–1876), owned more land: 900 acres along Blood's Brook just northwest of Meriden Village. According to the 1850 census, his farm produced 1,000 bushels of potatoes, 600 pounds of cheese, 500 pounds of butter, and still had room for 480 sheep to graze.¹⁰

Baker and Farnum were Plainfield's second and third wealthiest landowners. According to the 1850 census, Thomas Penniman (who had intervened in the town hall dispute) enjoyed a net worth, in land, machinery and livestock, of \$14,452. Not incidentally, Penniman was Merrit Farnum's uncle.

Farnum died in 1852 and Penniman passed away two years later, but their wealth stayed in the family. The 1870 census shows Farnum's son, Henry C. (1825–1906), as Plainfield's wealthiest citizen at \$12,300. Meanwhile, Penniman's three sons: Thomas T., Merrit F., and Ralston, all owned



Amos Farnum house, built in the 1780s on Farnum Road, about 1930. Merrit Farnum operated a large sheep farm here during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The house burned in the early 1930s. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

property worth more than \$10,000,¹¹ approximately the equivalent of more than a half-million dollars in today's currency.

Merrit F. Penniman held the distinction of owning the largest sheep herd ever assembled in Plainfield. The 1860 town tax inventory lists him as owning 1,265 sheep,¹² but Penniman was unlucky in business. Two years later, he decided to sell his herd and to move across the river to Hartland, Vermont. His timing was particularly bad. Had he held on another year, he would have cashed in on the surge in wool prices brought on by the Civil War.

The war years brought renewed prosperity to Plainfield's sagging agricultural economy. Unprecedented quantities of home-grown grain and beef were needed to provision the huge Union armies. The sudden need for hundreds of thousands of uniforms sent wool prices soaring. Plainfield followed the national trend, as the town's sheep population grew from 9,000 in 1861 to 13,000 in 1865.

Prosperity was short-lived. As the nation's railroad network expanded rapidly westward in the decade following the Civil War, the range lands became easily accessible. Large volumes of wool from the West were shipped eastward to New England mills. Beginning in 1867, wool prices went into another major decline, and the end result was that New England's sheep farmers were slowly squeezed out of business. While local industries such as Carter and Rogers Woolens in Lebanon and Monadnock Mills in Claremont continued to provide a limited market for Plainfield farmers, these outlets also began to dry up. Beginning

in 1884, Plainfield's sheep herd declined in thirteen of the next fourteen years. By 1897, there were only 1,200 sheep left in town, the same number Merrit Penniman had pastured on one farm 37 years earlier! Among the big sheep farmers, only Henry C. Farnum held on until the bitter end. When Farnum died in 1906, his flock was sold off, erasing the final reminder of the sheep-raising era.¹³

With sheep fading from the scene, Plainfield farmers cast about for alternative cash crops. Curtis F. Lewin (1850–1906) built a modest fortune raising chickens and hogs on the south end of Prospect Hill near Plainfield Village. The Penniman brothers, Ralston H., and Thomas T., were able to maintain their family's economic status by switching to dairy farming and selling to the nearby creamery in Cornish Flat. Darius N. Moulton (1838–1921) made a respectable living raising beef cattle on his farm just south of Meriden Village. Moulton's rise to the top of the town tax list was due more to his entrepreneurial skills as a livestock buyer for the Boston meat market than to his agricultural pursuits.¹⁴

William Brocklebank (1859–1906) was another success story. He grew up on the town poor farm where his father Napoleon was a perpetual resident. Brocklebank managed to save \$100 by the time he was twenty-six and then capitalized on falling land prices. He bought 135 acres on Methodist Hill and started raising beef and dairy cattle.¹⁵ At age 38, Brocklebank owned 425 acres and was reckoned as one of the wealthiest men on the town tax list. He may have worked himself into an early grave, however, as he died at the age of forty-seven.

Brocklebank and Moulton were exceptions to the rule for their generation. Plainfield offered limited opportunities for upward mobility in the post-Civil War era. Cattle raising was a limited alternative to sheep since cows required better pasture land and consumed more feed grain. As a result, hundreds of hillside acres suitable only for sheep pasture were allowed to slip back into forest. Farms that had been prosperous a generation earlier were totally abandoned. The slopes of Grantham and Croydon Mountains in the east, Morgan Hill to the north, and Meeting House Hill in the center of town all began to assume a wild and deserted look.

It was during this time that the larger landholders began selling or dividing their farms. By 1880, Frank D. Baker had sold 540 of the 900 acres he had inherited from his grandfather Dimick. The Penniman domain was divided among numerous cousins and in-laws, an action unthinkable during the sheep-raising boom. The downward trend was reflected in both the town's census reports and the grand lists. Plainfield's population fell from a high of 1,620 in 1860 to 1,114 in 1900, and the total value of property dropped from \$712,527 in 1870 to \$476,212 in 1896.¹⁶ Simply put, Plainfield lost one-third of its people and one-third of its property value in a span of forty years.

Ironically, this downward trend may have been good news for the town's poorer folk. In the first half of the nineteenth century, land had been scarce and land prices were out of reach for the common dollar-a-day laborer. When the landed gentry began to disperse their farms after the Civil War, it gave the



Mill Hollow, Meriden, looking north, about 1885. The outbuilding behind the barn in the foreground was the Elder Jonathan Cram house. It was moved from the foot of Cram Hill by Gus Wilder. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

rural poor a chance to buy a few acres of their own.

By any measure, advancement from common laborer to small land owner was a backbreaking chore. It was a hard life right from the beginning. A laborer had several disadvantages, including the lack of an inheritance. If he were fortunate enough to survive the multitude of childhood diseases that afflicted particularly the poorer families, the laborer's son was hired out to a more prosperous neighbor at the age of twelve or thirteen. The money earned from his work went to supply his parents with need for cash.

At age twenty-one, the laborer earned the right to vote, but the privilege of property ownership was a long way off. At a time when the large landholders were cutting back their farming operations, work was becoming harder to find in rural areas. For instance, Henry C. Farnum paid just \$230 in wages during 1880 compared with \$500 just ten years earlier.¹⁷ Farnum's peers showed a similar tendency toward hiring less outside help. As a result, a laborer had to jump at every work opportunity that came along, even if it meant chopping wood for a week or painting a house for a day. He also had to pinch every penny and, if possible, put off thoughts of having a family until later in life. If he followed this path (and many did not), a laborer could eventually own a few acres and a house with a mortgage.

George Sweet was one who worked his way out of poverty. His father, Caleb, was a lifelong laborer whose abundant offspring showed every indication of following the same calling. George, born in 1830, was listed as a common laborer in the Plainfield census reports of 1860 and 1870. By 1880, however, he had saved up enough to buy a house and fifteen acres just south of Meriden Village. His major source of income that year came from the production of 300

pounds of butter and 150 pounds of cheese.¹⁸ The net value of his farm and livestock was \$525, certainly a far cry from the riches of the neighboring Pennimans. However, at age fifty, George Sweet had finally arrived at a place that he could call his own.

Sweet's labors were typical of what it took to survive in Plainfield during the latter part of the nineteenth century. During the sheep raising era, money had been relatively easy to come by. As the century progressed, every resident, from the largest landowners to the poorest laborers, had to work harder just to keep ahead. Agriculture became more a source of subsistence rather than a way of profit: just the reverse of Plainfield's first century.

These diminishing expectations had long-range impact. Earlier in the century, many of Plainfield's young people had left town to seek their fortunes on cheap western land. After the Civil War, they deserted in droves to New England's larger cities and towns. Many of the better-educated ones took their Kimball Union Academy diplomas and never looked back. The decline was reflected in Plainfield's dwindling population; the town lost nearly half its population between 1860 and 1930.

The ones who remained may have been poorer on the whole than their predecessors, but there was little despair. The diary kept by East Plainfield's Jason Johnston between 1864 and 1910 reveals a man who used considerable ingenuity and determination to make ends meet.¹⁹

Johnston owned a 120-acre farm on the Lebanon border. He supplemented his farm produce by selling firewood, doing plastering and carpentry, plus a little masonry on the side. One of the diary's more sobering entries describes Johnston's seventy-year-old father driving sheep to Orford in the middle of a storm. He was sick the following week. Suffering wet, cold, and misery were accepted as facts of life. At the same time, Johnston went to a neighbor's taffy pull every Valentine's Day and enjoyed a big turkey dinner every Thanksgiving.

In many respects, Johnston's lifestyle would have been much the same had he lived in the more prosperous times at the start of the century. However, Plainfielders in the first half of the century were more confident and aggressive. Their town meetings were filled with debate and controversy year after year.

The second half of the century carried a more subdued mood. Instead of the twenty or so issues on the 1844 town warning, there were usually only five or six items for debate at later town meetings, and little argument followed over the questions on the agenda. Previously, the selectmen had deferred to the townspeople's wishes. Now the tide had turned. People struggled too hard to maintain their livelihoods to permit expending energy over town affairs.

The early Plainfield residents had been builders and shapers. The generation that took over after the Civil War found itself waging battle to maintain the *status quo*. In 1800, Plainfield was on the leading edge of the wave of a rapidly expanding national economy. The economy rolled on as the nineteenth century came to an end, but the wave of expansion had passed Plainfield by. The town's fortunes would rise again, but agriculture would not lead the way.



Harvey D. Plummer of Plainfield, Co. H, First New Hampshire Regiment of Heavy Artillery, 1864. He died on October 30, 1922, aged eighty-one years. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Plainfield and the American Civil War

Reverend Harold L. Jones, Jr.

Following the election of Abraham Lincoln in November 1860, the states of the deep south began to secede from the Union. On February 8, 1861, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, Texas, and South Carolina declared their independence and formed a new "country" known as the Confederate States of America (CSA). By April, South Carolina demanded that the federal government remove its troops and arms from an obscure coastal fortress in Charleston Harbor. On April 12, 1861, Fort Sumter was fired upon and forced to surrender to the forces of the provisional government of the CSA. Two days after the surrender of Sumter, Lincoln called upon the states to supply 75,000 troops to protect Washington, D.C., from armed aggression and to suppress the rebellion. This call for troops consolidated the secessionist sentiment in Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas with the result that they also seceded and joined with the Confederate States.

There was confidence throughout the North that the rebellion would be short-lived. The President's call for troops amounted to a call to the states for their militias. New Hampshire's military traces its roots to the tradition of the citizen soldier of the eighteenth century. Most militia organizations were poorly equipped, poorly trained, and totally unprepared to engage in a military campaign of any scope. Under the initial call, New Hampshire supplied one regiment of militia numbering 816 men. Among these brave militiamen was Alonzo Chapman of Plainfield. The First New Hampshire Infantry saw little action as a three-months regiment and was mustered out of duty in August of 1861. The unit did promote the cause of the Union and protected the nation's capitol. (See Appendix C for a list of Plainfield soldiers who served in the Civil War.)

Following the initial call for manpower, the state raised another infantry regiment. These men enlisted for three years. The Second New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry included two men who were residents, at the time, of Plainfield: John Buntin, a native of Kilmarnock, Scotland, and Charles Howard, originally from Grantham. Both men were just twenty-one years old. Within a short period of time, these two and others like them learned the cruel lessons of war. Buntin served with the regiment for another year and then deserted following the disastrous defeat at Second Bull Run in August 1862. Charles

Howard remained with the regiment until they marched north in late June-early July of 1863 to intercept the Confederate Army at Gettysburg. Howard was severely wounded at Gettysburg and died on July 18, 1863.

On September 13, 1861, a special notice appeared in the *Granite State Free Press*, published in Lebanon. Twelve men from Plainfield answered the call to join the Fifth New Hampshire, ten of them served in Company C. The notice read:

FALL INTO LINE FOR THE UNION—5th REGIMENT NH VOLUNTEERS commanded by Col. Edward Cross of Lancaster, NH—The 5th will be a regiment of light infantry armed and equipped like United States troops and directed by bugle call, drill in bayonet exercises, excellent equipment, rifled muskets. Subscriber recruiting a company of 100 men. Each soldier to be allowed: \$10.00 state bounty, \$13.00 pay per month, \$3.00 for clothes, 30 cents per day for rations, plus \$100.00 bounty from U. S. Government. Samuel P. Adams—recruiting agent.

However, as the war dragged into the summer of 1862, enthusiasm for enlistment subsided. Most regiments were now full. It seemed that the great decisive blow would now fall on Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy. Instead, a series of humiliating defeats followed beginning on the Peninsula southeast of Richmond and ending at Fredericksburg in December 1862. The recruiting stations reopened.

Plainfield men continued to enlist. As new regiments were raised to fill shortages at the front, Plainfielders marched off to war. In July 1862, nineteen men joined the Ninth New Hampshire; when the Fourteenth New Hampshire was raised, ten from Plainfield enlisted. By September 1862, the need was even more pressing. Another twenty-three men went off to war with the Sixteenth New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry.

One of those men who enlisted was Charles Woodward who was born in Plainfield on August 25, 1842. While working in Plainfield on a farm owned by Abraham Spencer, a farm that Woodward would later own, he enlisted in Company I, Fourteenth New Hampshire Volunteers on August 28, 1862, for three years.¹ Woodward was given a \$1 bounty for enlisting and then mustered into the state service where he received training initially in Claremont and later at the state campground in Concord.² The regiment was mustered into the service of the federal government on September 23 and 24 and left for Washington, D.C., on October 18.

Woodward's account of army camp life during the fall of 1862-63 is of interest. He wrote:

For some reason our first camp was named Adder Hill. We were on high ground and could look across the river into the state of Virginia. We could hear the baying of bloodhounds at night.

The first Sunday we were there, there was what we thought to be a hard battle fought. It lasted about an hour or so. Our officers ordered us to keep out of sight and to be quiet—they seemed to be more frightened than the men were. We weren't allowed to have any fires that night for fear that the Rebs would drop a few bombs into our camp. Now we had just begun to know what war really was. We had to turn in without fires to keep us warm or without our supper. It was then the first of November. The next day it began to rain and as the tents leaked we were soon soaked through. With no fire and nothing to eat, we were in pretty bad shape; the ground became muddy and stuck to us like a brother.³

By the autumn of 1863, the calls by the government for more men had proved fruitless. The United States Congress had passed legislation to insure conscripts for the army either by volunteer or draft. The most hated law passed during the war was the Enrollment Act of 1863.⁴ This law provided for the drafting of men to fill requirements for troop strength. Riots in New York City broke out in protest of this law, and troops were sent to keep the peace and protect those involved with draft.

On October 17, 1863, President Lincoln called for 300,000 volunteers. The quota assigned to New Hampshire was 3,768 troops. If these men were not raised by the fifth of January 1864, a draft would be ordered to fill the deficiency. There was one draft board for each congressional district, each board consisting of three officers: district provost marshal, surgeon, and commissioner.⁵ A list was drawn up of eligible men between the ages of twenty and forty-five.⁶ There were four calls for troops under this Act: summer 1863, spring 1864, fall 1864, spring 1865.

There were three ways to evade the draft. A provision in the law, Section 13, allowed a draftee to avoid the draft by paying \$300 to the government. Public hostility led to the repeal of this section in July 1864.⁷ A second method was also provided by the law: the draftee could provide a substitute to serve in his place. The draftee paid the commutation fee to the substitute and thus bought his replacement. After the repeal of commutation, the prices paid for substitutes went much higher.

Few towns were able to fill their quotas. Special town meetings were called, and substantial sums of money were voted as incentives for men to enlist. With the call to Plainfield to supply twenty-one more men, the town raised \$4,158 in bounty money. However, there were still those who hired substitutes by paying the \$300 fee. In October 1863, four men hired substitutes: Francis W. Stickney, who had already served a three-month term in state service, hired a Canadian by the name of Leon Paul; Almond French was replaced by Bostonian Samuel Jordan; Warren Westgate hired a substitute from Ireland by the name of James Miller; and Martin Gove paid Joseph Shepard to serve in his place. In all, thirty

men from town paid the commutation fee for someone else to fill their shoes.

During 1864, the government called upon Plainfield to supply fifty-nine more men. Also at this time, the legislature passed laws detailing the amount of money the town could offer for bounty: \$100 for a one-year recruit, \$200 for two-year, and \$300 for a three-year recruit. Well over \$40,000 was expended by the town to insure compliance with the calls for soldiers.

The cost to the community was counted in more than dollars and cents. The cost in human life and suffering was great. Four young Plainfield residents lost their lives as the results of wounds. Charles Howard died at Gettysburg. Joseph Everest died from wounds received at the Battle of Antietam. Norman B. Read, serving with the Tenth Vermont Infantry, died as a prisoner of war following his capture at the Battle of Cedar Creek in 1864. Elmer Bragg, who had attended Kimball Union Academy before the war, was wounded at Spottsylvania and taken captive. He died of his wounds after returning to Union lines. Sixteen of the boys who had gone off to fight "Johnny Reb" instead died from disease: Ralph Brown, William Morgan, Alonzo Watson, Charles Duncan, Edmund Gallup, Carlos George, Daniel Hadley, Charles Powers, John Barrett, Reuben Benway, Benjamin Chapman, Ransom Brocklebank, Joseph Cutler, Spencer Dowse, Ira Johnson, Luther Stone, and Samuel Rutherford. Charles Lewis, another Plainfield native serving with the Nineteenth Massachusetts Infantry, was captured and later died at Andersonville, Georgia.

Eleven gallant soldiers from this town were wounded. Many had to leave the army due to wounds. Another twenty-two were discharged due to disability, and four of these died at home before the war was over.

The stunning reality of warfare is often a shocking education in violence and cruelty. In the early evening hours of September 14, 1862, twenty-one Plainfield men, nineteen of them in Company E of the Ninth New Hampshire Volunteers, were bivouacked near Sharpsburg, Maryland. In Company E, there were seven young men who had attended Kimball Union Academy.⁸ The Battle of Antietam was the first action that the Ninth New Hampshire had seen. Several of the recruits had never loaded their rifled muskets. Oscar Robinson, who would rise to the rank of captain before the war was over, wrote how after loading their Windsor muskets, "Some of them having loaded discharged them into the ground which so enraged Col. Fellows that he whispers some pretty hard words."⁹ Another correspondent in the company, Elmer Bragg, detailed the action as the Ninth moved into position: "The Captain gave us orders to throw off everything and fight like men, and we did. I felt no kind of fear through it all. I was as calm as if I was out upon a peaceful drill."¹⁰ Robinson, however, reported that it had not been a peaceful jaunt in the countryside, as he wrote: "Strange sights meet my eyes this morning as I walk over the battlefield of yesterday. The trees are shivered rent and grazed by missiles of all descriptions...the number of rebel dead shows that they fought desperately. In one place, I noticed eighteen literally piled upon each other, the whole occupying less than a square rod of ground."¹¹



Colonel Samuel Duncan of Meriden, about 1864. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

A prominent citizen of Meriden, Samuel A. Duncan, a graduate of Kimball Union Academy and Dartmouth Class of 1858, was appointed major of the Fourteenth New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry. Duncan, who was an extraordinarily capable man, was later appointed colonel of the Fourth United States Colored Infantry on September 16, 1863. He was wounded while leading his regiment against enemy breastworks outside Richmond in September 1864. Col. Duncan was breveted to the rank of brigadier general on October 28, 1864, for the gallant and meritorious services in the attack upon the enemy's works at Spring Hill, Virginia.¹² He served in various staff positions before mustering out of the service in 1866. He died in New York City on October 18, 1895, a prominent patent attorney.

Plainfield sent a number of doctors and a chaplain off to war. Some were more trained than others. Dr. Charles C. Beckley was a graduate of Dartmouth College, class of 1854. He was administering to the needs of the town when he joined the Fourth New Hampshire Volunteers in October 1863 and was commissioned as the assistant surgeon. He served six months before mustering out of the regiment and returning home. He died in Plainfield, February 18, 1886.¹³

Another Dartmouth graduate, Hiram Dow, class of 1835 Dartmouth Medical College, enlisted in Company G, Sixth New Hampshire Regiment in September 1861. Dr. Dow served as an enlisted man until he was discharged at New Berne, North Carolina. He returned to Plainfield where he died October 24, 1873.¹⁴

Willard C. Kempton enlisted as a young man in 1862 and was appointed hospital steward. He was later commissioned as assistant surgeon in the Seventh United States Colored Heavy Artillery, October 24, 1864, and as assistant surgeon in the Second New Hampshire Infantry, August 26, 1865. Kempton was later appointed acting assistant surgeon U. S. Army and was medical officer of the post at Lynchburg, Virginia. However, he did not receive his Dartmouth diploma until 1872 when he graduated from the Medical College.¹⁵

The Reverend Elihu T. Rowe, Dartmouth class of 1840, served as chaplain of the Fourteenth New Hampshire Volunteers from October 3, 1862, until July 20, 1863. Reverend Rowe died in Auburndale, Massachusetts, March 21, 1867.¹⁶

Many men returned home to Plainfield and Meriden when the war ended, but their lives had been changed forever by the experiences of their service. As industrialization moved in, a few of the veterans moved west to the new frontier. The Ebenezer Hoisington family moved to Colorado, Franklin Burnham to Minnesota, John French to Kansas. However, most of the men returned to the green hills and fields of New Hampshire content to live out their lives in peace and to never forget the great adventure they had faced in the war. George W. Doyle, who had gone to Vermont to enlist in the Fifth Vermont Infantry, was the last Civil War veteran to reside in Plainfield. He died in 1938.

Transportation

Robert C. Drye
Kathryn F. MacLeay
Nancy Norwalk
Edmund Wright

Canal

Although Plainfield never fell victim to the canal fever that gripped so many American towns at the turn of the nineteenth century, it did have its own canal for about fifty years. The locks and dam at Sumner Falls were chartered in 1794 by Vermont and in 1796 by New Hampshire. The Vermont act incorporated the "Company for rendering Connecticut River navigable by Water—Quechee Falls." Perez Gallup of Hartland, a descendent of a Plainfield family, was given the right to charge eighteen pence per ton of freight. The New Hampshire act allowed "For each boat loaded or not loaded, five cents per ton according to the weight of goods it will carry; for every ton of goods, wares and merchandise not exceeding five tons, ten cents; for every additional ton above five, six cents; and each thousand of clapboards eight cents; shingles, two cents; boards, twelve cents; and each ton of timber, six cents."

Control of the canal and its dam eventually passed into the hands of merchant David Sumner of Hartland, who built a sizable lumber mill on the site. The dam, locks, and mill were all washed away in 1856. An attempt by the Newton brothers of Holyoke, Massachusetts, to rebuild the dam in 1881 was thwarted by an injunction by the Ottauquechee Woolen Company, which was concerned that a change in the water level would damage their business. By the time the injunction was lifted, the Newtons had lost interest in the Sumner Falls site.¹

Ferries

Three ferries once plied the Connecticut River between Plainfield and Hartland. The northernmost was begun sometime after April 20, 1779, by Joseph Kimball who held an exclusive right to operate the ferry until 1786. The ferry ran from the north end of the current Edgewater Farm to a point just below



Lower ferry across the Connecticut River at the old Woodward house, 1900.
Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

the mouth of the Ottauquechee on the Vermont side. The access road to the ferry landing is still visible on River Road.

By 1890, the ferry had been moved to the south end of the field (Colby Meadow) near Pierce Road. Like most New England river ferries, it was kept on course by a cable strung between the banks and poled across. Blancha Daniels explained the operation:

There was a cable stretched across the river from high up in two trees, one on each side....of the trees was sort of a trolley arrangement on this cable. That consisted of a beam with a wheel at each end. From one end, a rope was attached to the front of the north side of the boat and another rope from the other end to the rear of the north side of the boat. By means of a windlass, these ropes could be wound up or let out. The front end of the boat would be headed slightly upstream by winding up the rope at the west end. The force of the current against the north side would be resolved into two components, one tending to push the boat forward and this other simply exerting pressure against the boat. As the boat reached the other side of the river, the front rope would be let out and the boat would straighten and its momentum would carry it to the shore. Long poles would sometimes be used to assist in moving the boat. The boat moved very slowly.

The last owner, Doc Melbourne of Hartland, bought it in 1906. A few years later, he forgot to beach the boat before the river froze, and the ice carried it away the following spring.

Jonathan Chase of Cornish was granted a charter in 1784 to operate a ferry across the river between what is now Bridge Street in Hartland and the foot of Ferry Hill (Stevens Meadow) in Plainfield. Benjamin Stevens was the recorded owner in 1817. David Sumner replaced the ferry with a bridge across Hart Island in 1821. A second bridge was erected in 1841 to replace the bridge lost in a spring washout. The second bridge lasted until 1859 when it followed its predecessor down the river.

After the destruction of the second bridge, Sumner operated a cable ferry near the bridge site at the southern end of River Road. The last recorded owner was Stephen Woodward. His daughter, Lena Kovalski, operated it for him in 1903. In 1904, the boat was lost in the spring floods and was not replaced.

George Austin had his own ferry. He taught school in Hartland and daily pulled himself across the river in a basket attached to a cable.²

Roads and Bridges

Transportation to and from southern New England was an important consideration of the early settlers. The Connecticut River has always been the most important thoroughfare. The Native Americans who seasonally traveled the Upper Valley also used the Connecticut River as a natural route.

The first major road to the Upper Valley paralleled the Connecticut River on its eastern side. Following an earlier Indian trail, it was known as the Great Road. However, it was not so great by modern standards. A narrow path through the woods above Charlestown, the path was improved and widened for wagons about 1769.

When settlers began to arrive in the Plainfield area in the 1760s, they probably came by the river. The men traveled the river in the summer to prepare their homesites and to return for the harvest season. Often the men would make the long trip up the river and back home for two or three summers. When the time came to move permanently, the settler and his family journeyed the frozen Connecticut River in winter or came up in large log canoes in the spring. Transportation by water proved easier than by road.³

The first mention of a road in Plainfield is in the minutes of the Plainfield proprietors of March 10, 1767, which was held at Joseph Kimball's house in the eastern end of town. It was voted that "Ye North and South County Road through the town be where it laid out by our Committee (viz. John Stevens, Thomas Gallup, and Joshua Dunlap)." This path was probably part of the Great Road that ran through the west side of the town.

According to Vernon Hood, "the first roads were little more than paths through the forest and at best were little more than bridle paths between the fallen trees and rocks."⁴ The first road in town was probably the one from Charlestown

to Lebanon cleared in 1763 by residents of Hanover, Norwich, Lebanon, and Lyme. It extended the Great Road and encouraged settlement. Hood maintains that the present County Road is part of the Great Road. A section of Route 12A also follows the Great Road down to the Cornish town line.

At this same March 10, 1767, meeting of the proprietors, it was voted that "ye Selectmen be a Committee to lay out the Roads in ye Town where they be thought most needfull." Again, the exact location of these early roads is unknown, but Center-of-Town Road and Plummer-Hedgehog Road were close to these original paths since they approached the central part of town which the charter mandated for settlement. According to Hood "a road was laid out to be four rods wide when the plans for the proposed first village were drawn in 1769."⁵ The first mill of the town was built at about that time (1768) in Mill Village which was then at the bottom of Center-of-Town Road.

In 1771, the proprietors decided to build a bridge across Beaver Brook, and on April 8, they accepted three more roads as town roads.⁶ One of these roads, which ran from the meeting house lot on Center-of-Town Road to Sumner's Falls, was abandoned in 1802. Traces are still visible.

By the mid-1770s, the rapidly growing town had a number of roads, and it was the duty of the residents of the town to care for them. This requirement was known as the "road tax," and lists were made of those who had not worked to pay off this tax. The town annually chose four surveyors and was divided into four highway districts. Since houses were built on scattered lots throughout the town, new residents submitted to the selectmen to have their property connected to the road system.

The Meriden Covered Bridge over Blood's Brook was constructed in 1880 by James F. Tasker of Cornish, builder of the Cornish-Windsor Bridge. On November 27, 1880, George J. French signed a note in the amount of \$465 plus interest for Tasker. Town records show that Mr. French paid Levi H. Sanderson the sum of \$220 on December 18, 1880, "for building bridge abutments near William Moore's Mill." On February 23, 1881, the town reimbursed Mr. French \$220 plus seventy-nine cents interest. The total cost to the town for the covered bridge job was \$692.75. The bridge replaced at least two previous structures.

The late Cyrus Barton of Cornish, who was a young man at the time, worked on the construction crew. He told Plainfield town clerk, Howard Zea, that:

the timber for the bridge was cut in the Green Mountain district of Claremont. After it was sawn, Mr. Tasker framed the bridge on land owned by the town of Cornish, near the Cornish Town Hall. The timbers were sized and cut to fit in the same manner that buildings were framed. It was then taken to the site in Meriden and erected by Thanksgiving time, a snowy, cold day. Its approximate dimensions are length over all, 85 feet; roadway, 80 feet; width outside, 16 feet; roadway, 14 feet.



Meriden Covered Bridge, about 1885. The sawmill is on the left; the grist mill to the right. Later, Gene Beers, road agent, sawed off the top of the siding to save the expense of snowing the bridge for sleigh and sled traffic. Courtesy Dorothy McNamara.

The bridge has been replanked on several occasions. In 1935, the selectmen with the advice of the Finance Committee, purchased sheet iron roofing to re-cover the roof of the bridge. The "Old Maids" and Mr. Bundy protested putting on a "tin roof," and the metal roofing was returned for "20 M shingles @ \$4.85 per M."

On August 13, 1955, Hurricane Carol nearly finished the days of the covered bridge. The dam at the Carlson Place (Lafayette Noda, 1991), east of Meriden, washed out, and the flood water severely damaged the westerly abutment. The bridge was closed to traffic for several weeks until repairs were made.

At the annual Town Meeting, March 13, 1956, Article 13 of the warrant: "To see what action, if any, the town will vote to take in regard to the covered bridge in Meriden, and to see what sum of money the town will vote to raise and appropriate for such purpose." The record of the vote was, "Moved and seconded that the town appropriate \$1,000.00 and that the selectmen be authorized to execute, issue and sell serial notes or bonds in the amount of \$1,500.00 not to exceed \$6,000.00 to repair the covered bridge over Blood's Brook in Meriden." Voted by show of hands, "Yes," 51 votes; "No," 1 vote.



Meriden Covered Bridge, about 1937. Photo by Gordon Leland. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Later that year, a hearing was held, and it was proposed that the covered bridge be abandoned and that a road be built from near Mill Cemetery southerly to the Stage Road near the Griffin Place (Nancy Crumbine, 1991). This proposition did not meet with favor.

At the next Town Meeting in March 1957, the town voted to set up a Capital Reserve Fund of \$2,000. It was increased by \$1,000 each year until \$7,000 plus interest had accrued.

At the March Town Meeting in 1962, "It was moved and seconded that the Town vote to have the Selectmen investigate the replacement of or making major repairs to the covered bridge at Meriden and make a report to the town on or before June 1, 1962. Voted in the affirmative." The selectmen made an investigation accordingly, and a hearing was held at the Meriden Town Hall as requested. It was found that a new bridge north of the old bridge would cost about \$60,000; and that repairs to the covered bridge would cost approximately \$20,000. Steel reinforcing beams were to be included, and that it could be done with State Bridge Aid, the town and state each paying one-half the cost. It was the opinion of the hearing to proceed to have a special town meet-



Morris Penniman and Carrie (Rogers) Westgate at the reopening of the Meriden Covered Bridge, July 16, 1963. Photo by Gordon Leland. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

ing. On Election Day, November 6, 1962, a special Town Meeting was held by permission from the Judge of Superior Court. It was voted unanimously in the affirmative to raise the sum of \$2,400, (with the Capital Reserve Fund of \$7,600) to provide the sum of \$10,000 as the town's share of repair to the Meriden Covered Bridge." The selectmen to attend to the details of carrying out the work.

An article in the 1963 Annual Report written July 16, 1963, by Vernon A. Hood, states:

The Celebration of the Restoration of the Mill Bridge was held on July 20, 1963, at 2:00 PM. The list of distinguished guests included The Honorable James Cleveland, New Hampshire Representative to the United States Congress, Mrs. Margaret DeLude, New Hampshire State Senator, 8th District, Floyd Aver, N. H. Secondary Roads Engineer, Mrs. Nellie Pierce, President, N. H. Covered Bridge Association, Albert Carlson, Exec. Sec. Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee Association, Bob McLaughry, President, Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee Association, Plainfield Selectmen: Palmer Read, Chairman, Vernon Hood, and Joseph Meyeette, Dr. Frederick E. Carver, Headmaster of Kimball Union Academy. Among the long time Plainfield residents

attending were Mrs. Harold (Mary) Chellis, Morris Penniman, Mrs. Albert (Myrtie) Barker, William Wildey, Mrs. William (Carrie) Westgate, Miss Helen Richards, Edward Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Williams, and Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Cole. The children in costume were Nancy and Deborah Chapman, and Philip and Arthur Zea.

The bridge in 1991 is the result of these deliberations of the town. It has become a landmark and is of historical interest to the area. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. During the summer months, it is a tourist attraction.

Turnpikes

In 1791, the New Hampshire legislature authorized the establishment of four post roads, two of which came to the Upper Valley. These were little more than blazed footpaths through the woods. In 1796, the first turnpike (or toll road) was opened in New Hampshire, and soon four turnpikes (the Second, Third, Fourth, and Croydon Turnpikes) were opened to the Upper Valley. The Croydon Turnpike ran from Lebanon through Plainfield, apparently on the road that now bears this name, to Croydon and Newport in order to connect with the Second Turnpike in Lempster.

The Fourth Turnpike was the most widely used of these toll roads because it connected Hanover and Lebanon with Concord. Chartered in 1802, it accommodated "30 teams a day counted at times,"⁷ but when the railroad from Concord to White River Junction was incorporated in 1837, the road soon fell from use. Maintenance of the Plainfield section of the turnpike was taken over by the town. It was used until the railroad was completed in 1848.

Town Roads

Within Plainfield, several roads and bridges were designed to serve local needs rather than distant destinations. The following list catalogs many roads around Plainfield and Meriden.⁸

Although the present Stage Road between Plainfield and Meriden may conjure an image of the old West, the road was named for the postal delivery route. Most of this road was surveyed and constructed between 1830 and 1845.

Andrews Lane was named for the Nathan Andrews family who lived at the end of it.

Bean Road is named for the family of Samuel Bean (1750/1–1825) who settled on the Grantham side of the old Plainfield-Grantham line. The hill is also named after this family, many of whom are buried in the nearby Gleason Cemetery.

Beauty Hill Road is steep and was named by children who thought that the hill was a "beauty" for sledding.



Manley and Amelia Smith on their motorcycle, about 1920. George Manley Smith (1843–1923) was a Civil War veteran who married, on January 17, 1900, Amelia Bontemps (1877–1964), who worked in the summer colony. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Black Hill Road was probably named by Moses Smith, an early settler, who knew Black Hill in Canterbury, Connecticut, his home town. (See Chapter 1, *Landscape*, for another explanation.)

Bonner Road was named for the former Ike Bonner farm on this road. Although the road is early (1770), the name is comparatively recent.

Camp Road was named for the Camp family who lived on this road.

Center-of-Town Road, as explained earlier, was one of the original roads in Plainfield. It was laid out in 1769 by the proprietors to lead to the center of Plainfield.

Chellis Road was named after the family of Thomas Chellis (ca. 1750–1835) whose ancestral farm spans the road. It was the main route to Lebanon before the Civil War.

Colby Hill Road was named for the Colby family who farmed along the side of Colby Hill.

Columbus Jordan Road was named for Christopher Columbus Jordan (1856–1924) who owned a farm on the road for many years.

Croydon Turnpike, as explained earlier, follows the route of the former turnpike abandoned in 1837.

Cutler Road was named for Benjamin Cutler, an early settler and farmer.

Daniels Road, formerly called Cross Road or Road to Mill Village, was named for Henry Daniels (1848–1923) in this century (Ruth Whybrow, 1991).

Dodge Road was named after Joshua Dodge (1798/9–1849) and his son Azro (1827–1862), a Civil War veteran, who lived in a house that formerly bordered this road.

Eaton Road was named for Exom Eaton (1859–1941), farmer and logger.

Ferry Hill Road was laid out in 1842 as a convenient approach to Sumner's Bridge across the Connecticut River. After the second bridge was carried off by the flood of 1859, Sumner operated a ferry nearby.

Freeman Road was named after Daniel Freeman (1727–1819), a native of Plainfield, Connecticut, who built a large house near the Cornish town line in 1784.

Gleason Road was named after Elijah Gleason (1750–1819) who was an early settler of Grantham.

Hayward Road was named for Griswold Hayward, a New York businessman, who maintained a large estate along it.

Hedgehog Road borders the area formerly known as "Hedgehog" because porcupines lived on the ledges nearby.

The origins of Hell Hollow Road are uncertain. However, Hood reports that his mother obtained an explanation from Elizabeth Kenyon (1839–1920) who said the name stemmed from individuals "who resided thereabout in the early 1800s 'raising hell in general' in their time, including persons she knew when she was young."

High Street was named for its elevation. At one time, it was facetiously called "Pork Avenue" because a pig farm was located there.

Hopkins Road was recently named after the Hopkins Cemetery on it. All of the markers are inscribed for the family of Philip Hopkins (1748/9–1796), who settled in Grantham before the Revolutionary War.

Houser Lane was named for Louis Houser, who converted the Willow Brook School into a house where he still lives. Mr. Houser was a selectman for many years in the 1960s and 1970s.

Jenney Road was named after the Jenney family who operated a large farm on it.

Kenyon Road and Kenyon Hill were named after Joseph Kenyon (1737–1829), the first of his family to live in this part of the town.

Lawton Lane was named by Harold Hoisington, who sold building lots on this road and who called it after his mother's maiden name.

Ladieu Road was named for the James Ladieu family who lived on its northern side.

Methodist Hill Road was named for the number of families that belonged to the Methodist Church that formerly stood in the Enfield quadrant at the four corners.

Mill Road was named for the water-powered Freeman mills operated on Blow-Me-Down Brook at the Cornish line.

Old County Road, part of the Great Road, was a portion of the first road in Plainfield.



Harvey D. Plummer
(1841–1922). Courtesy
Plainfield Historical Society.

Park Road was named for Corbin's Park (the Blue Mountain Forest Association hunting preserve).

Penniman Road was named after Thomas Penniman (1778–1854) who bought a house and farm from John Stevens, Jr., in 1802.

Peterson Road is a very old road that was first cleared before 1770. It was named for the family of John Westgate Peterson (1831–1909) who had a farm there from the Civil War to the 1940s.

Pierce Road is named after William Harrison Pierce (1823–1877) who lived where it joined River Road (Paul Franklin, 1991).

Plummer Road is named for Harvey Plummer (1841–1922), who lived beside the road for many years. The road passes Plummer Spring, not far from his home-site, which is believed to be the largest spring in town.

Porter Road, one of the oldest roads in town, was named after Reverend Micaiah Porter (1743/4–1829), pastor of the West Parish of Plainfield for about twenty-five years, beginning in 1804.

River Road is a very early road along the Connecticut River. It is about five miles long and was begun in the 1760s. The last section was completed in the early 1800s. Portions of this road were superimposed on the early Great Road. The lower section of Route 12A in Plainfield was also part of the Great Road.

Parts of Route 120, an early road, were the main road to Lebanon and Cornish Flat and later to the Croydon Turnpike.

Sanborn Road was named for Sidney Sanborn who owned the farm at the top of the road (Helen Walker, 1991). He died in the flu epidemic of 1919.



Automobile on the present Route 12A by the Plainfield Plain Cemetery, 1915. L-R Willis Daniels, Madge (Daniels) Whitney at the wheel, Emma Daniels, and unidentified. Courtesy Mary Cassedy.

The road was previously called the Manchester Road after Dr. Manchester who lived there.

Slack Road was named after Henry Slack (1840–1910) who owned a house on this road in the 1800s.

Tallow Hill Road was so named because the hill rising at the east end is a clay bank, which became slippery when wet—as slippery as tallow.

Thrasher Road was named in 1958 in honor of Harry Thrasher, a veteran of World War I who was killed in action while serving in the U. S. Army in France. He was a member of a family who operated mills on Blow-Me-Down Brook for several generations. As a boy he worked for Augustus Saint-Gaudens, from whom he learned to be a sculptor. (See Chapter 18, Plainfield and the Cornish Colony through Biographies.)

True Road was named after the True family.

Underhill Road was named after Elijah Underhill (1778–1862).

Westgate Road was named after Daniel C. Westgate (1857–1943) and his father Earl (1808–1898) who were active in the town's political, civil, and religious life from the 1800s through the 1930s. In 1813, the family built the house where the Upper Valley Humane Society was located (1990).

Whitaker Road was named after Frank Whitaker (1858–1922) who owned a farm on the road.

Willow Brook Road is the lower section of the Brook Road leading from Mill Hollow in Meriden to West Lebanon. At one time, there were long rows of willows growing along the bank.

Old Time Industries¹

Blancha Daniels
[Written in 1920]

The town of Plainfield was settled in 1765 or a little earlier. The people who came here to a wilderness had to be self-supporting in every respect, as the only means of transportation was by horseback over rough bridal paths, by cart over the same paths slightly widened, and by canoe or raft on the river. Nearly everything they needed for sustaining life had to be raised and made by them at home. Each home, or community, was a self-supporting unit.²

A large amount of the clothing worn in those days was made of wool from the sheep raised on the farm. For a time, this wool was carded by the use of hand cards which looked much like cattle or horse cards. Nearly every old house in town had a pair in the attic but they have long since disappeared. In most cases, the boys of more recent times used them to card their horses and wore them out. After some years, wool was much more quickly and easily carded at the carding mills. The people at the Plainfield end of the town used to go to Mercer's Carding Mill in Cornish which was located beside the Blow-Me-Down where Judge Hand's summer home now stands [Jean B. King, 1991]. This mill was kept up longer than some old mills. I remember the old dilapidated buildings standing there just before the artist T. W. Dewing bought the place. My mother who lived in West Lebanon remembers going there with her grandmother to get wool carded. At the Meriden end of town, there was a carding machine where Cuddy's Grist Mill now stands [below the covered bridge]. Stephen Woodward remembers taking wool there when he was a boy.

When the wool had been carded, it was spun on the old spinning wheels. Many old families in town have one of these picturesque old relics in their attics. Then there were the old looms upon which the cloth was woven. Carpets were also woven on them. The old True loom is standing in the Mothers' and Daughters' Clubhouse in Plainfield today. It has been used much in the modern rag-rug industry. The Freeman loom is now in Mrs. Insley Spaulding's house. [This loom was given to the Plainfield Historical Society in 1988 and again stands in the clubhouse.] The room in which the loom was set up was called the "loom room." The machine was so bulky that a room could not be used for much else. Flax was raised on the farms and linen made from it. Some of the old sheets and towels are in existence today and are much cherished by their owners.

Another article of clothing was shoes which were usually made in the home by a cobbler who went from house to house and fitted out the whole family. Later, such work was done at the village shoemaker's. Hides were tanned at the local tanneries. There was one located in the ravine between Mrs. Lydia Reed's [Dennis Gobin, 1991] and Mrs. Belle Stone's [formerly Jean Burling's law office] just south of Plainfield Village. It was on the west side of the road at the foot of the hill nearest Mrs. Stone's [between the Gobin's property and Burling's]. Father remembers seeing the old building there when he was quite a small boy, and also the vats on the old hillside still red from the hemlock bark which was used in the tanning process. The owner probably lived in the old house on the present site of Mrs. Jabez Reed's house. There was also a tannery at Hell Hollow on the road leading south. It was owned and operated by Daniel Cole who lived on the site of the Kenyon house [Steven Roland, 1991]. At the Meriden end of the town, there was a tannery on the Lebanon road at the place where "Fiddler" Beers recently lived [Stephen Beaupré, 1991]. One of the shoemakers who went around from house to house was Job Pierce. He lived in Puckerpod on the left hand side of the road to West Lebanon not far beyond the guide board. He also worked at home. A man by the name of Sam Marcy had a room on the Plain where he made and repaired shoes. "Jock" Phillips who lived in the house nearly opposite Will French's [Nick Cohen, 1991] was another shoemaker. Sylvanus Spaulding in later years used to do such work. There were doubtless many others.

The first houses were log cabins. Very soon the settlers wanted better houses. Consequently, at an early date, sawmills were built here and there beside the brooks where there was a little water power. Probably, one of the oldest was located on Beaver Brook in Ward's Woods. A low dam was built across the brook about half way down the hill on the West Lebanon road, and the water was carried by a ditch and by wooden troughs to the mill which stood south of the crossroad [Pierce Road] near Fred Smith's [Clifford Griswold, 1991]. All the land in this locality belonged to Francis Smith, the first settler. I have not found who built the mill, probably Mr. Smith or his son. Another old mill is the Freeman Mill now owned by Winston Churchill. When it was built, it was wholly in Plainfield, but now, since the town line was changed in 1888, it is almost wholly in Cornish. In the will of Lieutenant Daniel Freeman who died in 1806, he bequeathed the sawmill property to his son James. Daniel came to Plainfield in 1782. He may or may not have built the mill.

There were three very old sawmills at Meriden. Probably the oldest was the one near Cuddy's [Howard Zea, 1991] although there were two more on the same brook. One was about a mile farther down the brook on the West Lebanon road which was operated by Simon French. Levi and George Bryant owned the property around it and may have owned the mill. The other was nearly opposite the Dennis Cross place [Jessie Carver English, 1991]. The saws used in the oldest mills were the upright type which worked up and down in a vertical position. The upright saw in the Freeman Mill was changed to a circular saw by John Freeman about the time of the Civil War.



Silsby Mill south of the junction of Main Street and Camp Road, Meriden, about 1910. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

In the early days of the town, there were a good many people living at the so-called "center of the town." The first church was built there not far from the town pound. It is now the town hall at the Plain. [The walls of the pound are still standing.] It is not surprising to find that this little community had a sawmill. It was located at the mouth of Mud Pond. There was a small forest of pine near this pond when the first settlers came to town. It was the only growth of this kind of tree back from the river. In those days, the white pine was found only in the forests along the banks of the river; now it is distributed all over the town. More sawmills: There was one north of the Plain at the "Bony" Brocklebank's place now owned by Ed Milner [Donella Meadows, 1991]. The stone foundations may be seen there today. John and Turner Peterson owned it at one time. They sold it to Charles Read. The one whose ruins are still in existence at Charles Burr's place [Jay Waldner, 1991] was owned and operated by Merrit Penniman. Parker Carr, at East Plainfield, had one at one time. The present mill at Mill Village now owned and operated by Fred Read is old. Its earliest owners are not known. The Peterson brothers operated it at one time and sold it to Mr. Read's father. He tried to haul logs from Grantham Mountain, then take the lumber to Windsor after it was sawed, but the project failed on account of the great distances. The present Mr. Read still uses the mill which is the only permanent sawmill in the town at the present day.

Across the brook from the Read Mill and opposite the house which Harvey Plummer now occupies [Joseph Bourget, 1991], there was a grist mill owned and operated at one time by Record Spaulding. The building, which was



Wilmer Spalding's store, Plainfield Village, about 1925. The building was used by Spalding's father, Insley, as a blacksmith shop. Later, Wilmer Spalding used the building as an antiques shop. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

made of stone, is now standing. Later, Zenas B. Small ran it and bought a heavy steam engine for power as the water furnished by the Read dam was often insufficient. There was not custom enough to pay for the investment. William Quint tried the same thing a few years later on the river. He tried to operate a grist mill by steam power in the barn on his wife's farm (now Mrs. Frank Pierce)[Forrest Chase, 1991]. There was not enough custom in that locality to make the business pay. The grist mill now used by Mrs. Davidge Taylor as a summer cottage was owned and operated for many years by Jacob Read, Hamden Gilson's first wife's father [on Donella Meadows' property, 1991]. At Meriden, there was a grist mill connected with the old carding mill. Benjamin Kimball, father of Daniel, had the first grant of the property and built the original mill. Before any grist mill was built, Benjamin Cutler took his bag of corn to Fort Number Four, now Charlestown. He made the journey on foot over Black Hill to the river, thence down the stream by canoe.

Farming implements had to be made in the community. There was a large brick building on the Plain at the back of the lot between Wilmer Spaulding's store and Mr. Ross' house [Judy Merrill, 1991]. Silas Read and Sam Spaulding operated it. Downstairs there was a blacksmith's shop where iron work was done, upstairs, a room for woodwork. It was in this building that Sam Marcy had his shoe shop. The tool shop did a flourishing business, employing several men. My grandfather Daniels had several tools made there. Father remembers several ploughs. "Uncle Sam" Spaulding also used to go from house to house to make yokes.

Even the furniture used in the homes was made in town. On the Plain, there was Calvin Spaulding's shop, located where Ernest Hill's carpenter shop now stands [Gil Williamson, 1991]. He made all kinds of furniture. When the Freeman house was remodeled in 1851, he made a red plush set for the front parlor and a black haircloth set for the back parlor. There is hardly a house in the Plainfield end of the town which does not have some article of furniture made by him. Across the brook from the tannery near his house, he had a little shop where he did his sawing by water power. It is also interesting to know that he rigged up an ordinary chopping knife to operate by water power with which he cut his own sausage meat and that of his neighbors. After he died, Solomon Hildreth and Son made axe handles in the shop. Just before the Civil War, the building was moved to the present site of Chadbourne's Store and a few years later was remodeled into a store. A few years later, a Mr. Bailey made furniture in the south end of the house opposite the store. At about 1874, he made two nice chairs for my father and mother who were married that year.

In Meriden, John Spaulding operated a shop where he both made and repaired furniture. The building was made over into a house where his son Arthur lived and where Mrs. Blanche Barton now lives [Winnie Brooks, 1991]. On the west side of Meriden Hill, Deacon Morrill had a furniture shop in the building which later became Robert's Store and is now the village schoolhouse [torn down in 1966, empty lot west of the town hall, 1991]. He had the reputation of making very nice furniture.



Chest of drawers made by Daniel Morrill, Meriden; yellow birch, mahogany veneer, white pine, and basswood, about 1830. Photo by Kimberly King Zea.

Deacon Morrill also made caskets, as did Calvin Spaulding. It is said the Deacon made his own coffin, and slept in it to see if it fitted. Someone remembers hearing it said that he kept his beans in it. William Eggleston of the west end of town owned and operated a coffin shop just over the line in Cornish at the Thrasher house [gone, empty lot Plainfield side of the bridge, 1991]. Five or six men were employed there. Axe helves, wagon spokes, and fence pickets were also made at this shop. During the Civil War, wooden ram-rods were made in this shop and also at the Freeman Sawmill. About 1840, the shop was owned by Timothy Nutting who lived in the Thrasher house. He sold to Lorenzo Knight who sold to Cheever Knight and William Eggleston. The old shop was carried away by a freshet in 1869. Together with it went the drying house and the bridge. The owners rebuilt it. Later, Mr. Eggleston bought out his partner. The buildings may be seen today but they are in ruins. The dam is nearly all gone, and the waterwheel washed down the brook a few feet.

At this present time of prohibition, I am almost afraid to mention the next industry which I have on my list, that of cider-making. Perhaps it will be allowable to record it in the past tense and refer to it as history. There was a very old cider mill on the Woodman farm, now owned by Professor Smythe [Home Hill Country Inn, 1991]. It stood across the road from the house exactly opposite the present driveway. The apples were dumped in from the road level and

Stand made by "Captin Calvin Spalding/Cabinet & Chair Maker/Painter & Gilder & Varnisher/No. 1 Mechanics Corner/Plainfield, N.H.," yellow birch, cherry, and white pine, about 1820. Photo by Kimberly King Zea.



allowed to fall down between the wooden rollers which were kept turning by a horse. The apple-cheese was set up on the meadow level upon large hand-hewn beams. Pressure was obtained by hanging a drag-load of stones from the end of an immense beam which extended outside of the mill. The inner end of the beam was fastened to an upright post and the beam allowed to rest on the cheese not far from the post. Another equally interesting cider mill was on the Henry Farnum farm [cellar hole on the old road between Ira Townsend's and Dan Davis's, 1991]. The writer of this article remembers seeing it about ten years ago, and noticing that pressure was obtained by three huge wooden screws. The building is not standing now, so the chance to take a picture of it is lost. Nearly every prosperous farmer had a cider mill. Apples were abundant. People not only made cider for the purpose of obtaining vinegar later, but they made it to drink. There was a mill at the William Daniels' place [Peter Mogielnicki, 1991], one at the Cutler place (Charles Daniels)[east side of Black Hill], and one at the Freeman place. Father remembers taking apples to Ezekiel Jenney's cider mill and also to Almon French's in more recent days. Charles A. Williams [Joseph Longacre, 1991] had for a hitching post a few years ago an old cider mill screw, so there was doubtless a mill at that place years ago when it was the home of the Gates family. All the old cider mills in town have disappeared. Plainfield was dry long before the federal amendment was passed.

At the time when many houses were being built of brick, there were doubtless several brick kilns in town. There was one on the Woodman place [Home Hill Country Inn] where some of the brick for the Gallup Tavern was made, but Captain Gallup bought most of it in Hanover, using money which he obtained from selling some of his virgin pine. On the east side of the road on Charles Williams' farm [Joseph Longacre, 1991], on the bank sloping toward the Blow-Me-Down, some brick was made. In the seventies, there was a "brick yard" across the road from the Eggleston coffin shop. It was owned by Marshall Harlow of Cornish and operated by the Flint family who also lived in Cornish. The business soon failed on account of the distance from the railroad.

In the early times when trees were plenty and many burned in big bonfires for the purpose of clearing the land, potash was made. The ashes were leached and then the liquor boiled down in large iron kettles. Mrs. Edward Blood remembers hearing that potash was made in the field where the Harlow brick yard was later located. The good housewives used it in baking where we now use baking soda and called it saleratus. Many people made it for their own use and some made it to sell.

Charcoal was another product made from wood. Logs were heaped up, covered with turf and part of them burned to heat the rest into charcoal. The same Mrs. Blood remembers that some was made on the bank on the north side of the Thrasher house. Anybody could make it who needed it. It was used by blacksmiths in their forges.

Another useful article in the home was soft soap. Lye was obtained from a lye-leach which was a barrel or a similar container filled with wood ashes and a little lime. Water, poured on top, soaked through and dissolved the chemicals coming out of the flat stone placed underneath as lye. Certain proportions of this lye and grease which had been saved up during the year from butchering and from general cooking were put in a huge iron kettle and boiled. The soap thus made was stored in hollowed-out logs in the cellar.

It is with great interest that we people of 1920 read about the industries of the early days in our town. We do not care to return to the conditions of those days, but we cannot help wishing for some of the steadfast purpose and tireless energy of those good old pioneers. They met with many obstacles but overcame them triumphantly and laid the foundation for the life of today. We are proud of them!

• 10 •

Business and Commerce

Elisabeth Beck
Mary Cassedy
Vera Chellis
Sylvia Clark
Virginia Colby
Bettyann N. Dole
Paul Franklin
Kathryn F. MacLeay
Nancy Norwalk
Stephen H. Taylor

The Trades, 1765–1991

• *Blacksmiths*

Oliver Milner operated a blacksmith shop in the first frame house erected on the Plain. It was located just around the corner on the road to the river.

Josiah Russell, blacksmith, bought land from Thomas Gallup in 1768.

Nathaniel Dean of Plainfield, Connecticut, was a blacksmith who came to town to run the mills. He died June 14, 1788.

Josiah Russell, Jr., had a blacksmith shop on River Road in 1772.

Enos Spalding built the house where Tracy Spalding lived (O'Brien Rental Properties, 1991). His blacksmith shop was between Plummer's Store and Mrs. Hathaway's during the early 1800s (William Smith, 1991).

In 1818, Silas Read bought land from Benjamin Westgate.

Simon Spaulding, blacksmith, bought a piece of land in 1822.

Samuel Spaulding, a blacksmith, acquired land in 1825 from Loving Williams.

Burback's blacksmith shop was between Meriden and Cutler's (west of the meeting house) in 1829.

Orville Williams, blacksmith, acquired land from Priscilla Gates in 1830 near the Atwood place and the County Road.

The Sullivan County Map of 1860 shows that the brick house that stood at the corner of Flat Iron and Bean Road was occupied by J. Newton. "Newton's Blacksmith Shop" is shown east of the house.



John Moore's blacksmith shop, Bonner Road, Meriden, about 1912. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.



Insley W. Spalding in front of his blacksmith shop. The building was later used as a store by his son, Wilmer. See Figure. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Dexter Cutts (1830–1885) was a blacksmith and lived in East Plainfield. The Sullivan County Map of 1892 shows that his widow lived on Croydon Turnpike. His two sons, Hinkley (1856–1937) and Otis V. (1861–1913), were both blacksmiths. Otis V. lived in the brick house at the corner of Flat Iron and Bean Roads in Meriden. It was formally owned by J. Newton who had operated the blacksmith shop. Hinkley maintained a shop in East Plainfield, and after his brother died ran the blacksmith shop in Meriden. Otis's widow and son Raymond and family continued to live in the brick house, which looked much like the front part of Kimball Union Academy's Hazelton House. Their home burned about 1924. In the early 1940s, Roy Barker moved the shop building onto the old foundation and converted it into a dwelling (George Hynes, 1991).

G. M. Saltmarsh lived in East Plainfield and operated a blacksmith shop about 1895. His shop was on the east side of the Lebanon road, south of the schoolhouse. Later the shop was moved across the road and became the ell part of the barn now owned by Judith Belyea (1991). The legend, "5 miles and 88 rods to town hall of Lebanon," can still be seen on the double smithy doors.

About 1860, Henry M. Scales lived in the Bird Sanctuary house (Joseph Salsbury, 1991) and operated a blacksmith shop in a building on the same side of the road and across from Bonner Road.

Warren Barker (1855–1918) had a blacksmith shop in East Plainfield. The foundation of this shop can still be seen south of Beatrice Beliveau's home (1991).

O. V. Cutts was "The Village Blacksmith" in 1912 (*Weekly Enterprise*, March 14, 1912).

Captain Reuben Moore (1774/5–1850) came to town after 1798, lived in East Plainfield, and was a blacksmith. He was the first of three generations to practice the trade. Two sons, Reuben N. (1812–1885) and Elias S. (1835–1888), followed their father. The Sullivan County map of 1860 shows that Reuben N. lived in the Franklin Currier place (Richard Currier, 1991) and his brother Elias S. lived in the next house south at the intersection of Methodist Hill Road. Their blacksmith shop stood just across the road from Reubin's house at the intersection of Old Stage Coach Road.

Reuben N. Moore's son, John H. (1844–1924), lived in Meriden, in the house last occupied by Josephine Lamb. This house was later taken down and a new house built (Michael McAllister, 1991). His blacksmith shop was located across Bonner Road from his home. Mr. Moore was 68 years old when the news item appeared in the *Weekly Enterprise* on March 14, 1912, stating that "The new blacksmith at John Moore's shop is doing good business." The text suggests that the shop was operated by a new smith. Later, the shop and lot was owned by Clarence Cole. Mr. Cole did blacksmithing for his own use but not for the public.

After 1915, a blacksmith shop stood on Main Street in Meriden (James Chandler, 1991).

Gus Wilder was a blacksmith into the 1930s (Bruce Baird, 1991).

Before 1925, the blacksmith shop, at the end of Flat Iron Road, was



Marjory Spalding House, built about 1820, Plainfield, photo about 1890.
Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

owned by Ernest S. Milner. He lived across the road in the Clarence Bean place and also had a harness shop (Lawrence Gentleman, 1991).

Enos Spalding (1799–1885) was the first of the Spalding blacksmiths. His home was in the brick Spalding Homestead on Main Street in Plainfield (O'Brien Rental Property, 1991). He was the brother of Calvin Spalding, a well known cabinetmaker. His son and tenth child was Insley Wilmer Spalding, a blacksmith by trade who built the house where William A. Smith lives (1991). After his father's death, he lived in the Spalding Homestead. I. Wilmer was also a blacksmith, and Tracy M. ran a store and was town moderator for a number of years. I. Wilmer had patterns for wrought-iron firewood baskets drawn for him by Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Charles Platt.

When I. Wilmer and Lulu (Jenney) Spalding were married about 1905, they moved into the house in Plainfield Village (Marjorie Spalding, 1989; Dana Ennis, 1991). The small building south of the house, recently used as an antique shop, was Wilmer's own blacksmith shop where he made candle sconces, handles, and latches that were ordered by the summer people. Wilmer also pursued wood-working. About 1918, the Spaldings started to sell antiques.

Joseph S. Stickney, blacksmith, lived in the house built on the site of the Silas Read Tavern. He used the blacksmith shop across the road. The shop was sold in 1919.

David B. Clark who died in 1919, at age eighty-eight, is listed as a blacksmith.

Harold Hoisington (1901–1991) was a traveling farrier. He was self-taught as he explained in an interview in 1974:

I began shoeing about forty years ago when I was farming with my father over in Vermont. We had horses, but couldn't find anyone to shoe 'em. So we sent to Montgomery Wards for a forge and an anvil and shod 'em ourselves. Well it wasn't long before word got around and people began bringing us their horses on rainy days when they couldn't use 'em in the fields.¹

Hoisington rigged a portable shop on a 1930 pickup truck and traveled from farm to farm. He and his family moved to Plainfield about 1950, and he had a complete shop there (Raymond Morin, 1991), but did most of the work from the pickup. He had the reputation of having the most complete mobile outfit on either side of the Connecticut River.

His forty-year-old forge, its legs shortened for portability, is fanned by a blower which runs off the truck battery. A large corking vise has been mounted to slide in and out of the truck body, and an acetylene welding outfit for braising corks and applying barium to winter shoes is stashed within easy reach. Every type of tool for every type of shoeing problem is stored in his truck. And he knows just where everything is.²

• *Carpenters and Cabinetmakers*

John Austin came to Plainfield in 1783–84. He lived near Plainfield Village. His account books record making carts, sheds and coffins as well as building houses. He raised a barn for Asa Gallup in 1784 and also built the framing for Benjamin Kimball's new mill after the first one burned.

Lenn Bailey, a cabinetmaker, lived in Plainfield Village. He made and repaired furniture. He died in 1895.

Otis H. Chellis was a carpenter in Meriden who was born May 15, 1821, and died June 30, 1894. He was also a merchant and farmer.

Amos E. Coleman (died 1913) was a carpenter at the Plain. When Willis Jordan died, with his house unfinished, his wife Ella (Read) Jordan, got this old man to do the upstairs finish work.

Colonel Charles Eggleston was both a contractor and builder. He erected several public buildings in New Hampshire and Vermont. He erected his own brick house in 1842 (the former Vernon Hood house).

Charles Eggleston was both a builder and farmer. Insight into the scope of his business is shown by the notes he gave to six people, all dated July 2, 1852, probably to finance one of his many building projects.

The first note for the sum of \$145, given to Asa Kingsbury and William Flanders, was secured by 172 sheep, 44 lambs, 7 red calves. As was customary at the time, one lamb was given to Kingsbury and Flanders to hold in the name of the whole.

The second note was for the amount of \$143 to William Ward and was secured by five three-year-old steers, one three-year-old heifer, six two-year-old steers, one yearling bull and one yearling heifer. One brown yearling heifer was delivered to Mr. Ward in the name of the whole.

The third note was given to Daniel Kenyon in the amount of \$150. This was secured by one ox cart, one plow, one cheese press, fourteen acres of oats, three acres of potatoes, five acres of corn, and fifty acres of standing grass. The ox cart was to be held in the name of the whole.

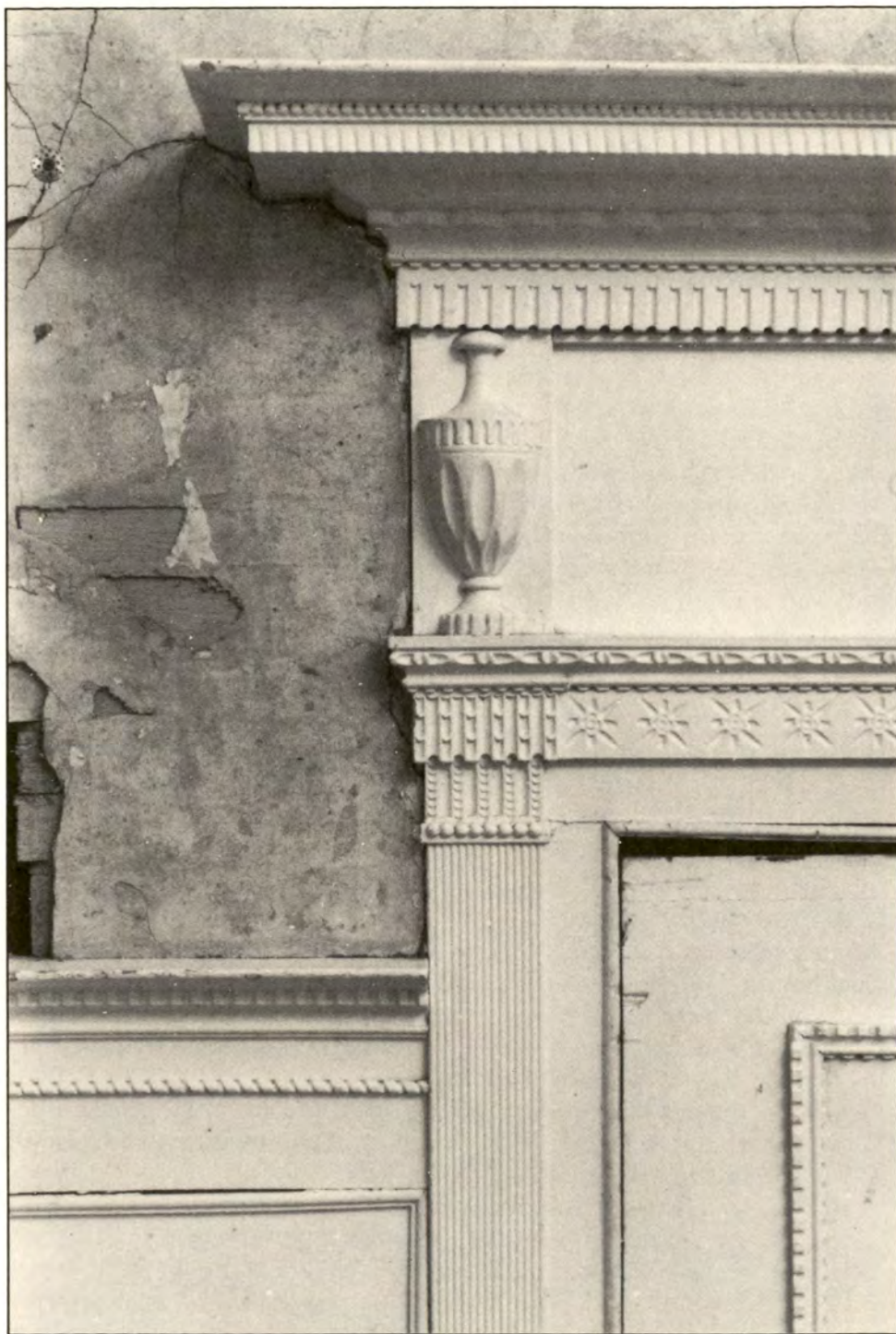
The fourth note for \$50 was given to his sister, Lucinda Eggleston, and as security, he pledged one secretary with mahogany veneer, one mahogany veneer sofa, one dozen flag bottom chairs, one Grecian birch table, and one work stand, which was given to Lucinda to hold.

The fifth and largest note was given for \$295.04. This was to Charles Flanders. It was secured by 14 cows, 4 wintered hogs, 1 yoke of red oxen, 1 black horse, 1 two-year-old bay colt, 1 gig wagon and harness, 50 cheeses, 5,000 shingles, 1,000 feet of clear pine boards, 250 pounds of fleece wool.

The sixth note was given to William Huse of Enfield for \$166. This was secured by 2,239 feet of clear boards, plus the drawing of the same, 6,300 feet of clear boards valued at \$13.50 per thousand feet, 6,000 feet of hemlock boards, and 7,000 rift shingles at \$3.25 per thousand. Said property is in and about the Academy land in Hanover.³

Jesse French, born in 1795, had participated in the construction of nearly every house in Meriden. He was known to "use a little cider occasionally."

James Gilkey received from Abel Stone a valuable horse for doing the finish work on his parlor and the chamber over it. He was referred to as a "mechanical woodcarver." He also carved the woodwork in the Vernon Hood house, the Thomas Gallup Tavern (Home Hill Country Inn, 1991), the Kingsbury Tavern (Judy Atwater, 1991), and several other houses in town. In the Kingsbury Tavern, Gilkey left "some of his most distinctive motifs in the front parlors. In the room to the south of the central hall, chair-railing, mantlepiece and corner beading boast his spiral molding, a difficult and unusual type. The window casings and other surfaces use his striated motif of dense, parallel grooves. Doors and mantlepiece are decorated with a scallop-fan design, and the mantlepiece features an elegant carved heart. At the Home Hill Restaurant, the carpenter's work is most evident in the ceiling moldings of a dining room."⁴ Some of the moldings are the same as those in the Kingsbury Tavern.



Carved woodwork attributed to James Gilkey, about 1802. Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel. The house stands in Mill Village (Mary Beth Hayes and Roy DuVerger, 1991).

Asa Kingsbury ran the Kingsbury Tavern, but in a deed of 1794 from Charles Williams to Asa Kingsbury, he is described as a carpenter.

Deacon Daniel Morrill had his furniture shop in the building that became the Brown School in Meriden during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. His home was west of the shop (James Lenz, 1991).

John Spaulding maintained his furniture shop after the War of 1812 in a building that used to stand in front of Fitch Science Building at Kimball Union Academy. The shop was converted to a dwelling in 1869 by Benjamin F. Manchester. Spaulding lived in the house next to the Meriden Store.

Duty Stickney (1777–1866) was a carpenter and ran a water powered shop on Newton Brook at the location of the Kelly Gloger house (1991). On November 25, 1843, his son, Moses K., gave him a mortgage on one-half interest of a turning machine and one mortising machine.

Benjamin F. Manchester (1829–1908) was a carpenter and housewright by trade. He built many houses in Meriden and nearby communities. Mr. Manchester usually built story and a half houses using one set of plans. There were two rooms plus stairs across the front and two small bedrooms and a pantry at the back. The kitchen and wood shed were in the ell. In the main rooms he used a low pediment header over the doors and windows. He lived in Meriden on Grantham Mountain Road (Stephen Beaupré, 1991). The house at the corner of Underhill and Penniman Roads is an example of his work (William Franklin, 1991).

George Henry Moore (1846–1916) was a carpenter and builder. He lived on Colby Hill Road in the first house on the left above the bridge. He remodeled that house from a central chimney house and added the barn in 1880. His brother, William S., lived across the road and was the miller. They operated a wood-working shop in the mill, which included a lathe big enough to turn porch posts. He also built the horse sheds back of the Meriden Congregational Church.

Herman and Herbert Plummer were Ned Waite's best carpenters. They helped build the town hall floor.

Ai Read erected a wood cottage (Raymond Morin, 1991) north of Mrs. Chadbourne's (Doris Plummer, 1991). In his day, Read was the leading merchant and businessman of Plainfield and constructed many other buildings.

George Ruggles was born in Plainfield and became a contractor and builder. He assisted on many of the buildings contracted for Cornish Colony members. He worked most of his life for Maxfield Parrish. He built his own home and set up a small hotel. (See boarding houses in this chapter; also see Chapter 22, Biography.)

Calvin Spaulding made furniture at Plainfield Plain after the War of 1812.

Mr. Stearns was the proprietor of a scythe snath and rake factory in Meriden Village between 1830 and 1850. It was located on the brook just above the Moulton Bridge.⁵

Edward "Ned" C. Waite, Jr., was an excellent carpenter who did much work for the Cornish Colony people. He built many beautiful homes in this area, including several in Claremont. He did the paneling in the Churchill residence.

He built and designed his daughter's house (Sylvia Gray, now Henry Rupertsberger, 1991). In the 1920s, he build the front portico on the library in Plainfield. Ned and his helpers laid the hardwood floor in the Plainfield Town Hall. The floor was originally built on a slant so the rows of built-in seats were each higher than the one before it. Some townspeople opposed removing the seats. While this group was out gathering signatures on a petition, Ned and his men tore the seats out and laid the new floor.⁶

According to death records, other carpenters in Plainfield were: David Burnap, died 1872, age seventy-one; Amanso Davis, died 1885, age seventy-four; Irving L. Strong, died 1885, age fifty-seven; Junius A. Spencer, died 1889, age sixty; John Morgan, died 1889, age sixty-four; Orrin M. Currie, died 1892, age forty; Charles H. Read, died 1898, age seventy-five; George F. Doty, died 1899, age fifty-one; Allen Colby Root, died 1909, age sixty-two; John Lorenzo Fuller, died 1911, age seventy-eight; Orismus S. Hix, died 1911, age eighty-four; Charles H. Williams, died 1911, age seventy; George W. Beers, died 1913, age eighty-three; Frank H. Davis, died 1925, age fifty-four; Turner H. Smith, died 1927, age seventy-nine; Elmer W. Weeden, died 1931, age fifty-seven; Erma D. Ormsby, died 1934, age thirty-eight.

Clifton "Tink" Marsh began Marsh Construction in 1971. The first house he built was on Stage Road for Earl King (Leonard Swett, 1991).

D. Boone Rondeau started building and remodeling in 1977. He has his business on Tallow Hill Road.

In 1984, David McBride started Spectrum Contracting and Consulting. He does renovations, additions to homes, and cabinet work. He lives on Cram Hill Road.

Quality Carpentry Building and Remodeling was founded in 1986. Bruce Rogers and Alan Benware build homes, do remodeling and renovations. They have one employee and are located on Camp Road.

Stanley Dole, cabinetmaker, has a business at his home on Sanborn Road. He does antique restoration and makes custom furniture. He operated the same business in Salem, New Hampshire, from 1964 to 1972, before moving to Meriden in 1973.

Other present local carpenters are Jay Waldner, Steven Roland, Tom Laflam, Mark Overman, and Theodore Haley, Sr.

• *Clock and Watchmakers*

Jonathan Barker was a clock tinker. He used to travel around with a little tin trunk and was called "Tinker Barker." He lived at the corner of Center-of-Town Road and Porter Road.⁷

Joshua Spaulding, son of Abel Spaulding of Cornish, was a watch and clock maker. His shop was in the northwest front room of his home just below Dr. Huse's home in Meriden (Kimball Union Academy's Hazelton House, 1991).⁸

Peter King, who died in 1888, at age sixty-three, was a clock tinker.⁹

Frank French was a jeweler and repaired clocks and watches.

• *Coopers*

Nathaniel Alvin Manchester (1777–1840) came to Plainfield in 1800. “He was a cooper by trade, a Democrat and an Episcopalian.” He lived on Sanborn Road (Leonard Timmons, 1991).

The 1831 road survey showed a cooper’s shop near the old store, ferry, and Francis Smith’s farm in the northwest corner of town.¹⁰

Raymond K. Jordan, son of James, was a “cooper by trade and a hard-working, temperate man.”¹¹ He is listed in *The New Hampshire Business Directory* of 1868.

Mr. Duty Stickney and Sons and Mr. Jesse French and Sons made some casks and were also basket makers, but Mr. Dunklee who lived in the last house on High Street was a cooper by trade. He made pails, sap buckets, kegs and casks of various sizes.¹²

• *Gravestone Cutters*

Mrs. Mary Camp writes in her Memoirs that there used to live an old soldier of the Civil War, John Gilman Stevens, on Hopkins Road. He was a blacksmith in the army, but his real trade was cutting gravestones. He was an expert craftsman and many of the stones in the Gleason Cemetery and other nearby cemeteries were wrought by him. Near the bottom of them will be found in small letters “J. G. S.”

Gravestones made by Sylvanus Bryant, Jr. (1790–1864) of Cornish are also found in Plainfield. They are signed “S. Bryant.”

• *Gunsmiths*

Ellsworth “Sonny” Sawyer opened Sawyer’s Guns in 1955. He had his shop at home and later in his general store. He supplied ammunition, gun accessories, and police supplies. Sawyer also offered gun repair and sponsored gun matches. He discontinued business in the mid-1980s.

James Benware started Jim’s Gun Shop in Lebanon in 1978. Eight years later he moved the business to his home on the Brook Road. He sells ammunition, reloading supplies, black powder, and new and used firearms.

Dietrich Apel has a gunsmith shop, Apel’s Gunsmithing, in his home on Brook Road. Most of his business is done through mail order. The business opened in 1990.

• *Loggers*

Robert Grace started a logging business in 1972. He has three skidders, a tractor and a log truck.

Meriden Timber, Inc., was started in 1982 by Max Jewell and Judy Belyea and is located in East Plainfield. They have four trucks for transporting logs and recycling products.

Armand Rondeau is also a logger. He uses oxen rather than heavy machinery.

• *Shoe and Harness Makers*

"In early times, shoes and boots were usually made in the home by a cobbler who went from house to house and fitted out the family. Later, such work was done at the village shoemaker's."¹³ Shoemakers also frequently made and repaired harnesses.

Roswell Spalding was a harnessmaker. He was lame and deformed from arthritis. He went from house to house to make or mend shoes and harnesses in return for his keep.¹⁴ Mrs. Eunice Waite remembered him at the Morse house about 1890.¹⁵

Newell Chapman was a shoemaker on High Street in Meriden. His shoemaker's bench was in one corner of the kitchen. When store shoes became available, he turned to mending shoes.¹⁶ *The New Hampshire Business Directory* of 1868 listed Chapman as well as Samuel Fifield and Abel Spaulding as boot and shoemakers.

Joseph W. Everest was a shoe and harnessmaker. Listed in a chattel mortgage, dated May 16, 1835, from Mr. Everest to Samuel B. Duncan are items pertaining to his business: 17 pairs upper leathers for shoes-\$12, 50 green calf skins in vats marked X-\$40, 31 untanned hides from Peru not worked in-\$140, etc. A number of items pertaining to the tanning business were also listed.¹⁷

Elijah Austin was a cobbler and lived on Black Hill. His account book is partly transcribed.¹⁸

Peter Abbot was a cobbler. He lived in Plainfield for sixty years.¹⁹

Other shoemakers were Job Pierce who lived in Puckerpod, Sam Marcy who had a room on the Plain, "Jock" Phillips who lived opposite Will French, and Sylvanus Spaulding.²⁰ Town death records also list: John N. Short, shoemaker, died 1885, age seventy-nine; Abel Spalding, shoemaker, died 1897, age eighty-five; Willis S. Kimball, harnessmaker, died 1926, age sixty-five; and Ferdinand M. Spaulding, shoemaker, died 1924. The following is from the Westgate family records:

Sylvanus Spalding—who moved into house, April, '75 @ 3.00 per month. Credit by repairing harnesses, mending shoes, shoemaking and topping boots for Walter.²¹

• *Stonemasons*

Anthony Wayne Jordan, called "Waynes" Jordon, learned the stonemason's trade which he "followed industriously during his active years and provided his family with a good living and a practical education."²² He lived on the Hedgehog Road at the center of town in the place west of the schoolhouse.²³ Anthony's brother, Timothy, was also a stonemason.²⁴ Three of his sons learned the trade. Frank "Tip" Jordan (born April 19, 1840), a veteran of the Civil War, carried on a thriving business as a stonecutter in Plainfield.²⁵ "Tips Monument" on Tallow Hill Road was built by him.²⁶ Riley Jordan was a marblecutter and worked in a number of places.²⁷ Albert Jordan also learned the

stonecutting trade, but lost an arm in a Fourth of July celebration.

A Mr. Sanderson was a stonemason. When rebuilding his house after it burned (Wallace Williams, 1991), he used a large granite rock ledge across the road (Route 120) for blocks to build his cellar. He also put stone posts around his house to secure his white picket fence. He built the buttments to the covered bridge in Meriden.²⁸

Plainfield death records list other stonemasons: Joshua Allard, died 1885, age seventy; William Riley Jordan, a marble cutter, died 1881; and Exvia Mason, died 1930, age seventy-six.

• *Tanneries*

"The green hides were first dipped in weak hot-bark liquors, then packed in the tan-pits between layers of hemlock bark and allowed to soak there from one to three years. The tan-pits were dug in the edge of some convenient swale, roughly five feet deep, three feet long and slightly less in width, being planked up inside to hold the drench, for tanning calf-skins principally." The skins were later "scoured," "stuffed" with a mixture of tallow and oil, dried thoroughly, then "whitened" where the white residue left from the tallow was scraped off with a special knife. The fulling mill softened the dry hides. In later years, steam power was utilized in the process.²⁹

In early times, there was a tannery, possibly the first in town, in "Lowell Hollow" south of the center of Plainfield.³⁰

There was a tannery on the place owned by Bellows, which was sold to Captain Records. It is either the Meyette house or the Morse house in Mill Village.³¹

Daniel Cole, Sr., a Revolutionary War veteran, was a tanner and shoemaker.³² His tannery was at Hell Hollow on the road south.

On May 15, 1844, Waldo C. Clark mortgaged 500 sides of Spanish leather to Timothy Nutting for \$100. The leather was in the tanning process at his tannery in Plainfield.

A tannery was operated by Stephen Fifield north of Meriden on the road to Lebanon. Professor Samuel W. Cole, in the 1920s, remembered the remains of the dam and the bark mill.³³ The town records show that Stephen Fifield was sworn in as the Sealer of Leather in 1853.³⁴

There was also a tannery on the Moses True Farm just at the foot of the hill on the left hand side of True Road. The holes are still there in the ground where the vats were located.³⁵

Calvin Williams ran a tan yard about 1831.³⁶

The Westgate records, 1835-1887, mention transactions with several tanners: Benjamin Parker, Jan. 1835—credit by tanning kid skins, Ephraim Converse, Feb. 1840—bought bark and hides, Alvin Commings, Nov. 1858—credit by tanning leather.³⁷

Mills

Mills were of paramount importance to the proprietors and settlers of northern New England. Lumber was needed for dwellings and outbuildings. Grain and flour were needed for sustenance. Records of proprietors' meetings show active promotion of mill construction.

The mills at Mill Village on Blow-Me-Down Brook east of Plainfield Village were the earliest in town. A dam and mill building still stand there in 1991. At a proprietors' meeting at Joseph Kimball's house on March 8, 1768, a gristmill "east of the road that goes from Joseph Kimball to Lemuel Williams" was promoted.³⁸ A tax of ten pounds was levied on each proprietor on May 1, 1769, as incentive for a builder. A year later, the incentive was raised at the proprietors' meeting on March 14, 1769.

... give 10 pounds in money and 10 pounds in vendable specie and 100 acres of land for an encouragement for building of a gristmill on ye brook called Blowmedown brook at ye falls where the mill now stands to Aaron Chapman or any other man that will build a good authentic grist mill fit for ye Purpose of grinding by the first day of June which will be in ye year 1770 . . .³⁹

Mention here of "where the mill now stands to Aaron Chapman" leads to the conclusion that Chapman had already built a sawmill without the monetary encouragement. Nathaniel Dean responded, and at a meeting on September 29, 1770, the proprietors voted that

... we do except [sic] the grist mill that Nathaniel Dean has built in ye brook called Blowmedown brook that Aaron Chapman or any other man was to have built on said brook according to vote past for that purpose on March ye 14, A.D. 1769, he ye sd Dean has entitled himself to all ye Provisidges belong to said Votes . . .⁴⁰

Dean was the brother-in-law of Thomas Gallup whose first 100-acre lot probably included the mill site. He was enterprising and soon acquired the sawmill on the opposite bank. The mills became a center of community activity. Dean was also a blacksmith, operated a tavern, and hosted religious and other meetings.

The 1800s saw a succession of owners and operators at these mills on the Blow-Me-Down. The gristmill was switched to the south bank. In the late 1800s, this mill was owned by Record Spaulding and was operated by Zenas B. Small. They bought a heavy engine because there was often insufficient water power to run both mills. This venture failed. Other owners have been John and Turner Peterson, Fred Read, Charles Read, and Forrest Read. The latter spent

his lifetime at the mill. In 1954, Forrest Read, then an old man, sold the mill to a Mr. Snelling who soon sold it to Warren Demers. Demers ran it for twenty years with water and diesel power. On September 22, 1975, Gordon Wilder, the present owner, bought the historic mill site and buildings. He replaced beams and supports and recribbed the dam with oak cut on a nearby hill, perhaps where the first builders obtained their lumber. The eighteenth century mill site stands as a monument to the earliest settlers.

The same year that plans were made for the mill on the Blow-Me-Down, the proprietors chose the falls on Blood's Brook in Meriden as the mill site in the eastern end of town. Meeting again at Joseph Kimball's house on October 29, 1768, they voted to give 100 acres adjoining the falls on Blood's Brook as incentive for building a sawmill and a gristmill. John Stevens, Thomas Gallup, and Benjamin Chapman formed a committee to work with Benjamin Kimball to build the mills. On May 10, 1770, they voted a two-year extension for Kimball beginning on the following November 1. Progress was slow, possibly because of shortage of iron. On November 20, 1772, the proprietors voted another extension of five years to complete his gristmill. It appears that a sawmill had been built, but the gristmill was not completed until 1778.

Tumbling water over rocks and ledges in a steep-sided ravine made Blood's Brook well-suited to provide water power. It is not surprising that there have been at least three dams and several mills near this stretch of fast water.

The first recorded map in the Plainfield town records is the survey of the road through what is now Meriden Village (c. 1780). This map shows the Kimball mills and indicates that a mill stood on each side of Blood's Brook. Although Benjamin Kimball conveyed this land to his son Daniel, no mention is made of the mill buildings.

Sometime after 1808, Ebenezer Hadley became owner of the Kimball mill property.

The first mention of the gristmill is in a deed dated February 14, 1816, when Daniel Kimball conveyed the property to Timothy Flanders, for the sum of \$440. The description of the property was as follows, "one and a half acres of land on the westerly side of the brook, beginning at the second post of the Tenter Barrs until it strikes Joseph Taylor's line near the gristmill, then to the first corner."

The "Tenter Barrs" were used in the preparing of the wool. After wool was spun and woven into cloth at home, it was taken to the "clothiers" for dressing and finishing. The first step in dressing the cloth was to wash and shrink it. While it was still wet, it was stretched on the "tenter frame or bars" to dry, so it would be all the same width. The "tenter frame" had nails on the edges, and the wool was stretched and hitched to those nails, with a paddlelike tool, which also had nails in the end of it. The paddle was called a "tenter hook." This technology is the source of the phrase to be worried or "on tenter hooks."

From February 1816 until May 1817, there were great changes in the business. On May 25, 1817, "Timothy Flanders of Plainfield in the County of Cheshire

and State of New Hampshire, clothier," conveyed to "Thomas Johnson, Husbandman for \$400, the one and a half acres on the westerly side of the brook, beginning at an apple tree standing in the south east corner of my orchard...Also one half of all the remainder of my land and one half of my fulling mill standing on the premises...Reference is made to the deed I received from Daniel Kimball, Esq." The early Sullivan County deeds were damaged by fire and parts of each page were destroyed.

On May 16, 1830, Thomas Johnson, John W. Johnson, and Jacob Colby sold the mills to James Smith and John Bryant for \$2,000. The mill site was one acre on the west side of the brook and the same amount on the east side. Sometimes the two parcels were sold as a unit and at other times were divided. Always, the rights and privileges of the use of the dam and water was conveyed. In 1830, the land on the west side of the brook was deeded, starting at an apple tree by the old fulling mill and running westerly to include the old shop. It gave the "new gristmill lately erected by Adams and Morton, on the east side of the brook" as one of the points of reference. This deed included with the acre of land, a carding machine, one picker, one screw and plate, two shearing machines, and one napping machine.

At this time, spinning and weaving of woolen cloth and flannel was still occasionally done in the home, but the carding of the wool and the dressing of the cloth, after it was woven, was taken to the "clothing mill."

In 1843, Bryant and Smith sold the mills to Abraham and Joseph Spencer. The mills again changed hands in 1852, when Ebenezer Hadley purchased the mills for \$1,500. This deed calls for land and building, a carding mill, cloth work, and machinery, on the west side of the brook and a sawmill and gristmill with one run of stones, on the east side. The Sullivan County Map of 1860, shows a sawmill, gristmill and blacksmith shop on the east side. By April 5, 1862, Jethro Hadley and his wife owned the mills, and they sold to Philip Carr.

After the death of Philip Carr, his wife Persis, acting as administrator, sold the mills at auction, in 1869, to settle the estate. William and George H. Moore purchased the western part, that included certain buildings containing a "cloth work and machinery and tools, said buildings (carding and cloth works) now contains a portable gristmill." This is the first reference of a gristmill on the west side. Under the same date, Persis Carr conveyed the east side to Dimick Baker, which contained the sawmill. She reserved the shoe shop that stood on the sawmill lot. This little building stood on the old road near the house now occupied by Bruce Baird (1991). In August 1879, William and George H. Moore bought the sawmill from Dimick Baker.

Soon after the Moores owned the mill, William Moore locked up the gristmill one evening and hung the key under the clock shelf at home. During the night, a great storm washed away the mill. When morning came, all that was left of the mill was the key! It hung under the clock shelf until 1937, when his niece and heir, Alice (Moore) Cuddy, gave the key to a neighbor. The granite

mill stones can still be seen in the brook below the mill site.

A new mill was erected on a much higher foundation and probably at this time, turbines were installed for power in both the gristmill and sawmill. The new gristmill had "one run of stones and a work shop under the same roof." The gristmill section was in the north end of the one story plus basement building. George H. Moore had a woodworking shop in the south end of the building. There was also a cider mill.

A second set of granite stones were put into the brook and the Moores had a pair of French burr stones that were in use until the end of the need for grinding grain.

The bridge at the mill was an open bridge that ran from the ledge under the present covered bridge, to the west side, on a low foundation, making a steep approach on either side. When the present covered bridge was built, it was raised about fifteen feet over the old bridge, making it possible to drive under the bridge to the mill. (The Covered Bridge has been raised twice and is now about two feet higher than when it was built in 1880.) At the west end of the bridge and on the south side of the road, there was a water trough maintained by the town for the benefit of the animals that drew logs and grain to the mills. The spring can still be seen part way up the bank.

After William Moore's death, George Moore sold his undivided half interest in the mills to the Widow Margaret Moore for \$1,000. The next owner was William True. Later Bert West became the miller and on January 1, 1900, the deed speaks of "a saw mill recently built on the easterly side." This must record the change from an up-and-down saw to a new circular saw.

In a taped interview, Myrtie (West) Weeden Barker recalled that her father bought the gristmill, which was on the west bank of the brook, about 1898. There was no other gristmill operating in town at that time. She added that her father built a sawmill on the opposite side of the brook to meet the demand for lumber. The dam itself was under the bridge, and a road came down around under the bridge to the mill from upstream on the east bank. Myrtie remembered best the production of shingles. As a little girl, she had to help pack them.

After grain was shipped into New England from the west, there was less need for a gristmill. The sawmill continued to operate until the first quarter of this century. There must have been some trouble with the turbine, for the sawmill was converted to a gasoline engine for power.

The gristmill building fell into disrepair and the very heavy snowfall in the winter of 1935-1936, collapsed the roof. At that time, all the machinery was still in the gristmill. The saw, arbors, and carriage had been removed from the sawmill. Just before World War II, there was a great demand for scrap iron that was sent to Japan. James P. Cuddy, who owned the mills at that time, sold all the metal—turbines, crown wheels, shafting, housing, and pulleys—for scrap. Soon all the buildings had vanished.

The main dam, built by Benjamin Kimball, was just below the covered bridge.

It was made of huge boulders laid across the ledge. On top of this was log cribbing with planks on top. The socket that held the end log can still be seen in the retaining wall on the west side. There is also a row of iron pins across the ledge that held a large timber that supported the flume box, which supplied water to the gristmill turbine. When the dam was at its height, it impounded water well beyond the property now owned by Bruce Baird (1991). The pound was always a favorite place for swimming.

The dam fell into disuse and was damaged by a series of spring floods. In the mid-1950s, high water caused the Carlson dam (Lafayette Noda's property, 1991) to break. The sudden rush of water was more than the remaining dam could withstand. After some 170 years, the old Kimball dam was gone. Many of the large boulders that made the dam can still be seen below the present swimming hole.

There was another dam about one-tenth of a mile below the bridge. In the first decade of this century, James P. Cuddy, who owned the land along this section of the brook, conceived the idea of building a dam and hydro-electric plant. At this time, Mr. Cuddy owned the Moses Chellis farm on High Street, which had a stand of old growth hemlock. He cut these trees and built a log crib dam at a point where there are shear ledges on both sides of the brook. Some of these logs were three feet on the butts. The dam was built to a height of about twenty feet. It impounded water clear up the pool below the first dam. After Mr. Cuddy completed his dam, he petitioned the Public Utility Commission to furnish electricity for the village of Meriden and vicinity. At about the same time, Harold W. Chellis also petitioned the Public Utility Commission to build an electric line from Poverty Lane in Lebanon to Meriden. The Public Utility Commission felt that Mr. Cuddy's dam could not impound enough water to generate electricity for the needs of Meriden and the franchise was given to the Meriden Light and Power Company.⁴¹

The second or Cuddy dam was never used other than for a great place to fish and swim. It was finally washed out at the same time as the Kimball dam.

About a half mile downstream from the gristmill, Joseph Kimball, brother of Benjamin Kimball, operated a sawmill. On February 6, 1797, Joseph Kimball deeded fifty acres of land to his son, Benjamin. The first point of reference in the deed states "beginning at a stake and stones, eight rods northeast from the sawmill owned by me." On the Sullivan County map of 1860, it is referred to as Bryant's sawmill.

Upstream from the Baptist Pool, a sawmill owned by Levi and George Bryant was operated by Simon French.

A third long-lived sawmill site was on the Blow-Me-Down in the southwestern part of town where the brook and the town line run close together near the covered bridge at Squag City. Blancha Daniels wrote in 1920, "Another old mill is the Freeman Mill...When it was built, it was wholly in Plainfield, but now since the town line was changed in 1888, it is almost wholly in Cornish."⁴² The change was minor, and the current town line still passes through the mill

pond area, although the pond itself vanished when the old dam finally collapsed. For many years, this mill was owned and operated by various members of the Freeman family and their business associates. An 1805 map of Cornish shows Freeman Mills right on the line. Daniel Freeman, who had settled in Plainfield in 1782, willed the sawmill property to his son in 1806. Similar to the other mills, a companion gristmill was situated on the opposite bank, in this case, in Cornish.

John Freeman, a long-lived, prosperous, cantankerous bachelor was involved with this mill for years. He installed a circular saw to replace the older up-and-down saw about the time of the Civil War. Because of its location a couple of miles from Plainfield Village, this mill supplied much lumber for the building of houses and barns in the early days. Careful examination of the site, on the east bank of the Blow-Me-Down, still shows its location.

David Read's account books document a grist mill established about 1816 on the cross cut from Mill Village to the emerging settlement at the Plain.⁴³ Apparently, the gristmill at Mill Village was not in operation, and Read saw a need to provide a gristmill for the two hamlets. The mill was built just off Daniels Road, as it is now known, east of the bank of the Blow-Me-Down. The water was carried by a small canal around the shoulder of the hill from a dam built on the stream near Stage Road. Over the years, the mill passed into the hands of Jacob Read, son of David, and then to Ham Gilson, son-in-law of Jacob.

There were other water-powered saw and gristmills in Plainfield about which less is now known. Their traces are nearly obliterated by time and modern construction. For example, Beaver Brook, north of Plainfield Village, had two different mill sites long ago. One was by Pierce Road, and the dam for this mill was on the steep stretch of water in Ward's Woods. The water was ditched to the foot of the slope and then westerly to the mill itself. The second mill on Beaver Brook was near the property now owned by the Baldwins on Old County Road (1991). This mill was bought in the mid-1800s by John and Turner Peterson from Charles Read, George Read's father. They sold to "Bony" Brocklebank, whose name appears at that location on the 1892 map of Plainfield.

In the first years of the town, when settlement was planned for the center of town, a small mill was at the mouth of Mud Pond, near the projected village. A long vanished mill was on Blood's Brook in Coryville near the sharp bend in the modern road. East Plainfield also had a mill on Great Brook. A mill stood on Blow-Me-Down Brook off Stage Road on the Burr place (Jay Waldner, 1991). Merrit Penniman owned and operated this mill, which was washed away in the early 1900s. No doubt there were others, too.

Upright, framed saws, which operated in a vertical position and left distinctive kerf marks on boards were used in all early mills. After the Civil War, circular saws gradually came into use and slowly replaced the uprights. The new century brought a switch to steam-powered mills, but some mills used water power or both in the 1900s.

Two steam-powered mills were located in Meriden. Silsby Mill was just east



Silsby Mill, Meriden, about 1910. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

of Michael McNamara's house (1991) in Meriden, south of the road. This mill sawed quantities of lumber cut in Corbin's Park and drawn "down off the mountain" with horses. The boards were then drawn to the "cars" in the railroad yards at White River Junction by way of the Brook Road.⁴⁴

Then, in 1928, the late John McNamara, Sr., bought and learned to run a steam sawmill. After a bad wind storm, a farmer in Meriden had complained to Mr. McNamara that there was no place to get logs sawed from trees that had been blown down. Mr. McNamara's diary entry for March 1, 1928, stated "we worked in the sawmill all day and I think we are ready to run." At times the mill was quite busy. It was operated solely for custom work and not as a lumber yard until it was sold in the late 1940s.

Warren Demers invented a portable sawmill. It was a conventional sawmill joined to the frame of a thirty-five passenger bus. Mr. Demers had planned his invention for twenty years and finally started building it in 1955. He felt it would save woodlot owners the cost of hauling logs to a mill. They would also be able to keep the sawdust that the mill owner usually kept. The mill could handle logs as long as twenty feet and thirty-six inches across. To work it, Demers would posi-

tion himself about mid-way on its forty-foot length. (A hinged device allowed the last five feet to swing up, to conform with highway regulations.) He would then turn the key on the Pierce-Arrow motor that ran the saw. The logs ran along two rails. A hand gear would send the piece of timber past the forty-eight-inch circular blade.⁴⁵ Mr. Demers claimed the sawmill could do fifty-miles-per-hour on a good highway. However, a local resident remembers Mr. Demers, during the early 1970s, driving the sawmill down Route 12A at a much slower pace.

Gordon LaPan purchased the portable sawmill from Mr. Demers and continues to operate it. The sawmill has the capacity to put out 6,000 board feet in one day. He will set up his mill on a site late in the day so that he can start cutting early the next morning. He says, "I need two men to help, one to roll on and one to take away, but it doesn't hurt to have half the town there."⁴⁶

Whether it be a few blocks of foundation stone hidden in the brush or the restored mill site at Mill Village, traces of mills remind us of their lasting importance in the development of Plainfield. They are a testimony to the men who planned, promoted, built, and ran them.⁴⁷

Stores

• *Plainfield*

On December 13, 1797, Daniel Kingsbury received a liquor license "to sell at his store on the Main Street in Plainfield for the ensuing year."

Daniel Kingsbury and Albe Cady were licensed to sell liquor at their store on March 23, 1799. John Harris was licensed to sell liquor and to mix it on August 25, 1800. Nathaniel Garland was licensed to sell liquor at his store on September 17, 1800. Turner Peterson was licensed to sell by retail at his store on March 14, 1801. Also licensed were Adam Clark and Silas Read in 1806, John Harris and Kimball in 1810, and Freeman Chase in 1811.

In 1820, Luther Parker had a store in the brick house at the corner of Westgate Road and Main Street.

In 1825, Baley and Gilson had a store in Plainfield at an unknown location.

Between 1827 and 1830, Luther Parker and Ai Read ran a store known as Luther Parker & Co. In 1830, they dissolved and each had their own store. Read's store was where Raymond Morin's house (1991) is on Route 12A.

William Ward bought the Francis Smith place (William McNamara, 1991) on the River Road and had a store near the ferry between 1827 and 1832. He had a liquor license. He was also in business with one of the two Silas Reads in town.

About 1820, Totty Sargent built a house for a store and home on Main Street, where Marge Spalding lived (1989).

Norman J. Harris was issued a liquor license, October 8, 1830.

Asa A. D. Kingsbury had a store and tailor shop in Plainfield Village in 1843.

In 1847, Benjamin C. Smith started out in the brick house on the corner of Westgate Road and moved to the old cabinet shop across from the General



"Plainfield Fantasy" by Fiske Boyd, woodcut, 1940s. Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel.
Courtesy Hillary Sundell.

Store (1991). He had two licenses: one to sell medicine and one to sell liquor. He also carried general merchandise and furniture. The building burned.

Frank Daniels built a store in 1850 and "keeps neat store, carried good stock and does a business of about \$15,000 per annum."

Between 1852 and 1866, Benjamin F. Ward (son of William Ward) had a store on the site of the Philip Read Memorial Library (1991). He later bought the house now owned by Doris Plummer (1991). This business was later operated in 1869 by Hall Brothers, between 1871 and 1889 by William Hall, and in 1890 by Wheeler and Whitaker. John H. Whitaker took over the store in 1891. The store burned in 1902 and he built the present general store. Whitaker left the business in 1911.

Lewin and Lawrence had a groceries and meat business (and meat cart) in 1908. Benny Lewin also ran a meat cart in the 1930s.

The Plainfield General Store was owned by Frank J. Chadbourne between 1911 and 1921, E. W. Bridgford between 1921 and 1923, Stephen F. Plummer between 1923 and 1961, Franklin "Jim" Barto between 1961 and 1973, Robert and Sue Perkins between 1973 and 1976, Norman and Linda Patch between 1976 and 1979, Martin and Joanne Gradijan between 1979 and 1984, Raymond and Christine Morin between 1984 and 1987, and Lawrence and Loraine St. Aubin from 1987 to the present.

Between 1962 and 1970, Harold Stone ran a meat market on Haywood Road.⁴⁸

Between 1980 and 1984, Sawyer's Convenience Store on Westgate Road

sold groceries, cigarettes, candy and general merchandise. Before the Convenience Store opened, Sonny Sawyer sold guns at that location.

- *East Plainfield*

The earliest record of a store in East Plainfield was in 1795. It was owned by Nathaniel Garland, and he received a license to sell liquor in 1800.

D. & E. Emerson's store was near the corner of Croydon Turnpike in 1827. A liquor license was issued to Daniel Emerson on September 1, 1830.

Orin Morgan was issued a license "to sell at the store of Conant, Morgan & Co. at the east end of town" in 1846.

Sam Harrington had a store on Route 120 during the early twentieth century (Kenneth Goodrow, 1991).

In the 1920s, Mrs. Currier had a store where the family still lives. There was a shop in a house owned by Claflin where Carter's overalls were made.

- *Meriden*

Daniel Kimball and his nephew, John Bryant operated a general store, located on the west side of the Meriden common. They bought local produce and shipped it to Boston. They returned with goods and supplies that were needed by the residents and students as well as luxury items. The building was probably built in the last of the eighteenth or early nineteenth century, and is shown on Dr. Frost's map as standing in 1808.

John Bryant's name first appears in the Plainfield tax inventory in 1806, as having \$1,000 stock-in-trade. Daniel Kimball was assessed for \$1,600 in building and unimproved land and for \$2,000 money at interest that same year. It appears that John Bryant was responsible for the operation of the store while Mr. Kimball attended to other interests. Later, after Daniel Kimball's death, the store was operated under the ownership of Levi Bryant, brother of John Bryant.

A license to sell liquor was given to Levi Bryant on September 1, 1829, and 1830. In 1841, Levi found it necessary to borrow money. As was customary at this time before banking as we know it, he borrowed \$3,546.65 from four local men: Merrit Farnum, George Bryant, Samuel Duncan and Abraham Spencer. As security on this note, Levi Bryant gave his stock-in-trade as collateral. A complete inventory of the store was given, item by item, of goods for sale or trade. This document gives insight into the contents of a village store in 1841. The items are listed shelf by shelf. There are 309 entries in the inventory, starting with 1 1/2 gallons of castor oil. Many items were for the home and shop: lace edge plates, tea sets, black tin teapots, German silver tableware, weaver's reeds, 1,230 pounds of tea, 30 pounds of cocoa (but no coffee), spices, raisins, rice, sugar by the barrel and by the loaf. For the ladies, there were 80 vials of essence, Highland shawls, silk shawls, and handkerchiefs. For the gentleman, shaving soap, ten pairs of walking shoes and seventeen pairs of "Gentleman's pumps" were listed. For Kimball Union Academy students, 460 bound books, 43 bound Greek and Latin books, sanding boxes and sand,

ink, paper, candy, and English walnuts. There were 2,000 pounds of cheese and 100 bushels of potatoes taken in trade for shipment to Boston.

The greatest surprise is the amount of yard goods stocked by the Bryant store. The inventory lists 3,710 yards of a wide variety of cloth. There was silk, velvet, linen, nankin (coarse linen), alpin, dimity, gingham, and much more. The largest amount of any one type was 1,300 yards of calico valued at \$156, 150 yards of cassinum at \$150, 437 yards of broad cloth sheeting at \$37.96, 317 yards of shirting at \$19.02. For the home, there were 233 rolls of paper hangings for \$46.60.⁴⁹

The store was converted into the girls' dormitory known as the Bryant Block and later burned. Today all that is left is the cellar which is the sunken garden by the Congregational parish house.

The brick building (Michael McNamara, 1991) across from Fifield's Tavern was a store between about 1830 and 1850.

Alonzo Winkley held a license to sell liquor between 1847 and 1853.

James Bean and James Fifield sold liquor at their store in 1847.

Darius Moulton ran a store with Perley Roberts in 1886. The store was west of the Meriden Town Hall. The first floor was a store and the family lived upstairs. When the building burned in 1908, they remodeled the Deacon Morrill cabinetshop.

In 1886, a hat shop was run by Henry Wells (Richard Swett, 1991). Later he made kid shoes and slippers.

In 1908, the Curtis G. Doyle Store, also called Peoples' Cash Store was located at the intersection of Main Street and Bonner Road. Mr. Doyle was the editor of the *Weekly Enterprise* at that location. The building burned.

On July 28, 1909, Frank Torrey advertised in the *Weekly Enterprise* that he "would be in the village and will deliver fresh fish from his wagon."

In 1909, the store owned by Moulton and Rogers was purchased by John Bryant for remodeling as what came to be called the old Brown Schoolhouse.

John F. Cann operated the Bryant store in 1909 and 1910.⁵⁰

Between 1910 and 1920, Fred Rogers (Cloverland Farm) had a meat cart and delivered to customers on Tuesday and Friday. Will Westgate drove the cart for him.⁵¹

From 1860 till 1872, Converse Cole operated a store at the present location of the Meriden Store and Post Office. Then, Clark and Stickney ran it for one year. Later Jenney and Carr and Asa Jenney ran it alone from 1874 to 1876.

Charles W. Cummings ran the store from 1877 to 1891. In 1891, Fred Wheeler was the owner. The firm of Chellis and Stickney operated the store from 1893 to 1905 when Morse and Mason took it over until 1912. Carter's Overalls were made in the upstairs of the Morse and Mason Store. An advertisement in the *Weekly Enterprise* shows that E. M. Chapman cut hair at the Morse and Mason Store on Saturdays: hair cuts, 25 cents and shave, 10 cents. Chas. D. Morse bought out Mason and operated it as C. D. Morse Store from 1913 to 1919, selling the store in 1920 to A. Hayes Jones. After 1921, it was



A. Hayes Jones store, Meriden, about 1890. The Meriden Grange met here before the present hall was built. The building burned in 1935. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

run under the management of A. Hayes Jones and Son, when Wallace Jones joined his father in the business. The Jones' store burned in 1935, and they rebuilt on the same lot. Wallace Jones delivered groceries with a large broad sled. In 1957, G. Gardiner, Jr., and Kathryn MacLeay purchased the store and operated it under the name of MacLeay's General Store. The MacLeays had a delivery route until 1962. In 1974, Joseph Salsbury purchased the store and ran it under the name of Meriden Country Store until 1989. He leased the building to Gretchen Taylor between 1987 and 1989. The store was closed for a few months, and then in 1990 leased to Lenore Kimball. It is now called the Meriden Village Store.

In 1919, Rob Chapman had a store on Chellis Road (Bradford Hunt, 1991). Rob carried general staples, tobacco, fresh meat, fresh fish, and penny candy. Local residents, who grew up in Meriden, remember that Rob was very generous with the candy if they did not have the money. He also delivered house to house.

- *Mill Village*

A license was issued to Turner Peterson by the selectmen on March 14, 1801, "to sell foreign distilled spirits by retail at his store for the ensuing year."

This store was located in the Homer Cole house (Timothy Rub, 1991).

Advertisements about businesses in the *Weekly Enterprise*:

September 9, 1909: L. C. Mason; grain, corn meal, oats, gasoline, lumber, and wood.

September 9, 1909: Isaac F. Bonner; sold grain at his home on Bonner Road "Terms Cash"; he also was a stage driver.

March 10, 1910: W. S. Kimball, Meriden; cleans, mends, and oils harness.

March 10, 1910: J. F. Cann; "Don't forget that I am selling most everything in dry goods at cost."

Advertisements from *The Kimball Union*:

1895, 1898, 1899, 1901: Hastings' Livery; run by G. S. Hastings, Prop.; boarded horses, livery, and feed store; stable in the rear of Richards Hall on south Main Street (Kimball Union Academy snack bar, 1991).

1895, 1899, 1901: Chellis and Stickney Store; Meriden dry goods, groceries, hardware, medicine, cutlery, drugs, oils, paint, garden seeds, dried fruit, fresh candies.

1895: Moulton and Robert's Store; dry goods, groceries, and hardware.

1895, 1899: F. DeF. Baker; dealer in horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, calves, poultry; livery and feed store. He lived on the site of the present (1991) Donald Garfield residence. After the building burned, he continued his business where Douglas Fraser lives (1991).

There were several enterprising students at Kimball Union Academy (ads in *Kimball Union*):

1893, 1894: E. D. Brown; sold stationery.

1897, 1898: H. A. McElwain; stationery and agent for athletic goods; in the Academy building.

1897: C. N. Davie; advertised that he carried all grades of standard books.

1897: J. O. Cook; Room 14, Academy Building; sold Waterman's Fountain Pens.

1897: T. W. Gordon; stationery and Century Pens.

1899: McElwain and Tottingham; stationery, athletic goods.⁵²

Commerce, 1900–1991

• *Present-day Farms and Food Products*

Like agricultural operations along the Connecticut River, farms elsewhere in Plainfield changed rapidly after about 1970. New technology combined with changing markets to spur establishment of new farm enterprises, such as Lamplighter Farm on Route 120, where Harold and Sylvia Clark developed a greenhouse, vegetable, and roadside stand enterprise; Hill Farm, established by Walter and Elizabeth Backofen on Methodist Hill and specializing in pick-your-own fruit and Christmas trees; Noda Farm on Bean Road with extensive blueberry production and Christmas trees; and Stesdahl Farm on River Road where Arnold and Viola Torkelson sell perennials.

Charles and Sheila Stone reestablished a dairy operation on his ancestral farm on Whitaker Road in 1974 that eventually grew into one of the largest and most productive in Sullivan County. Stephen and Gretchen Taylor started a sheep farm at Mill Hollow in 1970 that evolved into a dairy enterprise. The Otis Jordan family operated a Kenyon Road dairy for many years, and in early 1990 leased the milking facilities to a Newport family, the Delaneys.

Much Plainfield land in the 1980s was devoted to production of forage, principally hay and silage corn to feed the town's dairy herds and the sizable and diverse assortment of horses and livestock maintained on various small farms. Major growers of hay for commercial sale included John Meyette on the Plain, Ken Tashro on Route 120, David Stockwell in the Willow Brook district, and James Griffiths on Harriman Road.

Several major horse farms were established during this period, including the Michael and Sue Zayatz stable and riding center (M.N.M.'S Stables) on Westgate Road, the Peter and Lynn Martin saddle horse breeding and training farm on Grantham Mountain Road, and the Carl Moulton stable and training center for competition and show workhorses off Route 120 in East Plainfield.

The agriculture found along the River Road in 1991 reflects the rapid population growth of the Upper Valley area since 1970. The River Road's proximity to this growth and the well-drained stone-free soils along the river have fostered several related enterprises.

Starting at the north end of River Road and proceeding southward, the first business is Riverbend Veterinary Clinic. In 1979 Kenneth and Barbara LeClair (daughter of William and Hazel McNamara) purchased the Steve Kimball property at the intersection of River Road and Route 12A. A veterinary clinic was opened in August 1981. The business presently employs two veterinarians and two technicians. The practice handles animals of all sizes with a specialty in equine breeding.

Abutting Riverbend Veterinary Clinic to the south is Edgewater Farm. The heirs of Earle Colby sold the farm in 1974 to Lockwood and Anne Sprague (daughter of William and Hazel). The Spragues have developed Edgewater Farm into three general horticultural enterprises. In the spring, they raise bedding

plants and perennials from their ten greenhouses on River Road. In conjunction with Riverview Farm, they raise strawberries. On nearly forty acres, they raise a wide variety of vegetables, asparagus, and fall raspberries which are marketed at their roadside stand.

The next farm to the south is Riverview Farm owned by Paul and Nancy Franklin. After initially raising strawberries on Paul's parents' farm on Underhill Road in Meriden and then on land leased nearby from Wallace Williams on Route 120, the Franklins purchased this farm from John and Annabelle Roeber in August 1981. In conjunction with Edgewater Farm, they raise ten to twelve acres of strawberries that are sold on a pick-your-own basis. Seven acres of apple trees were planted in 1983. The orchard is open for pick-your-own in the fall and other seasonal crops such as cider, pumpkins, squash, peas, grapes, honey, and ornamental gourds and corn are sold. After the collapse of the large dairy barn on the farm in January 1982, two smaller buildings were constructed. One serves as a retail barn for the pick-your-own operations and the other houses the cider press and cold storage for the apples.

The next farm south is known as Mac's Happy Acres and was purchased by William "Bill" and Hazel McNamara from Julia Skinner (daughter of the Ward family) in 1950. At that time, there were eight dairy farms shipping milk from the top of Black Hill to the southern end of River Road. Presently Mac's Happy Acres is one of two dairy farms on the western side of Plainfield and one of only four in town. The farm consists of 800 to 900 acres in all. Over 300 acres (including some leased land) are in forage crops; 108 acres in silage corn and the balance is mostly alfalfa hay. The farm has a total of approximately 120 cattle, 75 of which are the milking and dry cows. The farm is also well known in the northeast for raising, training, and racing trotting horses. They presently board fifty horses. Until 1989, Tom McNamara (son) raced their horses at such tracks as Saratoga, Yonkers, and Scarboro. The farm is now operated by Bill and Hazel along with their sons Thomas and Patrick and their respective spouses, Claire and Mary, and by son-in-law Benjamin Judy, Joyce's husband.⁵³

The Lamplighter Farm is located on Route 120 south of Meriden Village and is managed by Sylvia and Harold Clark. They raise vegetable and flower plants to sell each spring, and now sell vegetables, jams and jellies, potted flowers, syrup, salad dressings, and yarn at their stand. The Clarks also raise sheep and sell the wool in Maine in exchange for dyed yarn.

Al and Lib Backofen operate Hill Farm on Methodist Hill. They have apple orchards, blueberries, and Christmas trees in a pick-your-own operation.

Wond-R-View Farm has been owned by the Jordan family over 100 years. On October 26, 1990, the New Hampshire State Grange honored Otis "Bill," Alice, and Raymond Jordan for their "Century Farm." (A Century Farm is one that has been operated by the same family for at least 100 years.) They have raised cattle (both milking and beef), shipped milk, made maple syrup, and gardened. William Riley Jordan was the first in the family to farm the property in 1850. His son Darwin took over and raised Durham cattle and sheep. Third genera-

tion Otis Jordan, Sr., left the farm as a young adult to earn a teaching degree from Brown University. However, when the call came for help back at the farm, he returned to take charge. While managing the dairy, Otis taught school for neighborhood children. The farm's woodshed served as a one-room schoolhouse. In 1960, the present Jordan family went to the bulk tank system, and in 1971 they added a free stall barn. Bill retired from farming in 1986 due to ill health. (He received a heart transplant in 1988.) Raymond still maintains a few head of cattle, and the farm is now leased to a couple who are again operating a dairy.

The Kinsley Walker family moved from New Jersey in 1946 and purchased the farm at the top of Sanborn Road which they named Timber Top. The family, and then son James, ran a holstein dairy operation until 1989.

Charles and Sheila Stone purchased the Stone Farm, where he had grown up, on Whitaker Road in 1974. They began farming with 25 cows and shipped 1,500 pounds of milk every other day. In 1976, they built a large barn to accommodate their growing herd. In 1991, they have 160 milking cows and ship 13,000 pounds of milk every other day. They have three full-time employees and several part-time. In 1980, they began reclaiming ninety acres of land. They raise 220 acres of corn and cut many acres of hay from their own and leased land.

In the 1970s, Stephen and Gretchen Taylor operated the Taylor farm primarily as a sheep farm, reaching a high at one point of about 250 breeding ewes. Later they shifted into dairy and developed, in the 1980s, into a sixty-cow operation. Their sons have now joined them in operating the farm.

- *Garfield's Smokehouse, Inc.*

Garfield's Smokehouse, located on Main Street in Meriden, was started in 1986. The president is Donald Garfield and the smokemeister is Andy Morandi. They started by selling smoked cheeses. The company now smokes ham, bacon, turkey, capons, sausage, and beef jerky.

- *Maple Mountain Farms*

Maple Mountain Farms was started in Cornish, and in 1962, the owner, Merrill N. Thompson, moved to Meriden at the beginning of Stage Road. His smoked and other cheeses are mail ordered and delivered throughout New England and New York State.

- *Hy-On-A-Hill Trout Hatchery*

Gordon "Peanut" Wilder never dreamed that he would go into the trout hatchery business. When the cattle were sold on their farm, Peanut wanted to continue in some type of farm-related business. He and his wife, Fern, decided to stock the farm pond with fifty trout for their own use. They were unable to find a place to buy the trout until locating a hatchery in Massachusetts. They realized that their property was a natural for fish ponds as they had a very good supply of clear water. Moses Pond was above their land and Blow-Me-Down Brook from Grantham Mountain ran through their property. They recognized

the demand for trout and the shortage of suppliers. The Wilders ordered 10,000 trout eggs. The first year they tried to raise them in mayonnaise jars in the cellar. Something went awry with the chemicals, and they lost all of the eggs. The following year they purchased 25,000 eggs, and all went well. Now they purchase over 100,000 eggs annually and raise them to the size of four-inch to seventeen-inch trout. They have a hatchery building and several ponds.⁵⁴

• *Jenney Potato Business*

William "Bill" Jenney began his potato business in 1942. He planted ten acres. Within six years, he was planting eighty-five acres and buying potatoes from local farms. He had a large warehouse with a sorting and packing area just off Route 12A behind his home. Twenty or more people were hired to harvest. His potatoes were delivered throughout New England. The business closed in the 1960s.⁵⁵

• *Andress Sheet Metal and Welding*

John Andress purchased the equipment at the former Patch's Sheet Metal Business in Lebanon and opened a shop at his home on Methodist Hill in October 1989, where he makes custom sheet metal products and duct work.

• *Auctioneers*

William A. Smith began to auction during the early 1960s while he was teaching school. Some of these auctions were held in the Plainfield Town Hall. In 1974, he stopped teaching and purchased the Plainfield Plain schoolhouse for an auction gallery. In 1985, a storage barn was built in the field in front of the gallery. The following year an addition was made to the gallery to enlarge the show room and seating area. Mr. Smith recently dismantled an early nineteenth century house from Grafton, New Hampshire, and rebuilt it near the auction gallery. It is used to show antiques.

"Colonel" Stan Milo began auctioneering in 1969. He retired in 1977 but has continued to auction occasionally as a hobby.

• *Beauty Shops*

Meriden Hairstyling and Entire Family Hair Care is located at the mini mall on Route 120 in Meriden. It was opened in 1988 and is managed by Jody Pardoe. Stage Coach Road Beauty Shoppe was located in East Plainfield and managed by Patricia Swett. She opened her shop in 1970 and discontinued it in 1982.

• *Berwick and Sons, Inc.*

In 1939 Harry Berwick saw the barrels from the shops in Lebanon on the dump. He paid the dump keeper ten cents for each barrel and trucked them to Boston. In 1946 and 1947, the barrels changed from wood to steel, and Berwick started trucking them to New Jersey. Harry had one employee. His two sons also worked with him, and his wife was the bookkeeper and secre-

tary. In 1956, Don Berwick joined in the business full time, and in 1969, purchased the Malden Hauling Business. Now, the Berwicks haul barrels of all sorts. Berwick's two sons and one of his daughters are in the business. They have 38 employees who man the 17 tractors and 168 trailers and travel throughout the northeastern part of the United States.

• *Binary Technology*

Binary Technology was founded in 1982 by Douglas Fraser, who developed and manufactures single board computers and software products. All of their business is mail-order, and they ship items worldwide.

• *Timothy Buzzell and Associates, Inc.*

Timothy Buzzell and Associates, Inc., is located at the corner of Methodist Hill Road and Route 120 in East Plainfield. It was started by Timothy and Linda Buzzell in 1982 and is a consulting civil engineering company. In 1985, Timothy Buzzell and Matt Bonaccorsi began to operate five hydro-electric plants as well as continuing the engineering company.

• *Douglas Carver, Potter*

Carver apprenticed with Jack O'Leary and studied at the Art Center in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and at Alfred University. He started with a shop in the Rogers house on Main Street in 1966 and then moved to the Carver Farm on Brook Road. He had his wheel and kiln in the barn and set up a shop in the corn crib. Doug exhibited at the New Hampshire Arts and Crafts Fair at Sunapee for several years and also sold pottery throughout the state. Carver also taught pottery at Kimball Union Academy in 1981 to 1982.

• *Child Care Services*

Augusta "Grammie Bea" Kilton ran the Twin Cedar Nursery and Kindergarten for fifty years. She began in Lebanon, moved to Plainfield, and then settled in Meriden. She had her nursery school on Route 120 north of Meriden Village for three decades. She was "Grammie Bea" to over 1,000 children and retired in July of 1989, just before her eighty-second birthday.

In 1969 Marcia Swett began a day care center at her home on Main Street in Meriden and in 1984, Jeanne Jekanowski began a child care business at her home on East Main Street in Meriden. These businesses continue today.

Claudine Spencer, of Plainfield Village, was also a long-time provider of child care.

• *Gasoline and Service Stations*

In 1945, Mr. Sherman Manning built a garage building on land that was purchased from John F. McNamara on Route 120. He rented the building to Ray "Skip" Barker and Basil McNamara who started a repair business known as the Meriden Garage. At a later date, Harold "Pete" Pringle joined them.

In early 1946, Basil McNamara sold his interest to Barker and Pringle. Later in the 1940s, Pringle purchased Barker's interest. Pete Pringle ran the garage until his death in January 1976. Pete's son, James, took over the business and ran it until February 13, 1979, when a fire completely demolished the garage.

The property was purchased by Dan Soucy who constructed a larger building and operated under the name of Dan's Garage until 1989. The business was purchased by John H. McNamara, Jr., who renamed the business Meriden Garage.

Another gas and service station was built, about a half mile north of the Baptist Church in Meriden, in the late 1930s or early 1940s, by Charles F. Woodward. He ran it until his son, Ralph, and his wife, Bertha, took it over. After Ralph went into military service, Bertha kept the business. Later it was purchased by Kenneth Hooker who ran it as a welding shop. It is now owned by his son Kevin.

There was a gas station and store on the west side of the road in East Plainfield run by Fred and Laura Currier. They sold Texaco gas. The store was started in 1906 and remained open for at least ten years. The gas pumps remained on the site until the late 1940s or early 1950s.

Mobil gas was sold at the A. Hayes Jones Store (later MacLeay's Store) in Meriden Village until the early 1960s.⁵⁶

George West started an auto repair business specializing in SAAB repair service in 1980. West's Garage is located behind the family residence south of Plainfield on Route 12A. In October of 1981, his father, George W. West, retired from Goodyear in Windsor and joined his son in the business. They expanded their business to repair all makes of automobiles.

Griswold's Garage, located north of Plainfield Village on Route 12A, was owned and operated by Clifford Griswold. The business was sold in 1990.

Plainfield Sales and Service, located on Route 12A south of Plainfield Village, was started in the early 1950s by Sherman Manning of Hartford, Vermont. Several Plainfield residents managed it for Mr. Manning, including Nathan Mace, Harry Caine, Lester Dow, and later Jeff Grobe. In 1981, Ed Mitchell purchased the business. He sells used cars and runs a wrecker service. Ron Burnham has a maintenance shop within the building and repairs and services cars.

Classy Chassis is an auto and body repair shop on Center-of-Town Road. Robert "Bob" Carpenter started it as a full time business in 1987.

Frank Lawrence began auto body work in 1971. Lawrence's Auto Body Shop is located south of Plainfield Village on Route 12A. Five years later, he expanded to full time. He does general body work and mechanical work.

Gas was sold at the Plainfield Store until 1989.

• *GS Trucking Equipment Corporation*

GS Trucking Equipment Corporation was begun in July 1974 by James Gallagher, Sr. The firm sells equipment for trucks, sanitation, rubbish removal, and recycling. They also mount snow plows on trucks. In 1981, James Gallagher, Jr., became president and has continued the business.

• *Hot Grips*

James Hollander invented a way to heat hand grips for snowmobiles and named it Hot Grips. He has three patents registered in the United States and Canada and sells to manufacturers in both countries. He also has a contract to ship Hot Grips to Yamaha Corporation in Japan for use on their snowmobiles. He moved his business to Methodist Hill in September 1989 and has three employees.

• *J. B. Accounting Service*

The J. B. Accounting Service is owned by Judith "Judy" Belyea and is located on Route 120 in East Plainfield. She and her two employees do general book-keeping and tax returns.

• *Jewell Resources, Inc.*

Jewell Resources, Inc., is owned by Max Jewell and Judy Belyea. They started in 1973 and now have six trucks and two metal crushers. They have a contract with the New Hampshire Resource Recovery Association and travel to all the towns that do scrap metal recycling.

• *KDL Associates*

KDL Associates is a management consultant business. David Kimball has his office at his home on Brook Road in Meriden. It is a marketing, manufacturing, and financial consulting business that was started in 1989. There are three partners in the business and another office is located in Boston.

• *Kennels*

The Dog-E-Motel was run by Bernard and Mildred Eaton in Plainfield on Westgate Road in the early 1950s. They had a kennel where people could board their dogs while they were away on vacation. They discontinued the business when they retired in 1970. Later, the Upper Valley Humane Society located here.

Northeastern Kennels was established in 1985 and is located north of Plainfield Village on Route 12A. It is run by Gregory Whitehead and Carolyn Petell. They specialize in German Shepards, but train, board, and groom all breeds of dogs.

• *La Galeria*

Shortly after Alma Gilbert purchased the Maxfield Parrish property, The Oaks, and opened the Parrish Museum, she opened an art gallery in Hanover, New Hampshire, and named it La Galeria after an art gallery she owns in California. She exhibited and sold original art by Maxfield Parrish, Rembrandt, the Wyeth family, and others. In the summer of 1980, Mrs. Gilbert built a two-story art gallery on the grounds of The Oaks and moved La Galeria there. The gallery and museum closed at the same time.



Studio of Maxfield Parrish, Plainfield, 1985. Photo by Susan Woodward.
Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

• *Maxfield Parrish Museum*

The Maxfield Parrish Museum opened on June 24 and 25, 1978, with great fanfare. There was such enthusiasm and so many reservations that two identical programs were held on successive nights to accommodate the crowds.

Maurice and Alma Gilbert had purchased the Parrish property with plans for a museum dedicated to Maxfield Parrish located in his studio. Alma Gilbert was an art dealer in San Mateo, California, who specialized in Parrish's art. She was able to secure the loan of many original paintings for museum exhibits: Parrish's most famous "Daybreak" and "Garden of Allah," "Ecstasy," "Study for the Plainfield Town Hall Backdrop," among many others.

There were as many as twenty-five volunteer docents (guides) and other volunteer staff recruited from the local area. These volunteers kept the museum open for two years. In 1979, a grant of \$28,000 from the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) allowed the hiring of three full-time employees and offered some stability to the operation. The same year, an \$800 grant was received from the New Hampshire Charitable Fund for an oral history program. The New Hampshire Commission for the Arts awarded the Maxfield Parrish Museum a \$980 grant to help sponsor a winter concert

series. Local stores donated display units for posters and books as well as office furniture. During the first year, more than 3,400 visitors toured the museum.

On the evening of February 24, 1979, a disastrous fire destroyed the Oaks. Fortunately, the studio, which housed the museum, was spared. The Gilberts pledged to rebuild along the same general lines of the original house. Architect Stephen P. Tracy of Cornish drew the plans, and work was started in April with the dedication of the new structure in November of the same year.

In the meantime, the Plainfield Church Women hosted a ham and bean supper to support the museum. A concert, held at the Plainfield Town Hall and using the Maxfield Parrish backdrop, was sponsored by the communities of Cornish and Plainfield, with the proceeds going to the museum. A monthly newsletter was printed to inform docents and other interested people of happenings at the museum. As interest grew, donations of prints, books, and other memorabilia were received. But there was no firm leadership, and eventually the volunteer docents became disillusioned. Some local news releases even blamed problems at the museum on a lack of community support which was untrue. The museum was left with virtually no volunteers. Alma Gilbert closed the museum when she filed for bankruptcy in 1985. With the community's protest, the museum collection was legally donated to the Brandywine River Museum in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania.

• *John F. McNamara's Insurance Company*

John F. McNamara applied to the National Grange Liability Company in Keene, New Hampshire, on March 29, 1927, for an agency with an allowed commission of 10 percent. The application was successful, and he recorded in his diary on April 26, 1927, that he is going to try to sell auto liability insurance for the Grange Insurance Company. Later he added home and business insurance as well as extended auto coverage. In 1977, he sold his interest to Keating Insurance of Claremont, after fifty years as an agent.

• *McNamara's Plumbing and Heating*

John F. McNamara's plumbing and heating business started almost as soon as he moved his family to Meriden in 1924. To supplement the farm income, he purchased a manual on the topics of plumbing and heating from a mail order company. The rest of his knowledge was gained from experience. All three of his sons and a son-in-law worked with him at different times. In 1962, he sold the business to his youngest son, John H. McNamara, and retired. John H. McNamara and his sons continued the business until 1990 when he retired.

• *North Country Door, Inc.*

North Country Door, Inc., was started by Robert Sprano and Nathan Cass in February of 1985, south of Meriden Village on Route 120. They made custom cabinet doors. The business expanded in October of 1988 when a new, large building was dedicated to Randall C. Kenyon, a long-time employee. They

now make wainscoting, bathroom vanities, and mirror frames. In 1990, they had seventeen employees.

- *Northeast Wood Products Corporation*

Northeast Wood Products Corporation, known locally as the "Snath Factory," was begun in 1967 on land south of Plainfield Village. At that time, it was the only industry in Plainfield. The factory made snaths, the wooden shafts of scythes. The company was a division of the Dominion Snath Company of Quebec. Plainfield was chosen for the factory because of the amount of white ash that grows locally, the only wood that is used for snaths. Tariff considerations and a favorable tax structure were also important factors. Dominion Snath Company was one of only three such manufacturers in the world. Principal officers were James Maloney and Frederick Daley of Hanover.⁵⁷ This company went out of business in the 1970s.

In 1977, Dick Bates purchased the factory and operated it under the name Bates and Wilkins, Inc. Wilkins was eventually replaced by Dick's brother Howard. By this time, there was only one other snath factory in the United States—in Indiana.

The factory housed an assortment of unique wood-turning machines, some dating to the 1800s. The ash wood used for the snaths had to be free of defects, have a perfectly straight grain, and have the annual growth rings far enough apart to allow the wood to give when it was bent. Only the butt end was used. The log was cut into tapered, straight-grained boards, two and one-quarter inches thick and five feet long, called flitches. From the flitches were cut tapered sticks that measure two and one-quarter inches square at one end and one and three-quarter inches square at the other. Those went into a dowl-ing machine, which rounded off the edges; then the sticks were placed in a steam cabinet until they were pliable enough to bend. After steaming, each stick was placed in a machine that first made a horizontal bend, then a vertical bend, and then pushed the snath into a mold. (This machine was the only one of its kind in the world.) The snath in the mold was placed in a kiln where drying set the bend. After the snath dried, it was run through a "slithering" machine, designed to remove splinters.⁵⁸

Bates and Wilkins shipped thousands of snaths yearly to Australia, Ireland, England, New Zealand, Canada, and Mexico, as well as the United States. During the off-season, the company made walking sticks, souvenir baseball bats, and other wooden items. This business closed during the 1980s.

The building remained empty for several years and was then purchased by John Bassette who rents space to four small woodworking businesses.

- *Northern New England Storage*

Northern New England Storage utilized the former Jenney Potato building which was divided into ten or fifteen storage units by William F. Jenney. When the building burned in 1984, a new building was constructed for stor-

age. William H. Jenney joined his father in the business. Two more large storage buildings have been added.

• *Plainfield Construction Company, Inc.*

Mark H. Wilder handled construction equipment as a boy on his father's farm and helped to build trout ponds. In the late 1980s, he decided to start his own construction business. He excavates ponds, wells, cellar holes, septic systems, and does land clearing, lawns, driveways, and snow plowing.⁵⁹

• *Plainfield Lawnmower Service*

Plainfield Lawnmower Service was owned and operated by Carroll N. Mosher. In 1970, Carroll constructed a new building and assumed an equipment dealership. In 1975, Carroll retired from Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company and became full time. As the business grew, he hired one full-time mechanic and several part-time employees during the summer months. He serviced equipment in a fifty-mile area. In October 1987, he closed the business due to health problems.

• *Plainfield Oil and Don MacLeay Construction*

Don MacLeay was in the oil business with his father and brother in Windsor, Vermont. In 1954, the Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge was closed for renovation, and Don took over the oil customers in New Hampshire. His father and brother retained the Vermont customers.

In 1955, Don purchased the Beckley Lot on Route 12A south of Plainfield Village and built his garage and storage tanks (the location of the Plainfield Post Office in 1991). He and Wendell Reed, who worked for Don many years, delivered oil in Cornish, Meriden, and Plainfield. During the summers, there was not much oil business. Don bought an old bulldozer for \$6,000 and started construction work. He did bulldozing, ditch digging, land clearing, brush chipping, and grading. During the early years, he employed about fifteen men. When Don realized that he enjoyed construction work more than paperwork, he reduced his help. His son Scott worked along with his Dad (even as a five-year-old with a toy dozer and grader). In 1974, Don sold the oil business to Johnson and Dix but continued the construction business, which extended to Hanover, Georges Mills, and Claremont. Don retired in 1990, and Scott now runs the business on a smaller scale.

• *Pyramid Construction Company*

Pyramid Construction Company is a corporation run by Michael "Mike" Alafat and Ryan Bell. They do site preparation, land clearing, driveways and roads, water and septic systems, snow plowing, and landscaping. The business was started in 1983 in Meriden on Batchelder Hill Road and currently employs four people year round and as many as ten during the summer.



Porcelain
fountain made
by Eric O'Leary.
Courtesy
Plainfield
Historical
Society.

• *Tariki Pottery (O'Leary Pottery)*

Jack O'Leary started in the pottery business in Keene and moved to Meriden in 1959. A member of the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen for ten years, Jack was joined by his son, Eric, in 1969. The second son, Brian, worked for a period of time, and his third son, Kevin, joined the business full time in 1983. Jack died in 1982, and Eric inherited the business. In 1975, the name of the shop was changed to Tariki. Larger kilns were installed in 1984 and 1985, so that large-scale sculpture could be fired. Work has been commissioned by private individuals and museums all over the United States and in several foreign countries. The O'Learys have exhibited in England, Canada, and throughout the United States.

• *Townline Equipment Sales, Inc.*

Townline Equipment Sales, Inc., begun in 1971, is located south of Plainfield Village on Route 12A. Aside from Townline, there were three businesses in the original building: Stowell Enterprises which was a housing business, Peter Edson who ran a cabinet and building supply business, and a surveyors office. In 1974, Bob Marrazzo was named manager. He purchased the business in 1984 and became president. They sell farm, garden, and construction equipment. In 1990 there were sixteen full time employees. The first

year, with four employees, they grossed \$150,000. Recently, the firm grossed \$6,000,000.

Food and Lodging

• *Bird Village Inn*

The Bird Village Inn was named for the efforts of Ernest Harold Baynes in establishing the Meriden Bird Club. It operated during the summer months when Kimball Union Academy was not in session.⁶⁰ The building of three and a half stories was constructed in 1892 on the site of the previous hotel and was later replaced by a brick dormitory in 1936. Big piazzas, filled with "wonderful rocking chairs with great big arms," surrounded it.⁶¹ People came to spend their summers. As the sun moved, so did they, from one porch to the next, looking at the views, chatting, and snoozing.⁶² Gladys Stevens remembered staying at the inn as a child and of annoying the ladies by standing upon the arms of those "lovely rocking chairs and walking them around as stilts."⁶³ The Camp Meriden 1930 brochure mentions that the campers performed dances for the guests. Several people ran the inn including John Cann,⁶⁴ a Mr. Claflin who was the headmaster at Lebanon High School, and Stephen Tracy (in 1934) whose father, Charles Alden Tracy, was the headmaster of Kimball Union Academy for many years. Tracy was allowed one-half of the summer's profits as his salary. The net profit that year was \$75.⁶⁵

• *Boarding Houses*

Many of the farmers in Plainfield and Meriden kept summer boarders beginning in the 1870s because of "about 400 tourists who spend their summer vacation in this pleasant town."⁶⁶ Cloverland Farm was one such boarding house. Now known as the Benson Farm, it is located two miles north of Meriden Village on True Road. The brochure described the farm's many attractions, including "large, airy and pleasant, comfortably furnished" rooms, a "plentiful supply of pure spring water," "long broad piazzas on two sides of the house," a "fine view of the Blue Mountain Reserve," a "table supplied liberally with products from the farm," and a "nice gentle horse and good buggy for let." Fred A. Rogers was the proprietor and terms were \$8 per week for two persons or \$9 per week for one alone.⁶⁷

On the Plainfield side, Maria (Eggleston) Ruggles saw the need of a summer hotel because of the Cornish Colony people. Her husband, George Ruggles, a carpenter, added rooms to their home until there were seventeen rooms in all. He also built a studio at the back in which many artists, writers, and musicians boarded (see Chapters 18, Plainfield and the Cornish Colony through Biographies, and 22, Biography). Woodrow Wilson's house guests and his private secretary also boarded here during the time when he was at his Summer White House in Cornish.⁶⁸



Girls at Camp Meriden dancing for the guests of Bird Village Inn, about 1910.
Courtesy Dorothy and Basil McNamara.

- *Camp Meriden*


Camp Meriden, a “New Camp for Girls,” was opened in 1929 by Reverend and Mrs. Noble O. Bowlby (Basil McNamara, 1991). Camp Meriden’s 1930 brochure described a healthful camping experience “in the very heart of God’s own country, surrounded by natural scenery that attracts, inspires, and educates.” Activities ranged from tennis “to develop muscles and the power of quick decision and action” to English-style horseback riding, dramatics, music, and nature study. Swimming was taught at Bryant Pond at the end of a picturesque trail near Blood’s Brook. Girls were reminded to include knickers, bloomers, middies, and a bright colored jersey bathing suit in their steamer trunk. Full tuition for eight weeks at Camp Meriden was \$175. Because of the Great Depression, the camp operated for only four or five years.⁶⁹

- *Churchill Inn*

The town records, on May 5, 1914, mention a petition for a new highway beginning at a stake standing at the corner on the Ferry Road north of the “inn” and running southward 1,160 feet on the west side of the “inn” to a stake standing near the Freeman Cemetery. This is the current Pine Avenue.⁷⁰ No other mention of this inn has been found.

- *Meriden House*

An inn at Meriden was completed for John Bryant in 1820. It occupied the site of the present Dexter Richards Hall of Kimball Union Academy.⁷¹ A letter, dated August 4, 1818, describes the raising of the inn.⁷² It was first called



Where
Shall I
Spend the
Summer ?

Advertisement, Bird Village Inn, Meriden, September 2, 1896. This building was razed in 1936 for the construction of the brick Dexter Richards dormitory at Kimball Union Academy. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

the Meriden House. By 1825, it took the name Union Hotel, and Ishmael Tuxbury was licensed to sell liquor.⁷³ The 1833 Kimball Union catalogue refers to the Union Hotel. By 1837 and again in 1842, it was called The Temperance House.⁷⁴ Many Kimball Union Academy parents stayed there. The hotel came into the possession of the Academy in 1853⁷⁵ and was made into a dormitory. During these years, the building resumed its first name, The Meriden House.⁷⁶ Some of the other proprietors included Silas S. Booth in 1868,⁷⁷ N. L. Jewell in 1879,⁷⁸ and L. A. Purmont in 1886.⁷⁹ On March 20, 1890, the hotel took fire at noon and burned to the ground.⁸⁰ It was rebuilt in 1892, thanks to the generosity of Dexter Richards of Newport, and was named after him.⁸¹ Later, it became known as Bird Village Inn.

• *Restaurants*

In 1977, Bill Smith rented the basement of his auction gallery to Bob and Sue Perkins where they ran the Gallery Restaurant. It was later sold to Irene Gillen and then rented to Ray Morin. The restaurant was closed in 1988.

Home Hill Country Inn and Restaurant is located on River Road just north of the intersection with Freeman Hill Road. This large brick and frame building was built in 1818. The original house had burned after use as an inn since 1780. The property was then owned by the Woodman and Gray families for

many years. In the 1930s and 1940s, it was owned by the Smyths who raised Guernsey cattle. Later the Bissel family kept a milking Holstein herd. The Smyths and Bissels were "gentlemen" farmers. It was purchased by Ted and Betty Burgess from the Bissel family in the 1960s. After several subdivisions, Alma Gilbert purchased it from the Burgesses. She had recently purchased Maxfield Parrish's home, The Oaks, and was acquainted with a well-known California restaurateur, Roger Nicolas, when she made him aware of the property. Nicolas purchased the property in February 1982 and opened the inn and restaurant in November 1983.

The restaurant features fine French cuisine and has been acclaimed in several international magazines of fine dining. The inn has nine rooms for overnight accommodations. Activities include cross-country skiing in the winter and tennis, swimming, and canoeing on the river in the summer.⁸²

In 1972, J. Thomas and Rosalind Wells purchased the Maxfield Parrish estate from Peter Burling. They operated Wellwood, a restaurant and inn, in the main house and an antique shop on the first floor of the studio. They lived above the shop in Parrish's apartments. In 1978, Mrs. Wells wished to resume her operatic career, and they sold the estate to Alma Gilbert. Mrs. Gilbert renamed the property "The Oaks," and continued to operate a restaurant and inn until the main house burned in 1979.

• *Taverns and Tavernkeepers*⁸³

The taverns were not only inns for the accommodation of travelers, they were social centers for local people. Dancing schools, lectures, and lycea were held in them. Before the post offices were established, the stage drivers left mail and the newspapers at them. Travelers and teamsters brought news from the cities. Political meetings were often warned to meet at taverns. The local chapter of the Masons met at Fifield and Kingsbury Taverns. Militia musters assembled at taverns, "training days" and "parades" were held nearby. Peter Abbot played a base viol; Benjamin Stevens and some of the Kenyons, Frenches, and Beers were fiddlers in Plainfield. Perhaps, they furnished music at parties and dances at these houses of entertainment.

A move for temperance began at the state level in 1854. The next year there was strict control regarding the selling of liquor. The General Court passed an act entitled "An Act for the Suppression of Intemperance." The taverns and stores were no longer licensed, and only town agents were allowed to sell liquor. Many of the people made hard cider and wine, but this was not considered to be liquor. The town stores never had a license to sell alcoholic beverages until the town voted to allow the sale of malt beverages in the 1960s.

The legislature of the province of New Hampshire empowered the Courts of General Sessions to: "allow as many Tavernkeepers in each Town Parish Precinct and District...as they shall judge Convenient...such Persons applying for the liberty of keeping Tavern not having kept Tavern before, producing a certificate from the selectmen..." Among other requirements, the law stated that each tav-

ern must have two beds for patrons and have suitable stables and provide feed for the care of the horses or oxen of the travelers they accommodated.

The colonial laws and the laws of the state of New Hampshire required the town to annually elect, "at least two tithingmen." The duties of these officers included "to inspect licensed houses and immediately inform a justice of the peace of all disorders and misdemeanors, such as selling without license, of all Idle and Disorderly Persons, Profane Swearers or Cursers, Sabbath-breakers and the like Offenders." Plainfield elected tithingmen, but there is no record of their inspections, if any, or of any disorders.

The town and proprietary records from 1761–1791 do not mention taverns or inns. Meetings of both the town and proprietary were often held at the house of Nathaniel Dean in Mill Village from 1773. Religious services were held there. The house also served as a gathering place for all types of public purposes. The records do not designate Mr. Dean's house as a tavern or inn or show that he ever was licensed for the dispensing of liquor. After Dean died in 1788, town meeting was called at Simon Blanchard's house in Mill Village, which was a tavern from 1788–91. It is not known whether Blanchard bought Dean's tavern or built his own.⁸⁴

The first license of record was made November 20, 1792, to Dr. Ebenezer Wright "...to sell Spirituous Liquor," probably for medical purposes. Dr. Wright's house was on the Freeman Hill Road, just north of the Winston Churchill house. It burned about 1880.

A proprietors' meeting was held June 1, 1792, "at the House of Asa Gallup innholder." Town meetings had been held at his house occasionally beginning in March 1778. It is unknown when he first kept an inn or tavern. The first record of a license to him was made November 26, 1792, "for the purpose of keeping a public house to sell liquor." He lived near the center of town. He was last issued a license in 1796.

The same day that Asa Gallup received his license, Joseph Kimball was licensed "for the purpose of keeping a public house for entertainment and to sell mixed liquors and to Retail spirituous liquor for one year." He was again licensed in 1793 and 1794. Kimball then lived on the Shipman place on the Stage Road between Plainfield and Meriden (Dennis Dinan, 1991). He moved to Meriden in 1794 and built the house now owned by William Fletcher (1991). There is no record of him holding a license in Meriden after he built that house.

William Dean was licensed in 1794 and 1795. Samuel Kimball had a permit in 1795. They were to sell "at their dwelling houses." They lived at or near Meriden. Captain Chapman was also issued a license in 1795.

Plainfield June ye 1st 1795 —This may Certify that Capt.
Benjamin Chapman hath License to mix and Sell Liquor as he
Shall find Occasion.

Chapman lived in the house now owned by Otis W., Jr., and Raymond Jordan (1991). Built as a two-story house, it was remodeled by taking out the first story and lowering the second story to make the present one-story house.

John Harris of East Plainfield was first licensed as a taverner March 10, 1795. He was again licensed in 1797. Three years later, he received a permit to sell liquor at his store, which he kept until 1830. Harris had a partner, and they were licensed as "Harris and Kimball" in 1810. His son, Thomas J. Harris, was licensed to sell liquor in 1830.

Nathan Gates was recommended for a license May 8, 1796, "to keep a Tavern the Ensuing year and to Retail New Rum." The proprietors of Plainfield met at his inn November 13, 1797. He was licensed regularly until 1810. His tavern was on the road then called "the River Road," now Freeman Road.

Benjamin Allen was licensed "to keep Tavern at his dwelling house..." between 1796 and 1798. A road survey tells that his place was on the River Road, possibly south of Elizabeth Jones's house (1991), which was built by Zadick Allen about 1828.

Major Joseph Smith kept his dwelling house as a tavern from 1799 until his death in 1804. Town records show that Widow Ruth Smith was granted a license in 1804. Major Smith lived on Black Hill at the house owned by John Stephenson (1991).

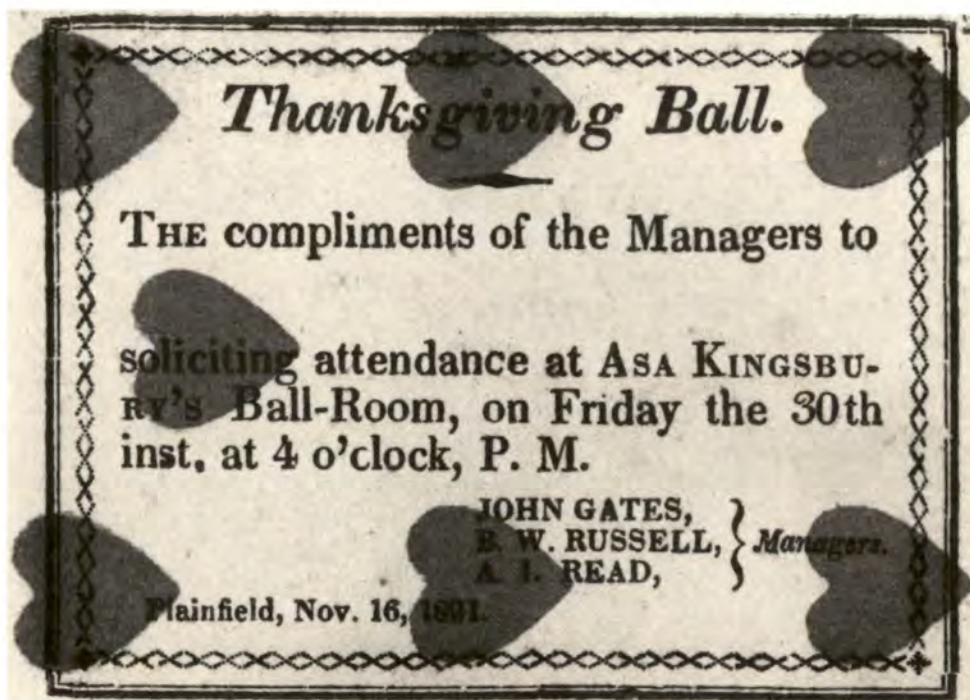
Abraham Carpenter, Jr., a son of the first minister, was licensed as a tavernkeeper in 1797. He lived at the center of town in the house his father had previously owned across the road from the old town pound. John Colburn bought the place and kept it as a tavern between 1804 and 1810.

Simeon Cory lived on Ladieu Hill in 1795. He was approved for a license that year. His house was near the site of Douglas Carver's house (1991).

Albe Cady received a license "to Retail Spirituous Liquor," January 2, 1797. Daniel Kingsbury was also recommended the following December 23, "to sell at his store on the main street in Plainfield." Mr. Cady and Mr. Kingsbury joined forces and built in 1800 the house now owned by the Community Baptist Church as its parsonage. The partnership only lasted until 1802. Daniel Kingsbury continued the store for several years. In 1804, he was licensed as a tavernkeeper and continued the business until after 1818. It was here that Daniel used to deal out new rum, "with sug., 3 cents; no sug., 2 cents."⁸⁵

Leonard and Sylvester Pulsifer came to town before 1798 when they kept a store. It was on the River Road near the ferry that they bought from Joseph Kimball in 1803. In 1800, Leonard was approved and recommended as a tavernkeeper. His tavern adventure was apparently a short-lived affair as he had a license only one year. The brothers kept the store together until 1816 when Sylvester sold to Leonard, who continued the business until after 1820.

Edward Fifield came to town between 1790 and 1798. Family tradition says that he came from Salisbury, New Hampshire, about 1791.⁸⁶ He built the house in Meriden Village now owned by Dr. Erich Witzel (1991). It was outfitted with a ballroom "with a swinging floor—just posts on the ends" on the sec-



Ticket, Thanksgiving Ball at the Kingsbury Tavern, November 16, 1821. Tickets and small announcements were often printed on old playing cards in the early nineteenth century. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

ond floor.⁸⁷ The town records do not show that he ever was licensed to sell spirituous liquor. He may have carried on his business as a temperance house. In rare instances, there were hotels at the time not participating in the liquor traffic. He died August 19, 1831. His son Stephen had taken over the tavern the previous year and was licensed as a taverner. Perley Fifield operated the tavern in 1847 and dispensed spirits. President Franklin Pierce is said to have stayed here before his election.⁸⁸ Samuel Cole remembers seeing the long hotel stable.⁸⁹ In a letter dated August 13, 1961, from Elizabeth Jones to Mrs. Barbour, owner at that time, she relates the following family tradition:

My Aunt Harriet . . . was an ardent prohibitionist. There were several alcoholics in the family. Orrin Morgan was one of them . . . You must be beginning to wonder where Harriet enters in (as villainess). Well, all the old inn ledgers were up in the hall going back to very early days. There were the liquor accounts of various people, store accounts, land sales, postal accounts, a treasure trove of history. When Erolld [Mrs. Jones' father], as guardian, sold the place, he and I anticipated learning the town history contained in them. We found that Harriet not want-

ing it known that her great-grandfather had sold liquor in the house had ripped out and burned all the contents!!!

March 11, 1800, the Widow Sabra Stevens was approved "to sell Mixt liquor at her house near the Connecticut River." She was the second wife of John Stevens, Sr. Her son Benjamin kept the house as a tavern between 1829 and 1832.

The proprietors met "at the house of Oliver Lathrop Innholder," January 31, 1801. The location of the house is unknown. Stephen Reed was also in the tavern business in 1801 and 1802. It is not known where his tavern was located.

Asa D. Kingsbury built the Kingsbury Tavern at Plainfield Village about 1802 (Judy Atwater, 1991). He also kept a store for a few years and continued the tavern business until 1845. The next year, he was licensed but reported to the selectmen that he did not sell any liquor during the year. His house was designed as a tavern with bar room on the first floor and a large ballroom on the second floor. The Cheshire Lodge of Masons met there when first organized. Musters were often called to meet "at Asa Kingsbury's Tavern." They trained and held their parades on the green north of the tavern and in front of the meeting house nearby and "many a soldier's whistle has been wet with new rum and molasses on training and muster days."⁹⁰

Gay and lively frolics took place in this and other taverns. Visits to the bar room contributed to the merriment. The late Morris French told Vernon Hood an anecdote of an ancestor.

Archibald Spencer stopped at Asa Kingsbury's tavern one evening. Mr. Kingsbury remarked that he did not seem to be very sociable as he did not buy a drink. Archie replied that he would have to pass it up as he had but one cent on him. Asa told him to give him the cent. He received the cent, handed Mr. Spencer a bottle of rum and told him to drink his money's worth! Spencer took the bottle and drank his money's worth. When he left, he was very happy and in no pain!

In later years, the tavern became dilapidated and was used for a hen house by Kurt Lewin. Ellen H. Maylin remembered a legend about a ghost catching hens upstairs in the tavern.⁹¹ It was sold to Charles Empey and then to Mrs. Clara Davidge who restored it to its former beauty.⁹²

Silas Read was licensed to sell liquor at his store between 1801 and 1810. Between 1811 and 1813, he was associated with a Mr. Taylor. Mr. Read worked alone in the store business between 1814 and 1826. He was first licensed as a tavernkeeper in 1827. He carried on the tavern for twenty years. The tavern was taken down about 1880. It was a large two-storied building quite similar to the Kingsbury Tavern. It occupied the site of the house now owned by Christine (Waite) Dow (1991), a descendant of Silas Read, at the corner

of Daniels Road and Route 12A. There was a ballroom upstairs in the east end of the building. After the tavern was closed, the room was used for dancing schools, parties, and gatherings.

Captain Thomas Gallup lived on the River Road on the place now owned by Roger Nicolas (1991). On September 27, 1796, the selectmen approved him "as a suitable person to mix and sell spirituous liquor at his dwelling house." The records of the town clerk do not show that he was again licensed until 1821. The Captain was licensed as a tavernkeeper between 1821 and 1835. His son Thomas resided with him, and they carried on the business together. In June 1817, Stephen Tracy made and sold him "brickmoulds." Two years later, Thomas Gallup paid Mr. Tracy for "turning staircase posts." These transitions are clues to the time that the brick house was built. It is an elegant house, designed for use as a tavern. It originally had a ballroom in the second story. James Gilkey carved the woodwork in the north front room. This room has an arched ceiling and is beautifully decorated with a handcarved mantel and chair rails.

Job Williams had a tavern license in 1813 and 1818. He lived in the "Narriers" at the "Lute" Westgate place, now the Bolton house (1991).

Isaac W. Westgate was licensed as a taverner "at his house for one year from May 30, 1846." He built, between 1850 and 1854, the stone house now owned by Kenneth Tashro on Route 120 (1991). It may have replaced his tavern.

In Meriden, Ishmael Tuxbury was licensed to sell "at the Union Hotel" in 1825. In 1828, he was in business with Jesse Roberts. In later years, the hotel was known as "The Temperance Hotel." It was located on the site of Dexter Richards Hall. Kimball Union Academy acquired the building for a dormitory, and it burned in 1890.

Joseph Lamberson was licensed to sell "at the dwelling house where he now lives" in 1836 and 1838. The site is not recorded. James Willard kept a tavern between 1827 and 1834. He lived on the Old County Road. Benjamin L. Fuller kept a tavern at his house on the River Road in 1847.

The River Road was a main road along the Connecticut Valley. The railroads put a sudden end to the through travel on the road. On November 17, 1847, the Northern Railroad from Boston to Lebanon was opened for business. Other railroads began to operate along the Connecticut Valley. Farm produce and freight were transported by the "Iron Horse." Stage coaches and express teams, which had patronized the country taverns, soon vanished from the scene. The taverns of Plainfield also became a part of the past. By 1868, no taverns and only one hotel, The Meriden House, were listed in *The New Hampshire Business Directory*.

Utilities

• *Meriden Electric Light and Power Company*

Meriden Electric Light and Power Company was begun in 1910 when two friends collaborated on a plan to bring electric power into Meriden. Charles Alden

Tracy was headmaster at Kimball Union Academy and was eager to have electric lights and power in the school buildings. Harold W. Chellis, owner of the Meriden Telephone Company, already had pole lines established in the village. He agreed to handle the construction work and management of the enterprise.

The company was incorporated in August of 1910 and began operation on January 2, 1911, with Mr. Chellis as manager. Stock was issued at \$100 per share. A report to the Secretary of State indicates that on January 1, 1912, thirty shares had been issued, and \$3,000 were the total assets of the corporation. Kimball Union Academy held the controlling interest. Several members of the Chellis family invested in the venture, along with other townspeople and a few summer residents. The corporation elected four officers each year, and five directors represented the shareholders.

When major expansion work was undertaken in March 1926, permission was granted by the state of New Hampshire "to erect and maintain an electrical pole line and fixtures along the highways of said town of Cornish." Among the early customers in that area were the Baptist Church and the George H. Stowell Free Library. Additional stock was authorized and issued at this time to supply the necessary capital.

Power was purchased from Granite State Electric Company. The point of entry into Meriden was at the Stearns' Farm in the Poverty Lane area of Lebanon. In 1935, 73,420 kilowatt hours were purchased and had increased to 657,360 hours at the end of 1955. Assets in this same period had grown from \$18,573 to \$54,398.

Harold Chellis operated the company until his death in October 1935. His son Howard succeeded him and managed the business for over twenty years until it was sold. There were 75 customers in Meriden in 1935, plus 13 street lights; 44 in Cornish which had 6 street lights; and 4 in Lebanon. About 20 years later, there were 126 meters in Meriden with no added street lighting, 61 in Cornish with 11 street lights, and 16 in the Lebanon area. Through the years, Meriden Electric Light and Power often employed, in addition to the manager, a part-time worker to read meters and to help build and repair the power lines. For a utility company with miles of poles and wires, storms meant broken wires, poles, and blown transformer fuses caused by lightning. The worst disaster was the Hurricane of 1938. Power crews were brought in from other areas to help make repairs. Customers were without power for four or five days.

It was with a feeling of deep regret when in 1958 the trustees of Kimball Union Academy voted to sell the company. On September 23, Meriden Electric Light and Power Company became part of Granite State Electric Company.

• *Meriden Telephone Company*

The Meriden Telephone Company was the last to convert to dial service in New Hampshire. It began with the dream of Harold Chellis for easier contact with the outside world. His cousin, Converse Chellis, on another hilltop a mile away, was the first customer. The circuit was established over a varied terrain of



"Mother" Mary (Westgate) Chellis at the switchboard, Meriden Telephone Company, 1954. Photo by Gordon Leland. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

pastures and woods using fence posts for telephone poles, and in 1904, the first switchboard was installed. As time passed, more interest was shown in Harold Chellis' venture. When the general store became a part of the system, business grew further. The store later became a switching point for night calls.

When Mary Chellis (Mrs. Harold) was away from her home giving birth to her first son, Howard, the switchboard was installed in her dining room. It remained there until 1940. It took thirty-six years to get a separate switchboard room.

The business progressed until the death of Harold Chellis in 1935. At this time, Howard Chellis returned to Meriden from his job with Western Union in New York. As the company's new leader, Howard faced replacing most of the system after the Hurricane of 1938 hit with full force. He served as manager until his death in 1971.

Like other independent companies, Meriden Telephone Company operated as a family unit. Service was rendered and problems handled by the Chellises and their neighbors. The system evolved into a kind of town-wide intercom system with party lines and a bell code that identified each subscriber by line number and then a combination of long and short rings.

The second son, Frank, assumed the manager's position in 1971. With the need to modernize the plant (even though the customers were satisfied with the manual system), the decision was made to convert to dial. The conversion was made on schedule. The final call was made through the last magneto exchange in New Hampshire at midnight on August 25, 1973. It marked the end of an era.

With 180 resident telephones, the daily operation of the company was transferred to Frank's twin sons, David and Thomas, and to one service representative, Audrey Jacquier. Mrs. Jacquier was one of the operators from the old office. In 1974, after due study and consideration, the officers and directors accepted the proposal of Telephone and Data Systems, Inc. (TDS), to purchase the company. Local identity was retained, and the work force remains nearly as it was before the acquisition.

Frank Chellis, who drafted this article in 1976, found customer contacts especially satisfying. When he died in 1980, David became manager of the Meriden Telephone Company. Tom transferred to Northfield, Vermont, to become the commercial manager of the Northeast Region of TDS. In 1988, there were 320 resident telephones, excluding business telephones and pay stations.⁹³

Newspapers

PlainFacts was the brain child of Donella "Dana" Meadows and Dennis Meadows, who were subsequently joined by other local people. The whole enterprise was the product of free labor and generous gifts of cash from many Meriden and Plainfield villagers who thought a town newsletter was worth supporting. The first issue was distributed in June 1973. Nine issues of *PlainFacts* appeared through October 1974. A Christmas issue was published in 1975, the gift of

Plain Facts

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP
Plainfield, NH July/August 1990 Vol. 10. No.5



PLAINFIELD ANNUAL FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION

Morning:

7:00-9:00

8:00

8:30

10:00 on

11:00

Noon

Afternoon:

All Day:

- *Pancake Breakfast at the Plainfield Community Church
- *2 Road Races (2.0 & 4.7 miles) sponsored by the Plainfield Recreation Committee (Town Hall)
- *2 Mile Walk through Plainfield Village
- *Sandwiches & Beverages available at the Blow-Me-Down Grange
- *Parade: Floats; Decorated Bicycles, doll carriages, wagons; Marchers (Meet on Hayward Road at 10 to line up)
- *Beef Bar-B-Que sponsored by the Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department
- *Performance by Northern New England Dance Academy
- *Civil War Encampment in the field in front of the Auction Gallery
- *Local Artists' Exhibit at the Town Hall, Maxfield Parrish Backdrop Lighted
- *Plainfield Historical Society Building Open with Displays
- *Flea Market at the Blow-Me-Town Grange Hall
- *Special Appearances by Smokey the Bear, McGruff the Crime Dog, and the Mysterious Moose

Prizes for the best decorated floats, bicycles, doll carriages, and wagons. Judges for floats are Winnie Brooks, John Meyette, and Verna Moulton. Judges for the "Push It, Pull It, Ride It" entries are Alice Nintzel and the Recreation Commission.



Front page of *PlainFacts*, July/August 1990. Courtesy Philip Read Memorial Library.

printer Jerry Burt and an *ad hoc* staff. A special issue was published in 1977 under the supervision of Ruthann Wheeler of Plainfield and Kay Jones of Meriden, both editors of past issues, with the help of others. The special issue was printed to give voters notice of an article at the March Town Meeting regarding the adoption of zoning regulations. *PlainFacts* again suspended publication with the hope others would revive it.⁹⁴

In 1982, Stephen Taylor called fifteen people and asked for \$10 donations to get started again. That issue, published in March, started a new life for *PlainFacts*. Volume II, Number 1, was published with a few subscribers and a plea for 100 more at \$8 per subscription. Residents were encouraged to volunteer and become monthly editors and contributors. Betsy Baird designed the masthead. The subscriptions pay for printing and postage. There has been a continuous publication of *PlainFacts* since that issue and all work is still volunteer. Until the 1988 summer issue, Ruth Brady manually typed the copy. At that time, the public libraries each acquired a computer, and *PlainFacts* entered the computer age. Librarians Nancy Norwalk and Bettyann Dole are the co-editors. In 1991, subscriptions totaled 300.

Subscription prices have increased to \$12.50 for ten issues. As stated on the front page, *PlainFacts* is "News and Information for the People of Plainfield Township." The paper contains only news about the town: town organizations, Zoning Board of Adjustment, school information, Planning Board, selectmen's minutes, library columns, announcements, and features about the town or townspeople. A regular feature is the Plainfield weather page. Richard H. Langill contributed this column for many years and in 1990 turned it over to Doug Cogan. *PlainFacts* is still a nonprofit, co-operative effort.

The *Weekly Enterprise* was published from November 18, 1908, to 1917. The paper was advertised on the Meriden Telephone Company Directory in 1909 as follows:

The only newsy publication covering the towns of Plainfield, Meriden, Cornish including the Little New York Colony. This paper contains the local news and articles of benefit to everybody.

Anybody, far or near, who is interested in the welfare of the towns of Plainfield and Cornish should subscribe for the *Enterprise* at once if they do not already take it.

Curtis George Doyle was editor and proprietor of the *Weekly Enterprise*, an eight page newspaper published each Thursday. The *Enterprise* cost \$1 per year's subscription, six months was 55 cents, three months was 30 cents. All prices were payable in advance. A single copy cost three cents. Classified rates and announcements cost ten cents per line (seven words) for the first insertions; five cents for the second. A card-of-thanks cost forty cents. Cash had to accompany all orders from parties who did not have an account with the

WEEKLY ENTERPRISE, NOVEMBER 17, 1910.

Weekly Enterprise

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

Doyle, Editor and Prop.

MERIDEN, N. H. Tel. 1-12.

TERMS:

Year, - - - \$1.00 in advance.
 6 months, - - .50 "
 3 months, - - .30 "
 Advertisers, \$1.25 a Year.

Advertising Rates.

1. For Sale, To Rent, etc.,
 10 cents per line (7 words)
 first insertion, and 5 cents per
 each subsequent insertion.
 2. Same rate. Card of
 10 cents. Display advertising
 application. Cash must accom-
 any orders from parties not
 account with us.

Notice to Advertisers.

1. All advertisements must be in
 than 10 o'clock a. m., Monday
 insertion for current week.
 charge for setting advertise-
 in on time.

4. as second-class matter Nov-
 3, 1908, at the post office of
 N. H., under the Act of
 1879.

1 DAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1910.

or Governor Bass!

e will begin to figure on 1912.

one of you who did bet on Bass
 your Thanksgiving turkey and
 your Christmas shopping.

we know that New Hampshire
 years old Nov. 7. Monday old
 pretty as a picture still.

Winston Churchill, born No-
 10, 1871, regards the election
 New Hampshire as an accepta-
 lay gift.

New Hampshire is the one
 or a blot on an otherwise
 book depends on what your
 preferences are.

at the men who have been
 sit in the enlarged hall in the
 house look over the public
 and see what changes and
 ought to be made so that they
 ready when the legislature

P. Bass is elected governor of
 phire, a most decided com-
 the man whom the people of
 have come to believe in.
 it to finish he has made good.
 back over his canvass it is
 a single thing to criticize.
 announced that he would
 no money to corrupt the
 it cast dismay over some who
 led to believe that an election
 nor cannot be accomplished
 he use of money. On the other
 were many men who were
 the declaration and who felt,
 Bass, that it was better to
 enable defeat than to win with
 od ballot. The result was
 implied by Mr. Carr also
 and that he would not use
 and this has been one of the
 lections the state has seen for
 ra. That it may prove a prece-
 the future is the wish of the
 urge.

ation that is to be held in this
 it to be well advertised in this
 r—if it's at all important that
 ould attend it.

Meriden Vicinity

Almost turkey time

Dr. E. L. Huse is away deer hunting.
 Mrs. E. L. Huse is away visiting her
 parents.

Harold Ransome of Newport was in
 town Sunday.

Clyde Berkey spent Sunday at his
 home in Claremont.

Charles Newton and son-in-law are
 working on the road.

Mr. Gilson of No. Hartland, Vt., was
 here recently buying furs.

Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Baker were in
 White River Junction Tuesday.

Auren Jenks and Harry Smith found
 a fresh strawberry blossom this week.

Ed Chapman has moved onto High
 St., into the home which was his father's.

Prof. C. A. Tracy has his auto in his
 automobile building and is acting as his
 own chauffeur.

On account of illness of Mr. Doyle,
 the paper has been delayed a few
 hours this week.

Sgt. 1st Class, Charles Kimball,
 Hospital Corps, U. S. Army is visiting
 his parents here.

Miss Ruth Aiken spent Sunday at her
 home in Enfield. Miss Isabel Lufkin
 accompanied her.

Freeman Trowe had made quite an
 extensive addition to his house, leaving
 them much more room.

The Academy will not be in session
 on Thanksgiving Day. Many of the
 students will go to their homes on
 Wednesday and return Friday.

Mr. Tracy carried some students in
 his automobile to call on Harland Porter,
 Wednesday. Also Des. Miller and H.
 W. Chellis have been seen spinning with
 Mr. Tracy.

Herbert Williams has taken four fine
 Jersey heifers home under yoke from
 his pasture on the Spencer place and
 will try for the other three as soon as
 deeper snow comes.

Wendell Phillip Dean was the winner
 in The Enterprise Babys' Contest of
 the \$10.00 Bank Book—and the book
 will be delivered to his mother at the
 earliest possible date.

In the death of Noah B. Hazen of
 White River Junction Kimball Union
 Academy loses a firm friend who for
 many years has given faithful service
 on her board of Trustees.

Isaac F. Bonner has a new kitchen
 stove from Sears, Roebuck & Co.,
 which is giving the greatest of satis-
 faction. The same cooking tastes better,
 and more praise for the cook.

Mr. C. S. Sherman of Windsor took a
 picture of the Kimball Union football
 team last Friday. The picture was
 taken in front of the new Bryant Hall
 —the first athletic group to be photo-
 graphed there.

Letters remaining unclaimed in the
 Meriden post office November 1, 1910:
 Mrs. James A. Parker, Worcester,
 Mass.; Miss Addie D. Little, Laconia,
 N. H.; Mrs. Mabel Allen, Etna; Mrs. A. K.
 Vasteen, Hackensack, N. J.

Mr. Wayne C. Jordan, Y. M. C. A.
 Secretary for Sullivan County, was at
 Kimball Union from Saturday evening
 until Monday afternoon. He gave an
 informal talk to the boys on Saturday
 evening describing his life as a Rhodes
 scholar at Oxford. Sunday evening he
 addressed the Y. M. C. A. on, The
 Positive Life.

Amasa Kimball of North Plainfield
 and Miss Lillian Smith of Claremont
 were married by Charles Woodward,
 Justice of the Peace, at Mr. Wood-
 ward's home Saturday evening, Nov. 12,
 1910. Mr. Kimball is a farmer and
 owns a fine yellow cottage at North
 Plainfield. Much happiness and pros-
 perity is extended to them.

FINAL VOTE OF THE ENTERPRISE

BABYS' CONTEST.

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Wendell Phillip Dean, | 9,266 |
| Catherine M. Baker, | 7,628 |
| Ralph O. Woodward, | 7,370 |
| Sidney Chandler Mason, | 5,937 |
| Mabel Lewis Loomis, | 2,014 |

Votes Counted Wednesday Morning Nov. 16
By Three People:

Miss Mary Chellis, Miss Lucy Eastman, and Curtis Doyle.

FOLLOWING IS THE VOTES CAST FOR EACH TUESDAY EVENING:

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Wendell P. Dean, | 5,770 |
| Catherine M. Baker, | 2,864 |
| Ralph O. Woodward, | 3,974 |
| Sidney Chandler Mason, | 3,208 |
| Mabel Lewis Loomis, | 479 |

CONTEST STANDING, LAST WEEK, NOV. 10.

| | |
|--|-------|
| CATHERINE M. BAKER, Meriden, | 4,764 |
| WENDELL PHILLIP DEAN, Meriden, | 3,496 |
| RALPH O. WOODWARD, R. 1, West Lebanon, | 3,396 |
| SIDNEY CHANDLER MASON, Meriden, | 2,729 |
| MABEL LEWIS LOOMIS, Cornish Flat, | 1,585 |
| GLADYS CHAPMAN, Meriden, | 1,146 |
| ANNA JENKS, Meriden, | 1,143 |
| EVELYN KIMBALL, Meriden, | 894 |
| ERNEST CHEEVER, Windsor, Vt., | 529 |

Plainfield's Uncommon Vote.

Everything uncommon except the
 license vote.

Governor:

Robert P. Bass, r, 106; Clarence E.
 Carr, d, 104.

Representative in Congress:

Frank D. Currier, r, 99; Henry H.
 Metcalf, d, 108.

Councillor:

John M. Gile, r, 102; William H.
 Sawyer, d, 101.

Senator:

Robert J. Merrill, r, 96; Tyler L.
 Barker, d, 107.

Sheriff:

James W. Davidson, r, 97; Edward
 H. King, d, 106.

Solicitor:

Frank H. Brown, r, 61; Frank O.
 Chellis, d, 104.

Treasurer:

Hiram N. Johnson, r, 97; Harry T.
 Eaton, d, 102.

Register of Deeds:

Charles W. Rounsavel, r, 96; Edward
 J. Maley, d, 102.

Register of Probate:

Elisha M. Kempton, r, 100; Arthur C.
 Chadwick, d, 102.

Commissioners:

Frederick W. Aiken, r, 100; Seth E.
 Andrews, d, 100; Albert I. Barton, r,
 99; Moses F. Knowlton, d, 99; Henry C.
 Sanders, Sr. r, 101; Erwin W. Quimby,
 d, 100.

Representative to the General Court:

Robert R. Penniman, r, 82; William
 H. Skinner, d, 126.

Supervisors:

Frank L. French, r, 99; Nathan R.
 Andrews, d, 100; Albert K. Read, r,
 100; Arling B. Cutts, d, 106; George S.
 Ruggles, r, 99; Charles D. Morse, d,
 104.

Moderator:

Daniel C. Westgate, r, 102; Frank
 Whitaker, d, 103.

License:

69

No License:

99

Try The Enterprise for want adver-

tisements.

EAST PLAINFIELD.

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Moore went to
 Pike, Monday, for the winter. Mr.
 Moore is to work for Horace Spooner.

Miss Myrtle Cook and John W. Allan
 after spending a week with Mrs. James
 Holt returned to their home in Peter-
 sboro, Thursday.

Miss Caroline Newton has gone to
 Cornish to stay for a time with her
 nephew, Charles Newton.

O. A. Stearns was so unlucky as to
 lose a good work horse one day last
 week.

Milton Camp spent Saturday night
 and Sunday at Hardy Hill with Mrs.
 Camp, who is boarding with Mrs. Amy
 Briggs.

Mr. and Mrs. George Vadney went to
 Claremont last week to attend the
 wedding of Fred Vadney.

School closes here this week Friday
 for two weeks vacation.

David E. Britton

Trunks, Bags and Dress Suit Cases,
 Horse Furnishings, Robes, Whips and
 Blankets. Hand-made Team and Driving
 Harness, also all grades Factory
 Harness. All work warranted.
 LEBANON, N. H.

Card.

Bills due March first are now subject
 to collection without further notice,
 but I do not wish to be unfair to any-
 one. If you can't pay your bill see me
 and make some arrangement with me,
 but don't wait.

J. F. CANN.

D. N. MOULTON.

All persons having an unsettled ac-
 count with the firm of Moulton & Rob-
 erts, are requested to settle the same
 by cash or note before Aug. 1st, or they
 will be collected. Don't forget this.

My barber shop at Morse & Mason's
 store will be open Saturdays.
 Hair-cut 25c., shave 10c. Bring your
 razors to be honed and your shers to be
 sharpened. Razor honing 25c., shear
 sharpening 10c.

E. M. CHAPMAN, Meriden, N. H.

Enterprise. Copy was due no later than 10 a.m. on Mondays to ensure insertion for the week.

The *Weekly Enterprise* printed items of world and national news and also tidbits of information about visits of family and friends. Births, marriages, deaths, and accidents were duly noted. Mr. Doyle's editorials were not always as kind or tactful. In the December 14, 1911, edition, Doyle reported on himself: "C.G.Doyle purchased the Fred Freeman homestead near the town hall. Of course, we shall expect new and renewal subscriptions to begin to come in at once." (How else was he going to pay off his mortgage?)

The following are news items taken from the *Weekly Enterprise*:

March 31, 1910 —Hall District: Mrs. A.P.Jenney, Jr., has the best flock of hens without a doubt in this Burg. One day last week from 12 hens she got 15 eggs. Who can beat that?

March 31, 1910—East Plainfield: Maurice Tolbert had a very narrow escape from a broken neck last week Thursday. He went to East Lebanon to carry two men and in making the turn at the covered bridge there, his wagon slued suddenly to one side and broke through the ice and Mr. Tolbert was thrown violently out, striking on his head among the timbers on the side of the bridge. He received a bad cut on his forehead besides bruising his face badly. He says he feels as if he had either been in a cyclone or a wreck and he certainly looks it. We beg to correct the report that Mr. Tolbert was intoxicated for it is false.

Mr. Doyle was known to speak his mind about anything. According to Gertrude (Woodward) Mark, he would print anything, too. Her father had a gripe which Mr. Doyle printed for him.⁹⁵ Doyle always had someone mad at him. The *Weekly Enterprise* became known as "The Meriden Bellyache."

In the Plainfield Oral History interview of Stephen Tracy, Mr. Tracy notes that Mr. Doyle wasn't a particularly popular person because his comments in the paper were often caustic and his reporting was anything but accurate. He also noted that Doyle was in constant turmoil with the public because every time the paper came out, there were sure to be some hot collars.

The newspaper may have ceased publication at the time of the fire that destroyed the building on Tuesday night, May 15, 1917. At any rate, the equipment was lost in the fire, and the *Weekly Enterprise* did not rise from the ashes.⁹⁶ The fire, too, aroused a bit of suspicion because it was discovered that Mr. Doyle had taken out an extensive fire insurance policy on the building about a week before the fire.



A flock of sheep at the junction of Jenney and Willow Brook Roads, Meriden, 1975. Until 1977, about 250 sheep were driven each fall from pastures on Batchelder Hill back to the Taylor Farm on Main Street in Meriden. Photo by Larry McDonald. Courtesy Stephen H. Taylor.

Agriculture, Sheep Farming, and Turkey Drives

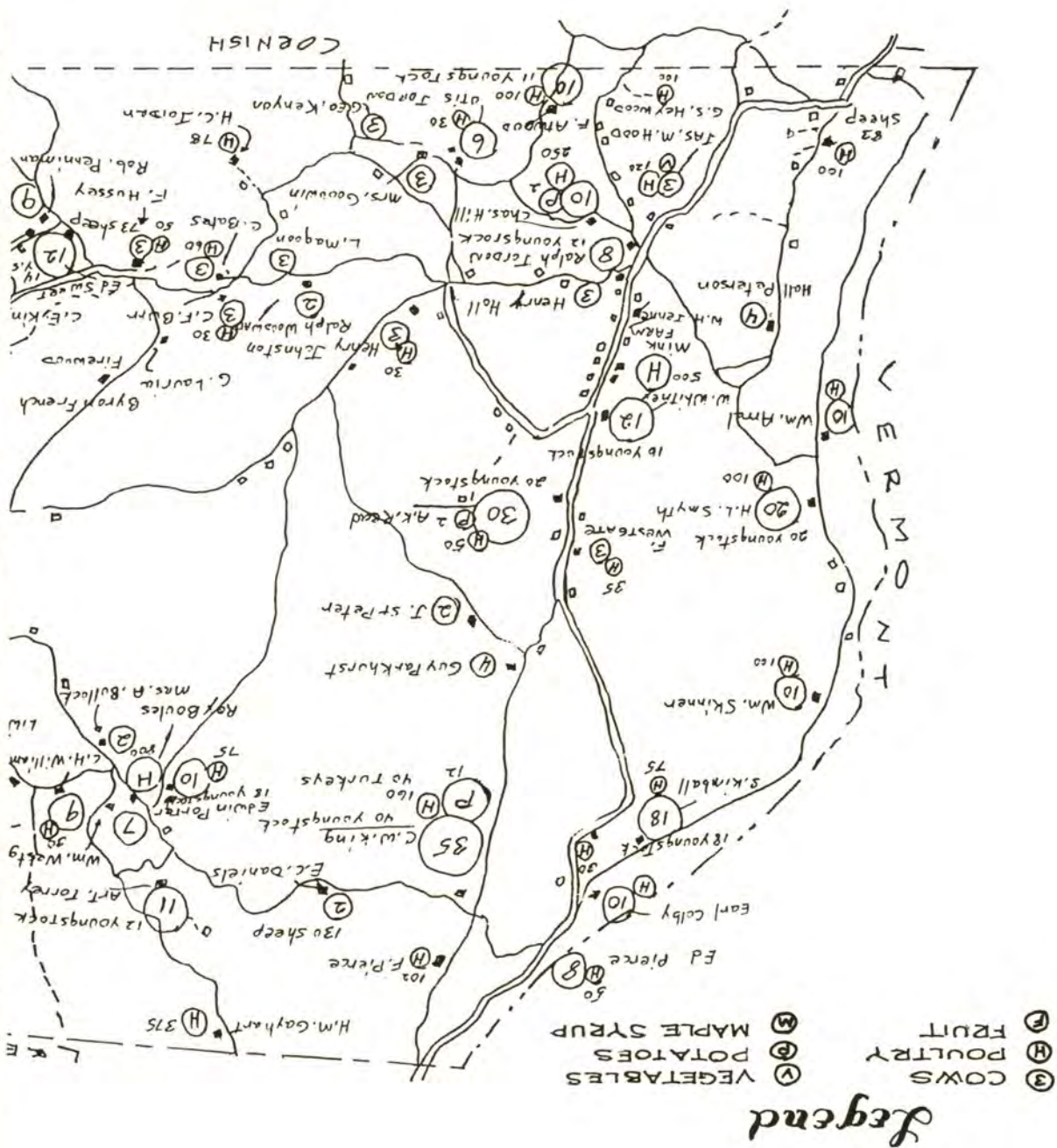
Kathryn F. MacLeay
Albert K. Read III
Kathleen (Philbrick) Read
Stephen H. Taylor

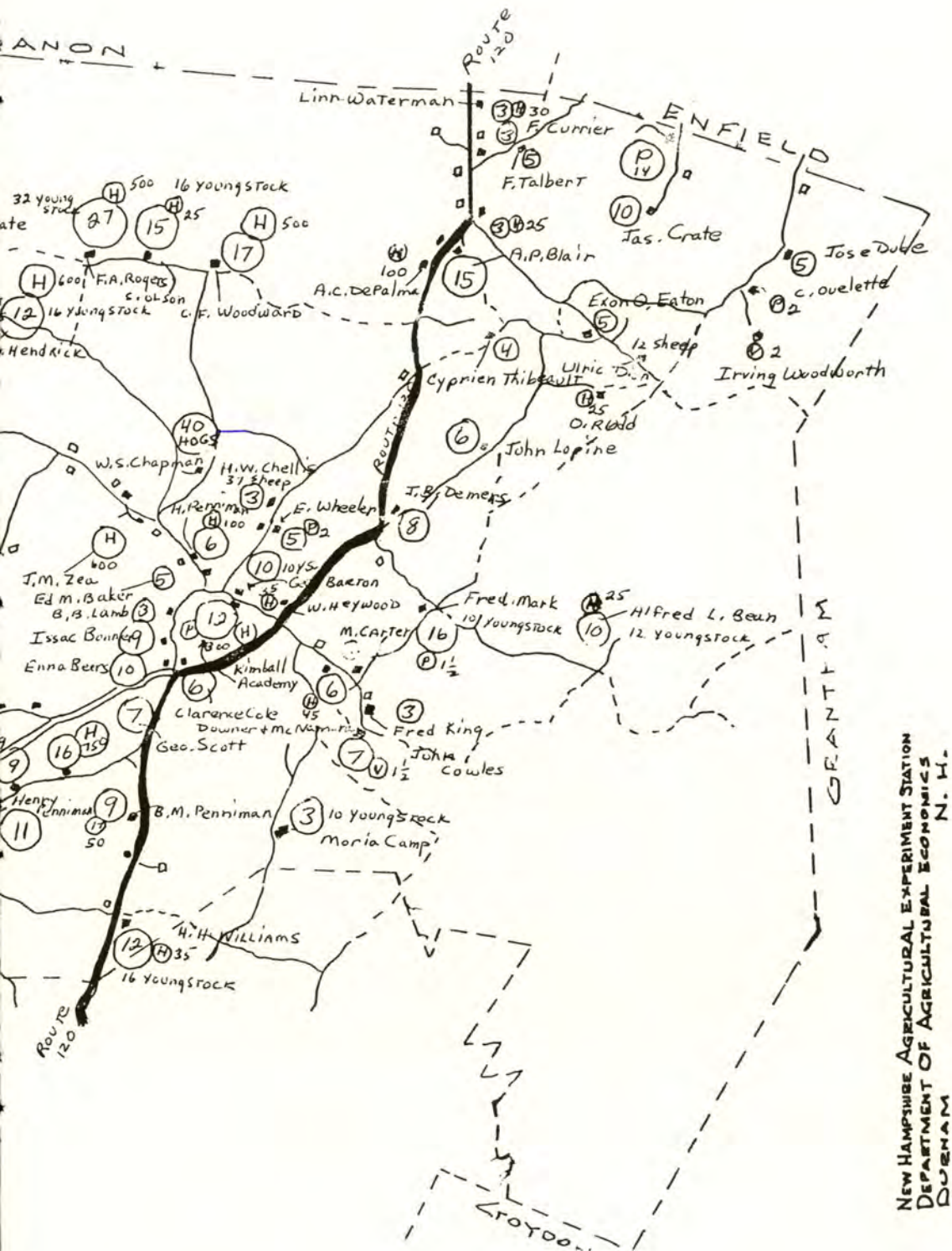
The greatest obstacle to settling New England was not the Indians, but the vast forests stretching from the coast to the Hudson River. No grass could grow in the forest's shade. Without grass, there was no feed for cattle, sheep, or horses. The Indians had grown corn and pumpkins on river land that flooded seasonally or where they had cleared small areas by girdling and burning trees.¹ Hardwoods grew 100 to 200 feet tall, and the white pines in the Plainfield area grew well over that. Eleazar Wheelock, founder of Dartmouth College, said that the pines on his campus were 200 feet high, and one by actual measurement was 270 feet.² Few church steeples in New England are over 100 feet high. These white pine trees were highly prized for masts in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and were taken overland to the coast by ox teams.³ The best mast trees (three feet through the butt) were marked with a metal tag to preserve them for use as masts for the King's ships. The mast road in Plainfield extended from the center of town to the river.

The pioneers cut the trees to build temporary cabins and to clear their fields. Burning thousands of trees brought another benefit: potash. The ashes were collected and slowly leached with water to make lye, which was boiled dry in huge iron pots to make a powder called potash or pearl ash. The manufacture of woolen cloth, linen, and glass all required this forest product. Potash was a source of income for settlers until the early 1800s when European chemists substituted it with sodium from the huge salt deposits in France, Germany, and Austria.⁴

Surplus trees were also made into charcoal to run nearby iron foundries. Bog iron was common, and Vergennes, Vermont, in the early 1800s, was a center for iron production. There were eight forges, a blast furnace, and a rolling mill. Charcoal was also surpassed by a better product: coal.⁵

Commercial Agricultural Production In PLAINFIELD N.H. 1937





With the forests gone, grass could grow at last. Timothy Hanson, born near Keene, New Hampshire, developed the first Timothy grass seed in America.⁶ Farming cultivated crops had begun. Farmers grew wheat for their bread, flax for their linens, corn and oats for their stock. Ground together, this mix of corn and oats made "provender," an excellent feed for cattle, sheep, and hogs. Corn yielded a greater crop per acre and was easier to turn into grain. The stalks were also good feed for animals. Corn became the most popular grain. It appeared in corn meal mush for breakfast, Johnny Cake for dinner, and Indian Pudding for dessert. Grains were raised and ground at local mills for both human and animal feed.

Under all of us is the earth. Plainfield's soils have sustained agriculture since settlement. Despite the flood plain of the Connecticut River, Plainfield, in general, has very limited soils ideally suited to modern agriculture. Less than one percent of the land area possess soils which are well-drained, free of stones, or relatively flat. The land is best suited for pasture and forest production.

Little was known about soil science until the latter half of the nineteenth century. The pioneers survived on the natural fertility of the soil. Manure from livestock and potash from burning of trees were the only fertilizers known to colonial era farmers. This lack of knowledge played a major role in the changes that swept Plainfield agriculture. Soil depletion affected the upland farms where the soils were both acidic and thin. Farms high on Grantham Mountain were abandoned when the sheep industry began its decline after the Civil War.

Farms best suited for conversion to dairy in the late nineteenth century were those with deeper soils. Scientific methods of developing and maintaining soil fertility began to emerge by the early 1900s. With the educational efforts of the University of New Hampshire Extension Service, most farmers had access to the latest recommendations.

Agricultural know-how expanded, and technological advances in farming allowed fewer and fewer acres to produce more feed for livestock. The Federal Soil Conservation Service began in the 1930s. It introduced erosion control, water quality protection, and related practices to many Plainfield farms.

Pork

Diet was determined by livestock to a large extent. Everyone had at least two hogs for their winter's supply of meat (two hogs always do better than one). Sometimes they would butcher a beef or a lamb, but pork offered the greatest variety of meats for the table. Besides the pork chops and roasts, there were sausages, bacon, ham, hogshead cheese, pickled pigs feet, and above all—salt pork! Fried salt pork with milk gravy on potatoes filled many stomachs in the winter. Despite the cholesterol and sodium, people thrived on it. Salt pork joined dry beans to make beloved baked beans. In the spring, salt pork was the only meat left to flavor the first "greens."



Albert K. Read III with oxen, 1937. Courtesy Albert K. Read III.

Oxen

Cowboy movies have stressed American dependence on horses, but in New England, it was the ox that enabled the pioneer to survive. They brought the settlers from Connecticut in the dead of winter upon the river's icy trail. Oxen could survive on leaves and twigs in the early spring and then plow the stubborn soil for the first crops.

Durhams (now called milking Shorthorns) were suited as draft animals. They plowed and harrowed. By the late 1800s, when the mowing machines were introduced, they drew the equipment. Wallace Stockwell, in the early 1960s, had a pair of Ayrshire oxen which he drove from the seat of the machine. He mowed and raked with them. These hardy animals held a dual purpose: the cows milked a moderate amount and raised their calves. Because of the importance of oxen as draft animals, bull calves were as valuable as heifers. Willis Daniels kept diaries as a boy and young man. He always noted the selling price of oxen at auctions he attended. In several entries during the late 1860s, pairs of oxen seemed to sell for seven to nine times the value of a cow. Although the quicker horse became popular, especially the Morgan which could both work and drive a buggy, the ox retained a singular advantage. If a leg was broken, he was food! Calm and quiet, oxen stepped easily over downed logs and brush. Even today, oxen are preferred by some loggers over horses for skidding to preserve the environment.

Clifton Porter tells of his grandfather, John Porter of Meriden, who received a telephone call from a man who wanted to buy his team of oxen. As usual, the

neighbors "listened in" on the old party line to the conversation. As the dickering continued and John hesitated, an excited neighbor broke in, "You know you'd ought to sell them, John. You're short of hay." John sold the oxen.

In recent years, Armand Rondeau, Wayne Wheeler, John Meyette, and John Clegg (under a 4-H project) were also successful at raising and training oxen. Wayne grew very attached to his oxen, Bill and Dan. As time went on, however, Wayne wasn't able to work with the oxen as often and decided he should sell them to the butcher. But, as soon as the oxen were gone, Wayne began to have second thoughts. The next morning, he called the butcher's. Luckily, Bill and Dan were still there. Wayne bought them back—at a higher price.

Bees

Although the ox was the helpmate of the settlers, do not forget the tiny honey bee. With the making of maple syrup and sugar, the pioneers did not use honey as their only sweetener, but few fruit trees would have borne surpluses without bees. The honey bee was unknown in America until the first settlers brought them from England. The Indians called them the "White Man's flies" as they spread quickly ahead of the settlers. There is a folk tale of a village saved from approaching Indians when they knocked over a bee hive and were driven off by irate bees.⁷

You might get a strange look if you were to extol beehunting, but in Plainfield, it was a common Sunday afternoon occupation in the 1930s. As many as ten or twelve menfolks would gather at Palmer Read's with three or four bee boxes, and off they would go to trap the wily bee! Occasionally, the families followed with a picnic lunch.

The bee box, scented with anise, was a trap that enticed the bee into a little compartment where it could fill up on sugar and water. When released, the bee was watched carefully to see where it went. Sometimes the bees were marked by a drop of red ink to tell how much time passed before returning for another load. Bill Jenney, Sr., made clever bee boxes, which he may have learned to do through work in Corbin's Park, possibly with the naturalist Ernest Harold Baynes. The bees were not hunted entirely for their honey. The swarms themselves were taken to new homes where they settled into new and better quarters. Larry Taylor obtained many bees this way and was an enthusiastic beekeeper.

Sheep

When the countryside became more settled, farmers diversified. The wool market was good, and New England was perfect for sheep. Old timers used to tell of "hollering" from any hilltop in Plainfield where 3,000 sheep could hear them!

Nothing in the town's history has defined its landscape as much as the sheep industry during the first half of the nineteenth century. In its heyday, the

sheep boom encouraged clearing most of the available land, assured the creation of miles of stonewalls, and brought the prosperity that funded some of the town's best architecture.

Plainfield's experience with sheep parallels neighboring towns in northern New England with suitable pasture land. This epoch in American agricultural history saw the interplay of climate, scientific advances, human migration, and international economics to create and then to destroy regional enterprise.

The earliest development of sheep farming in Plainfield is difficult to trace. The first tax inventory in 1830 records a population of 1,169 sheep. The earliest sheep in Plainfield, which became the foundation for later flocks, were animals descended from English stock imported in small numbers to coastal New England during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These animals were typically small, poorly fleeced, and often inbred.

In 1809, the American consul to Portugal, William Jarvis of Weathersfield, Vermont, obtained Merino breeding stock from noblemen desperate for cash to wage war against the invading armies of Napoleon Bonaparte. European breeders had resisted selling their best animals to the New World, fearing the growth of competitive flocks and herds. Jarvis brought wooly Merino sheep to his farm in Weathersfield, and from these animals came the breeding rams that improved the fleeces of flocks throughout New England. The "Merino Craze" made raising sheep for wool production a cash crop. It led to the development of many small mills for carding, spinning, and weaving woolen cloth.

Plainfield's sheep population jumped ninefold between 1830 and 1835. Merrit Farnum increased his flock from 200 to 450, Reuben True from 120 to 500, Leonard and William Daniels from 50 to 1,004. From thirteen farms reporting sheep aged six months or older in 1830, the number of farms with sheep jumped to sixty-one in those five years. The average farm ran a flock of 170 head. The largest operations were owned by the families that would dominate Plainfield sheep husbandry for the rest of the century.

Extensive sheep farming required overcoming substantial obstacles. The greatest was stockpiling sufficient feed to sustain flocks through the six-month winter period when no pasture was available. It was necessary to devote the better land on the farm to growing hay and corn, to secure sufficient labor to cut (with scythe and sickle), rake, husk, and store the crops, and to provide at least minimal winter shelter for the animals.

Pasturing the animals during the warmer months presented other tasks. Confining the animals to the owner's pasture meant building walls or fences. The most permanent material was rock, which abounded on Plainfield's hillsides. Using iron bars, ox teams, stoneboats, and untold hours of labor, farmers gathered thousands of tons of stones and laid them up into the walls that still surround fields and define boundaries today. The walls were not completely effective, so farmers often dressed the tops of the stonewalls with brush to increase their height or to fill in lines where no walls had been laid up.

Predators were a continual problem: first the wolf and the coyote, then later, the domesticated dog. The wolf and coyote were destroyed by relentless hunting and by clearing the land which diminished their habitat. Dogs were controlled with guns and laws making dog owners liable for damage to flocks.

The nineteenth-century Plainfield farmer was also confronted by sheep diseases like foot rot and intestinal parasites. It is a tribute to their diligence that they were able to sustain high flock numbers.

From the diaries of Willis Daniels, we learn that the flocks were turned out to pasture in May. The farm work focused largely on planting crops and maintaining fences. About the third week of June, the sheep were rounded up and "washed," a practice of soaking and brushing that wool buyers demanded to reduce the grease, chaff, and other foreign matter in the fleece. Then began the shearing, an arduous task that involved every able-bodied male on the farm.

The shearing was done with hand shears, which taxed the muscles of the forearm and the lower back, while the sheep struggled to escape. Wool was bagged and marketed to buyers and speculators often based in Lebanon.

When the shearing was done, it was time to hay. They typically began the first Monday after the Fourth of July and ran well into September. It was interrupted only by an occasional hoeing of corn. The nineteenth-century Plainfield farmer had little knowledge of the physiology of grasses and legumes, and, thus, early harvest to obtain maximum protein and other nutrient values was of no concern. The sheep had to subsist through the winter on hay of very low quality by modern standards.

In late fall, the sheep flocks were moved to winter quarters in open sheds adjacent to barns that contained the hay. Owners would "pick out" the flock, separating frail old sheep and males unwanted for breeding. They were shipped to slaughter or to sale. Dealers and drovers assembled groups of animals from farm to farm and drove them by foot to markets in Boston and New York. The coming of the railroad to White River Junction in the early 1850s ended the livestock drives and enabled dealers to ship their stock to the Brighton Market in Boston overnight rather than the tortuous two-week journey over the road.

Ewes were mated to lamb in the spring. The low level of nutrition and minimal management frequently extended the lambing season throughout the summer. A good manager yielded one live weanling lamb per ewe. Twin lambs on many farms were unwelcome because their mothers rarely produced enough milk to sustain two, so both would perish.

Plainfield's sheep population reached its all-time peak in 1860. The tax inventory records 17,234 head, but it was already evident that the sheep boom was beginning to bust. The demand for wool during the Civil War was strengthened by the blockade of southern cotton and the need for clothing. When the war was ended, the number of sheep in the town and elsewhere in New England began to decline rapidly. The sheep population dropped by more than

4,000 between 1865 and 1870. By 1890, there were fewer than one-third of the peak thirty years earlier.

What caused this decline? First, there was a change in dietary habits after the Civil War. The Industrial Revolution significantly reduced the caloric requirements of people by mechanizing work that had long been done manually, by providing indoor work to large segments of the population, and by improving methods of heating living and work spaces. These conditions reduced demand for mutton and, more importantly, lowered demand for woolen garments and bedding. At the same time, the native American population was turning away from fatty mutton and cutting back on woolen fabric. Immigrants to the United States were arriving from countries with no tradition of eating mutton or lamb. Ethnic groups from central and eastern Europe preferred pork and beef.

A second major development was the opening of the American West. Low-cost range land provided cheaper feed for sheep which were sent to the eastern markets by rail. By 1870, live lambs were loaded onto rail cars in Illinois and shipped in three days to the Brighton Market. Prices for New England sheep fell. The market was depressed further in the 1880s when refrigerated ships were introduced. Lamb and mutton were then transported from Australia, New Zealand, and Argentina.

The 1890s saw improvements of the refrigerated rail car and the rise of the United States packing industry in Chicago, St. Paul, and Kansas City. By the beginning of the twentieth century, lamb and mutton slaughter in the Northeast had shrunk to less than a quarter of its former size, even though the region continued to be the primary market for lamb and mutton.

Climatic records indicate a substantial moderation of New England weather beginning after 1870, and changes in tariffs and trade barriers made in the 1890s also played a role in decreasing the profitability of sheep husbandry in New England. In the period from 1890 to 1895, Plainfield's sheep population dropped by four-fifths. By World War I, the townspeople counted barely 600 head. The sheep population of the mid-nineteenth century and the extent of cleared land for agricultural use made the appearance of Plainfield dramatically different than it had been before and certainly has been since.

A half-dozen Plainfield families dominated the sheep culture of the town throughout the decades of sheep prosperity. Merrit Farnum and his son Henry consistently maintained the largest flock. They farmed west of Columbus Jordan Road. The Penniman family on Whitaker and Penniman Roads cropped the home farm to support flocks as large as 1,200 head, which were pastured on the uplands of Stowell Hill and Grantham Mountain. The Pennimans washed sheep in a pond formed by a small dam in Blow-Me-Down Brook. Black Hill was virtually cleared for pasturage and crop production by the Daniels family. The last Daniels on Black Hill, Edward, kept a sizable flock until the 1930s. The Chellis family operated extensive farms around Meriden Village with large flocks, and the Trues, Morgans, and Coles had major sheep



Henry C. Daniels with sheep, Plainfield, about 1920. Courtesy Jane Stephenson.

operations on Morgan and Batchelder Hills and west to Hibbard Brook. Westgates and Freemans were major sheep farmers in the west part of the town. (See Chapter 6, Plainfield in the Nineteenth Century, for further discussion of sheep farming.)

• *Table of Sheep Population*⁸

| Year | Sheep |
|------|--------|
| 1830 | 1,169 |
| 1835 | 10,432 |
| 1840 | 11,205 |
| 1845 | 12,631 |
| 1850 | 10,337 |
| 1855 | 12,060 |
| 1860 | 17,234 |
| 1865 | 13,817 |
| 1870 | 9,110 |
| 1875 | 7,906 |
| 1880 | 7,952 |
| 1885 | 6,920 |
| 1890 | 5,725 |
| 1895 | 1,689 |
| 1900 | 1,133 |
| 1905 | 1,293 |
| 1910 | 758 |
| 1915 | 621 |
| 1920 | 328 |
| 1925 | 306 |
| 1930 | 328 |
| 1935 | 333 |
| 1940 | 207 |
| 1945 | 204 |
| 1950 | 183 |
| 1955 | 208 |
| 1960 | 206 |
| 1965 | 194 |
| 1970 | 147 |
| 1975 | 305* |
| 1980 | 170* |
| 1985 | 106* |

**Taxation of sheep ended in 1971. Figures are from United States Department of Agriculture Statistical and Reporting Service.*



Log drive at Sumner Falls on the Connecticut River, before 1915. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Logging

As the number of sheep declined, forests reclaimed abandoned farms. Many Civil War soldiers, who only expected their absence to last a few months, never came back. Others heard about the land in the Midwest and came home only to pack up their goods and families. Even more went to work in the mills and factories. Between 1830 and 1960, the population of Plainfield dropped 32 percent.⁹

By the early 1900s, the forests had reclaimed the land. While the trees were not the size of their virgin ancestors, they were marketable timber. Silsby's Mill in Meriden was one of many mills that handled the logs. Wallace Stockwell saw Silsby Mill move from Meriden to Rumney. He heard bells and looked out of the barn to see a caravan of horse and ox teams going by. It was half a mile long. The teams were all hitched to a long rope.

When Corbin's Park was cut, the logs were drawn to True's farm just over the town line in Lebanon where they were rolled into the Connecticut River on the last log drive. Organized by the Connecticut Valley Lumber Company, the drive started in March 1915 at the Second Connecticut Lake. Over 200

men took part. It was the greatest drive that ever went down the Connecticut. When it passed North Stratford, New Hampshire, there were already sixty-five million feet of logs in the water.¹⁰

Forest products have been a major source of income for Plainfield landowners throughout the history of the town. As the vast pastures of the nineteenth century were abandoned, they rapidly reverted to forest, often to pine. In the twentieth century, Plainfield woodlands have yielded enormous quantities of "second growth" pine timber. Unfortunately, the current wave of forest growth has been dominated by lower quality hardwood species. Many Plainfield landowners in the later twentieth century have turned to professional foresters to guide management of their tree stands. Such practices as selective cutting and thinning will enhance yields and quality in the coming years, but are applied only on a limited basis.

Sugaring

Making maple syrup was learned from the Indians. Instead of tapping the tree by slashing the bark, the settlers fashioned spouts or spiles from short lengths of young saplings that had a soft center. At first, the lengths were split and the soft center was scraped out. Then the whole center was burned out with a hot rod. Sumac was a favorite. Metal spouts became available and were preferred because they were less apt to break and thawed faster in the morning sun. These spouts were driven into holes in the trees, and the sap was collected in wooden buckets. The sap was carried to the sugar house in larger buckets carried by "sap yokes" fitted to the man's shoulders. Large cauldrons were first used to boil the sap, but soon pans and evaporators replaced them.

Most farmers made syrup and sugar for their own use. They did not have thermometers, but they knew when it was ready for syrup or for sugar. They dipped a ladle into the boiling syrup and held it up at eye level. If the syrup poured out in a broad sheet or "apron," it was thick enough to keep in storage. When it was thick enough to "spin a thread," it was ready for "sugar on snow" where spoonfuls were ladled onto clean packed snow to harden immediately into "sheepskins"—a delicious sheet of maple flavor! As soon as everyone had eaten their fill, along with pickles and doughnuts to counter the sweetness, the remainder was stirred until it became sugar. The whole process is delicate because the syrup burns easily, spoiling both liquid and the pan. Consequently, syrup making was not a commercial enterprise until this century.

Harvesting Ice

There is no record of when New Englanders began to harvest ice, but the business flourished in Boston and other New England cities in the early 1800s.¹¹ However, Plainfield people used cold springs and deep wells to cool perishables. The summer people in the Cornish Colony at the turn of this cen-

tury provided an extra market for ice until the late 1930s when electricity brought modern refrigeration. The ice business provided work for local farmers during the winter. Ice houses were usually packed with about 500 cakes of 50 to 75 pounds each for summer use.

It called for ingenuity to process solid ice for the ice house. First a hole had to be chopped in the ice. Then a saw about four feet long and eight inches deep with the teeth pointed down (you only cut on the down stroke) was put into play. It had a handle on each side of the top like a lawn mower. The ice was marked with the sharp end of a "pike"—the pole used to guide the cakes of ice in the water to the ramp. After the cakes were dragged out of the water with tongs, they were hauled dripping and freezing to the sled. Not only were they slippery, they were toe mashers and finger pinchers. Later, machinery was devised to ease this disagreeable work. Horse-drawn scrapers, markers or "plows" marked out the ice in a checkered design, usually sixteen inches square. This was the "standard" size. The thickness of the ice depended on the winter weather. Some people shoveled off the ice ponds, so the ice would not be insulated by the snow and would thicken faster. It was possible in a cold winter to cut the pond two or three times. Many farmers built small ponds for this reason. The larger operators cut ice on Moses Pond, Bryant Pond, Blow-Me-Down Pond, and the Connecticut River.

Stanley Colby, who was raised at the present Edgewater Farm (Lockwood Sprague, 1991), told about cutting ice on the river by the "Hen and Chickens" rocks at the Smith farm (Paul Franklin, 1991). They filled the ice houses of the farmers on the river who needed the ice to cool their milk shipments to creameries.

My father [Earle] and Uncle Ed [Pierce] were cutting ice on the river, and Ed was doing the driving. They drove down on the river where they had been cutting the day before and Uncle Ed stopped the horses and jumped off the sled. Unfortunately, he jumped off right where they had been cutting the day before and he went right into the water and right up again so fast that he whistled! It was 10 or 15 degrees below and his clothes froze right to him. We hustled him right up to the Smith's [Paul Franklin, 1991] where we thawed him out.

Winters varied as they do now, and an "open" or mild winter was disastrous for ice cutters, especially for those who drew ice from the Connecticut because the current prevented the ice from forming.

Oscar Johnson, who lived on Center-of-Town Road (Fred Sweet, 1991), told of cutting ice on Moses Pond on a large scale and sledding it down the brook to a depot on Burr's meadow near where Jennie Ward lives on Stage Road (1991). People came there to pick it up for their ice houses.

Once at the ice house, the cakes were packed in layers with sawdust that

was also added to the outside walls. Enough was packed between layers to keep them from freezing together. An average family used two and a half tons of ice each summer. To have that amount available, twice the amount was harvested to compensate for shrinkage at the ice house.¹² Dairy farmers had to have at least twice that amount to cool the milk. Harvesting and storing ice was a major undertaking.

Dairying

The dairy industry began during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Every farm had a few cows and made butter to trade for the few things that they did not raise. As early as 1893, there was talk of establishing a creamery in Meriden, but an item in the *North Plainfield News* says that there was "non-agreement of the location of it."¹³

Fred Rogers in Meriden first made butter (or rather his wife Addie did) and fed the skim milk to dozens of hogs. In the fall of 1906, the Meriden paper reported that he sent forty-four dressed hogs to Dennison Brothers in Claremont. A few weeks later the newspaper noted that he purchased the first milking machine in town. He milked thirty-six cows.¹⁴ With three machines, they could milk twenty-nine cows in sixty-five minutes. Today this seems unbelievably slow, but compared with milking by hand, it was easier and quicker.

About this time, some farmers began to ship milk to Boston. In the *Weekly Enterprise*, the following news item appears: "A powerful branch of the Boston Co-operative Milk Producers Company was organized at White River Junction, Vermont, February 28th, with F. A. Rogers of Meriden, president, and B. B. Drown of Sharon, Vermont, secretary....It was unanimously voted that they could not produce milk the coming summer, at last summer's prices."¹⁵ Dissatisfaction with the prices paid by the Boston creameries was no doubt the reason for constructing a cheese factory in 1917 at the end of Bonner Road near the town hall.

Not every farmer wanted to milk cows. A. K. Read and Son were cattle dealers. They went all over the territory, as far north as Post Mills, Vermont, buying and selling cows. Whatever was needed for cattle, people expected the Reads either to have them or to get them. When Albert III, "Abe," was an infant, the menfolk forgot that they had a baby to feed. They sold their only milking cow and had to buy it back! Every Monday the Reads drove their week's purchases from the farm just north of Plainfield Village to the cattle cars in West Lebanon where the cattle were shipped to Lowell and Boston by train. Can you imagine driving twenty-five cows through the shopping center in West Lebanon today?

By the late 1930s, the remaining farmers were almost exclusively dairymen. They put their milk into forty-quart metal cans and cooled them in lined metal tanks with a refrigeration system. A truck came to pick up the cans, which were shipped to Boston on the milk train. Eventually, local dairies took over.



Driving cattle from Plainfield to the White River Junction, Vermont, Fair, about 1925. Harold Stone, Albert K. Read II, Palmer C. Read, Sr., P.C. Read, Jr.. They started early in the morning and arrived about noon. Courtesy Albert K. Read III.

In the 1950s, the Massachusetts sanitation laws changed the can system to a "bulk tank" system. The milk was pumped from a stainless steel, refrigerated bulk tank on the farm into a refrigerated tank truck and rushed to the dairy where it was pasteurized, bottled, and delivered to the local stores. Milk went to dairies as far south as Boston. Such a system meant that it was possible to bring fluid milk from greater distances. Local farms had to compete with the huge farms of New York and Pennsylvania. Today there are only a handful of milk-producing farms in the area. However, more and more young families are moving to the country and raising a portion of their food. Agriculture has come to a complete circle in Plainfield.

Turkey Drives

The first turkey drive began in northern Vermont on November 1, 1824, and set out for Boston, some 209 miles away. The drive took twenty-three and one-half days. The 67 men, women, and children who delivered the 8,000 birds to the Boston market made "Genuine Vermont Turkey" a generic term still used today.¹⁶ Not all "Vermont Turkeys" were raised in Vermont—many came from northern New York State and from New Hampshire.¹⁷

These drives were organized like the later cattle drives of the old West. The cattlemen had learned from Easterners that fresh meat for the cities meant that they had to get them there *alive*! Before the railroads, Vermont turkeys were

driven down the eastern side of the Green Mountains to Putney, Vermont, where they were ferried across the Connecticut River to New Hampshire. Covered bridges were avoided because the turkeys immediately settled down to sleep as soon as they entered the dark confines of the bridge. They had to be literally pushed or carried through to the other side!¹⁸

Most of the food for the 8,000 turkeys, 67 people, and 8 teams of horses that pulled the wagons of provisions on the first drive had to be taken with them. The turkeys foraged on wild grain and grasses, berries, and nuts when available, but were always fed corn at night to keep them together and under control.¹⁹ Wild game provided some relief from the salted beef and pork brought with the drovers, but as provisions dwindled, the fare deteriorated to "lumber pie"²⁰—a fried dough-coated mixture of practically anything edible in small amounts. Ash-flecked biscuits were spread with a marmalade of boiled pumpkin and carrot, and with hunger making the best sauce, it was no doubt delicious!

Two hundred miles of walking is hard on feet of any kind, so the turkeys were driven through a trough of warm tar to "shod" them. When they walked in sand and dirt, the resulting combination made a serviceable "shoe" for the birds.

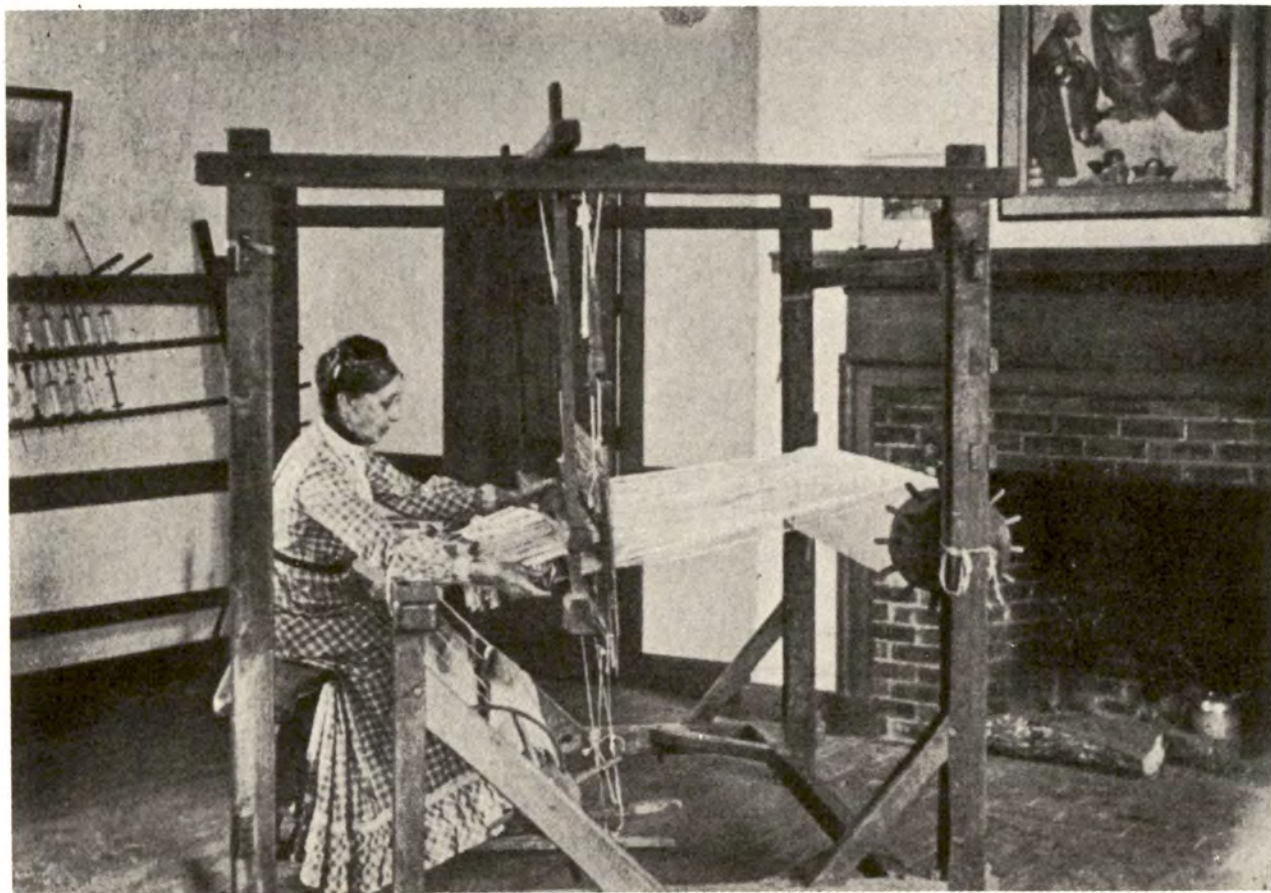
Fred S. Moulton of East Plainfield went on his first turkey drive in 1853. He did not have to "shoe" his turkeys. His route would not have been as far or as rocky as a Vermonter's, but he did have a trained old gobbler who led the flock and who flew when he could to save their feet.²¹ These lead turkeys, sometimes an old hen, were fitted with little bells while handbells and staffs were used to drive the flock. In 1908, turkey drovers brought (by foot and rail) 400 tons of live turkeys to Boston, including some from Plainfield.²²

Chicken Farming

Several poultry farms were operated in Plainfield. Rocky Acres was located on High Street in Meriden (Lester Bouchier, 1991). Joseph and Laura Bosley started raising chicken broilers in 1946. In 1952, they built a large chicken house and expanded their business, raising 10,000 chicks at a time. They continued until 1960 when they began to raise laying hens. They were the first people in New Hampshire to have "caged" laying hens. The Bosleys closed their business in 1968. Wild Echo Farm is located in East Plainfield on Croydon Turnpike, just off Route 120. The farm is owned by Veronica and Julian Bellavance. They began to raise chicken broilers in 1952. In 1964, they began to raise laying hens and had 7,500. They sold the eggs to Joseph Bosley. They also raised Hereford cattle. In 1967, the Bellavances left farming.

The Hendrick family on Stage Road also operated a chicken farm.

For a discussion of present-day farms and produce, see Chapter 10, Business and Commerce.



Miss Harriet Hildreth weaving at the Mothers' and Daughters' Clubhouse, Plainfield, about 1902. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

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**Mothers' and
Daughters' Club¹ and
Mothers' and Daughters'
Rug Industry**

Beatrice Clark

CLUB MOTTO

Wife means weaver. You must be either
housewives or house moths—remember that.
In the deep sense you must either weave men's
fortunes and embroider them or feed upon
them and bring them to decay.

—*Ruskin*

The club motto first appeared on the 1906–07 programs, ten years after the group was founded to bring women and girls together from all walks of life to solidify their position in society.

On August 19, 1897, Mrs. Laura Walker, wife of artist H. O. Walker, with her friends, Mrs. Bullard, Miss Grace Arnold, and Mrs. Eleanor Platt, invited all the ladies of Plainfield to a tea and meeting in the town hall. Its purpose was to form an organization "that should embrace the sojourners from the city and the country women, so that interests might be shared and helpful work done together."²

A constitution was drawn up and meetings scheduled for the first and third Wednesday afternoons of each month. Mrs. Lucy Hill owned a large house across from the store and was willing that the club meet in a large room on the south side (Judy Merrill, 1991). Benches with storage space below were built to hold their sewing work, and bookcases were added along the walls. The minutes record receipt of books and magazines sent to the club by the summer residents during their absence. (The town library at this time was located in a small upstairs room in the town hall.) On Saturday evenings the club room was opened for the young people. Reverend and Mrs. Trow generously gave their time to lead these evenings.



Laura Walker, about 1910. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

The first membership list numbered twenty-nine. Later that year, fifty-five members paid dues of fifteen cents each. Through the years, membership fluctuated at about seventy-five people with an average attendance at meetings of about twenty.

Since transportation was by horse and wagon or on foot, attendance depended on the weather: "sparse attendance of seven due to a temperature of thirty-three degrees below zero." Another time a large attendance was counted by a "horse tied to every tree."

Annual programs were organized around popular themes of the day. In 1904–05, the topic for study was Japan. Meetings discussed the development of Japan since 1850, home life in Japan, Japanese proverbs, and women's place in Japan followed by household economics with meetings that addressed bacteriology, dust, bacteria, molds, yeasts, friendly micro-organisms, disease germs, and sanitation. Apparently, various members volunteered and then researched their topic for presentation.

From the minutes of September 30, 1897:

The question for discussion, Moral Suasion versus Corporal Punishment, was read by the president and the subject opened by the reading of a quotation from the Talmud. Mrs. Frazer Campbell, Mrs. Beaman, Mrs. Platt, Mrs. Ruggles and others argued that for a child's good, it must be taught to obey. That



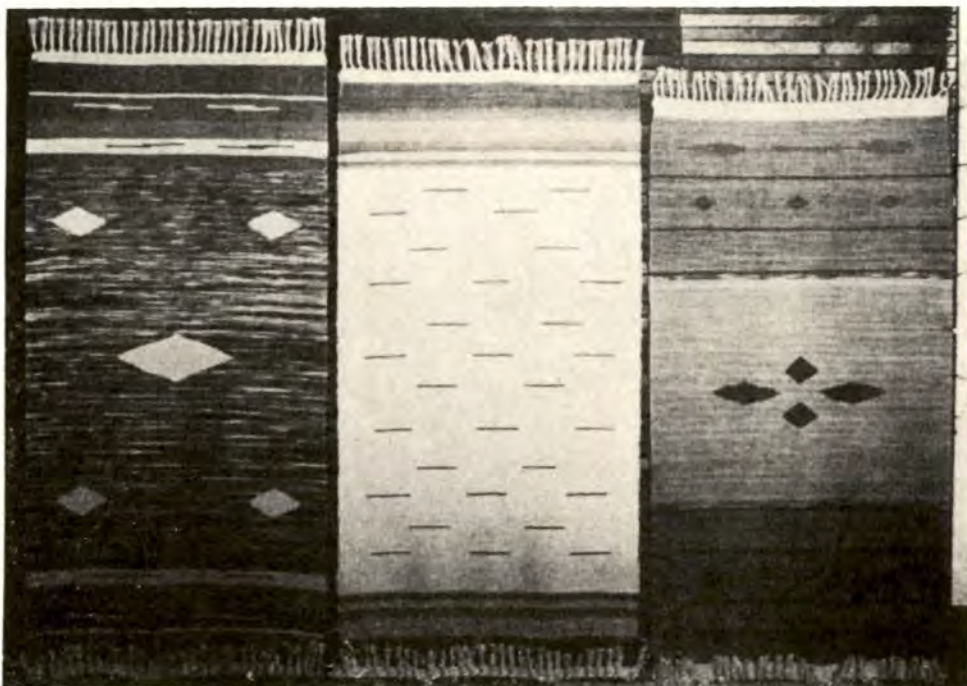
Postcard of the Mothers' and Daughters' Clubhouse, Plainfield, about 1920.
Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

while it is too young to be fully reasoned with, a judicious use of corporal punishment, administered in love, never in anger, upon a proper time and place is effectual and not objectionable.

Mrs. Parrish, Mrs. Houston, and Mrs. Austin contended that every child is a little individual whom parents do not own, with rights they are bound to respect, committed to their care to be trained to self-government, not to be coerced. That a child's self-respect is lowered by a whipping. To this Mrs. Beaman opposed a quotation from her father, "Never burden a child with the responsibility of his own bringing up."

During the winter months, the women turned their attention to helping the needy families in the community. In 1913, a bed quilt was pieced for the Cole family. Used clothing, new yard goods, and some money was given. Clothes were repaired or made over, and new dresses, shirts, and underwear took shape created on the club's sewing machine. The group often bought shoes and other items for the poor. Distribution occurred at the start of school and again at Christmas. Sewing classes for the children and grown girls were also held. Correspondence from the summer members flourished during the winter months with program ideas from Mrs. Bullard in Roxbury and Mrs. Walker in Lakewood.

On October 10, 1901, Curtis Lewin deeded a tract of land to the Mothers' and Daughters' Club with the understanding that a clubhouse be erected within two years. Architect Charles Platt designed the building. George Ruggles



Rugs made by the Mothers' and Daughters' Rug Industry, about 1900. The size of the rugs was three feet by six feet. The middle rug sold for five dollars and the others six dollars. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

supervised its construction and evidently did much of the work. He was paid \$210.20. The oak floor, valued at \$78, was given by the author Winston Churchill. Other gifts were the time of fourteen volunteers for hauling lumber and stones. Harvey Plummer, who laid the chimney, gave his labor as one day's work \$3.50. Will Tracy estimated the value of his seventeen hours at \$2.55; W. B. Eggleston, ten hours work at \$1.75; E. G. Kenyon, for "painting clubhouse outside and in," received \$50.20. One charge mentioned several times was "Ferryage to Hartland 20 cents" (for lumber and millwork from Martin's Mills across the river). The total cost of the clubhouse including donations was \$1,093.17. The clubhouse is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the first women's clubhouse in the state of New Hampshire and the first home-based crafts industry in New Hampshire. In addition to donations, money was raised from auctions, fairs, and sales, especially through the Rug Industry, another brainchild of Laura Walker. Rugs were woven for sale for about fifteen years under the management of Marion L. Ruggles.

The construction of the first women's clubhouse was an ambitious undertaking partly funded by rummage sales and fairs. To raise more money, Benjamin O. True donated to the Mothers' and Daughters' Club Mrs. H. D. True's (1802–1896) loom, which had been in the family for generations. Mrs. Laura Walker suggested that the club make summer rugs. In the winter of 1901–1902,

club members collected all the old cloth they could find, tearing it into strips, sewing and winding balls at their regular meetings. By the first of August, enough material was prepared to make twenty rugs. A sale was held in the clubhouse. All the rugs were sold, and orders taken for forty more. The supply of used material was exhausted, so all rugs after that were of new material.

The Mothers' and Daughters' Industry was a business organization distinct from the club and yet associated with it. All the workers in the industry had to hold membership in the club. Any profit went into the treasury of the club. The manager, Marion L. Ruggles, bought the material, gave out all the work, took all the orders, packed and shipped the goods sold, kept accounts of the workers, and attended to all the correspondence. The organization was the earliest craft industry in New Hampshire and was written up in national magazines: *The Twentieth Century Home* and *Country Life in America*, July 1903.

The cloth, a soft "domette," a medium-weight white outing flannel, was bought in lots of 500-1000 yards. It was torn into five one-half-yard pieces which were as long as could be handled successfully in dying. It was then given to the dyers: one did the indigo dying, the other all the other colors.

Mrs. Ruggles had experimented with vegetable dyes: apple tree bark, onion skins, goldenrod, and moss growing on old board fences. She also used indigo. Mrs. Walker found a piece of driftwood with a reddish hue while beachcombing on the New Jersey shore. It was a piece of valuable logwood from Jamaica, washed up from a shipwreck. Mrs. Ruggles used this new color for several years.

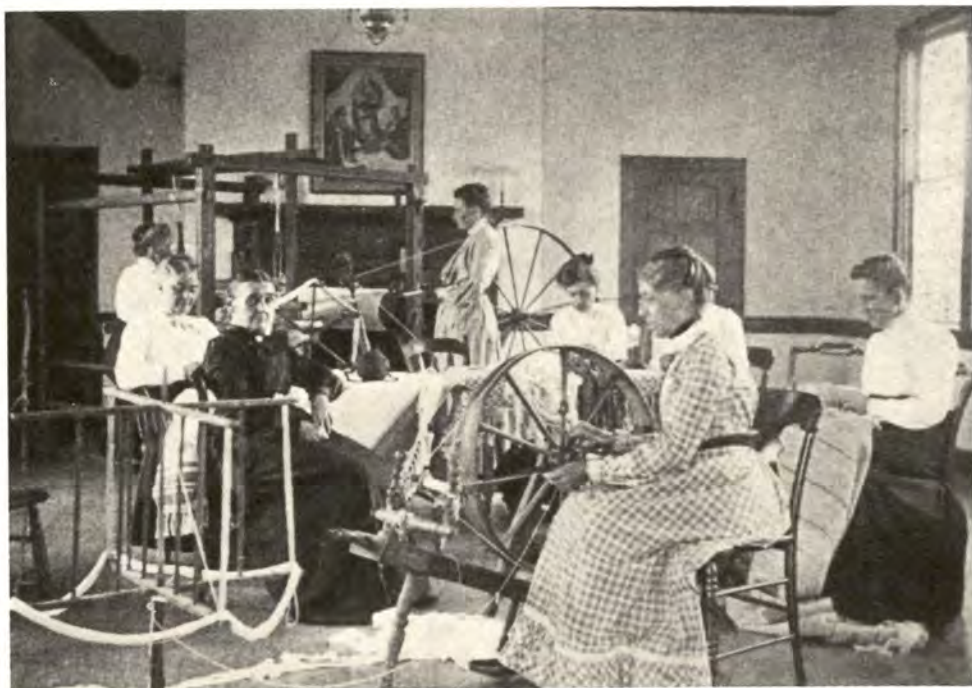
Dying was hard work. It required lifting heavy pieces of cloth for hours over a hot stove and then thoroughly washing and drying it in the sun. It was left outdoors several days to make it colorfast.

The huge pieces were then bundled up into balls of material for one rug. Bundles were taken to one of ten sewers who cut them into strips one inch wide, sewed them together, folded them lengthwise, and wound them into great balls. This work was simpler and children could help. It was "handy" work that could be picked up between household chores. The balls were then returned to Mrs. Ruggles.

The two artist friends, Laura Walker and Frances Houston, designed the rugs from the colors available. Some of their patterns were: Daffodil, Maple Leaf, Sun, Moon and Stars, Dog Track, Primrose, Leopard Skin, Arrow, Fig Leaf, Crossed Wire, Double Chariot Wheel, Flowers of Ediborough, Sweet Pea, Pine Tree. The rugs were usually a yard wide and two yards long; the price varied from \$5 to \$7 each. Smaller sizes were available and larger ones, too, by sewing together strips.

When a rug was ordered, Mrs. Ruggles selected the colors and sent the material with the painted picture from the artists to the weaver. Sometimes she was sent samples of wallpaper or furniture coverings to match in color with new rugs.

The weaving was hard work, too. There were five heavy looms. One of them was over a hundred years old and capable of a breadth of four feet. "The piece



Workers in the clubhouse. L-R Miss Stella Harlow (standing at loom), Mrs. Elizabeth Ward, Mrs. Lydia Reed, Mrs. Marion Ruggles (standing), Mrs. Lillian (Hildreth) Tyrell, Miss Harriet Hildreth, Mrs. Etta Trow. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

of work in the loom was pushed close by a lathe and needed a strong arm to manage it. The changing of the stitches was done by treadle work with the foot. The shuttle threading with cotton twine is a wonderful sight to see. It is pretty to see the looms in operation—but it takes strength to operate them and taste in following design are necessary.”³

The rug then went to a finisher who looked it over on both sides, fastened any loose threads, and sewed down the end of the woven strips which made the design. She also knotted the fringe and sewed on the trademark, which was designed by Mrs. William Houston. The finished rug was returned to Mrs. Ruggles for shipping.

“That the industry was a success from the start, was due in great measure to the kindness of the members from the Cornish Colony who not only bought rugs for themselves, but secured many orders in the city, some of them being kind enough to hold exhibitions and sales in their own homes, and the rugs, thus sold, being seen, brought more orders.”⁴ The first year the industry sold 200 rugs, the second year 300. One year, the Industry took in almost a thousand dollars. Rugs were exhibited in New York, Boston, Chicago, and elsewhere. Lucy (Ruggles) Bishop remembered her mother sending many rugs to Council Bluffs, Iowa.



Both sides of the sign, Mothers' and Daughters' Rug Industry, about 1900.
Photos by Nancy Norwalk. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

In 1903, a smaller loom was bought and a kind of Swedish weaving, also called twine weaving, was learned in order to weave curtains, table covers, and coverlets. The industry eventually had three of these looms. Prices for the twine weaving ranged from \$5 for a pair of curtains to \$12 for a double bed coverlet.

There was not enough work to keep all the workers busy, but it did mean that club members, who wished, could make money in their own homes, which was unusual in those days. Weaving for the club was a pleasant diversion and an occupation for spare moments. It was profitable at \$2.50 for a full day's work. It was also an artistic education. The workers learned a lot about color schemes, harmonious designs, the use of soft shades, and avoidance of crude colors.

The industry operated for about fifteen years. As time went on, they were unable to compete in the commercial market. The people who had been active in the industry grew older. "Mrs. Ruggles offered her services for the purpose of teaching a girl or a class of girls who cared to learn weaving that it may not become a lost art in the present generation in Plainfield."⁵ Department stores were selling rugs at two to three dollars. Even though the sales room was combined with a tea room, they eventually had to abandon both projects "but we had gained far more than we had earned."

Although the club's work was local, one can follow the history of the country in the minutes of meetings. Mrs. Walker refers to "all the work we did for our boys in the Spanish War," and there is a thank you note for the pajamas made by the members for the Spanish-American veterans in the Army hospitals. Mrs. Walker's Silver Anniversary history mentions all the sewing and knitting done for "our boys in the Big War." The clubhouse served as the Red Cross Center. Suffrage meetings were held at the clubhouse between 1916 and

1919. During the Depression, a Winter Relief Group of members again picked up their needles to sew for the poor. Often there were meetings, phonograph music, or readings as they worked. The minutes read "twenty garments and a quilt tacked, using Red Cross material." In 1933, a Winter Relief Fund Silver Tea was held at Ellen Shipman's house. World War II found the members contributing scarves, socks, sweaters, and mittens to the British War Relief as well as to local War Bond Drives: "sent thirty-three books to Army camps" and "voted use of the clubhouse for Red Cross Home Nursing Course till janitor and wood are needed this winter."

In the early years, programs were done by the membership. They did research and presented papers. Visitations to and from other women's clubs were common: the Hanover Club, the Fortnightly Club in West Lebanon, the Windsor Friends in Council. The Mothers' and Daughters' Club held membership in both State and General Federation of Women's Clubs. Year-round and summer residents contributed their talents in music and art. Mrs. Albion Lang willed her collection of "paintings and pictures" to the club. Others also helped.

Miss Grace Arnold and Mrs. Frances Graydon invited members to afternoon musicales with talent from New York and other places. Mrs. Maxfield Parrish also invited the club to musical presentations in her big drawing room. We went to afternoon teas at other beautiful homes and to garden parties at the home of Mrs. Ellen Shipman, the landscape architect. I am sure the most outstanding event for the club was a reception at Mrs. Shipman's to meet the first Mrs. Woodrow Wilson and two of her daughters.

In September 1927, a letter was received from Ellen Shipman offering prizes of \$25, \$15, and \$10 for the most beautiful flower beds that could be seen from the road from her house south to the Windsor bridge. The response was tremendous and resulted in a beautification program for Plainfield. Later, it seemed that programs depended heavily on the New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Service: food, nutrition, instruction in home skills, arts and crafts. There were also dramatic productions with local talent. Toward the end of the club years, members no longer wished to entertain themselves, but invited outside speakers. From the earliest times, probably the best attendance was at the New Year's luncheons. These gatherings were held annually in the clubhouse. There were always greetings and letters from the summer residents. In 1915, "covers were laid for twenty-four." In 1924, "all went home speaking a good word for our dinner." There was also an annual Gentlemen's Night. In 1898, "matrons [were] to bring their husbands, the members without mates, their gentlemen friends." Each year, a well-attended afternoon program was devoted to children's games, music, and recitations.

Through the years, the club sponsored scout troops, shared in church work,

and presented encyclopedias to the school. There was a "Tin Box" fund and a "Lend-A-Hand" group. Between 1900 and 1925, annual giving included The Flower Mission in Boston and an orphans home in Franklin. The latter may have become the Franklin Child Aid and Protective Society. Contributions were also made to the New Hampshire Memorial Hospital. In 1937, the club "donated to Hanover Hospital \$11, 48 quarts 2 pints vegetables, 7 glasses jelly, 3 cabbages, 1 squash, 1/2 peck carrots and beets." Windsor Hospital was also a recipient. Contributions were made "to pay off the mortgage on the McDowell Memorial in Peterborough," toward the construction of the National Federation Headquarters in Washington, and for the restoration of Independence Hall. Packages were sent to needy families abroad. Thank you notes are recorded from England and Greece.

By the 1970s, change had come to Plainfield. Ladies no longer had free time for club work. Families often required two incomes, and wives held jobs away from homes. The school had moved from Plainfield Plain. Taxes and other expenses had increased. A questionnaire showed twenty-six favoring continuation of the club with two opposed, but twenty were unwilling to accept an office of leadership. A motion was passed that the Mothers' and Daughters' Club deed the clubhouse, but not the contents, to the Plainfield Historical Society. On March 30, 1979, the Historical Society accepted the deed with the condition that the clubhouse may be used by the Mothers' and Daughters' Club without charge, that the building is not to be moved from Plainfield Village, that the Historical Society will have the option to buy the furnishings, and that the Mothers' and Daughters' Club may affix a plaque on the building, identifying it by its original name and the year it was built. The treasury of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club will sponsor an annual "Mothers' and Daughters' Club Day" at the Plainfield Elementary School.

For many members, there was a sense of sadness and betrayal of their forbears and founders, but they believed that Laura Walker's ideals must survive without the formality of her club: "the educational part of our original ways—the *studying* of things, should be kept up. And we should keep our eyes open to see where we can help each other where help is needed, either in material ways, or in 'holding up of the hands' of those less strong among us and always in *loving kindness*—for after all, we each one are in need of kindness and affection and of being understood."

Societies and Organizations

Bettyann N. Dole
Jessie Carver English
William Franklin
Kathryn F. MacLeay
Nancy Norwalk
Wallace Pickering
Clifton Porter
William Quimby
Diane Rogers
Stephen H. Taylor

Blow-Me-Down Grange, No. 234

Like many rural communities after the Civil War, Plainfield's Grange focused on politics and evidently did not satisfy the members. The group folded about 1874. A generation later, several farmers and villagers became charter members of Blow-Me-Down Grange in 1895:

Arvin S. Bartholomew
Alfred B. Chadbourne
Mrs. F. J. Chadbourne
Frank J. Chadbourne
Henry C. Daniels
Lizzie Daniels
Solomon C. Dow
Mrs. C. E. Eggleston
Charles E. Eggleston
Mary D. Hadley
Philip A. Hadley

Charles H. Hill
Lucy M. Hill
Lucy M. Lewin
George M. Smith
Insley W. Spalding
Jennie V. Spalding
Clara J. Westgate
Daniel C. Westgate (Master)
Fannie Whitaker
John H. Whitaker

The Grange was organized in the town hall on December 11, 1895, by District Deputy James W. Fitch, Cornish, who was assisted by members of Meriden Grange No. 151 and Cornish Grange No. 25. On a motion by Charles Hill, it was voted that the name should be Blow-Me-Down Grange No. 234, and the charter was granted by the National Grange on December 14, 1895. At

the third meeting, the Executive Committee made a signed contract with Solomon Dow to "build the fires, take care of the lamps and see to the hall, for which he is to have 25 cents and to have only 15 cents when no fire is needed, and for grange entertainments, he is to charge nothing."¹

On February 12, 1897, the members voted to join the Mascoma Pomona Grange. In April they bought an organ for \$45. In November 1897, "The Grange listened to the report of a committee in regard to the old church for a Grange Hall."² This was the first mention of procuring a building of their own. No action was taken.

On March 24, 1899, John Whitaker raised the issue of the "Old South Church." Land for the Union Congregational Church had been bought from Jeremiah Dow sixty years before, in 1839. One building was constructed that year by Colonel Charles Eggleston. On April 28, it was then voted to "see the pew-owners, and get their terms of sale." In May, they reported that each pew-owner would sell for \$3 or less, and the grange voted unanimously to buy them out. In July, Wallace Thrasher, J.P., was engaged to see the owners and have them sign "before witnesses in a legal way." On September 1, 1899, the deed was finished, and the Grange became the owner of the "Old South Church."

A special meeting was called in September 1899 to plan for remodeling. The church was altered by the Grange for \$300. In April 1900, Harry B. Fuller offered to loan the picture, "Puritan Settlers," on behalf of his wife, Lucia Fairchild Fuller, artist of the mural. The offer was accepted, and a committee appointed to hang the picture. Mrs. Charles Platt is one of the figures in the mural; Laura Walker is washing the dishpan; Mrs. Fuller's mother is holding the baby, Clara (Clarkie) Fuller.

For many years, nearly every program addressed topics of the day: "Should Parcel Post be Established in this Country?", "Should Re-appraisal of Real Estate be made in the Coming Year?", "To what Extent can a Farmer Afford to buy Grain for Stock?", and "Can a Farmer Afford an Automobile?" Prohibition and woman's suffrage were also debated. Three members voted against the latter. Members took all of these topics seriously, and many problems of farm and home were thoroughly discussed.

This Grange held its first fair in October 1912 with 228 exhibits, but only \$3.10 was realized for profits. Two years later, Harold Chellis wired the hall, and the first meeting by electric lights was on August 28, 1914. In 1918, another fair was held with profits of \$251.01 which were donated to the Red Cross.

Expenses began to mount. In 1921, a woodshed was constructed on the east wall. In the fall of 1925, the roof was shingled, trim painted, and tower repaired at a cost of \$150. But membership was small, and six months afterwards, they voted to "write to the Pomona Grange Secretary that we would be unable to entertain them owing to our financial standing."³ The sign was put on the front of the hall that year.

In September 1938, the hurricane came. The roof, windows, tower, and chimney were badly damaged. Needed repairs led to discussion of building a second



Sixtieth anniversary of the Blow-Me-Down Grange, December 9, 1955. L-R Willa Stone (treasurer), Clara Perry (Pomona), Hallie Gibson (seated, Executive Committee), Nathan Mace, Leona Mace, Charlotte Shepard, Priscilla Hodgeman (lecturer), Ellen Maylin (seated, master), Rebecca Hadley (steward). Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

floor. Hurricane lumber was given by Mrs. Platt, Mr. Rublee, and from Mrs. Goodyear. Later, hemlock lumber was also donated by Hattie Kenyon. During the winter of 1939–1940, the hall was remodeled to its present plan with volunteer labor.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the Grange held large agricultural fairs in the fields to the west of the Community Church and the Philip Read Memorial Library. In 1945, 500 people attended. The Grange celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in 1955 with eighty guests from fifteen New Hampshire granges. In recent years, membership has dropped. In 1985, the Blow-Me-Down Grange members entered into partnership with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows which had been meeting in Hanover. The Odd Fellows needed a place to meet and the Grange needed new and active members.

Bon Ami Club

This girls' club met on Saturday evenings at the Plainfield Baptist Church in 1910. At one meeting, "several original papers on abstract subjects were read by their authors." This group may have been church-related, but the reason for forming and how long it existed is unknown. There is mention in 1911 of the Good Friendship Club meeting at the church. Perhaps, the Bon Ami Club evolved into this group.⁴



Raymond Smith (born May 6, 1891) receiving the Boston Post Cane from Selectmen Judy Belyea, Bruce Baird, and Jay Waldner, Meriden, 1989. Courtesy Nancy Franklin.

The Boston Post Cane

On August 18, 1909, the *Boston Post* newspaper presented Gaboon ebony canes with a fourteen-karat gold head to the chairmen of the Board of Selectmen of 431 New England towns with the request that it be presented with the compliments of the *Boston Post* to the oldest citizen of the town.⁵ The head of the cane is inscribed: "Presented by the Boston Post/to the/Oldest Citizen of/Plainfield, N.H./(to be transmitted)." The idea was that the cane would be presented to and carried by the oldest citizen of the town and that upon his/her death would be transferred to the next oldest citizen.

Over the years, many canes have been lost to fire or moving citizens. Only a few *Boston Post* Canes can now be accounted for. The town of Plainfield is very fortunate to still have its cane. Our cane has become very fragile through many years of use. The selectmen, in consultation with Albert "Abe" Read, president of the Plainfield Historical Society in 1986, decided that the original *Boston Post* Cane would be displayed at the time of presentation, but that a similar cane would be engraved with the recipient's name and the date of presentation. The replacement cane is given permanently to the oldest resident of Plainfield for their continued use. The original *Boston Post* Cane is on display at the Plainfield Historical Society building in Plainfield.

Known Recipients of the *Boston Post Cane*

| Name | Rec. Cane | Birth | Death | Age |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----|
| Lewis Jordan | | 3/29/1829 | 1/23/1916 | 86 |
| Lucy Wyman | | 7/30/1833 | 8/28/1934 | 100 |
| Tamson Monroc | | 11/30/1846 | 10/08/1944 | 98 |
| Mary Freeman | | 5/22/1853 | 3/26/1945 | 91 |
| Clara J. (Stone) Westgate | | 3/27/1855 | 12/13/1945 | 90 |
| Asa Walker | | 9/01/1850 | 12/23/1948 | 95 |
| George Raymond Kenyon | | 11/21/1863 | 7/29/1953 | 89 |
| Cynthia Hadley | 1953 | 2/13/1867 | 3/15/1960 | 93 |
| Hattie (Mansur) Kenyon | | 7/23/1867 | 9/13/1963 | 96 |
| Maxfield Parrish | 1963 | 7/25/1870 | 3/30/1966 | 96 |
| Josephine (Orpin) Lamb | | 5/17/1875 | 11/14/1972 | 97 |
| Eunice Waite | 1975 | 3/07/1885 | 4/17/1977 | 92 |
| William Wildey | 1977 | 7/13/1884 | 3/28/1978 | 93 |
| Arthur Chivers | 1978 | 7/05/1880 | 8/07/1981 | 101 |
| Bessie (Westgate) Hill | 1982 | 10/15/1883 | 12/18/1986 | 104 |
| Nellie (Barton) Smith | 1987 | 8/06/1895 | 8/28/1989 | 94 |
| Raymond A. Smith | 1989 | 5/06/1891 | | |

Cheshire Masonic Lodge

Cheshire Lodge #23 A.F. & A.M. was organized in the Kingsbury Tavern about 1814 and received its charter from the Grand Lodge of New Hampshire in March 1815. Meetings were held in the Kingsbury Tavern, the Fifield Tavern, and the Meriden Hotel. The lodge was active until June 1840. The charter was renewed in February 1862. The lodge was located in Plainfield until October 1863 when it was voted to move to Cornish Flat where it is still located.

Christian Endeavor Society (Plainfield Baptist Church)

This group is mentioned in the newspaper as early as 1911. It must have met earlier, because an article announced that "the meetings used to be held in the vestry but will now be held in church every Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are marked by earnestness, brightness, and helpfulness to all . . . plenty of good singing"⁶ was an announcement in 1911, encouraging youths to join. The group was active at least until the 1930s. Newspaper articles of that time document the many activities.⁷ The recollections of Beatrice Clark and Mary Cassedy, who attended as teen-agers confirm that the group disbanded in the mid-30s. Lawn parties, socials, plays, pageants, meetings with elections of officers, and committees appointed such as the look-out committee, social



Buffalo in Corbin's Park, about 1900. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

committee, and prayer meeting committee were activities in which the members participated.⁸

Coburn Players

An announcement in a 1909 newspaper billed this group as having done a play production, "The Canterbury Pilgrims" by Percy MacKaye, on August 10, at 8:15 p.m. in the Saint Gaudens' woods.⁹

Corbin's Park (Blue Mountain Forest Association)

Grantham Mountain, to the east of Meriden Village, is largely within Corbin's Park, which is maintained by the Blue Mountain Forest Association. The Association is an exclusive group of men, who came from the New York City and Boston areas to hunt. Teddy Roosevelt, the Prince of Wales, and Grover Cleveland also hunted here. Corbin brought many other rich and powerful friends to visit and hunt in his park in the short time between his completing his land acquisitions and his untimely death in an accident caused by a runaway team of horses. Although the park was formally named Blue Mountain Forest Park, local residents still call it Corbin's Park. The park covers land in the towns of Croydon, Cornish, Grantham, and Newport, as well as the town of Plainfield, and encompasses 28,000 acres, of which 3,160.5 acres are in Plainfield.¹⁰

In June of 1953, lightning started a fire inside the park. The men of the



Ernest Harold Baynes with tame bear, about 1910. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

surrounding towns and the U. S. Army and U. S. Air Force units fought the fire for two months. It was finally contained, but the smoke was visible all summer and fall. The fire was finally put out by the first winter snow storm.

The land was originally owned by 350 farmers and other landowners, who began to sell land to Austin Corbin in 1886. Corbin, a Newport, New Hampshire, native, was a New York railroad baron and developer of Coney Island. In 1890, the Blue Mountain Forest Association was incorporated. Twelve-foot fences were erected around the park, and Mr. Corbin began to collect various species of wild game. In 1908, the count of animals was estimated at 165 buffalo, 500 deer, 50 elk, and 450 wild boar. The wild boar were imported from the Black Forest of Germany and were the most adaptable of all the animals Corbin brought to New Hampshire. They prospered on an omnivore's diet of grubs, roots, and vegetation, supplemented in severe winters with corn by the preserve's rangers.

Corbin also retained a distinguished naturalist, Ernest Harold Baynes, to oversee the development of the wildlife population within the park. Baynes settled in the Plainfield section of Corbin's vast preserve and lived out his life in the Meriden Village area. Baynes played a major role in national conservation efforts, including protection of migratory birds and the American bison pop-

ulation. (See Chapter 14, The Meriden Bird Club, and Chapter 18, Plainfield and the Cornish Colony through Biographies.)

Mr. Corbin, at Baynes' urging, brought the buffalo to the park because their numbers in the West were rapidly decreasing, and he wanted to protect them. There were feeding areas near the fence, and residents of the surrounding towns went to watch the herds of buffalo graze. During the 1910s and early 1920s, however, a mange disease developed in the herd, and the buffalo were decimated.

Later, during the Hurricane of 1938, falling trees smashed the fences, and some of the wild boar and other game escaped. The wild boar readily attacked agricultural crops, to the point where in 1945 Plainfield approved a \$40 bounty for each boar shot. Even up to the 1980s, wild boar occasionally escape to forage in local gardens and fields. Local hunters have killed most of them, although occasionally one is seen. A number of Plainfield homes are decorated with massive heads of boar shot in locations around the town.

Ownership and management of the park following Corbin's death passed to the Blue Mountain Forest Association, a private corporation consisting of about two dozen sportsmen. The land is managed both for the propagation of game and for production of wood and timber by a staff of rangers, foresters, and biologists.

Cornfield Bird Club

This group was organized on the west side of town in 1911. "The principal aim of the Club is the stimulation of interest in bird life, especially among the children."¹¹ It was fashioned after the Meriden Bird Club with a similar "constitution." Mrs. Winston Churchill encouraged the group and was the president of the club. There was a carpentry school that made birdhouses, windmills, and ironing boards as part of the group's activities.¹² Apparently, there was a large membership of children,¹³ but how long the club lasted is unknown.

The children also went through the village and tacked wire-netting pockets on the trees. Mr. Jarvis, the butcher, supplied them with suet every week. Mrs. Lydia Parrish drew up a system of charts and notebooks which were given to the children each month for them to record their bird observations. Ernest Harold Baynes lectured the members on birds and instructed them in building bird boxes.¹⁴

500 Club

In the early 1930s, the card game 500 was popular, and a club was formed. Various couples and individuals hosted games at their homes. There were prizes for winners and consolation prizes for losers.

There was a 500 party at the Mothers' and Daughters' Clubhouse to benefit the group. Some players appeared in colonial costumes; one couple came as George and Martha Washington.¹⁵

4-H Clubs

The establishment of a Cooperative Extension Service for Sullivan County soon after World War I brought trained educators from the University of New Hampshire with the latest information in home economics, forestry, and agriculture. A youth development agent assisted in the formation of 4-H clubs throughout the county to provide wholesome, educational activities for young people. Children who joined 4-H clubs pledged their "*heads* to clearer thinking, *hearts* to greater loyalty, *hands* to larger service, and *health* to better living." Community service was a major component of 4-H club activities.

The earliest documented 4-H club in Plainfield was organized in the River District by Casper and Mabel Short about 1926. Among the club's activities were projects in gardening, poultry and livestock, and the planting of young pine trees in cutover woodlots. One stand of pines set out by Hall and Rose Peterson's boys about 1930 near the junction of Freeman and Peterson Roads survived until a logging operation cut it in the late 1980s.

Various 4-H clubs were sustained during the 1930s and through the World War II years. The clubs reached their peak in the late 1940s and 1950s. Vincent A. "Pa" Perkins of Claremont, county 4-H extension agent at the time, was instrumental in building this enthusiasm.

The Happy 4-H Club for girls is well-documented as an active group in 1930 with leader Mrs. Ella Merrill.¹⁶ In 1931, a cooking club, sometimes referred to as the Jolly Nine or Lucky Nine, was started under the leadership of Arlene Jenney. These girls also were active in play productions and cooking competitions.¹⁷

A large club called the Blow-Me-Down Beavers flourished along the Plain under the leadership of Fern Wilder and later Susan Posnanski. In 1955, the Blow-Me-Down Belles and Beavers won a square dance festival in Claremont. In 1987, under the leadership of Christine Morin, the group changed its name to the Plainfield Clovers. Interest in this group waned in 1988. In the 1950s the Black Hill Bonnie Lads and Lassies were fixtures at county 4-H events and the Cornish Fair attired in distinctive Scottish-style kilts and tartans. The Rainbow Club in Meriden grew so large that several leaders were enlisted to guide the youngsters in specific project areas. Barbara Stone led cooking, Ruth Rogers the sewing, Wallace Williams the agricultural projects.

In Meriden, the Dandy Kandies, under the leadership of Sylvia Clark and Claire Downing, and later Bettyann Dole and Ruth Brady, remained strong. Membership has been as high as twenty-five. State and county awards for members and leaders have been many through the years. Participation in the Cornish Fair continues. In the late 1940s and 1950s, the Blue Mountain Boys Club grew under the leadership of Wallace Williams and project leaders Reverend Forrest Emerson and Herman Blanchard. The Home Hill Hustlers Club was comprised of youngsters from Freeman and River Road farms.

As time went on, 4-H club activities diversified to appeal to new tastes,



William McHugh, Plainfield postmaster, performing in pantomime for a variety show sponsored by the Friends of the Plainfield Library, Plainfield Town Hall, November 2, 1984. Photo by Richard Rogers. Courtesy Philip Read Memorial Library.

and projects were as apt to focus on model rocketry and photography as on dairy cows and cooking. An increase of public school extra-curricular activities, two parents working, and single parents have forced a decline of youth organizations. By the start of the 1990s, Plainfield sustained only two active 4-H clubs, the Sullivan County Equestrians and the Dandy Kandies, and had a number of youngsters involved in county level project clubs such as dairy and beef.

Friends of the Congregational Church (Meriden)

This group sponsored an annual church fair held in the Kimball Union Academy chapel on Tuesday evening, August 20, 1912, and "realized \$50."¹⁸

Friends of the Philip Read Memorial Library

This group formed in 1973. Regular meetings were held until 1981. Since the early 1980s the organization has become more informal with one officer—the treasurer.

The group has had two purposes: to be volunteer library aides and to fund-raise to acquire the "extras" for the library. Many of the library's patrons have become "informal Friends" through work at sales, and at variety shows, film programs, and story telling. The Friends group, although loosely organized,



The playground completed, 1984. Teacher Elva Mikula is with Dorrie Cedeno.
Photo by Brad Hills. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

has had an active treasury and remains critical to the library's success in supplementing the regular operating budget. The group has purchased such items as a copy machine, a computer, books-on-tape, and a movie projector, and funds children's and adult programming.

Friends of the Plainfield School

This group was started in the early 1980s by interested parents. They chose to form a local group rather than to join the national Parent-Teacher Association. A major project of this group was the building of the playground at the elementary school. Working with a consultant, entire families appeared on a very rainy day, shovels in hand, to construct the playground. The base of the playground was soft sand which had to be bulldozed, shoveled, and smoothed out. Tires were partially buried to form fences, tunnels, and climbing structures. By the end of the day, everyone was wet and muddy, but very proud of the finished playground—a wonderful example of community involvement.



Girl Scout troop sponsored by the Mothers' and Daughters' Club, Plainfield, about 1950. The identified girls are: Joan (Spalding) Roeber, Miss Owens, Polly (Plummer) Bekele, Betty Wilder, Miss Nelson, Janet Kochler, the Misses Stevens, Miss Williams, and leader Anita Barrett. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

In 1989, this group disbanded and reformed under the national Parent-Teacher Association, because parents wanted more involvement with the school in ways other than fund-raising.

Girl Scouts

The Girl Scout movement in Plainfield has been as sporadic as the Boy Scout organization in town. There was a troop in the 1940s that met at the Mothers' and Daughters' Clubhouse. A troop was also in existence in Meriden around 1970.¹⁹ Brownie and Girl Scout troops were organized again in the late 1980s.

Girls' Athletic Association

This group was active in 1930 and 1931.²⁰ The girls were active fundraisers and played basketball in the Plainfield Town Hall. Card games were pop-

ular at the time, and funds were raised through card parties. They also held a banquet in 1931 for the Plainfield Pioneer Boys' basketball team which won the Sullivan County championship that year.²¹

Ground Observer Corps (GOC)

The Group Observer Corps was formed in 1953 under the U.S. Air Force Defense Command before the Distant Early Warning System (known as the D.E.W. Line) was completed across Canada.

Members were:

Leona Mace, post supervisor
Alice Jordan
Peggy Meyette
Janet Mace
James Martin
Stuart Hodgeman
James Cushing
Marilyn Morse

Clara Perry, chief observer
Hallie Gibson
Hazel Amidon
Walter Gobin, Jr.
Polly Claflin
Mary Sweet
Anita Barrett
Ronald Morse

Members raised money to build an observation tower on land owned by Lee and Catherine Woodward near the present Westgate Condominiums (1991). The dedication ceremony was attended by many dignitaries including U.S. Representative Perkins Bass. Citations and GOC pins were given to members. A squad of servicemen gave a gun salute, and there was a helicopter flyover.

Leona Mace and Alice Jordan went to Pease Air Force Base for indoctrination. Many volunteers gave over 100 hours of service, and Alice Jordan was cited for 750 hours. Some of the observation work was done on the Jordan farm. Anita Barrett explained that when they sighted a plane, they would call the Air Force Center in Albany, New York, to report the time, type of plane, and its direction. The corps' code name was "Charlie Papa 43." One day a local teenager, Stuart Hodgeman, was on duty and said to Alice Jordan, "One day I am going to fly those planes." Today, he is a colonel in the U.S. Air Force.

When the observation tower was no longer needed, it was dismantled and moved farther up Westgate Road in the woods near a home then owned by Don MacLeay. His son Scott used it for a hide-a-way.²²

Happy Workers

Very little is known about this group, except that they met in December 1930 and "accomplished quite a bit of sewing, which will be distributed among families before Christmas."²³



Mary (Whitney) Cassedy in the outdoor theater as the witch in "Hansel and Gretel," Plainfield, 1935. Courtesy Mary Cassedy.

Howard Hart Players

This drama group was very active in the 1930s and held annual productions in the Herbert Adams Outdoor Theater. Later performances were given in the Plainfield Town Hall for which Hart donated money for the stage and sets. According to programs from the productions, the proceeds were to be divided by the Plain School and Tracy District School of Cornish for music instruction.

The Players had an extensive roster of members and officers in 1938. The committees were music, drama, art advisors, publicity and membership, ways and means, constitution and by-laws, drama property, and even a librarian.

Officers in 1938:

Honorary President —Herbert Adams
 Honorary Vice President —Maxfield Parrish
 President —Tracy M. Spalding
 Vice President —Priscilla Hodgeman
 Secretary and Treasurer—Marjorie Spalding

Music: Chairman—Mr. Lowe

George Bishop
 Lucy Bishop
 Rosamond (Taylor) Burling
 Creighton Churchill
 Sylvia Gray

Mrs. Charles Leedy
 Helen Littell
 George Northrop
 Ruth Ruggles
 Grace Lawrence Taylor

Drama: Chairman—William Jenney

Vice-Chairman—Ruth Foster

Edward Bernard

Harold Clark

Priscilla Hodgeman

Susie Jenney

Tracy Spalding

Edith Taylor

William Tracy

Madge Whitney

Art Advisors: Chairman—Margaret Platt

Vice-Chairman—John B. Clark

Herbert Adams

Grace Baker

Eva Bernard

Countess Eleanor

de Guize

Florence Deming

Grace French

Marion Parrish

Maxfield Parrish

Doris Plummer

Margaret St. Gaudens

Paul St. Gaudens

Ellen Shipman

Publicity and Membership: Chairman—Eva Bernard

Vice-Chairman—Ruth Northrop

Advisor —Ruth Foster

William Beaman

Edward Bernard

Mrs. Edward Burling

Helen Littell

Whitmore Littell

Marion Parrish

Ways and Means: Chairman —Stephen Plummer

Vice-Chairman—Willard Whitney

Robert Gibson

William Jenney, Jr.

Ralph Jordan

Ray Hilliard

Herbert Hodgeman

Hall Peterson

Larry Taylor

Librarian: Grace French

Constitution and By-Laws: Chairman—Arthur Quimby

Vice—Chairman—Blancha Daniels

Drama Property: Chairman—Mary Clark

Vice-Chairman—Ruth Northrop

There is some evidence that this group was called the Plainfield Dramatic Club before it became the Howard Hart Players.²⁴ At least one production, "Woodland Princess," was put on by this group in 1916.²⁵ "Woodland Princess" was first staged in the outdoor theater and was again presented at the dedication of the new stage and Maxfield Parrish-designed scenery at the Plainfield Town Hall.

Although inactive, the group still had money in its account in 1986 when Treasurer Marjorie Spalding and the remaining members transferred it to the Plainfield Historical Society for the purpose of restoring the Maxfield Parrish-designed stage set.



The Late Christopher Bean

By SIDNEY HOWARD

Plainfield Town Hall, September 2 and 3, 1938

CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| Dr. Haggett | . | . | . | . | . | Tracy Spalding |
| Susan Haggett | . | . | . | . | . | Yvonne Bernard |
| Abby | . | . | . | . | . | Priscilla Hodgman |
| Mrs. Haggett | . | . | . | . | . | Eva Bernard |
| Ada Haggett | . | . | . | . | . | Beatrice Bishop |
| Warren Creamer | . | . | . | . | . | William Salkins |
| Tallant | . | . | . | . | . | Edward Bernard |
| Rosen | . | . | . | . | . | Harold Wilder |
| Davenport | . | . | . | . | . | Harold Clark |

The dining room of the Haggett's house, not far from Boston

Act I.—Morning

Act II.—Noon

Act III.—Afternoon

Produced under the direction of William Jenney and Ruth Foster

Setting—E. C. Waite, Wm. Tracy, Maurice French

Properties—Marjorie Spaulding, Mary Clark, Ruth Northrup

Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French of New York

Playbill, "The Late Christopher Bean," Howard Hart Players, September 2, 1938. The masthead was designed by Maxfield Parrish. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Humane Society

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Harold Baynes were instrumental in initiating this organization in Meriden in June 1911.²⁶ Mr. Baynes was elected chairman, and he, with four others, drafted a constitution.

Independent Club —1818

The anniversary of American independence was celebrated by the Independent Club of Plainfield. The exercises commenced with an address to the club from President G. Boardman, Esq., after which an oration, exhibiting the true principle of liberty and independence, was pronounced by F. E. Phelps. After dinner, sixteen toasts were raised to: the day we celebrate, the United States of America, the president of the United States, the memory of President Washington, the American people, the clergy of all denominations, the American Navy, the American Army, the state of New Hampshire, the governor of New Hampshire, liberty, party spirit, Yankee honesty, the American fair, the Independent Club, and the orator of the day!²⁷

Kimball Union Academy Athletic Association

Although this organization is a Kimball Union Academy-related activity, many Meriden residents supported fund-raising activities.

This group sponsored socials and corned acts in the early 1900s.²⁸ With the proceeds, they improved the running track.²⁹

Ladies Aid (Plainfield)

This Baptist Church-related group is one of the long standing organizations on the west side of town. They were organized before 1909³⁰ and are still active in 1990 under the name of Plainfield Church Women (PCW).

In the early 1900s, they held annual sales of baked goods and fancy-work, plays, stocking socials, and oyster suppers. They met at members' homes and worked on handcrafted projects—mostly sewing.³¹

Ladies Aid Society of the Baptist Church (Meriden)

This group was active during the early 1900s with similar activities and purposes as the west side ladies. They still exist today.³²

Ladies Aid Society of the Congregational Church (Meriden)

As with the other two ladies aid groups, this one was active by the early 1900s and probably before.³³ One interesting event to note was the "conun-

drum supper to be held in the church dining room, June 3, Friday, from 5:30 to 8:00, to be served by dumb waiters."³⁴

All women in the Meriden Congregational Church were eligible for membership. The women met once a month either at the parsonage or at individuals' homes. The meetings started with a Bible reading and prayer, then the business meeting took place. Some of the projects undertaken were the re-upholstery of the pew cushions (done in 1941 and still in use today), new choir robes, the carpets in the aisles of the church, working on the new Parish House in the early 1960s, and helping the children of the church with their pageants.

The Christmas bazaar was a highlight of the fund-raising year. Before the Parish House was built, the event was held in the headmaster's house at Kimball Union Academy. It was a crafts sale with lunch and was very popular with the students and the townspeople alike. The name of the organization was changed from Ladies Aid Society to the Women's Fellowship. In the late 1960s, attendance fell, and it was decided, with regret, to no longer carry on as an organization. Now the many activities of the Women's Fellowship are done by the Ways and Means Committee of the church.

Ladies Progressive Club (East Plainfield)

The only reference to this club is in 1913.³⁵ They elected officers and held regular meetings. Refreshments were always important, and they apparently had a password. This quote was included in the announcement of the meeting when they changed their name to Ladies Club: "password is a good one but not 'more cake,' have had plenty without calling for more."

Loyal Temperance Legion

This group met with Miss Eva Baker in 1908.³⁶

Mericrafters

Can a community support its town organizations and clubs without spending extra tax dollars? The residents of Meriden and Plainfield found a way, and it has continued for almost forty years. It is called Mericrafters.

One afternoon in September 1954, Jessie Carver English (wife of the then headmaster of Kimball Union Academy), Margaret Rosa (a Meriden resident, always involved), and Dorothy McNamara (then president of the Home Economics Club) met outside MacLeay's General Store. Each had just made purchases to prepare for the forthcoming fireman's supper, just one of the benefits held by the many organizations in Meriden Village.

Jessie mentioned that the scientists and their wives attending the Gordon Research Conferences at Kimball Union Academy each summer were always asking for things to do while in Meriden. They also liked to buy gifts to take

back home, especially those articles typical of the area, she noted.

At the fall meeting of the Home Economics Club, a committee was formed to consider a sale that would allow residents to raise funds for their favorite organizations. Ruth Williams and Helen Dubois worked with Chairman Margaret Rosa to plan for a sale the following summer. Mary Cushing coined the name "Mericrafters"—Crafts of Meriden. Guido Rosa and Bertha Porter designed a Mericrafter tag using the Meriden Covered Bridge as a symbol, and all of the residents and organizations of Meriden were invited to participate.

In the summer of 1955, the first sales were held every Wednesday for twelve weeks. Revenue totaled \$965.91. The amount was divided among the individuals and clubs that made the items. Twenty-five percent of each producer's total sales went to the town organization of his or her choice. Today the organizations receive 15 percent and 5 percent goes to the Mericrafter organization for advertising costs. Over the years, sales have risen to an average total of \$5,000. The sales are held for ten weeks now. In 1979, Winnie Barton Brooks suggested that Mericrafters open on Thursday afternoons. That time raises an additional \$1,000 each summer. In 1983, a Christmas Boutique was held and continues today. Susan Timmons and Bettyann Dole instigated these sales for those crafters who specialize in Christmas items.

After that first summer, a meeting was held to hear the report of the committee. Thanks were given to Monnie Benson and Doris Franklin who set up the display nearly every day. Ruth Williams was also thanked for her work as treasurer and her help every sale day. A steering committee was established to plan the 1956 summer sale: Elizabeth "Lib" Green, Bertha Porter, and Margaret Rosa. Ruth Williams, who had acted as treasurer for the 1955 sale, was elected general manager. She established the bookkeeping system still in use in 1991. To broaden membership, anyone owning property in Meriden and, later, the town of Plainfield was able to join Mericrafters. Since then, the membership has been opened to those who belong to a town organization regardless of their residence.

Meriden Civic Association

The Meriden Civic Association was formed in the fall of 1973. When the Plainfield and Meriden grade schools were consolidated and the buildings sold, residents decided to purchase the Meriden White Schoolhouse rather than have it torn down or turned into a factory. The group was legally incorporated and the long range plan was to rent portions of the building as storage, an antique or crafts shop, and office space. The receipts from rentals would pay for improvements, maintenance, taxes, and other charges. The school was rented for several years until it was sold in 1977 to Aidron Duckworth.

The members of the Meriden Civic Association were Audrey Logan, Mary and Fred Cushing, Sara and Ira Townsend, Kay and Gardiner MacLeay, Kay and Parker Jones, and Marie and Bob Steinsieck.



The Meriden Cornet Band, 1897. The bandstand stood on the side of Bryant Hall at Kimball Union Academy. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Meriden Congregational Society

This society met from the early 1910s until 1931³⁷ at least. They put on a play as a fundraiser in 1913 and had an annual meeting in 1931.³⁸

Meriden Couples Club

During the 1950s, a Couples Club was organized in Meriden Village. Evenings were filled with games, card playing, and speakers. The club initiated the Meriden Good Cheer and Meriden Community Christmas parties for the children. Instead of townspeople sending Christmas cards to one another, a large card was placed on the bulletin board at MacLeay's Store. People donated the money saved from stamps and cards to have their name posted on the large card. The donations supported a community party with entertainment, sometimes magicians, puppets, and Santa. The Meriden Good Cheer came from the same fund. Poinsettias and food baskets are given to the elderly or those who had been ill or had sadness during the year. On one occasion, in 1954, a program was planned in the Meriden Town Hall to honor "The Person of the Year." Mary (Westgate) Chellis (Mrs. Harold Chellis) was the recipient.

Meriden Community Cornet Band

A Community Cornet Band performed during the 1910s. The bandstand stood where Bryant Hall is located on Chellis Road. The members practiced upstairs over the Morse and Mason Store on Main Street. They had uniforms,



Past masters of the Meriden Grange, about 1945. L-R, back row, Blanche Camp, Wendell Rogers, Ruth Rogers, Basil McNamara, John McNamara, Dan Westgate, Wallace Williams, Herman Rogers, Howard Zea; front row, Morris Penniman, J. Daniel Porter, Addie Rogers, Matthew Watson, Henry Penniman. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

and one of the hats is on display at the Plainfield Historical Society. The only known members were Elbridge Fadden, Frank French, and Eugene Beers.

Meriden Duplicate Bridge Club

The Meriden Duplicate Bridge Club was founded by Howard and Hazel Chellis, who had been members of a bridge club in New Jersey. When they returned to Meriden in 1935, several of their friends were invited to play. The next year, the Meriden Duplicate Bridge Club was formed and still meet.

Meriden Grange No. 151

The Meriden Grange was organized April 28, 1890, by State Master McDaniel with twenty-three charter members. The following officers were elected:

Josiah Davis, Master
Thomas Morril, Overseer
Mrs. Electa Chellis, Lecturer
C. B. Strong, Steward
Alvah B. Chellis, Assistant Steward
E. R. Miller, Chaplin
Orzo V. Eastman, Treasurer
Frank deF. Baker, Secretary and Gatekeeper
Miss Hattie Davis, Ceres
Mrs. M. A. Strong, Pomona
Mrs. Alvah Chellis, Flora
Mrs. G. C. Morril, Lady Assistant Steward

For many years, the Grange meetings were held in the upstairs hall over Stickney's Store, which was on the site of the present Meriden Village Store. The meetings were also held in members' homes for a short time after the store burned.

In 1910, when Fred A. Rogers was master, a committee was formed of Harold W. Chellis, Frank E. Jenney, and Alvah B. Chellis to investigate building a hall. In March, it was voted to build a hall, construction was begun at once, and on April 19, a meeting was held in the partially completed hall. Fred A. Rogers donated the lumber, and Charles Mason donated the land. The lumber came from an old farmhouse located on one of the True Farms Rogers had purchased.

The first Grange fair was held in 1910 to raise money to finish the building. In the early days of the fair, cattle were featured since nearly all members were farmers. In later years, more emphasis was placed on vegetables, flowers, fancy work, exhibits, and sales tables. The Meriden Grange fair suppers were known for miles around.

Fred Rogers was master for five years after the hall was built. Members of the Rogers family were to hold the master's chair for a total of twenty years and other offices too numerous to mention. Two sons and three daughters of Fred and Addie Rogers received golden sheaf certificates, and two of them received sixty-year certificates in 1970. Daughter-in-law Ruth Rogers was secretary for twenty-five years.

For more than sixty years, the Penniman family was also active in the Grange. Other families who were faithful Grangers in the early days were the Chellises, Bartons, Masons, Beans, Andrews, Beers, and Jenneys. In 1954, Eugene Beers was the first member of Meriden Grange to receive a sixty-year certificate.

The hall became a community center. Practically every organization in Meriden Village has had free use of the hall at one time or another, and Extension Service groups have used the hall for garden meetings and demonstrations. One can only guess at the number of wedding receptions and wedding anniversary parties that have been held there. The first wedding anniversary party on record was held February 1915, honoring Fred and Addie Rogers on their twenty-fifth anniversary, with 100 people in attendance.



Meriden Grange play, about 1950. L-R Sara Townsend, Catherine Jones, David Benson, Frank Chellis (on couch), Pearl Pringle, Basil McNamara. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Children's night was a big event. They would recite or sing and then go upstairs for ice cream. It was a big treat because some people did not have refrigerators, and many farms did not have electricity.

Many three-act plays were presented by Grange members. Morris Penniman was a talented actor. He and Nellie Andrews played leading roles in a number of these good amateur productions.

In 1942, Mrs. Marcia Strong, a charter member of Meriden Grange, celebrated her 102nd birthday. At that time, she was believed to be the oldest Grange member in the United States. At the fiftieth anniversary of the Grange in 1940, she presented the Grange with a beautiful quilt that she had made.

In 1944, members felt the Grange kitchen needed remodeling. Members decided to revive the play productions to raise money. Under the direction of Winnie Barton Brooks, a play was presented in conjunction with the Grange fair. The play was also presented at several other Granges, and proceeds were divided. Enough money was realized to remodel the kitchen. The play was so successful that another was put on the following spring. On June 28, 1945, Meriden Junior Grange was organized by Marion Atwood, with Ruth Rogers as the first matron.

During the 1960s, many new members joined the Grange, including a large

group of young people. Strawberry festivals were held with Barbara Stone Talbert as chairman. Members planted potatoes on the Wallace Williams' farm and sold them to help pay the Grange Hall's taxes. Christmas bazaars were held yearly beginning in 1969. Grange members have always entered cooking and sewing contests. In 1970, a dress made by Doris Porter won second place in a statewide contest. It was also in 1970 that the Grange voted to sponsor the Girl Scouts. A cookbook was published in 1971 by the Home Economics Committee.

More young people joined the Grange during the 1970s. One of the first projects of the Youth Committee was to install electrical outlets in the Grange Hall using money raised by food sales. The Youth Committee was involved in many community service activities and cooperated with the PTA to raise money for a speech therapist for area children and with the Girl Scouts in a first-aid program. They sponsored a drug abuse program and furnished reflective tape for youngsters to attach to their bicycles.

Memorial gifts in the names of Carrie Westgate, Herman Rogers, Elmer and Stella Towne, and John F. and Florence McNamara have made it possible to improve plumbing at the Grange Hall. Finances were assisted during the early 1980s by the legislature which exempted Granges from property taxes.

The annual Grange fair, held in September with a family style ham supper, was carried on for many years as a good fund-raiser and fellowship time. Recently, rummage sales have taken its place. The Mascoma Valley Pomona Grange meets with the Meriden branch at least once a year.

The Meriden Grange celebrated its centennial in 1990 with a membership of forty-one.

Meriden Home Economics Group

In her oral history tape (Tape 4, p. 29), Dorothy Kelsey Strong mentions a group formed during the war. The state sent a home economics worker to organizations in town. Membership remains strong with ten to twelve actively participating in the county programs. The club meets nine months of the year. Several members have been awarded fifty-year membership pins.

Meriden Peace Trust

The Meriden Peace Trust, formerly called the Meriden Bridges for Peace, is a nonprofit community group organized in 1981. There were thirteen charter members. Founded in the "cold war" years of the early Reagan Presidency, the primary goal of the Peace Trust is the establishment of communications between people living in Plainfield and in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.). The Peace Trust has organized a number of personal visits for Soviet and American people who have discovered how to appreciate one another face to face. Several Plainfield residents received full funding for trips to the U.S.S.R. through the Emily Quimby Scholarship which was named after a neighbor whose

peaceful spirit inspired many people in Plainfield to work for peace. Kathryn MacLeay, Natalie LaFlam, Heather O'Leary, and Donna Beaupré traveled to the Soviet Union as representatives of the Peace Trust. Ten Soviet citizens have been welcomed to Plainfield.

In addition to organizing these visits, the Peace Trust has planned a number of educational programs concerning issues of mutual peace and security. The largest and most influential of these forums was a four-day conference held at Kimball Union Academy and jointly sponsored by the Peace Trust and US-USSR Bridges for Peace in May 1985. The theme of the conference was "Soviets and Americans getting Down to Earth."

The Peace Trust has cooperated with other organizations with similar goals including US-USSR Bridges for Peace, Beyond War, and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Since the birth of the Peace Trust in 1981, mutual hostility between the superpowers has declined. Presidents of the Meriden Peace Trust have been Greg Marshall, Molly Sheehan, Suzy Frazer, and Alex Cherington.



Robert Fuller as
Pellinore in the
Meriden Players' pro-
duction of
"Camelot,"
Flickinger Arts
Center, December
1990. Photo by
Elizabeth Knox.
Courtesy Plainfield
Historical Society.

Meriden Players

The Meriden Players is a non-profit organization with a board of directors which was formed in 1981 to present a musical each December. This community theater group was begun by Chris Williamson (drama teacher at Kimball Union Academy), Adele Fletcher, Greg Marshall, George Butler, Kathy Wright, and Joe Salisbury. The first production was "A Christmas Carol." The musi-

cals were all presented in the Meriden Congregational Church until 1990 when the Flickinger Arts Center was used. A tradition of the Players is to use a large cast with as many children and Kimball Union students as possible. Anyone may participate who lives, worships, or works in town.³⁹

Meriden Red Cross

There is reference made to Red Cross work in Meriden as early as 1914: "Mrs. E. H. Baynes sent first package of warm clothing to Boston . . . and other work is in progress."⁴⁰

There is a record book of meeting minutes covering the years 1924 through 1945. Only a handful of members attended the annual meetings even though in the late 1930s, there were over 100 members. The funds they collected went to various needs such as school lunches, ski suits, school milk for the poor, school dentistry, home service, and the war fund. This chapter had money in an account until 1963, but the last deposit, according to the treasurer's report, was made in 1961.

Meriden Royal Scottish Dance Group

A Royal Scottish Dance Group was founded in 1959. This group of about twenty people were led by Jack McKelvie of Bedford, New Hampshire. Jack came to Meriden on Sunday evenings, with about six dancers. They met in the Kimball Union Academy gym. On January 17, 1960, the group put on a formal dance. The ladies wore long white dresses and tartan plaids and the men wore kilts. About 100 people watched the demonstration. The group met for only two years.

Meriden Volunteer Fire Department and Association

Fire fighting in the early years was done by the bucket and pail brigades. The ringing of the church bells at the Baptist and Congregational Churches alarmed the people. Once a fire started, it was often impossible to save the building. Neighbors made certain that everyone escaped and moved out as many of the furnishings as possible. A small pressurized chemical cart was used later. Each member of the fire brigade was responsible for a certain number of fire buckets.

The largest fires in Meriden were the Meriden Congregational Church in 1894, The Bryant Block on November 15, 1927, the A. Hayes Jones Store on March 12, 1935, the forest fire on Grantham Mountain in 1953, the Pringle Garage in 1979, and the town garage on October 24, 1982.

In 1953, when there was a fire at the Harry Carlson house, Meriden residents realized that if a fire truck had been available, the damage to the house would have been minimal. An organizational meeting was held within a week,



Meriden Fire Department, 1979. Photo by Erich Witzel.

and the Meriden Volunteer Fire Department was formed and chartered on June 11, 1954. The first Board of Directors were Harold A. Pringle, Carl O. DuBois, Elbert S. Barton, Ira P. Townsend, and G. Gardiner MacLeay, Jr. The Fire Association was formed later to raise funds.

The original system of alerting the volunteers to a fire was closely aligned to the Meriden Telephone Company and the Chellis family. The fire telephone number was 15 ring 4, that is, line number 15, 4 rings (which was the MacLeay's Store and home line). When the call came to the switchboard, either Mother Chellis, Howard or Hazel Chellis, or one of the operators would come on the line. They would ask Kay MacLeay, who served as the dispatcher, the telephone numbers of the volunteers. While Kay told one person where the fire was, the operator would be calling the next number. In the 1970s, a siren was installed on the roof of the gymnasium at Kimball Union Academy. Later, when the telephone company changed to the dial system, pagers and monitors were purchased.

The first truck was a 1939 Ford cab-over-engine, formerly owned by the Lebanon Fire Department. The cost was \$1,500. Work began, in September 1954, to build a fire station on land that had been donated by Kimball Union Academy. All the work and materials were donated. The two-bay station was completed in January 1955.

In 1962, a new American LaFrance International fire engine was purchased.

It had a 750-gallon per minute pump with a 500-gallon tank. In 1971, a 1956 Mack engine was purchased to replace the 1939 Ford. Bill Smith auctioned the Ford for \$535 which was applied to the price of the new truck. When a tank truck was purchased in 1975, it was decided to build a three-bay addition to the old firehouse. The addition was started in July 1975 and completed in February 1976. The new station was dedicated in memory of the first fire chief, Harold "Pete" Pringle, on October 2, 1977. A 1971 Seagraves sixty-five foot aerial ladder truck was purchased in March 1979. This ladder truck remained in service until 1989. In February 1990, a 1963 Maxim eighty-five foot ladder truck was found in New Jersey and purchased with a donation from Kimball Union Academy. In 1988, a new fire engine was purchased with a 2,000-gallon tank and 1,000-gallon per minute pump to replace the Mack engine and the tanker. This engine was dedicated on June 3, 1989, and the names of G. Gardiner MacLeay, Jr., and John H. McNamara were painted on the front doors.

On March 12, 1990, a retirement party was held honoring Lieutenants G. Gardiner MacLeay, Jr., one of the fire department's charter members, and John H. McNamara, Sr. These men gave many hours of faithful service to the department.

Each year ten to fifteen Kimball Union Academy students make up the Kimball Union Academy Fire Brigade and have been trained in fire fighting. Kimball Union has funded their fire fighting protective gear. This brigade has been very helpful, especially during the daytime when many of the regular fire fighters are working out of town. The brigade had its beginnings with the punishment of a Kimball Union Academy student, who pulled a false alarm and was assigned to help the fire department. The punishment was a good experience, and other students thought it would be good for them, too. Kimball Union has always been very supportive of the department.

As a member of the Upper Valley Mutual Aid Group, the department has assisted in many mutual aid calls. The big Lebanon fire in 1964 and the two Joy fires in Claremont are the largest fires at which the department has assisted.

In 1978, the town voted to partially support both Plainfield and Meriden Fire Departments in order to defray expenses, but over the years many ham suppers, oyster stew suppers, chicken and lobster barbecues, wild game dinners, flea markets, donations from Mericrafter sales, and fund drives have been held to support the Meriden Volunteer Fire Department. Many people are required, beyond firefighters, to make the fire department succeed. We have truly had the support of the village of Meriden.

Fire Chiefs:

Harold "Pete" Pringle

G. Gardiner MacLeay, Jr.

Arthur Thompson

Douglas Grearson

Douglas Chapman

David Best

Merifield Men's Club

Charles Alden Tracy suggested the formation of a men's club in Meriden. At the first meeting, in January 1930, the Grange members (Eugene and Emma Beers, Henry and Marion Penniman, John and Florence McNamara) put on a chicken pie supper. One hundred people attended that first meeting, and Fred Rogers was elected president. The organization was very active until 1939.

In 1943, William Brewster, headmaster of Kimball Union Academy, re-formed the men's group. There were twenty to twenty-five members from Meriden and Plainfield. They met in the evenings, sometimes with a dinner beforehand. Mr. Brewster contacted professional people in the area to speak to the group. Wives were invited to some of the meetings. One evening, the guest was Jean Baptiste, a Maine guide and woodsman. He related his exciting and humorous experiences in the woods, in a wonderful French-Canadian accent. After his speech, Bill re-introduced the speaker as Ross McKinney, one of the teachers of the Dartmouth Outing Club.⁴¹ Officers in 1943 were: William Brewster, president; Stephen Plummer, secretary; and Converse Chellis, treasurer.

Minervian Society

This female debate club at Kimball Union Academy included town residents and met between 1909 and 1930. They had public meetings and held a Thanksgiving program.⁴²

Missionary Society (Meriden Congregational Church)

The Missionary Society was a small group mostly made up of the older members of the church. They met once a month at a member's home for a prayer meeting with religious discussions. The purpose was to study the work of the missions throughout the world and to contribute what they could. The work of this organization is now carried on by the Missions Committee of the church.

Mothers' and Daughters' Aid Society (Meriden)

This group was affiliated with the Baptist Church and may be the Ladies Aid, also referred to in newspaper accounts. The activities were very similar with "dime a game socials"⁴³ and a talk on "Mental Science."⁴⁴ The group was active between 1908 and 1914.⁴⁵

North Plainfield Ladies' Club

The North Plainfield Ladies' Club was formed about 1928. The ladies brought their children, and they met all day at a member's home with a lun-

cheon at noontime. They discussed ways of doing household chores, cooking and preserving, and sewing. They made cancer dressings and johnnies for area hospitals. Mittens and scarves were knitted for servicemen during World War II. In 1964, they made a total of 604 cancer dressings. When a wedding was announced in one of the member's families, the club tied a quilt for the bride.

The club joined the Sullivan County Home Demonstration group, and Marian Davis, the Home Demonstration leader, brought many programs to the group. One day each member made a dress in one hour.

Each member had a secret sister, who sent a card and a gift to her on special days during the year. It was good fun to guess the identity of each secret sister, which was revealed at the Christmas party.

This ladies group was very active until the late 1970s. Some of the members were: Addie Rogers, Carrie Westgate, Harriet Williams, Ruth Rogers, Nellie Zea, Flora King, Hildred Stockwell, Edith True, Annabelle Roeber, Stella Porter, Ella Perkins, Lib Green, Catherine Kimball, Monnie Benson, Doris Benware, Winona Zea, Louise Houser, Winnie Brooks, Olive Leib, Catherine Mascher, Lauretta McKinnon, and Constance Zea.⁴⁶

Our Helpers Society

This group of young people was associated with the Meriden Baptist Church in 1912.⁴⁷

Parent/Teacher Association (PTA)

PTA organizations were formed in both Meriden and Plainfield Plain in 1946.⁴⁸ They kept meticulous scrapbooks and were very active until the late 1960s. Both established hot lunch programs in the village schools, conducted many fundraising activities, and sponsored programs to raise parent involvement in the schools. Interest waned in the early 1970s and PTA activities came to be replaced by those of the Friends of the Plainfield School. However, in 1989, an interested group of parents formed a new PTA (see Friends of the Plainfield School).

Philadelphian Society

This group was a male debating organization at Kimball Union Academy during the mid-nineteenth century.⁴⁹

Pioneer Boys

This group met at the Plainfield Baptist Church vestry library room with their leader Reverend T. J. Ingram.⁵⁰ In the spring and early summer of 1930,



Plainfield Athletic Association basketball team, 1926–27. L–R, front row, Harvey Gray, Benjamin Lewin, Edward Bernard, Stephen Plummer, Charles Hanks; back row, Edward Daniels, William Jenney, Sr., Tracy Spalding, Fred Baley, John Bassett. Courtesy Doris Plummer.

the boys played baseball with the Kimball Union Academy team and with Cornish. They also attended a track meet at Camp Evangetha in New Hampshire. The 1930–31 basketball season resulted in winning the Sullivan County Championship game. They played against the Girls' Athletic Association teams, South Cornish, Windsor, Newport, Claremont, Sunapee, North Newport, Goshen, Charlestown, Kimball Union Academy, and the Windsor High School basketball teams. Home games were played in the Plainfield Town Hall.

There were enough boys to have a first and second team. The first team was rewarded in April 1931 with a trip to Manchester, Concord, and Portsmouth. They played the Manchester Cubs and the Portsmouth YMCA team. They took in the State Theatre, stayed overnight at the Manchester YMCA building, and visited the Portsmouth Coast Guard Station. A highlight was boarding a submarine and inspecting the Naval Prison at Portsmouth. They also visited the state legislature, state library, state hospital, and the New Hampshire Historical Society.⁵¹

This group's connection with the YMCA is unclear, but it was well-supported during 1930 and 1931.

Plainfield Athletic Association

The first mention of this group was in July 1924 when its committee organized the "biggest Fourth of July celebration in Plainfield" (nearly 1,000 people).⁵² There was a "parade of floats and horrors," trapshooting, "athletic sports of great variety," and baseball games between single men and married men (score 10-5) and the Plainfield Swatters versus the Meriden Sluggers (score 19-11). The association also had a basketball team until at least 1931.⁵³ Games were played in the Plainfield Town Hall.⁵⁴

Plainfield Bicentennial Committee

There were actually two committees by this name. The first was formed to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the town in 1961. Clare Boyd was chairman of the committee. The event was celebrated with a parade, Old Home Day, open house program, and other events. "Song of Plainfield" was composed by Lucy Bishop and performed for this celebration.

The second committee was formed to celebrate the nation's bicentennial of 1976. The result of this committee's efforts was *A Brief History of Early Plainfield*, edited by Mary Cassedy and Sue Perkins. A contest to select a Plainfield Bicentennial Emblem for the booklet and souvenirs was undertaken to raise funds for the project. Edward Perkins of Windsor won the contest with a sketch of a sugar house. Two bicentennial quilts were also made. One was raffled off,

and the other was awarded to a Plainfield resident (chosen from the voter registration list). The lucky person was Joan (Spalding) Roeber. There was also a parade.

Another project of this committee was "History Talks in Plainfield," a slide/sound production using three movie screens. The project began with oral history interviews of thirty-seven long-time residents. Sara Townsend was chairman of the project which was funded with a grant from the New Hampshire Humanities Council. Professor Jere Daniell of Dartmouth with Philip Zea advised the content of the program. Jerry Doolittle prepared the slide/sound show. The slide show was divided into segments: "Self-Sufficient Plainfield," "Cash, Commerce and Industry," "Diversions and Amusements," and "Schools."



Emblem, Plainfield
Bicentennial, 1961. Courtesy
Plainfield Historical Society.

Plainfield Boy Scout Troop

Boy Scout Troop #30 was begun in November 1961 by Barney Snider, Paul Martin, Richard Low, and Winston Spencer, Sr. The first troop meeting was held in January 1962 at the Plainfield Town Hall. Richard Low was scoutmaster with Frank Chapman as assistant scoutmaster. The troop began with four scouts. With a strong program of activities, the troop expanded rapidly to more than thirty scouts from all over town.

An ambitious program of woodsman skills was begun with the goal of providing each scout with at least ten days and nights of camping. The scouts became familiar with Chase and Lily Ponds on the Grantham Range and with a camping area on Potato Hill off of Old County Road. The troop also used the facilities of the Dartmouth Outing Club for overnight winter camping and hiking. Troop attendance at Camp Carpenter, the state scout camp near Manchester, was encouraged. Year-long attendance contests among the scouts of Troop #30 were sponsored by the Troop Committee. Each winner received a free week at Camp Carpenter.

In 1963, the troop meetings were shifted to the Meriden area. Kimball Union Academy generously made available the Silver Gymnasium for the weekly meeting place. At the November re-chartering, the Meriden Congregational Church became the sponsoring organization. At this time, a new troop committee was formed of Merrill Thompson, Louis Beliveau, David Walker, and William Franklin, who became the scoutmaster. In the late 1960s, the troop meeting place was shifted to the Meriden White School. During this time, the troop held its Courts of Honor and Investitures in the Duncan Parish House.

At its annual re-chartering, the year's activities were reviewed by the Daniel Webster Council, the state-wide scouting organization. Through its area districts, Mantowa and later Sunapee offered assistance in program planning and leadership training. District pros like Pete Mason, Herb McKenny, and Steve Schiller were outstanding. Another big plus was the opportunity to meet other area scouting leaders: grand people like Bob Chaffee of Lyme and Emery Kimball of Claremont.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Troop #30 became inactive. Led by Scoutmaster Doug Cooney, however, Troop #30 did have a very active Cub Scout group for three or more years. There were dens on both sides of town. The troop was co-sponsored by the Meriden Congregational Church and the Plainfield Community Baptist Church. Each den met weekly in the den mother's home, and monthly troop meetings were rotated between the two churches.

In 1985, a group sponsored by the Meriden Baptist Church and led by Julian Badger was formed and designated Troop #727. Unfortunately the troop did not attract support. After two years, the organization was disbanded. At that time, the Friends of the Plainfield School undertook the sponsorship of Troop #27 with Julian Badger and Alex MacDonald as leaders. It now meets in the Plainfield School each Monday night with a growing enrollment of boys. Cub Scout dens continue to meet in private homes.

AN EXCITING AUCTION

In the Town Hall

At PLAINFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Five Miles North of the Toll Bridge at Windsor, Vermont

Wednesday, August 27th, 1941

from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m.

(On Exhibition Tuesday, the 26th, after 1 p. m.—No Sales)

OF

Antiques

Treasures

Heirlooms

and something for everyone: Brass beds, rocking horses, dolls, draperies, costume jewelry, lamps, china, glass, pewter, furniture of many kinds, etc., out of the attics, store rooms, closets and bureau drawers of Central New England; and choice articles from Europe and the Orient.

An Indoor Letter Box made and painted by MAXFIELD PARRISH.

GUERNSEY BULL CALF with Pedigree---Smyth Herd.

AN OLD BUGGY in Good Condition.

Come Rain or Shine: It Will Be a Pleasant Social Event

BRING YOUR LUNCH AND SPEND THE DAY.

Luncheons may be eaten in the near-by Grange Hall. No cover charge.

COFFEE and DOUGHNUTS and a Variety of SOFT DRINKS will be for sale.

ALL PROCEEDS TO HELP BRITAIN

Mr. James A. Hall gives his services as Auctioneer.

All articles for sale are donated.

The Town Hall and Grange Hall are lent by Plainfield.

The auction is under the management of the Windsor County and Plainfield
British War Relief Societies.—TERMS CASH.

Bill, auction to benefit the British War Relief, Plainfield Town Hall, August 27, 1941. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Plainfield British War Relief Society

The only mention found of this society was a notice of an auction held at the Plainfield Town Hall to benefit the British war effort in World War II.⁵⁵

Plainfield Chorus Club

This group put on the "H.M.S. Pinafore" in the town hall on September 24, 1921. On the playbill was printed "indebted to William Howard Hart for the stage setting and his interest and support." Perhaps this group was a fore-runner to the Howard Hart Players.⁵⁶ In 1937, the same play was produced by a group of Kimball Union Academy students who were joined by music students of George Low from area schools. Bea (Bishop) Clark was one of the

lead performers. The play was performed at both Kimball Union Academy and the Plainfield Town Hall because the hall "contains the finest lighting arrangements of any theater around this section of the country."⁵⁷

Plainfield Church Women

See Ladies Aid Society (Plainfield).

Plainfield Community Christmas Committee

This group was created during the mid-1960s to coordinate Christmas festivities on the west side of town because the church, Grange, and other organizations were duplicating efforts in Christmas celebrations.⁵⁸ With public contributions and money from the Herbert Ward Trust Fund for children, gifts were purchased for each child and presented at a community Christmas party. In 1988, the style of celebration became a community pot-luck supper held in the town hall. Food baskets are also prepared for the elderly or needy.

Plainfield Fishing Association

"Some beautiful strings of trout were taken from the fishing grounds on Blow-Me-Down Brook last week by members of the Fishing Association." This notice appeared in newspapers dated April 25, 1930, and April 24, 1931. The group may have been a predecessor of the Rod and Gun Club (see entry).⁵⁹ The Plainfield Fishing Association was formed in 1928. Stephen Plummer was secretary. In 1928, he wrote the following letter to landowner Edward Stevens of Delhi, New York:

A fishing association has been formed by residents of Plainfield, its purpose being the protection and propagation of brook trout in Blow-Me-Down Brook and its tributaries.

For protection of the stream, we must post all lands bordering it (with the owner's consent) which will keep non-residents from fishing. This posting, of course, does not prohibit fishing by land owners or resident members of the club. The posting will be done at the expense of the club and will read thus: No trespassing or fishing, per order of land owner.

The brook has already been stocked and we expect to receive more trout this spring.

May we have your permission to post that part of your land which borders on the brook?⁶⁰

In 1929, the association stocked the brook with 6,000 two-inch trout purchased from the Cape Cod Trout Company at a cost of \$8 per thousand.⁶¹ Association records contain the following note:

Record of trout caught 1930—Apr. 15th caught 18. Largest fish 10 inches, weight 5 oz. Put back 11 fish, 10 of which covered state law. Estimated that 150 were taken from club waters today. Weather fair but very cold. 20 degrees above this a.m. Brook not very high.

Plainfield Historical Society

The first meeting of the Plainfield Historical Society was held on February 13, 1978, at the Philip Read Memorial Library. There were fifteen residents and three speakers present. Virginia Colby of Cornish spoke on "Starting a Historical Society." Robert Leavitt of Lebanon spoke on accepting gifts. Stephen Tracy of Cornish discussed the By-laws of the Cornish Historical Society and explained the laws involved. Two temporary officers were appointed: chairperson, Dorothy McNamara and secretary, Lucia Bryant.

In 1979, the Mothers' and Daughters' Club voted to deed their clubhouse built in 1902 to the Historical Society. On March 11, 1982, the eighty-year-old building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Although members met at the clubhouse, the archive collection was housed at the Philip Read Memorial Library until 1985 when a grant from the Institute of Museum Services was received to convert the woodshed at the clubhouse into an archive room. Most of the labor for this project was contributed by John Stephenson.

Projects of the historical society have included mapping the town's cemeteries, conducting a mini-course on Plainfield history at the elementary school, documenting the architecture and age of buildings in town, and preserving the Maxfield Parrish stage set in the town hall.

Plainfield Old Home Week Association

In 1910, the twelveth annual meeting of the Old Home Week Association was announced.⁶² The association began meeting in 1899 and celebrated for the last time in 1913. On August 7, 1914, a local newspaper noted that "It seems a pity to allow our Old Home Day to pass unobserved for the first time since its installation by ex-governor Rollins, fifteen years ago."⁶³

In its last year, Old Home Week was apparently celebrated in conjunction with the Kimball Union Academy pageant.⁶⁴ Old Home Week ended with a day of celebration featuring baseball games, orations by dignitaries, music, picnics, suppers, and evening dances.⁶⁵

The citizens of Cornish continue to celebrate this tradition to the present day.

Plainfield Progressive League

The objective of the league's work was in "bringing the community closer together socially during the winter months and providing amusing, entertaining

and instructive programmes, was undoubtedly successful, and it is hoped that the experiment may be continued, and its scope enlarged until it becomes a permanent feature of the community's life." The league was organized in the winter of 1908-09, and sponsored six entertainments, including a lecture illustrated with "elaborate screen pictures" by Ernest Harold Baynes. Miss McClarrain, an elocutionist from New York, gave a recital of a "well-known play," *The Music Master*. A "moving picture exhibition" was given by F. Howard & Company of Boston. The league also sponsored Robert Faulkner, the state forest commissioner, who illustrated a talk with lantern slides. Professor Reeves delivered an address about Abraham Lincoln, and a musical entertainment was provided by a quartet, also from Dartmouth.

The average attendance was 83 and the largest attendance was over 200. Even though the league's efforts were popular, there is no evidence that it continued as a "permanent feature of the community's life." A deficit of \$108.06 was incurred after the final entertainment was given and was met by private subscription.⁶⁶

Plainfield Republican Club

First conceived in 1914, this organization adopted new by-laws in 1949 and changed its name to the Republican Committee of Plainfield. In 1955, it changed the name again to the Republican Organization of Plainfield. The group's recorded activities from 1948 to 1970 shows a high attendance of members from 1948 to 1953.⁶⁷ The activities included contacting registered Republicans and urging them to vote, assisting in obtaining absentee ballots, and transportation to the polls. They also nominated candidates to run for the various town offices and to serve as delegates to the Constitutional Convention. One predecessor of this organization may have existed many years earlier. In 1897, Ora C. Davis, born March 8, 1847, was recorded as chairman of the Republican Town Committee "for many years."⁶⁸ The organization disbanded in 1970.

It is interesting to note the by-laws of 1949. The policy committee was to have five members "two of whom *may* be women" and that there should be two vice-chairman, "one of whom *shall* be a woman." In 1955, the by-laws were amended to read that the policy committee would have ten members, "four of whom *may* be women." In 1968 the by-law language omits women except that "one vice-chairman *shall* be a woman." There was never a woman chairman.

Plainfield Red Cross

The earliest evidence of a Red Cross chapter on the west side of town was in 1930 and 1931. A canvassing of members took place in both years. Fifty dollars from the Red Cross fund was given to sufferers of a Nashua fire in May 1930. This chapter also responded to the Drought Relief Fund in February 1931. It gave \$25 from its own treasury, \$14.50 from voluntary contributions,



Red Cross nurses, July 4th parade, about 1924. Driver Ruth (Whitaker) Northrop, Ellen Hadley, Ernestine (Hill) Hanks. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

and A. E. Lang gave \$100 to be credited to the Plainfield Red Cross.⁶⁹ The Plainfield Red Cross was led by Blancha L. Daniels for more than forty years; she was honored by President Eisenhower for her work. In later years, the Windsor Red Cross chapter served the community. Priscilla Hodgeman of Cornish was a liaison for many years.

Plainfield Rifle Club

The first meeting of the Rifle Club was held in 1947 on Wallace Pickering's front porch. Pickering, Charles Crary, Steve Plummer, and Edward Bernard attended. When the notice of the meeting appeared in the newspaper, a female resident exclaimed: "Goodness! Plainfield is going to have a rifle club! They will shoot up the town!"

The selectmen allowed the club to meet in the Plainfield Town Hall. Club members built bullet traps of boiler plates and set them up on the stage of the town hall. Tables were built for shooting prone.

The first rifles varied from automatic .22s to a classic firearm that an ex-G.I. had liberated with twenty-five other firearms in Germany and sent home piece by piece. There was only one shooting jacket owned by Charlie Crary, who shared with all who cared to wear it.

The club joined the National Rifle Association as well as a local shooting league. They practiced each Tuesday night. Match after match, they were defeated, particularly by the Fellows Gear Shaper Team. There were times in the town hall when even a "town hall suit" and the fierce fires in the two chunk

stoves on either side of the entrance could not stop shooters from shivering. That took a toll on accuracy.

The old equipment was slowly replaced by new target rifles, scopes, gloves, and 10X coats along with fancy shoulder attachments for rifle stocks and hand rests. Jackets carried a distinctive club emblem featuring the profile of a wild boar. The scores rose accordingly, and the club started to win matches. Encouraged by Charlie Crary, they finally defeated the powerful Gear Shaper team.

Eventually Doc Renihan made the old schoolhouse (in back of the Kingsbury Tavern) available to the club. Members spent \$700 on materials to restore the building and used Doc's tractor to pull an old-fashioned horse-drawn scoop to excavate the site behind the schoolhouse for a fifty-foot long range. They also constructed a fifty firing point 50-yard, 50-meter, and 100-yard firing range on Hans Nicolaisen's meadow off Daniels Road (Ruth Whybrow, 1991).

Over the years, members and their families held fund raising barbecues, shrimp feeds, and turkey suppers. One year they welcomed the governor with an armed guard and a keg of beer on the outdoor range. Shooters from as far away as Pennsylvania came, but eventually attendance dropped and the matches were abandoned.

Over the years, there were a few women members, but only Yvonne Gobin remained a regular. She consistently made the high five and trounced her husband Walter. For awhile a junior club also flourished. The girls' team won in rifle shooting, but the boys were champions in pistol and shoulder to shoulder matches.

The Plainfield Rifle Club merged into the Grafton County Fish and Game Club located on Brook Road in Plainfield on March 4, 1978.

Plainfield Taxpayers Association

This group was founded by Gene Krause and was short-lived. A constitution and by-laws were adopted on October 2, 1973. The association was formed to provide a forum for taxpayers' concerns and to promote more responsive local government. They sponsored candidate forums and urged adoption of "a code of ethics for town officers, agents, and employees of town."⁷⁰ The association sponsored a town newsletter, *PlainFacts*, which was the forerunner to the current (1991) *PlainFacts*. The organization disbanded in March 1974 when a proposed Code of Ethics was defeated at Town Meeting.

Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department

Chief Peter Berry reports that there was an informal fire department in the 1920s. It is assumed that the fire department organized then. This group was represented in the parade on July 4, 1924. Eugene Rice had "Old Jim," a thirty-one year old horse, hitched to a hay wagon on which Philip Hadley hand pumped water from a wash tub.⁷¹



Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department. Courtesy Peter Berry.

In October 1930, there was a meeting to elect officers for the fire company.⁷² A twenty-gallon fire extinguisher was purchased at the cost of \$275 by private subscription for the benefit of the townspeople. The extinguisher was kept in the shed of F. J. Chadbourne (near the present General Store).⁷³

In April 1954, George Northrop led a meeting in the Plainfield Town Hall to organize a volunteer fire department. He told how inadequate the present fire equipment had been in fighting a woods fire at the Everett Batchelder place. The Meriden Fire Department, organized the previous year, proved quite expert in fighting this fire. Palmer Read, Jr., was elected as fire chief. Men volunteered to learn fire fighting. Harold Hoisington gave the department a trailer body to haul their equipment. The group held fund raising events, including weekly bingo games, to purchase a 1931 Chevrolet fire truck and other equipment.⁷⁴ Equipment was kept in a garage next to the Plainfield Town Hall. Members from this department helped to fight the Grantham Mountain fire in 1953. In February 1955, the fire department incorporated and registered with the state.

In 1963, the department purchased land from Harold Hoisington and five years later built a fire station. In 1972, the fire siren was installed. James Gallagher, a part time Meriden resident, then of Long Island, New York, donated a 1956 Ford hose truck and a 1948 Mack 500 gallon a minute

pumper to the department. Weekly Bingo games were begun in the 1970s by Tracy and Emma Spalding. Still held in the Plainfield Town Hall, profits continue to support the fire department. A 1968 C.F.Mack pumper (purchased in 1978) and 1969 C.F. Mack pumper (purchased in 1985) were paid for from these funds. An addition was added to the fire station in 1982.⁷⁵

A partial list of fire chiefs:

Palmer C. Read, Jr.

Stephen F. Plummer

Harold F. Hoisington

John Meyette

Peter Berry

Plainfield Wild Flower Sanctuary

In 1966, 34.7 acres on both sides of the River Road were purchased by the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society and designated the Plainfield Wild Flower Sanctuary.

A steep slope rising from the road supports a spectacular collection of spring flowering herbs and many rare species. This area is said to have "the most varied assortment of woodland wild flowers in the state."⁷⁶

On the river section of the sanctuary are many rare semi-aquatic species of flowers. The periodic release of water at Wilder Dam (twelve miles upstream) resulting in rapid fluctuation and high levels of the river aids in the maintenance of these plants. Some of the rare plants found here are: orchids, hepatica, wild columbine, saxifrage, cardinal flowers, square stem red monkey flowers, and Indian tobacco.

The rocks in this sanctuary are also unusual. Phyllite, quartzite, and chlorite schist are found here and thought to be the oldest rocks in the area, formed between 440 and 260 million years ago.⁷⁷

Plainfield Yankee Doodlers

The era of Fourth of July parades was begun in 1981 by Joanne Gradijan two weeks before the Fourth. A sign-up sheet was placed at the Plainfield General Store. Several residents and groups signed up to have a parade, and the community has supported the event ever since. At first, volunteers organized the celebration. Now a committee is appointed by the town moderator. Besides the parade, there are special events such as the Plainfield Volunteer Fire Department's beef barbecue, a local art show, quilt show, band concerts, games, and other activities.

Early in 1982, a group of local residents, including Beth Kiendl, Sherman Fox, Emily Quimby, Tony Quimby, Mary Boyle, and Bill Cable, was determined to organize a marching band for the annual Fourth of July parade which the

previous year was without a note of music other than a loud jeep radio. The original idea was to assemble a full band complete with trumpets, clarinets, and trombones, but it became clear that we lacked a sufficient number of instrumentalists. Instead, a fife and drum corps was suggested. It evolved into a pennywhistle band because several experienced whistlers were at hand.

On July 4, 1982, a timid but determined group of tooters stepped out onto the parade route to the tune of "Yankee Doodle" with flag bearer (Betsy Baird), drum majorette (Grace Parmenter), and two drummers (Alex Cherington and Bill Rubel). Uniforms included a red hat, a white shirt, and blue dungarees.

With one exception, the Plainfield Yankee Doodlers have marched in each of the town's Fourth of July parades. The aggregation is likely to include a baby or two and an assortment of youngsters with small drums, tambourines, or flags. Informality, family participation, and a sense of good humor are important elements to the music.

Parade viewers seem to have enjoyed the band's homegrown musical contribution to our Fourth of July parade which itself has become a most positive factor in creating a spirit of community in our much beloved town.

Progressive Euchre Club

Members began to meet in January 1909 for the enjoyment of playing Euchre, which is a card game similar to Pinochle.⁷⁸ Ten tables of four players each played one evening. By the next winter, Euchre was out of style. There is no evidence that this group continued after 1909.

Rod and Gun Club

This group was mentioned in 1930 and 1931 when they built a sporting camp at Lyme Reservoir in Dorchester, New Hampshire. Several members and their wives had outings at the camp.⁷⁹

Stockade

Reverend Ray Leavitt of the Meriden Baptist Church organized about 1960 a chapter of a boys' recreation group called Stockade, which was patterned after the Boy Scout movement. The group met regularly for outdoor activities, but disbanded after two or three years.

Upper Valley Humane Society

The society purchased a house on Westgate Road and opened an animal shelter in November 1973. Stan Milo was the first caretaker. In 1990, the shelter built a new facility in Enfield and was relocated there.



Valley Players in "The Mountain" by Burnham Carter, Plainfield Town Hall, August/September 1956. L-R Arthur Quimby, David Taylor, Maurice Beaulieu, Ronald Sherwin, Carroll Little, Hazel Murgatroy. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Valley Improvement Society (Meriden)

This club existed from 1904–1907.

Valley Players

This drama group presented *The Mountain* by Burnham Carter, a one-time Cornish resident, on August 31 and September 1, 1956. The proceeds were to benefit the Cornish and Plainfield Schools for playground equipment. It was a rather elaborate production, and evidently the only one by the Valley Players.⁸⁰

Village Improvement Society (Meriden)

They had a meeting in the school building in December 1914.⁸¹

Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU)(Meriden)

This group was church-related and met in 1909 at members' homes.⁸² A meeting was held at the Congregational Church in 1914.⁸³

Women's Fellowship (Meriden)

This group was affiliated with the Meriden Congregational Church and met for several years following World War II into the 1970s.⁸⁴

Women's Missionary Society (Meriden)

This group was connected to the Ladies Aid and met in 1908 at a member's home.⁸⁵

YMCA (Kimball Union Academy)

This group was quite active in the Meriden community from at least 1909 to 1913 and perhaps later. The chapter was closely associated with the county and state organization. They had a campground in 1911.⁸⁶

YMCA (Plainfield)

This group may have started in 1910⁸⁷ and was operating in 1931.⁸⁸ They held socials, attended county conferences, and went on outings. The Pioneer Boys may have been connected to this group.

YWCA (Plainfield)

This group had started by February 1911 when they held a lecture, "The Emerald Isle" by Ian Gairn, at the Grange Hall.⁸⁹ They also won the Plainfield Association's debate pennant when they defeated the YMCA in a "spirited debate" in 1912 on the question: "that equal suffrage be granted the women of New Hampshire."⁹⁰



Otis Cutts, village blacksmith, beside his "Meriden" martin house. From the *First Report of the Meriden Bird Club, 1911*. Cutts' house and blacksmith shop are visible in the background. Courtesy Meriden Bird Club.

The Meriden Bird Club

Joan E. Bishop

Ernest Harold Baynes, naturalist, author, and lecturer, first gave his lecture, "How to Attract the Wild Birds," in Meriden on June 8, 1910, in the Kimball Union Academy chapel to students and townspeople. Mr. Baynes explained the great economic value of birds and the need for bird protection throughout the country. Two days later, he addressed a special meeting of the Academy's senior class of 1910. Mr. Baynes urged them to make a contribution of \$5 for the purchase of birdhouses for the campus. Those present voted unanimously to give \$25 from the class treasury.

Mr. Baynes also encouraged the people of Meriden to support his cause. While walking around the village doing errands, he would stop and talk to people about birds, and, one by one, they agreed to make Meriden a bird resort. Ernest carried a notebook to record their names and the amount donated for the purchase of birdhouses. Only one person of all those asked refused to give something to aid in the cause of bird protection. Many donated labor. Mr. O. V. Cutts, the local blacksmith, made a first-class martin house, which was reported to be occupied by tree sparrows on June 15.

Mr. Baynes next approached the small summer colony in Meriden. Mrs. Tamson L. Monroe invited a few summer people to her home to hear Ernest Baynes lecture on birds. The following day almost every member of the summer colony had subscribed to the birdhouse fund.

The farmers in town were approached next by Baynes, who was a member of the local Grange. He spoke at a meeting about "Bird Protection," and several farmers, including the master of the Grange, subscribed to the birdhouse fund.

Two enemies of birds were put on notice during the first few months of bird awareness in Meriden: red squirrels and cats. Mr. Baynes disliked killing, but accepted as a gift a .22 caliber rifle "for the protection of Meriden birds."

Most people regarded squirrels as a nuisance and did not object to reducing their number. Ernest noted that he never shot one in a private garden without first asking the owner's permission. Cats were another problem. A local newspaper writer remarked that "the cat owners should remember that it is just as unneighborly of them to permit their cats to destroy the birds which their neighbors are going to so much trouble to protect, as it is for these neighbors



Kimball Union Academy students raising a "Meriden" martin house. From the *First Report of the Meriden Bird Club, 1911*. Courtesy Meriden Bird Club.

to shoot the cats." People who owned three or four cats could do with one. At Town Meeting in 1919, Article XVII stated: "To see if the town will vote to adopt a cat ordinance in the village of Meriden (by request)." The motion was passed over.

During that first autumn, Meriden prepared to feed the birds through the winter months. Dr. Huse, J. Lewis Stickney, Mary Chellis, Principal Tracy, and Professor Howe started early. Mr. Frederick H. Kennard, a local landscape architect, designed an "Audubon foodhouse," with a peaked roof and glass sides to be mounted on a pole. This birdhouse was an adaptation of the foodhouse invented by Baron Hans von Berlepsch, the famous German bird lover whose "Bird Paradise," in Thuringa, Germany, was one of the wonders of the world. The blueprints were loaned to residents.

A number of voluntary contributions began to come in from friends outside the village: some from as far away as the west coast. Mr. William Lyman Underwood of Belmont, Massachusetts, heard about the work and volunteered to give his famous lecture, "A Strange Story of the North Woods." The proceeds were used for the protection of the Meriden birds.

On December 7, 1910, the Meriden Bird Club was organized in the Kimball Union chapel. Its objectives were: "The increase and protection of our local wild birds, the stimulation of interest in bird life, and the gradual establishment of a model bird sanctuary." The club was the first of its kind in America. The following morning the Kimball Union Academy boys went out to feed the birds. They scattered seed and tied suet contributed by the village butcher, Frank Whitaker, in the trees.

On January 7, 1911, Ernest Harold Baynes called the first meeting of the Meriden Bird Club at the Kimball Union Academy chapel. The following officers were chosen: President—Professor Frank M. Howe of Kimball Union Academy; Vice Presidents—Alvah B. Chellis, Fred A. Rogers, master of Meriden Grange, John F. Cann, and George C. Barton; Secretary—Miss Mary A. Freeman; Treasurer—Charles Alden Tracy, principal of Kimball Union Academy; General Manager—Ernest Harold Baynes. A motion was made by Mr. Baynes that the society be known as the Meriden Bird Club. A committee appointed by Professor Howe was to draft a constitution and by-laws of the society for presentation at the next meeting. Committees were appointed to draft a plan for bird study in the public schools, to consider construction of a martin house at the Academy in keeping with the architecture of the Bryant Dormitory, and to consider the construction of a martin house for the village.

The second meeting was held on January 20, 1911, and the constitution and by-laws were presented by the committee. Membership would consist of: Associate Members, \$1; Life Members, \$25; Patron, \$100; Junior Members (under fourteen), 10 cents. Since the members of the Kimball Union Academy class of 1910 were original donors to the bird club, they were made charter members. Later, to stimulate interest to study and photograph birds, a competition was begun by Mr. Baynes. A \$25 Century Camera was offered by Messrs. Robey, French and Company of Boston for the best 1,500–3,000 word essay on "Birds to be Seen Within Ten Miles of Meriden." Mr. Baynes offered a hand-colored etching by the old English ornithologist Selby for the second best essay on the subject. Mr. Baynes also offered a prize for the best essay on "Bird Feeding in Winter" by any student at Kimball Union Academy. It was awarded to Miss Ethel Rose Barton of Cornish, class of 1912. A pair of field glasses was offered for the six best photographs of birds or on subjects illustrating bird protection in Meriden. *American Photography* offered a two-year subscription for the second best. Each of these competitions were won by Mrs. Elmer E. (Elsie) Wheeler and Mrs. Frank M. Howe who had won the essay contests. Neither of them had previously photographed birds.

Meriden people went to great lengths to enjoy the birds. During June 1911, when the hummingbirds visited the Baynes' garden, Mrs. Baynes feared that the rubythroats would leave when the blossoms were over. She made artificial cloth flowers. In the center of each, she fastened a tiny bottle filled with honey and water or sugar and water. Each flower had a stem of wire. Some of the flowers were placed in vases on porches. Others were fastened to porch posts and window sills. The birds stayed all summer. The flowers sometimes had to be filled two or three times a day.

Almost everyone in Meriden Village had fun feeding the birds. The Kimball Union Academy students, under Professor Howe's leadership, maintained a number of the permanent stations. After each snowstorm, they trampled down the snow with snowshoes to create one large feeding station. Villagers gave them quantities of wheat, cracked corn, and oats to scatter on the ground. The student girls

scattered food on the roofs and porches of their dormitory, Dexter Hall. Even the farmers were reported to leave their barn doors open so the birds could feed.

Cut spruces, balsam firs, or discarded Christmas trees were another method of feeding the winter birds. The tree was then set firmly in the ground. Over its twigs and branches was poured boiling von Berlepsch bird food. The recipe consisted of white bread, meat, dried and ground, hemp, maw, poppy flour, millet, oats, dried elderberries, sunflower seeds, and ant eggs. The dried food was added to melted suet or fat.

Suet bags were the suggestion of a woman in Walpole, New Hampshire. She placed suet in loosely crocheted bags which were hung in trees. Under the direction of Madame Bauer, the girls of Kimball Union Academy made a number of these bags in different colors to see if the birds would show a preference. Unfortunately, the colors were not fast and after the first heavy rain, the bags all looked alike.

The martin houses named "Meriden" houses were first built by blacksmith Otis V. Cutts. The standard ones were made after a design furnished by Edward Howe Forbush, state ornithologist of Massachusetts. The house was built from large flour or sugar barrels that were divided into three stories with space for four rooms on each. A porch ran completely around the barrel. Under a peaked roof, the barrel was mounted on a pole, twenty to thirty feet high.

The "Benedict Bird Homes," seven of which were presented to the club by Naturalist Dr. G. A. Hinnen of Cincinnati, were made of ceramic and could accommodate birds ranging in size from wrens to blue birds. However, in 1911, it was reported none were occupied.

By far the most successful and widely used birdhouse was invented by the German bird lover, Baron Hans Von Berlepsch. He concluded that houses made by birds for themselves were more suitable than man-made ones. He invented a machine that would hollow out logs in such a way that the cavities were facsimiles of the natural burrows of woodpeckers, titmice, and nuthatches. Mr. Baynes was asked to undertake its manufacture in this country. Baynes obtained the German's machinery for boring the logs, but the birds were fussy. The houses were not up to German standards. One hundred fifty Berlepsch nestboxes were imported in the spring of 1911 for distribution among the subscribers to the original birdhouse fund. The remainder was to be hung in the Helen Woodruff Smith Bird Sanctuary in Meriden.

The imported houses were successful and the work of manufacturing American copies later became the task of the Audubon Bird House Company in Meriden. The houses were made of such woods as hemlock, maple, oak, ash, bass wood, black cherry, white birch, and yellow birch, each with natural bark adhering. Each house had a hardwood board attached to the back which was fastened to a branch, tree trunk, post, or the side of a building. Each had a lid or cover, fastened by a spring catch with a hinge at the back, so that it could be cleaned when unoccupied by birds. Houses were hung either straight up and down or slanting toward the entrance hole. The entrance hole was bored

at an angle and grooved to enable birds to gain a good footing. Since woodpeckers make no nest, sawdust and dirt were dropped at the bottom of the house. Ernest Harold Baynes was taxed from 1919 to 1923 for stock in trade of about \$950 for his birdhouses and \$200 for the mill to make them.

In April 1911, the thirty-two acre Mary Ann Watson farm (Joseph Salsbury, 1991) came on the market. The property is situated on the west side of Meriden hill and included a pine grove, a tract of hardwood, a swamp, and tillage land. The property was purchased by the club with an initial gift from Mrs. Helen Woodruff Smith of Stamford, Connecticut. Mrs. Smith was a bird lover who learned of the work underway in Meriden. Her gift of \$1,000 was offered with the stipulation that the sanctuary carry her name. The club became the first in America to own and maintain a sanctuary exclusively for birds.

Club members and Kimball Union Academy students started early in the spring working to gradually develop the old farm into a model bird sanctuary. Kimball Union Academy boys planted arrowwood and set out a hedge in front of the sanctuary. Thirty Berlespch nestboxes were hung in the sanctuary. A strip of land in the open field was plowed and planted to corn, sunflowers, hemp, Japanese millet, and wheat.

Later, the property was laid out by the landscape architect Frederick H. Kennard, who was also an ornithologist. He saw the aesthetic features of the land and considered the birds' welfare. The surveying was done by the Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth which drafted a topographical map of the reservation.

Four bird baths were planned by the club. Mr. Baynes addressed the Kimball Union Academy Board of Trustees at their autumn meeting in 1912 and suggested that they co-operate with the bird club by establishing a stone bird bath on the campus. A boulder was suggested by Mr. Tracy and one was found weighing between three and four tons on a hill about a half mile from the village. It was on the farm of club member Mrs. Jenney Barney who gladly donated it. The stone was loosened with crow bars and accelerated down the hillside. It crushed a tree before opening a gap in the stone wall at the bottom. The stone was captured and placed on a drag. Two teams of oxen belonging to Henry Goodwin and Newell G. Chapman were joined with Clarence Bean's powerful work horses to bring the boulder to the campus. The stone was placed on a foundation, and the top was hollowed out with a chisel to hold a pool of water. The boulder was drilled from top to bottom to hold a pipe connected to the public water system. The stone bath is still on the green of the Meriden Congregational Church.

Another bath, The Hale Memorial, was presented by Miss Harriet E. Freeman of Boston in memory of her friend, Dr. Edward Everett Hale. It was a boulder found on the farm of Harold Chellis, about a mile north of the village. It had been split by the frost in such a way that one-half was concave. When placed horizontally, it held water. The half-ton stone was hauled to the sanctuary by four teams of oxen and set upon a stone foundation to the left



Moving the boulder to make a memorial bird bath. From the *Second Report of the Meriden Bird Club*, 1912. Courtesy Meriden Bird Club.

of the house. The stone's surface was so beautifully weathered that the only alteration was to drill a single hole through the middle to admit a water pipe. The memorial bears a bronze tablet in memory of Dr. Edward Everett Hale, "a lover of nature."

Also just inside the entrance to the sanctuary is the Shell Bird Bath from the Philippines given by Mr. Baynes.

Another beautiful bronze bath is the "Overcus" Bird Bath. This public sculpture was designed by Mrs. Louis Saint-Gaudens in commemoration of the first bird masque, "Sanctuary." This piece was presented to the club by Helen Foster Barnett of Brooklyn, a lover of birds and a patroness of sculpture. Mrs. Barnett had taken part in the Masque and commissioned Mrs. Saint-Gaudens to produce a bath in bronze for the sanctuary. It was first exhibited in New York and Boston before arriving in Meriden for placement on a site selected by a committee of artists. Herbert Adams was chosen chairman. The bronze was installed close to the stage at the center of a little glade surrounded by white pines. The base of the bath is supported by a sculptured pedestal. Around the upper half are seen in low relief the pageant folk in action, "Tracita," the Dryad, the Post, the Naturalist, the Plume Hunter, and Onnis, together with a galaxy of gayly-arrayed "bird attendants."

The Warbler Pool is the largest of the four bird baths in the sanctuary. It was made by Walter M. Buswell, the first superintendent of the sanctuary. The pool is located near the center of the sanctuary and is well-hidden by the evergreens. A spring on the hillside feeds a shallow concrete basin, and then flows into the larger pool below.



Cast of *Sanctuary*, 1913. Courtesy Meriden Bird Club.

The Meriden Bird Sanctuary was dedicated on the evening of September 13, 1913. Mr. Baynes asked Percy MacKaye, the playwright, of Plainfield to write a poem for the dedication. Mr. MacKaye consented, but decided that the poem should take the form of a masque or play in which the problems of wild birds were explained. The bird masque "Sanctuary" was written, rehearsed, and produced within a month of its conception.

Miss Eleanor Wilson, daughter of President Woodrow Wilson, accepted the leading role. Her sister, Margaret Wilson, sang the opening song, "The Hermit Thrush." The words were written by Percy MacKaye's daughter at the age of nine. The music for the song was composed by Mr. Frederick S. Converse. Members of the cast dressed as birds and acted in pantomime. Many were nearby "Cornish Colony" people: Joseph Lindon Smith, Percy MacKaye, Ernest Harold Baynes, Juliet Barrett Rublee, and Witter Bynner were important members of the cast. Many distinguished people from surrounding towns came to witness the performance, notably a large group from Dublin, New Hampshire, including the English ambassador, Sir Cecil Spring Rice, Mrs. John L. Gardner, as well as President and Mrs. Woodrow Wilson. The masque was a great success and received world-wide publicity to further the cause of wildlife.

In January 1937, Eleanor (Wilson) MacAdoo gave two accounts of that evening with an interview to *The Saturday Evening Post*. She recalled that her costume had a headdress of white wings and that, twenty minutes before the performance, she discovered that she had left it at Harlakenden House, Winston Churchill's home in Cornish, which was the summer White House of the Wilson family. The chauffeur promised that he could make the ten miles and back in

time. After returning, he complained of a hard time because he "came back all the way in his own dust!"

Eleanor also recalled,

After the performance, the cast, feeling very gay, drove home together. Passing through a tiny New England village [Plainfield], we saw that there was a country dance in progress in the small town hall. We had the same idea simultaneously. Stopping the car a little way off, we approached stealthily and without warning appeared on the floor among the natives. Percy MacKaye, in his long blue-hooded gown, leaned with folded arms against the wall, gazing at the scene like a necromancer who had himself created it; Witter Brynner, in his leopard-skin mantle and tall feathered headdress; I, in my white robe; Ruth Hall and three others dressed as birds, in brief, bright costumes; we glided and swooped three times around the hall while the villagers stood against the wall in a daze. Then we disappeared as silently as we had come. I have never known whether they thought us a dream, or a visitation from an insane asylum.

The masque was later sponsored with the original cast in 1914 by the Civic Forum in New York under the patronage of Mrs. Woodrow Wilson. The performance was held at the Astor Hotel before an audience of 2,000. In 1916, the Redpath Chautauquas formed a company and put on the masque on the southern Chautauqua circuit for twenty weeks with Mr. Baynes playing his original role of Shy, the naturalist.

All of the activity stemming from the Meriden Bird Club resulted in the formation of over 200 community clubs as well as legislation to protect birds. The plume trade for women's hats was particularly hurt. The Cornfield Bird Club was established in the summer colony at Cornish and Plainfield. Other clubs were formed in the surrounding towns of Walpole, Charlestown, Claremont, Hanover, and Franklin. Meriden soon became known throughout the United States as "The Bird Village."

Bird Sunday was first observed in Meriden about 1914. The officers of the bird club suggested that the Reverend Noble O. Bowlby, a member and minister of the Meriden Congregational Church, designate one Sunday each summer as "Bird Sunday." He preached a sermon in which he explained the desirability of bird protection. In 1916, Bird Sunday was held in the bird sanctuary on August 6. The congregation used the seats which faced the stage and the service was very impressive. General Manager Ernest Baynes suggested that ministers of all denominations might join together for birds. A joint service was observed every summer by both Meriden churches until the early 1970s. A service of song and an address attracted the worshippers. Distinguished men like Bishop Dallas of New Hampshire, Sidney Snow of Chicago, Dr. Frederick Fagley



Ernest Harold Baynes and friend. From the *Third Report of the Meriden Bird Club*, 1916. Courtesy Meriden Bird Club.

of New York, and Reverend Marion J. Creeger then of New Haven, and a summer resident, gave the sermons as well as others.

In 1924, through the generosity of Mrs. Ezra Ripley Thayer of Boston, the early nineteenth century house at the entrance to the sanctuary was renovated to serve as a museum of conservation. Exhibited were models of nesting boxes from various manufacturers, as well as the von Berlepsch boxes, bird feeding devices, a collection of eggs, and a few stuffed birds.

On January 21, 1925, Ernest Harold Baynes died at the premature age of fifty-seven.

Miss Annie Duncan, a long-time member of the bird club, was named general manager. With Miss Duncan, Elmer Wheeler, Nathan Andrews, and representatives of bird clubs founded by Baynes, a memorial committee was formed to pay tribute to the champion of the birds from coast to coast. During the course of five years, the fund reached \$3,299.04. Improvements to the sanctuary continued with installations of plantings by the Junior Bird Club. A distinctive sign was made by Plainfield artist Maxfield Parrish. It was placed between the two stone pillars at the entrance to the sanctuary. On Bird Sunday, August 4, 1935, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Meriden Bird Club, a bronze tablet by Paul Saint-Gaudens and his mother, Annette, in memory of the club's founder was unveiled and dedicated.

The bronze tablet reads:

ERNEST HAROLD BAYNES

Naturalist . . . Crusader . . . Author . . . Friend of the Birds . . .
and all living creatures in this sanctuary which he founded . . .
this memorial was placed by the Meriden club and its friends.

The Depression, world war, and the weather took a toll on the prosperity of the bird club. In 1936, a fire burned the shop where the Berlepsch nesting boxes were made. The 1938 Hurricane extensively damaged the sanctuary's woods, but timber was salvaged under the direction of Converse Chellis and Arthur Whitney. Local men and Kimball Union Academy students cleared the trails with assistance by the U. S. Forest Service. The birds did not return in droves until new growth appeared.

At a special meeting in May 1947, the club voted to accept from General Manager Annie Duncan the sum of \$4,000 and a loan of \$4,395.86 in order to replace the museum and to extend the living quarters. Murray Stevens of New York, a club member and summer resident of Meriden, contributed a set of drawings for four rooms and a bath. The new section followed the lines of the old ell shown in a drawing given in 1940 by Miss Wingate, a daughter of the former occupant. The interior was finished with a fireplace to correspond with the main building. In the fall of 1948, the work was finished, and Harold Deneault, the physical education director at Kimball Union Academy, was chosen from a number of applicants to rent the apartment.

During the 1950s, the Warbler Pool was restored. Varieties of ferns, including a rare walking fern, were recorded. Over 150 guests visited the sanctuary during 1951. Members voted to place the collection of contributed books on birds, ferns, and flowers in the village library as a permanent loan. Club members Margaret Rosa, Jessie Carver, Bertha Porter, Sara Townsend, and Edith Whitney started winter talks on birds to the grammar school children. Interest was restored in the Junior Bird Club.

Wilfred Barnes, artist and a member of the Royal Canadian Academy who died in 1955, contributed a sanctuary scene in oils and played the violin at various Bird Sunday services. That year, Annie Duncan resigned as general manager of the club after thirty years of devoted work. The title of manager emeritus was bestowed on her.

In December 1958, a Warden's Committee was established. Members included Col. Bernard Thielen, Murray A. Stevens, and Reverend Jack Hemingway. Their duties were to post the sanctuary to prohibit hunting. At that meeting, a gift of a collection of stuffed birds and small animals from the Canaan, New Hampshire, Bird Club was added to Meriden's sizeable museum. The club members observed a moment of silence in memory of Mrs. Ernest Baynes who had passed away in Pennsylvania at the age of ninety-three. Her ashes were later returned to Meriden and strewn from the summit of Spruce Ball in the Blue Mountain Forest near her beloved husband.

Col. Bernard Thielen became the club's general manager. Col. Thielen was the author of two mystery novels: *Open Seasons* (in 1958) and *A Charm of Finches* (in 1959). He lived near the sanctuary where the Garfield family now live (1991).

On February 28, 1961, Annie Duncan died at the age of eighty-three. In 1962, on the fiftieth annual observance of Bird Sunday, a bronze tablet was unveiled. Given in honor of Miss Annie Duncan, fifty years its guiding spirit, the plaque is located on the Memorial Knoll of the sanctuary.

During the late fifties and sixties, the bird club grew inactive. On September 25, 1968, the first meeting in five years was held at the Meriden Parish House. A new slate of officers were chosen: President—Stephen Taylor; Treasurer—Fred Cushing; Secretary—Mrs. Claire Downing; Vice Presidents—Jerry Doolittle, Frank Orth, Harold Tandy, and Mrs. Jessie Carver. The directors were Fred Carver, Mrs. Philip Hulburd, Mrs. Mary Cushing, Ira Townsend, Mrs. David Millar, and Mrs. Cullous Mitchell. Membership dues were fifty cents for adults and twenty-five cents for children.

The early 1970s saw a revitalization under the leadership of Stephen Taylor. Meetings were held four times instead of annually as in the recent past. Guest speakers were invited to each meeting to speak on birds, conservation, and wild life. In 1972, President Taylor resigned, and Mr. and Mrs. Callous Mitchell were elected co-presidents. That year Margaret "Peg" Meyette began a teaching program for the Junior Bird Club.

At one of the early meetings in the 1970s, Sara Townsend suggested observance of Arbor Day. The Meriden Bird Club replaced the lost or dam-

aged trees on Main Street. Today, the people of Meriden witness the growth of these trees which will replace the maples dying from disease and acid rain.

Bird Sunday was held on July 29, 1973, in the sanctuary with a performance of music by the Philomusica Chamber Ensemble. Readings from scripture by Reverend Mason Ellison of the Meriden Congregational Church, and the address "Sanctuary" was given by the Reverend Carleton P. Jones III.

Sanctuary improvements continued under the direction of Ira Townsend and Stacey Burckes, who along with the Kimball Union Academy Outing Club, pruned trees and cleared trails. A ten-acre plot was harrowed and planted with seed to attract birds. Birdhouses stored in the museum were refurbished by member volunteers and set in the sanctuary. New benches were placed along some of the trails.

Some of the museum's collection of stuffed birds and eggs was discarded due to feather loss and age. The remainder was loaned to the Meriden Library. Restoration Chairman Mary Cushing suggested an appropriation of money each year for the purchase of carved and painted birds to start the museum collection anew. Nine replicas were purchased from donations received in memory of club member Margaret Rosa.

The Meriden Bird Club, in 1978, decided that the club's role as landlord was costly. With a touch of sadness, the old house was sold with three-quarters of an acre to Joseph and Judy Salisbury. The Baynes' prints and other memorabilia were placed on loan to the library. Baynes' desk and other items are now in the Plainfield Historical Society building.

In the late seventies, Mrs. Meyette started a teaching program for students at the Plainfield School for which she was honored in 1990. Conservation work continues.

A bluebird project which began in 1978 has seen the return of the bird to the Meriden-Plainfield area. The houses which were originally built by 4-H members and some club members are maintained by the property owners. Club President Peg Meyette checks the boxes for fledgling counts. There are now over sixty bluebird houses scattered throughout the town.

Eighty years after Ernest Harold Baynes first lectured on birds in Meriden, he would be proud to know that the Meriden Bird Club is still active and that his work continues in "Bird Village."¹

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Graveyards, Deaths, and Ghosts

Kathryn F. MacLeay
Nancy Norwalk
Laura Ward
Howard W. Zea

Burial Practices

Burial practices in Plainfield followed the general pattern of the time. A local person washed and dressed the corpse and waited until the coffin was made by the local cabinetmaker.

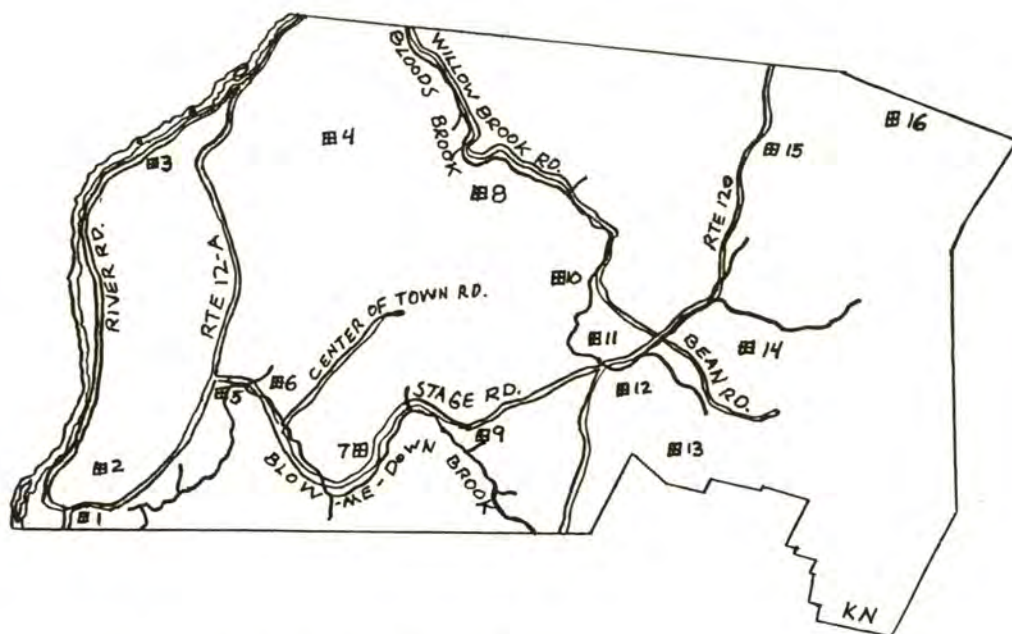
Alice (Moore) Cuddy told of her father working by lantern to meet the demand for coffins during the diphtheria epidemic of 1878 in which fifteen children died: all but two from Meriden. In October, the St. Clair family lost three children, three to six years of age, and between December 14 and 24, the Newell Chapman family lost three children, ages five to thirteen years. When illness was contagious, the burial was made as soon as possible. Otherwise, the time varied with the season.

Funerals were generally held in the home. It was customary to have some men in the neighborhood "sit up" with the deceased during the night. Probably the last person to be buried from their home in Meriden was Robert Bartlett who died in 1951.

In the winter when the ground was frozen, bodies were placed in a receiving vault until spring. The town vault can still be seen in the Plainfield Plain Cemetery.

Plainfield graveyards were typical of those in the region. Each grave had a headstone with the vital information and an epitaph. There was also a footstone to mark the length of the grave. Each grave was mounded up about six or eight inches to compensate for sinking. Usually there was only a foot or so in distance between the footstone in one row and the headstone in the next, which made mechanical mowing almost impossible.

By the early 1930s, people wanted their graveyards to look more like city parks. At this time, there were only thirty-seven trust funds for the care of family lots. Only those lots with trust funds were mowed by the town. Otherwise,



Map of Cemeteries by Kenneth Norwalk, 1991.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Freeman Cemetery | 9. Penniman Cemetery |
| 2. Westgate-Peterson Cemetery | 10. Mill Cemetery |
| 3. Colby or River Cemetery | 11. Raynsford Cemetery |
| 4. Daniels Cemetery | 12. Moulton Yard Cemetery |
| 5. Plainfield Plain Cemetery | 13. Hopkins Cemetery |
| 6. Gilkey Cemetery | 14. Gleason Cemetery |
| 7. Hendrick Cemetery | 15. East Plainfield Cemetery |
| 8. Coreville Cemetery | 16. Methodist Hill Cemetery |

care was left to the family or to the weeds and grass. About this time, the footstones were removed and the graves leveled to facilitate the mowing. The footstones were stacked on the walls at the Gleason Cemetery or placed in the tool shed. Gradually these footstones have disappeared. In 1936, Henry Penniman leveled the Mill Cemetery, using a horse and cultivator. Seed was sowed, and by late summer, it was mowed with a lawn mower. Now the cemeteries are cared for by income from trust funds and town appropriation.

Graveyards and Cemeteries

• *First Graveyard*

On March 11, 1766, at the first Proprietors' Meeting, a committee of Amos Stafford, Lieutenant Thomas Gallup, and Francis Smith was chosen to plan a meeting house lot and burial ground. The lot required ten acres. The survey was drafted

on August 18, 1769, and the proprietors accepted it August 24, 1769. The original graveyard was on the westerly side of the road leading northward from the center of the town. At the Town Meeting on August 8, 1771, the proposed burial plot and meeting house were introduced. The recommendation was originally rejected by the town, but was accepted on June 10, 1774. The lot was never used, and on October 27, 1829, was sold to Nathaniel French for \$100.

At a Town Meeting on April 20, 1770, Lieutenant Thomas Gallup presented a deed of land for a graveyard on the river in Plainfield, and the town accepted his proposal. River Cemetery (as it is now called) was the first public graveyard in Plainfield. It is located on the River Road near land now owned by the McNamara and Sprague families (1991).

- *Coryville Cemetery*

Coryville Cemetery (also known as Willow Brook Cemetery) is on the west side of Ladieu Road near the bottom of the hill. Several unmarked graves and approximately thirty stones are found there. The grave of Eleanore Kimball, wife of Joseph Kimball, lies inside a granite fence. It is unknown why Eleanore was not buried with her husband at Gilkey Cemetery, although the Kimball stone there gives the date of her death. Hodges Cutler, the last living Plainfield soldier of the Revolutionary War, also lies here. Probably, the only slaves held in town are buried here. In the census of 1790, Benjamin Cutler owned two slaves. According to Vernon Hood, the final graves in the cemetery were occupied by two of John Holt's children who died in 1880. Their graves are at the west end of the lot without a stone.

- *Daniels Cemetery*

On Black Hill, south of Edward Daniels' house, lies the Daniels Cemetery. The plot contains thirteen graves; the oldest stone is that of Joseph Daniels who died in 1829 (son of John Daniels, first of the family to own the farm). The lot is enclosed by a stone wall with a rail gate.

Willis Daniels (1844–1922) and his brother Edward (1850–1936) owned adjoining farms on Black Hill. Willis lived on the land now owned, in part, by John Stephenson (1991) and Edward lived on the land now owned, in part, by Peter Mogielnicki (1991). The family cemetery was divided by their common property line. After Willis' death, his farm was sold and eventually became the property of Clarence King. Edward willed his farm to his nephew Edward "Ted" Daniels.

In the 1940s, there was a conflict between Ed Daniels II and Clarence King over the Daniels Cemetery, which then extended to the west into a field owned by King. Ted Daniels took down all the Daniels' headstones on King's property and moved them to his side of the boundary line, then razed the stone wall which had surrounded that section of the cemetery, and re-erected the western side of the stone wall right on the boundary line. The skeletal remains were not moved, only the headstones. Portions of the original stone wall can still be seen.



(L) Gravestone, Polly L. Freeman, aged seventeen months, 1794; Freeman Cemetery, Plainfield. (R) Detail of the gravestone. Photos by Nancy Norwalk.

• *East Plainfield Cemetery*

East Plainfield Cemetery is just east of Route 120. It lies on Barker Road just off the Croydon Turnpike. Its oldest stone reads 1796.

• *Freeman Cemetery*

The Freeman Cemetery is located near the Cornish town line on Route 12A across from Town Line Equipment. Descendants of Lieutenant Daniel Freeman are buried in the cemetery. Lieutenant Freeman's grave is the oldest dated stone: August 14, 1806.

The cemetery had its own trust fund for maintenance until the fall of 1960 when Mary Cassedy turned over the records and all funds to the town. No special care is given to any of the lots within the cemetery and a limited amount of space remains for burial. The last person buried in the cemetery was Lori Schaffer, a five-year old child, in 1984. The cemetery had no burials between 1929–1959. The only markers for war veterans buried in the cemetery are those of David Cassedy and Lieutenant Freeman.

According to Mary Cassedy, a Freeman descendant, Freeman Cemetery is located near the former house of Daniel Freeman on the family property.¹ The big barn, which still stands, was built by Freeman's family in the eighteenth century. The house was near the foot of the hill on the corner near the house owned by Scott Walker (1991). The first house burned in 1940.

• *Gilkey Cemetery*

Gilkey Cemetery, located on a hill above Stage Road, was at one time on the Gilkey farm owned by Ellen Shipman. The graves are in three separate groups.

The largest is near the tall pine trees. There are many unmarked mounds. The first dated stone reads "June 28, 1767, Sarah, daughter of Captain Benjamin and Jerman Chapman." Members of the Shipman family have recently been buried near the oldest stone.

The second group is surrounded by a tall wire fence on iron stakes. Graves in this lot date between 1803 and 1906. The third group lies on the east side of the graveyard. Within this lot are six lettered graves, some of native field stone, and some unmarked mounds. The earliest stone is that of Lieutenant Thomas Gallup, who died September 30, 1777, at fifty-two years old. Gallup had been town clerk at his death and was a notable citizen at the town's beginning. There is also a section in the cemetery reserved for the Avery family. Money for the cemetery comes from the town and private trust funds. According to Joseph Meyette, a former sexton, the last person buried in Gilkey Cemetery was Gerald Wilder.

- *Gleason Cemetery*

Gleason Cemetery is one of the larger graveyards in Plainfield. It is located on the east side of Gleason Road above Meriden Village. The cemetery is named for an early settler of Grantham, Elijah Gleason, who lived in that section ceded to Plainfield in 1856. In April 1851, John P. Chellis and Father Bean planted the trees still standing in the cemetery, which has remained in continual use. The Gleasons' own gravestone is among the earliest. It also memorializes the death of a son in 1755 before the family moved to the New Hampshire Grants.

Other stones have since been moved. Mr. Walter Stearns, who lived in Meriden next to the Grange Hall, was a sexton of Gleason Cemetery. Stearns removed some of the headstones from the graveyard because he feared that the plot was filling too quickly. He stacked them in the cemetery shed and then in his cellar. Gleason Cemetery, to this day, has rows of graves with no headstones. When the new Kimball Union Academy library was built, the workers unearthed a single gravestone, which had the name Gleason on it.² Other gravestones have popped up in odd places over the years.

- *Hell Hollow Cemetery*

Near Hell Hollow in Plainfield lies a small graveyard for the Kenyon family, who were early settlers. It is located near their home along an unused road between the town farm and the old Colonel Ripley place in Cornish. There are eight graves. One stone is inscribed "Sarah K" and stands four feet tall. Vernon Hood said that he could not find the cemetery because the trees had not been cut around it.³ Its location in the woods is now obscure.

- *Hopkins Cemetery*

Hopkins Cemetery, located on the road of the same name, has only three stones, all members of the Hopkins family. The Hopkins Road was the prin-



Gravestone, H. & S. Chapman, 1865; Mill Cemetery, Meriden. Photo by Nancy Norwalk.

cipal road from Meriden to Cornish Flat in old times. The Hopkins family were early pioneers of the Grantham region. Hood said, "One wag made the remark that the reason the ground was used for a cemetery was because it was not fit for any other use."⁴ Stones are dated 1793, 1796, and 1831. The oldest stone is that of Ruth Hopkins, daughter of Philip and Ruth Hopkins.

• *Methodist Hill Cemetery*

Methodist Hill Cemetery is on the easterly side of the four corners on Methodist Hill. It was an early burial ground for the first settlers of Grantham and Enfield, before this section was annexed to Plainfield. The earliest inscription is for John Calif, February 12, 1840. In 1912, Wilbur F. Smith created a small trust fund for the care of the Daniel L. Smith and Moses Flanders lots. Any excess income can be applied to the general care of the yard except the Howe lots!

• *Mill Cemetery*

Mill Cemetery is on Colby Hill Road above the covered bridge on Blood's Brook in Meriden. It is one of the earliest and largest cemeteries in town and is the final resting place of many Meriden people. Mrs. Hannah Kimball, wife of Benjamin Kimball, was the first person buried there in 1783. Their son, Daniel Kimball, the benefactor of the Academy, is also buried there. Granite hitching posts survive along the road. Above the old graveyard lies the newer section

of the Mill Cemetery. It provides a beautiful view of Grantham Mountain. The "new" (west) part of Mill Cemetery is Plainfield's only cemetery not owned and maintained by the town. It is owned and operated by a private, nonprofit association.

- *Moulton Cemetery*

The Moulton Cemetery derived its name from Darius Moulton who owned property adjacent to it. It is east of Route 120 on the south side of Andrews Lane. It contains the graves of several members of the Moulton family. The oldest part of the graveyard is the western section. Trust funds are available for the cemetery's maintenance.

- *Penniman Cemetery*

Penniman Cemetery lies east of Penniman Road and south of the town shed. Surrounded by a stone wall and wooden gate, the oldest grave is that of Mary Spaulding, about 1810. Enclosed by a white picket fence, in the southeastern section, is the Penniman family lot. The town maintains the whole cemetery. The cemetery contains over sixty graves and is currently in use.⁵

- *Plainfield Plain Cemetery*

Plainfield Plain Cemetery started as a "Church Yard." The meeting house stood there until moved to its present location and remodeled as a town hall. The cemetery has been expanded five different times and is presently the largest cemetery in Plainfield. The first graves lie in the middle section and in back of the round drive. Experience Stevens is the oldest dated stone—February 20, 1767. The town records show that she was the first person to die in Plainfield. Experience passed away on February 20, 1767, aged forty-one years, the wife of John Stevens, the town moderator. She was buried near their cabin on Maude (Earle) Stanley's land (1991) on the River Road. About 1900, the Stevens residence was sold to William Orlo Kenyon, and the cemetery plot and stone were moved to Plainfield Plain Cemetery.⁶ A trust fund of \$500 was started in 1889 for Plainfield Plain Cemetery by Mrs. Lucy (Parker) Chamberlin and others for the upkeep of the cemetery. The town contributed \$100. At the cemetery's entrance, there is a cobblestone wall with wrought iron gates from Italy. Hitching rails were put up in 1902. There are two plaques on either side of the gates, one for Mrs. Chamberlin's parents and the other for the meeting house.⁷

- *Raynsford Cemetery*

Raynsford Cemetery is on the west side of Bonner Road in Meriden. Three of the four sides of the cemetery have a stone wall. The other has a white picket fence. The stones were carefully planned, but are close together in places. Isaac Williams, who died of smallpox in 1808 was buried there.⁸



Grave marker, an eastern white pine on the 1868 burial site of John Alden Gilbert, River Cemetery, 1990. Photo by Betty Robinson.

• *River Cemetery*

The River Cemetery (also known as Colby Cemetery) is located on the River Road, near the McNamara and Sprague land and the old Fuller place. The oldest stone is dated 1788. It is near the grave of Francis Smith, who was one of the first grantees. There are about seventy-five graves and several unmarked mounds. There is a tall tree in the rear of the cemetery, and John Alden Gilbert is buried under it. Gilbert was a servant who lived with the Smith family. He asked Lewis Jordan to put a pine tree on his grave as a monument.⁹ He feared no one would provide a stone for him because he was a town pauper. Town records show that in 1868 the selectmen paid Lewis Jordan two dollars "for digging grave for Gilbert" and that Judith Davis received thirty-three cents for "making robe for Gilbert."¹⁰

- *Spencer Cemetery*

The Spencer Cemetery, off Columbus Jordan Road, is a family plot. It is one of the most elusive cemeteries in Plainfield. Although the graves are recorded, some wonder whether it really exists. Vernon Hood claimed to have seen the graveyard, now in the woods, nearly thirty years ago, but he could not relocate it on a second trip.

Some tell of hunters stumbling upon the cemetery, but losing its location. Jennie Ward and her late husband, Quentin, found the graves nearly forty years ago. One evening when their cattle strayed onto the Columbus Jordan Road, they saw the small plot of land. It was surrounded by granite slabs and contained some stone markers. The Wards were in a hurry to get the cattle home. When they returned to the woods later, they could not retrace their steps.

Lucien Laurie, a former resident of Plainfield, now of Charlestown, once lived on the Columbus Jordan place. Laurie knew where the cemetery was but thought that a piece of heavy equipment had been through the area making it harder to find. Boone Rondeau also claims to have seen the graves in the 1980s.

The Spencer house was farther north on the same side as the Jordan place. David Chellis, David Dessert, Paul Franklin, and Philip Zea could not find the cemetery in the fall of 1969 after a systematic search. The Plainfield Historical Society met with similar results in the late 1980s.

In the spring of 1987, Laura and Gary Ward and his mother Jennie, walked up Columbus Jordan Road looking for the cemetery. They could not find it, either. They did see a granite slab on the roadside, perhaps a part of the fence surrounding the cemetery.

- *Westgate-Peterson Cemetery*

The Westgate-Peterson Cemetery is one of the earliest cemeteries in Plainfield. The cemetery is on the west side of Freeman Road and contains some seventy graves. There are also several markers. The oldest headstone is that of Thomas Gates who died in 1784. The cemetery is surrounded by a large iron pipe fence secured by a concrete curb. Relatives of Dr. Ebenezer Wright constructed the fence and provided money for its upkeep.¹¹ In 1960, Mary Cassidy turned over the records and funds for this cemetery to the town. Until then, this plot was also private.

- *Unmarked Graves*

There were a group of unmarked graves next to the riverbank south of Sumner Falls, near the property line of the late Henry L. Smythe (Roger Nicolas, 1991). Some people have said that this was an Indian burial ground. However, Vernon Hood reported that one of the graves was examined and a wooden coffin fastened with nails was found. Nellie (Woodman) Gray said that her grandmother told her that the graves were of early settlers of Plainfield and that the last person buried there was "a Spalding girl."¹²

According to Clare Boyd, the stone of Susan Watson, daughter of Peter and Mary, who died October 14, 1842, twenty-five years old, was used for a step stone at the Zea house in Meriden. The footstone of Micaiah Adams is nearby.

The original gravestones of Hartwell Spaulding (who died July 8, 1828), son of Enos and Lucretia, and another child, Lucia (who died February 8, 1939), both at the age of two years, were found in Tracy Spalding's wellhouse at Plainfield Plain and are now at the Plainfield Historical Society. The stones were replaced by newer ones.

There was a lone gravestone in the cellar of the Gagna Place (now the Hendrick's upper field, 1991) above the Stage Road. The grave of Parmelia Spalding is also on the property of Alice Hendrick. Hood described it near the cellar hole of the Timothy L. Jordan house on the hill west from the Hendrick's barn. It reads "Parmelia, wife of John G. Spalding, died April 10, 1837, in her 45th year." Her husband remarried and went to Vermont. Hood said, "Parmelia has it all her own way within the small stonewalled plot."¹³

It was a common practice years ago to bury family members on the family farm or property. There are several such cemeteries in Plainfield. Howe Cemetery is located in the woods on the Edward Howe farm along the west side of the road from Meriden to the Cornish line. Lina, wife of Gardner Hopkins, Jr., died August 31, 1831, age twenty-one, and one GAR marker are contained in the plot.

On the Winston Churchill place, there are two graves, of Churchill and his wife, Mabel Harlakenden Hall.

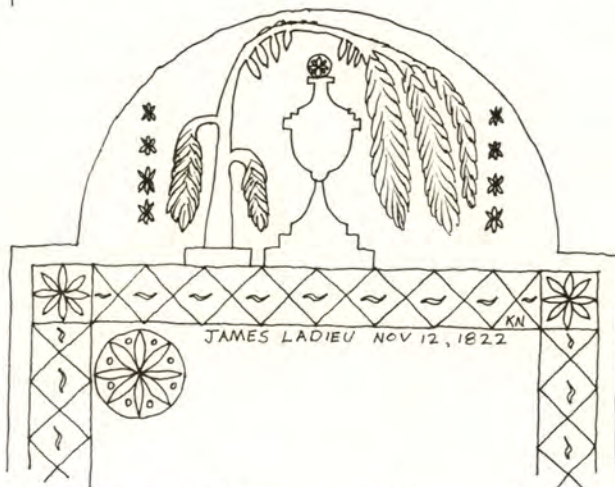
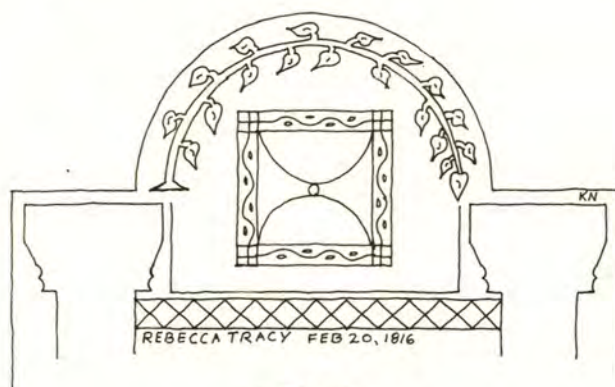
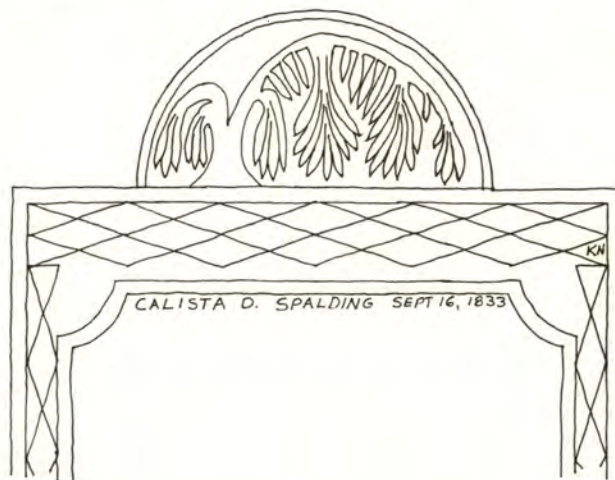
There is an inscription carved into the rocks by Sumner Falls on the Connecticut River: "(name-unreadable) Drowned Here July 17, 1883."

Two Stones for John Stevens

There are two stones for John Stevens. One is located in the back of the River Cemetery to the right of a big pine tree. In the Plainfield Cemetery, right through the gate, five or six rows back, a modern stone for the Stevens family is located. In the row of stones next to the wall, there is another stone for John Stevens. The stone in the River Cemetery is of a newer style; both stones have the same date on them. They are both for the same man, but which one marks his grave and which one is a memorial is unknown.

Trust Funds

Howard Zea said, "At one time almost every cemetery had an association. People were interested in maintaining family plots. Several trust funds are outgrowths of the associations." The earliest trust funds were the Chamberlin and the Junius Spencer Funds. Both were established in 1890. Trust funds have been set aside for the entrance to the Plainfield Cemetery. Gleason, Moulton,



Details of Plainfield gravestones. Drawings by Kenneth Norwalk.

and Mill Cemeteries all had trust funds for the maintenance of the graves. Mill Cemetery has the largest support. The old section is maintained by the town. The larger section is private. John Bryant's mother, Mary, left money in her will to be matched by the townspeople. Plainfield currently has 121 cemetery trust funds worth \$79,045.50. The trustees of the trust funds invest these funds for safety and income. In 1989, \$7,340.03 in income was generated to help maintain the town cemeteries. The last cemetery trust fund created was the Ralph Jordan Fund in 1986.

Deaths

• *The Alexander Children and Job Pierce*

An old house once stood on top of the hill, south of "Lowell Hollow." It was erected about 1780 and was owned at one time by Ransom Dutton. A Mr. Alexander with his wife and two small children once lived here. While he was away one day, Mrs. Alexander left the little ones playing together on the bed. She turned the key in the bedroom door and hurried away. The eldest got off the bed and began playing with fire in the fireplace. The bed clothing was soon ablaze, and the screams of the children aroused the neighbors and hastened the mother home. The scene was heart-rending, and one that was long remembered by the people of Plainfield. The house was not destroyed and was afterward occupied by Job Pierce. The building has been taken down.¹⁴

• *The Murder of Sylvia (Waite) Gray*

Sylvia Gray was born on July 15, 1905, and died on May 28, 1982. She was married to Harvey Gray and had two children, Robert and Richard. Mrs. Gray worked as an office clerk at Cone Machine Shop where her husband worked as a grinder. She lived on Daniels Road in Plainfield all of her life. She and her husband were both library trustees.

Her sister, Christine Dow, said: "Sylvia was a special, thoughtful friend and neighbor. She was a member of the Plainfield Baptist Church. She belonged to the Mothers' and Daughters' Club. It was the most dreadful thing that ever happened in Plainfield when Paul Amidon, his wife Hazel, and I discovered her murdered on Memorial Day 1982. We hope someday, somewhere, somehow, we can learn who killed my sister."

Mrs. Gray was last seen the previous Friday by her sister and friends who had tea with her at the Gray home. The tea dishes were found undisturbed on the back porch. Mrs. Dow had become concerned when she could not reach her sister by phone over the weekend. They found her body lying face down in a field near the home on Daniels Road. Her death was caused by blows to the head with a blunt object, and she had been stabbed several times. No motive was discovered. Mrs. Gray's unlocked house was undisturbed, but the rings that she wore were stolen. Despite intense investigation by state and Plainfield police, the murder has not been solved.

- *Marcia Jordan's Tragic Death*

On June 25, 1856, Marcia Jordan, age ten, daughter of Anthony W. and Mercy (Root) Jordan, was accidentally hung at the schoolhouse in the center of town (District 6). She was headed home after school when she realized that she had forgotten something. Returning to school, Marcia found the door locked. She tried to open a window, but it was high off the ground. She apparently "could only open one of them by reaching up at arms length and holding it with one hand, while pulling herself up by the other hand." Marcia managed to get part way in, but slipped and fell. The window sash hit her on the back of her neck and choked her. A family member searched for her and found her dead, hanging from the window.¹⁵

- *The Freeman/Morgan Murders (June 11, 1889)*

On June 11, 1889, Lucien Freeman killed his mother, Mary, and the hired man, John Morgan. Lucien was a retarded person and was kept locked in a room at their home in Meriden. When Mrs. Freeman went to the village to shop, Lucien managed to escape his room. Upon her return, he killed her with an axe. The hired man, who lived in the ell apartment was also killed. Freeman ran away and was seen at the home of Exom Eaton on Eaton Road. Neighbors realized that he should be returned to his home. When they checked the house, the murders were discovered. There was a trial in Newport on September 3, and the Drs. Sleeper and Sawyer and the Board of Selectmen were summoned to testify at Lucien's trial. Lucien was sent to the State Hospital in Concord, where he died June 16, 1897. He is buried next to his mother in the Moulton Cemetery. The Freeman house was located on the east side of Chellis Road where the Tromblys lived before the LeVarns bought it in the 1970s.

- *The Osgood/Kendall Murders (December 6, 1912)*

On December 6, 1912, George Kendall, aged forty, of Canaan, turned himself in to Lebanon police after fatally shooting his wife and Charles Osgood. The shooting took place at Osgood's farm on Black Hill. Mrs. Kendall had left her husband and was living in Plainfield with one of her six children. The other five children lived with their father. George Kendall arrived at the farm and pleaded with his wife to leave Osgood and return to him and the other children. When she refused, Mrs. Kendall noticed a revolver in his pocket and struggled with him for it. Mr. Kendall shot her; he said accidentally. George Osgood then rushed toward Kendall, who shot him to death.¹⁶

- *The Murder of Irving Smith (October 12, 1896)*

Irving Smith, age twenty, was digging potatoes near Levi Nelson's residence when he was shot in the back, head, and abdomen by Walter H. Hunt, thirty years old. He had already served time in the Newport jail for various crimes. The shots were fired so close to the body that the victim's clothing caught on fire. Hunt then threw a whiskey bottle down beside the body and ran into the

woods. The cause of the murder was a woman, rum, and an ugly disposition. Hunt had been jealous of Smith and had said that his black curls had captured his wife's affections. Hunt had been known to drive his wife off to a neighbor's with a knife in his hand. A prominent citizen stated that Hunt had "the meanest shaped head" he had ever seen on a human being.

Approximately two hours were spent gathering men from nearby towns to surround the woods and to search for Hunt. They found him along the Blow-Me-Down Brook where he had shot himself.

Ghosts

• *Ghost of Stage Road*

According to Patricia and Armand Rondeau, strange occurrences have happened in their house. Between 1976 and 1978, lightning hit appliances in their home three consecutive summers: the washing machine, furnace, and electric fence. Pat said that Marguerite Quimby (who lived across from the Plainfield Cemetery) told her that they shared a ghost, who was "a woman with a pack of children behind her." The ghost according to Quimby walks up and down Stage Road and has been seen at the Quimby and Rondeau households.¹⁷

• *Ghost in Kingsbury Tavern*

Vera MacLeay, now of Cornish, resided in the tavern from 1963 to 1978. Ghosts were often mentioned in connection with the house. MacLeay relates that a neighbor, Marguerite Quimby, identified one ghost as Aunt Esther. She wore a long gray dress and came with the woodwork in the back sitting room from an old house on Center-of-Town Road. She was a wallflower who froze to death waiting at a midwinter dance. MacLeay said the ghost never appeared if you had a happy family, and she never saw the ghost while living in the house.¹⁸

• *Ghost in the Fuller House*

The stucco house on Route 12A south of Plainfield Village was the home of artists Henry and Lucia Fairchild Fuller. Doors open and then slam shut. Doris LeVarn reported what happened when she lived there, "a black cat arrived and every time we put the cat outside—the doors and windows were closed or screened...no holes...a little while later the cat would be back in the house. The most uncomfortable sensation came when I would be downstairs and hear footsteps in the upper hall and the hanging lamps would slowly sway. This type of incident occurred several times." One guest was sleeping and was awakened by what he was convinced was someone touching him. He left the house that night and would not set foot in it again.¹⁹

There is an upstairs room where the presence of ghosts has been felt. One woman recalled sitting in a rocker and feeling someone combing her hair. One resident, in the 1980s, reported that her two dogs refused to enter the room.

They would bristle the hair on their necks and snarl. Many have reported strange noises and eerie feelings.

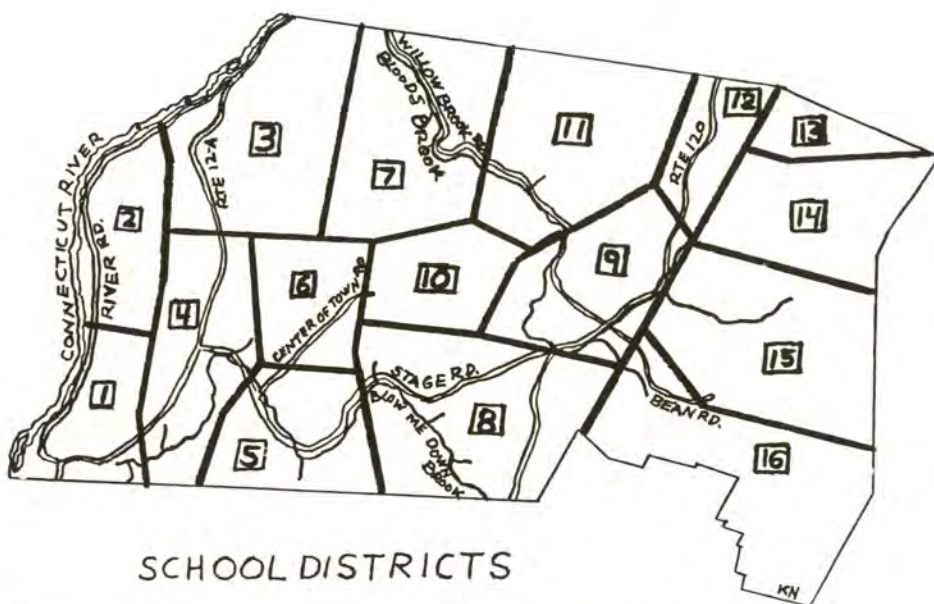
• *Indian Ghosts*

Another tale, that has never been verified, concerns a dozen Indians who were supposedly buried in the Plainfield Plain Cemetery after an Indian massacre in the early days of Plainfield. Some have claimed that they saw the bloody ghosts of these murdered Indians rise from the ground and dance around the tombstones. However, there was never an Indian massacre in Plainfield, and there are no Indians buried in any Plainfield cemetery.²⁰

• *Spiritualists*

As early as 1854, townspeople attended Spiritualist meetings. A devoted spiritualist, Ellen Morgan, held meetings at her home and at houses in Hell Hollow. A woman from Hartland, Vermont, led the meetings. Elizabeth Kenyon said the medium would go into a trance and tell about "a bastard child being born, killed, and buried in a garden." Talk of the incident lowered attendance. The last meeting was held one night at the Hendrick residence. Some young men, for a joke, broke up the meeting by firing their guns.

As a little boy, Morris Penniman was afraid of Morgan. When he grew older, Penniman thought she was harmless, but strange and not like other people. As she grew older, she would go out into the fields and woods to talk to the spirits. When she died, Hattie Kenyon, who was picking berries on the Town Farm, discovered her on the cover of an old well.²¹



Map of School Districts by Gilbert Williamson and Kenneth Norwalk, 1991.

Key:

1. Freeman, closed 1896.
2. River, closed 1889, reopened for the years 1894, 1899, 1907, 1910, 1911.
3. Black Hill, no school held 1906, closed 1928.
4. Plainfield Plain, closed 1973.
5. Spencer, no school held 1902, 1903, 1915; closed 1938.
6. Center, closed 1895.
7. Brook (also called the New School or North Plainfield School), no school held 1919, 1920; closed 1948.
8. Penniman, closed 1922.
9. Meriden, closed 1973.
10. Whitaker, no school held 1895–1909; closed 1915.
11. True, no school held 1906, closed 1908.
12. East Plainfield, closed 1954.
13. Methodist Hill, no school held 1906–1911, 1914; closed 1952.
14. Not named, closed 1896.
15. Hersey, no school held 1886, 1887, 1897, 1898, 1901–1906; closed 1922.
16. Not named, closed 1896.

Schoolhouses in Districts 5, 7, and 13 are on their original foundations and are now dwellings. The Penniman Schoolhouse was moved to Bean Road and is now the dwelling of the Rybeck-Lynd family (1991). The True Schoolhouse was moved down the hill and is now the dwelling of James Ingerson (1991). The Plain Schoolhouse was moved behind the Kingsbury Tavern (Judy Atwater, 1991) by the Plainfield Gun Club.

. 16 .
Going to School

Stephen Beaupré
Winifred Brooks
Sylvia Clark
Margaret Drye
Jessie Carver English
Audrey Logan
Gretchen Taylor

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Schools

One Plainfield historian characterized the schools in Plainfield, "Rather they were like Topsy in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* who just grewed."¹ The early settlers brought the experience of some formal education with them. Through the years, their descendants have continued the commitment to public education. Despite physical and financial difficulties, reports show that Plainfield citizens, from the beginning, were "proud and happy to improve schools when possible."²

Two articles on the warrant for the Town Meeting on April 20, 1770, asked to "see if they will build two schoolhouses in Sd. town" and "to grant a tax to Defray the charge of Sd. houses." Both articles received a nay vote.³ In 1773, Reverend Abraham Carpenter arrived in Plainfield from Connecticut and began to keep school for anyone who wished to attend.⁴ Two years later, on October 12, 1775, an article requested that "Ye Selectmen shall divide the town into Districts." Once again nothing came of the vote. The appearance of these articles, however, indicates an awareness of the need to accept education as a civic responsibility. The early settlers were often forced to reject education because of economic limitations.

Finally, at the Town Meeting on March 11, 1788, a full generation after the settlement of Plainfield, a division of the town into eight school districts was accepted.⁵ The following September, fifty pounds was approved to support these schools. Beginning in 1793, money to support schools has been included in the annual budget, although each district was responsible for raising and expending tax money.

Petitions for redistricting were constant. The locations of schools were based more on convenience and available resources than on the edicts of the select-

men. Plainfield was a series of neighborhoods and the schools were an integral part of each crossroads. Consequently, these small schools depended upon the commitment of families in their immediate area. In March 1797, the school districts were reduced to three.⁶ Variation in the number of districts continued until 1885 when the New Hampshire legislature established the town system throughout the state. The district schools were gradually abandoned.

The earliest record of a district school meeting in Plainfield was on October 22, 1812. The South School District included Plainfield Village on the County Road. David Read was chosen as moderator, Daniel Kingsbury as clerk, and Asa Kingsbury as committeeman. The latter was charged with "procuring a Room to keep school this winter if he can find any that will answer the purpose" and "to Build a new school next season."⁷ No record has been unearthed to show that these plans ever materialized.

The first building of record constructed in Plainfield for education was located between the present Elizabeth Jones residence and the Home Hill Country Inn on the River Road. In April 1821, the selectmen chose a building site on the River Road "forty rods north of Mr. Gallup's house, near two oak trees, on the east side of said road in the Thomas Gallup School District so-called."⁸ It survived, more or less, until the mid-twentieth century, although its use as a schoolhouse had long since been abandoned.

The selectmen only monitored education as one of their many duties. Control over schooling rested with those who lived in the district. In 1808, however, the New Hampshire legislature enacted a law whereby the towns, if they chose, could appoint a committee of three persons to supervise the schools within the borders of individual towns. Plainfield did not comply with this law until 1824 when the first committee was selected. They called themselves "Inspectors of Schools."⁹ By 1827, the legislature required towns to establish "Common Schools" and to lay out districts for each one. As corporate bodies, these districts were now able to buy and sell land, to build schoolhouses, to sue and be sued, to elect officers and committees, and to levy taxes for their support.¹⁰

Such a committee of three persons was authorized to redistrict the town at the Town Meeting on March 10, 1829. In March 1831, they reported their recommendation to establish twelve districts in Plainfield.¹¹ These districts continued to post individual warrants, usually on the schoolhouse door, announcing the agenda for the district meeting. Such articles might request the selection of a moderator, clerk, and Prudential Committee, usually one person, to carry on the district business for the ensuing year and typically "to adopt some method to procure the fuel for the district." While these meetings permitted a certain amount of autonomy within each district, the superintending committee began to assume more oversight of all school districts in town. They complained of "ardorous and onorous" duties, and took their responsibilities seriously. Lengthy reports were submitted to the selectmen which contained both favorable and unfavorable comments on the condition of schools and schooling. The



Meriden School, next to the Congregational Church, about 1886. Miss Julia A. Whitaker is the teacher. Courtesy Wallace Williams.

selectmen listed the taxable property in each district and assessed a special tax rate. The Prudential Committee paid the bills and dispensed the teachers' salaries.

This system continued for fifty years. People within the local districts jealously guarded their independence. Despite the inequalities of wealth and population distribution, and the annexation of part of Grantham in 1856, people were reluctant to relinquish local control. By mid-century, however, the population of the town began to shift from isolated farms to small villages. In 1860, the population of Plainfield was 1,620. According to a school census report of 1857, 287 pupils were registered for the winter term, although some schools boasted only five or six students. Plainfield Village, Willow Brook, and Meriden Hill claimed the largest number of attendees.¹²

The quality and equality of education for all children became an issue. The Plainfield School Report of 1845 notes allotments of money to each of the twelve districts. Four districts received over \$100, three over \$50, and five under \$50. One begins to understand the difficulty of offering equal education to every Plainfield child. Even with the best of intentions, the district school system perpetuated genuine inequality.¹³

Finally, in 1885, the town system was established by the New Hampshire legislature. The whole of Plainfield was incorporated into the Plainfield School District, which remains the basis of governance today. With improved transportation, a more standardized and demanding curriculum, and closer administrative supervision, consolidation was inevitable. At the end of the nineteenth



Spencer District Schoolhouse on Stage Road near Mill Village, 1991. The building is now remodeled into a private home. Photo by Erich Witzel.

century, sixteen school districts existed in Plainfield. One by one, these schools were abandoned. They were allowed to fall into disrepair or used for other purposes. The opening of the Plainfield School in Plainfield Village in 1929, and the Meriden White School in Meriden Village in 1940, marked continued consolidation under the relatively new town system.

At the District School

The appearance and condition of district schools were consistent over the New England landscape. Schoolhouses were “out of repair, unpainted—or painted a cheap red—usually with a privy but neither playground or shade trees. Within, the schoolhouse was likely to be dark, disfigured, decrepit, ill-ventilated, and too hot or too cold due to the vagaries of wide-throated fireplace or relatively efficient stoves. Ink often froze in the inkwells. . . .”¹⁴ The schoolroom was generally divided with boys on one side and girls on the other. Older students were in the back of the room and the younger ones in front.

The struggle to construct new schoolhouses and to maintain the old ones was constant. An 1850 report states, “The schoolhouses in Plainfield, with one exception are all venerable.” The one exception must have been the new one in District

3, along the Connecticut River, which was reported in 1845 as "being the best of any we have seen in New Hampshire." However, another schoolhouse "would need repairing to be well fitted for a Swinehouse. The seats will dance and tremble during recess like the Pines of the forest in the wake of a tornado."¹⁵

Inside these early district schools, teachers were apt to be new and inexperienced graduates of the same one-room schools. They often taught pupils who were close to their own ages. During the twelve-week summer term, when the men worked the land, the teachers were primarily women who did not have the brawn to intimidate the more aggressive students. During the twelve-week winter term, the presence of more male teachers and the rigors of the climate may have redirected some of this excess energy.

Teachers' wages were meager. The first school report printed for distribution in 1847-48 records that: Sarah Freeman in District #1 received \$1.00 per week and Emily Johnson in District #2, an experienced teacher, received \$1.065 per week for ten weeks.¹⁶ William Taylor, with forty-seven months of experience, received \$20 a month with board valued at \$1.50 per week. "There was considerable confusion in Mr. Taylor's school." Small wonder! He juggled eighty-one pupils with an average attendance of fifty-two.

By the 1860s and 1870s, teacher salaries had risen from \$8.00 to \$22.00 per month and in winter school from \$18.00 to \$33.00 a month. By the end of the century, typical salaries had risen to \$5.00-\$7.00 a week, depending on the amount of experience and the resources of the hiring district.¹⁷ With teachers responsible for the physical condition in the schools as well as the moral and academic life of their students, one marvels at the commitment and the stamina of these early pedagogues.

The behavior patterns in modern classrooms pale before some accounts of these early New England schools. The 1845 report on common schools in Plainfield relates that "house and books and other property have been turned upside down and have converted to a perfect Bedlam." Teachers left the premises for a noon meal at nearby boarding facilities and were admonished "to frown on every appearance of evil and [to] watch over our children with the watchfulness of a guardian angel." A quotation from an 1813 broadside in a collection in Stratham, New Hampshire, reads:

What maddening perplexity was it when a herd of half-washed fellows with wild hair, bovine odor, and unpardonable boots, broke every rule, destroyed the indispensable quiet, burned offensive matters upon the stove, expectorated over the floor, sassed the master, delighted in making the tall girls blush, and the small ones cry, and finally precipitated a "row" which made further exercises impossible.¹⁸

Obviously, the range of subjects that were taught in these schools, particularly in the early years, was dependent upon the knowledge of individual teach-

ers and available materials. As one might expect, reading, writing, and arithmetic were the foundation of the curriculum. Before long, geography, penmanship, spelling, with occasional dashes of American history were added. If a teacher's education was sufficiently advanced, algebra, geometry, or other less traditional offerings might become a part of the curriculum.¹⁹ Arithmetic was considered a high priority for boys, less so for girls, who were not expected to manage the finances of farm and family. Rote learning was emphasized. Memorization and recitation, both individually and in unison, were common teaching methods. "The indifference to understanding was typical of the approach to all subjects."²⁰ Not until the 1840s could the school fathers of Plainfield write that: "We think every district in town is now provided with a blackboard which we consider indispensably necessary in the demonstration of various branches."

Beginning in the 1830s and 1840s, towns were no longer left to shift for themselves in the matter of education. They gradually were pressured by the state to follow certain mandates regarding teaching credentials, curriculum, and the organization of the school districts themselves. The reform movement was not greeted with enthusiasm throughout the state. In the countryside, people valued local control and were concerned about meeting the cost of the new requirements. Expectations for higher teacher standards and performance led to the establishment of Teachers' Institutes throughout the state by the 1870s and 1880s. Many Plainfield teachers attended the Sullivan County Teachers' Institute. Others advanced themselves at local academies. Mary Camp relates, in her memoirs, that she taught in Meriden after she enrolled at Kimball Union Academy in 1888. During the next decade, she alternated teaching in the district schools with returning to Kimball Union in order to further her own education. She had an average of fourteen students per term, ranging in age from five to sixteen years. She taught both summer and winter sessions. When necessary, her board was paid in addition to her salary. Her teaching assignments included Center-of-Town, Brook School, Meriden Hill, and Penniman School.

Textbooks were also rewritten and distributed to school districts throughout the state in order to establish a more uniform, broader curriculum. For example, on December 30, 1889, the School Board of Plainfield "adopted *The Modern Spelling Book* as legal textbook for use in the public schools of this town for the term of five years." The cost was nine cents a copy.²¹ By the end of the nineteenth century, the reform movement had largely succeeded in attaining its primary goal of uniformity even in the more isolated towns.

Despite the limitations of the one-room school and the district system, many teachers had extraordinary success with their pupils. Inevitably, too, the interaction of students of different ages and of varying abilities must have added another dimension to the learning process. One historian records that "in New England, 90-95 percent had some degree of literacy and competence with numbers."²² Education had attained a high priority, not only in Plainfield, but throughout New England. The men and women, who governed Plainfield during the first two centuries and who contributed to its rich life, were products of these schools.

1900–1940

At the turn of the century, according to the 1900 Report of the School Board, there were eleven schools operating at Plainfield: Methodist Hill, East Plainfield, Hersey, Meriden, True, Brook, Black Hill, Penniman, Spencer, River, and Plain. Over the years, schools would open depending on the number of students, the availability of teachers, and illness. For example, the River School closed from 1901–1907, reopened in 1908, and was finally closed permanently in 1913. The 1905 decision that “schools where average attendance is less than six should not be kept open” assured that in 1907 and 1909 only seven schools were operating in the town.²³ In 1908, eleven were open.

The teachers were almost entirely women. They were local people and taught an average term of nine weeks in the summer, fall, and winter. The pay depended upon experience and ranged from \$18–30 a week. The number of “scholars” varied from six in the Hersey and True Schools to thirty and thirty-three in the Plain and Meriden Schools.²⁴ In the True District, when the number of pupils was low, especially during the winter term, school was held in the back bedroom of the Fred Rogers home (Philip Brady, 1991). All schools contained grades 1–8, although some years there may not have been any students in some grades.

A teacher could start after graduation from high school, and many did. A girl of seventeen might teach boys only a few years younger and probably taller than she. Many teachers had discipline problems. Eva (Hill) Bernard began to teach at the Black Hill School at age seventeen immediately upon her graduation from Kimball Union Academy. She walked to the Black Hill School from her home in Plainfield Village (about four miles), but in the winter boarded at a house that was closer to the school (about a mile away). Mrs. Bernard anticipated problems with the older boys, but held her ground. She simply made them leave their chewing tobacco outside and, for discipline, “tried to make the punishment fit the crime.”²⁵

Marion (Cutts) Hall graduated from Kimball Union Academy in 1917 and began to teach at the Brook School that fall at the age of seventeen. She drove a car to school whenever she could. Other times, she drove a team.²⁶ Since the schools were close to the children’s homes, almost everyone walked to school. Occasionally students would come by horse or in winter by sled. There were never any “snow days” called because of weather. In fact, snow improved transportation for sleighs, cutters, and sleds.

Sometimes the schools were moved to the students. Lacking a foundation, the buildings were relatively easy to move around town. The Plain School, for example, was moved at least twice before arriving at its present site. Albert “Abe” Read III attended the same school building as his father, but in a different location. It was originally located in front of the Plain Cemetery. The building was moved south to the bottom of the hill and eventually back up the hill and placed in back of the Kingsbury Tavern (Judy Atwater, 1991) where it still stands.



Baseball team, Plainfield School, 1910 or 1912. L-R, front: Andrew Dana, Stephen Plummer, Tracy Spalding, George Williams, Francis David; back: Harold Smith, Everett Williams, Gordon Plummer; doorway: Harold Clark. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

The schools themselves were one-room buildings which lacked lights and plumbing. At the Spencer School on Stage Road, water was drawn from a neighboring brook. At the Plain School, water was brought from a neighbor's house. The jug lasted the school the whole day, and the children drank from either a dipper or their own cups, brought from home and hung on the wall. The plumbing was an outhouse, a "one-holer" or "two-holer," according to the district's population. Heat came from a stove that either the teacher or an older boy started in the morning. Doris Plummer, who taught at the Plain School in 1924, remembers that the stove was "never very hot, but warm enough."²⁷ The children wore long underwear and stockings to supplement the heating system.

The Plain School, like most others, had an entry where the children left their coats and boots. The desks were arranged in rows. The seat of one child's desk was attached to the writing surface of the desk behind him. Children were seated by size: the smallest in front. The day began at 9:00 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance, the singing of "America," and the Lord's Prayer. There were two recesses, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and a lunch break. Hot lunches with cocoa were sometimes provided in the wintertime. The lunch was usually stew or soup heated on the stove.

Like in the nineteenth century, the teachers taught the "three R's" with



School "Victory" gardens, 1914. L-R Sylvia (Waite) Gray, unknown, Ernestine (Hill) Hanks, Ruth (Whitaker) Northrop, Warren Westgate, Benjamin Lewin, Gertrude (Lewin) White, Rachel Daniels, Erwin Williams, Marion Whitaker, Marjory Spalding, unknown. Courtesy Philip Read Memorial Library.

geography and history. The books were provided by the town. The 1902 Town Report states that:

The spelling books which have been used in Plainfield for more than a decade, and now out-of-print, were replaced by new ones. The old histories, some of which were indeed ancient, were replaced by *Montgomery's American Histories*, thoroughly up-to-date works.

Vocal music was introduced in 1908 "as an experiment, with good success."²⁸ Friends of the summer colony furnished a music teacher for the Plain School in 1918. In 1932, "through the effort of Mrs. Marguerite Quimby and some of the interested mothers of the community, the sum of \$175 was raised to maintain music technique in the Plainfield Village School and the Tracy School in Cornish for the ensuing year."²⁹ Such voluntary efforts, coupled with an arrangement with Kimball Union Academy in 1937 for a music teacher, were rewarded with comments like this one in the 1937 School Report: "That music has been improved to a great extent is shown in the songs at Christmas and Memorial Day exercises."

During this period, there was a growing feeling that "fewer schools, but better graded ones, would be an improvement upon our present system."³⁰ The town completed construction of the Plain School (now William Smith's Auction Gallery) in 1929. It contained the "little" room (grades 1-4) and the "big" room (grades 5-8). There was a full basement with two staircases: one for girls, one for boys. A bathroom for each sex was also found next to the furnace. During the year that the school was under construction, some students were sent to the nearby Tracy School in Cornish. Work on its counterpart in Meriden was begun November 1938, financed by a 45 percent grant from the Public Works Administration.

There were now two teachers in each school. Attending to a larger school meant a change in responsibility. A superintendent was appointed to oversee the teachers. He visited frequently. The 1923 Town Report lists 172 visits to schools. Mrs. Bernard enjoyed his visits because the superintendent took over the class, and she "learned more from him than at the Normal School (teacher's college)."³¹ Basil McNamara remembers Superintendent Andrew "Daddy" Averill of Cornish Flat, who visited his class and asked Ronald McNamara, "What does 'e' double 'g' spell?" Ronald had never heard of "double 'g'" and was too paralyzed to speak!³²

The school nurse was also a frequent visitor. Head lice was a consistent concern. Bea Clark says that the nurse did three things: tested your eyes and your hearing, asked what you had for breakfast, and checked your fingernails.³³ Maxine Nelson, teacher at East Plainfield from 1936-40, recalled when the school nurse brought a bottle of cod liver oil. The teacher had to give each pupil a spoonful every day with the student's own spoon. After a few days, when the teacher arrived at school, the entire student body was on the fence outside. The teacher rang the bell with no response. She rang it again, and still no one moved. She finally went out to see why. The student spokesman told her that they were not going back in that schoolhouse if they had to take more cod liver oil. A compromise was reached. The teacher brought a supply of peppermint candies and bribed the students after each spoonful until they finally finished the bottle.³⁴

Recess was important! During the winter, many children had sleds. In Meriden, they would often slide from the Congregational Church past the covered bridge to the Baptist Pool. In the warmer weather, games such as horse-shoes, fox and geese, red rover, and king of the mountain were played. The Plainfield children occasionally threw a ball to each other over the roof of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club Building. The main sport was baseball, usually a competition between the Meriden and Plain Schools.

Because of difficult transportation, field trips were rare. There was an occasional picnic in the Meriden Bird Sanctuary, and some graduating classes took a spring trip. When Marion (Cutts) Hall took her class to Lebanon for the dedication of the new town hall, which replaced the one that burned in 1923, the trip required the permission of the School Board.³⁵

The major events focused upon holidays and were usually held at the town

halls. At Christmas time, Mrs. Hall's school would have a program and party at the school. Parents, children, and neighbors would come and exchange presents. For some families, it was their only Christmas celebration.³⁶ On Memorial Day, after the program, the children marched to the cemeteries to place flags on the veterans' graves.

During the 1930s and 1940s, there were only two paved roads in town, Route 120 and Route 12A. The Stage Road was not paved until after World War II. All roads were graveled to some degree—some better than others. Spring break from school coincided with mud season, but it was not known just when this would take place. When the weather caused the roads to break up, Mud Vacation was declared. The length of the vacation was also unknown. It depended on the depth of frost in the roads. As soon as the roads dried, vacation was over, and school resumed. This plan continued until Plainfield became part of the Supervisory Union and spring vacation had to coincide with the Lebanon schools'. Ruth Rogers drove the Meriden bus and Stella White was the driver of the Plain bus. These vehicles were not the yellow school buses that we think of today, but rather suburban vans.

Graduation was the final special event of the school year. Those students who did go on to high school had a choice of five, depending upon the location of their home in town and whether Kimball Union Academy was co-ed at the time: Kimball Union Academy, Windsor, West Lebanon (presently Seminary Hill School), Lebanon, and Claremont. High school tuition in the '30s was \$125 for Stevens High School in Claremont and \$100 for Windsor.

The era from 1900–40 saw the school budget climb from \$1,950.28 in 1900 to \$15,000 in 1940. Teachers' salaries went from \$20–26 a week to an average \$912 a year. In 1940, only the Meriden Primary and Grammar, the Plain Primary and Grammar, East Plainfield, Brook, and Methodist Hill Schools remained.

Competitive teacher salaries and adequate transportation permitted the goal summarized by Superintendent Averill in 1922:

Our greatest educational need is a competent, well-trained, enthusiastic and energetic teacher in every school room. One who has a compelling influence in instilling in the minds of her pupils high ideals, lofty ambitions, and strong, sturdy character.³⁷

1940–1960

In Meriden, the new school was completed in 1940. Slate blackboards were removed from the old Meriden School and mounted in the Plain School. The Town Report in 1941 listed the debt remaining on the two-year-old school at \$1,566. The same year Superintendent William English apologized for having the bulk of his report deal chiefly with material rather than educational subjects. However, he recognized that "we can do much better work in our

schools when good material and equipment are there.” After the establishment of these two schools, the remnants of nineteenth-century education slowly passed away.

Two of the remaining smaller buildings, the Brook and East Plainfield Schools received the benefit of sanitary toilet facilities in 1942, but the Spencer School was sold.

The shadow of world war was evident even in the superintendent’s report of 1943, when he expressed his gratitude to “teachers and volunteers who have volunteered to help in the matter of rationing.” The Agricultural Marketing Service provided the schools with apples, condensed milk, and other food for a warm dish at lunch. Students carried on the sale of savings stamps and collected scrap metal for junk dealers. In this time of belt-tightening, the budget stayed the same as the previous year.

The following year (1944) brought more rationing, scrap material and waste paper collection, and the sale of stamps and bonds. Again the strain of war was evident. When the superintendent recommended repairs to the Plain School steps and the painting of the Meriden, Methodist Hill, and East Plainfield Schools, he also acknowledged that “all these recommendations are made with the awareness that help to do the work is limited, if available at all.”

In the area of health, a school dental clinic was made possible by Dr. William Stuart of Claremont in 1943. Funds from the Red Cross supported the examination of sixty-five students. A Western Electric audiometer loaned by the state Board of Education was used to check the students’ hearing “scientifically.” The following year, the opening of school was delayed nine days in order to allay the fears of parents when an infantile paralysis epidemic was in nearby communities.

The community supported education in various ways: the Red Cross and other friends contributed for noon lunches; the Blow-Me-Down Grange installed playground equipment at the Plainfield school; the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), formed in 1946, also supplied noon meals.

The annual school budget jumped from \$17,647 in the 1946 Town Report to \$24,146 the following year. The largest portion of this great increase was in teachers’ salaries. Superintendent English explained that salaries were increased to make Plainfield as attractive as its neighbors.

Meanwhile, as the school population grew, some consideration was given to consolidation. The recommendations of a committee formed for this purpose in 1947³⁸ was published in the Town Report two years later. The committee studied three options: (1) additions or alterations to the existing Meriden and Plain Schools; (2) an eight-room centralized Plainfield school in the center of town (Stage Road); and (3) a consolidated school serving both Plainfield and Cornish, located somewhere on 120 between Meriden and Cornish Flat.

The committee found “wastefulness and short-sightedness” in adding to the existing structures, which were wooden buildings already considered obso-

lete and out-of-date by state educational authorities. Instead, the two-town consolidation plan offered the most efficient school unit. However, at that time, Cornish had already reached an advanced planning stage for its own centralized school. The committee then recommended: “. . . that the town of Plainfield should give serious consideration to Plan II, Plainfield central school, though it would be unwise to shut the door entirely on the possibility of a consolidated school for the two towns. We recommend, because of the high cost of building . . . that no extensive building program be adopted for the town at this time.”

Because of increased enrollment, grade 8 in Plainfield attended school in Windsor in 1949. An additional room was outfitted in the Blow-Me-Down Grange in 1950, and, by a vote of 68–63, the town authorized the purchase of a “motor vehicle for the transportation of school pupils” for \$3,800.

In 1952, the town voted to build and equip additions to Plain and Meriden Schools. The next article called for \$40,000 for said additions, but the town voted to raise only \$15,000 for a two-room addition to the Plain School and none for Meriden. In 1953, a request for \$15,000 for a Meriden addition was again passed over. In 1954, the addition for Meriden was again narrowly defeated. The first vote was a tie (67 yes, 67 no) and the second voted it down, 71–62. Finally, in 1955, \$20,000 was appropriated to build an addition to the White School in Meriden. School opened nine days late in 1956 because of construction delays. (The Brown School had been re-opened in 1950 and used until the White School addition was completed.)

The number of high school students jumped in the mid-50s (from fifty-two in 1953 to seventy-five in 1955) and again in 1960–61. In 1961, the town raised \$1,400 to defray the cost of changing from its current system of two grades per room to one grade per classroom and empowered the School Board to revert to the old system if the plan proved impractical or unnecessary. The growth of the school population meant that there never was a need to return to the old system.

Superintendent Hammond Young acknowledged at the end of the 1960 school year that “school district problems are centered around books, supplies, buildings, teachers, transportation, budget, and taxes.” Yet he remained optimistic that:

The long-range problems can be solved by constructive thought and efforts by parents and citizens working with the school board . . . education is acquired through hard work. Parents and grandparents can encourage children to attend school with a *desire* to do well and *study effectively*. Children owe themselves, their community and country the efforts to acquire an education that will make them productive citizens.

1960-1972

The population growth of Plainfield in the 1950s forced the addition of classrooms in both the Meriden and Plainfield Schools. The Brown School in Meriden had been discontinued in the late 1940s. There were now four classrooms in the new schools, to accommodate all of the elementary students in the town. Each school divided its students into combinations of first and second grades, third and fourth grades, fifth and sixth grades, and seventh and eighth grades. High school students continued to attend either Windsor, Lebanon, or Kimball Union Academy.

In 1962, with the hope of uniting the town, the Plainfield Plain School began to house grades one through five with Emma Spalding as the teaching-principal. The Meriden White School accommodated a combination first and second grade, sixth grade, and a departmentalized seventh and eighth grades with Gerry Knight as teaching-principal.

During the period of transition in 1962, Murray Stevens, an active school board member, engineered the original bus route schedule. After a long study of maps and home locations, Murray rode the proposed bus routes with stop watch in hand. A remarkable order evolved from this complicated network. The route has remained essentially unchanged.

The availability of the Kimball Union gymnasium encouraged the development of basketball as a major sport. Orange and black became the school colors, identical to those of Kimball Union, which enabled Plainfield to utilize Kimball Union Academy's old uniforms. A yearbook was started as well as a school paper. A cheer leading squad was organized. Skating in the winter took place on the Kimball Union Academy rink. The big event of the winter term was the Winter Carnival with snow sculptures, tobogganing, and downhill skiing on Potato Patch Hill.

In 1964, Stephen Beaupré replaced Gerald Knight as teaching-principal, and a year later, grades one and two were transferred from Meriden and combined with the existing classes in Plainfield. Steve Beaupré went on to become principal of both schools and of the new school in 1973. After ten years, he resigned to resume full-time teaching in the school.

In the 1960s, new programs were initiated. Denis Reisch activated a physical education program. Mayme Noda instigated a Friday enrichment series in Meriden with speakers, usually from the Dartmouth community. Title I, a federal program, became available on a part-time basis to supplement the reading program. Libraries were begun in both schools, sparked by the hard work of volunteer parents, including Emily Quimby, Alice O'Leary, the J.D. Salingers, Rose Low, Helen Snider, and Donna Beaupré. In 1965, Audrey Logan, a trustee of the Meriden Library, supplemented the school program with one at the Meriden Library. Before long the Philip Read Memorial Library in Plainfield followed suit. These programs continued until the new school library was established in 1973.

In 1968, an agreement was signed with Lebanon under the direction of the New Hampshire Department of Education. Under the contract, all Plainfield students were to attend Lebanon High School, and attendance at Windsor High was gradually discontinued. Since a few students had always attended Kimball Union Academy, an agreement between the town and Kimball Union Academy, based on a tax formula, was devised in 1976, making it possible for more students to attend Kimball Union Academy if they chose.

The growth of Plainfield and the Upper Valley after the construction of the interstate highway system required more room for the growing student body and modern requirements for education. The advantages of a consolidated school, educationally, geographically, and economically, were clear. In 1968, a population study and projection was begun. Architect Stephen Tracy of Cornish volunteered his time for planning. William Merrill, superintendent of Supervisory Union 32 until 1973, also added his considerable support and knowledge. A building committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Stephen Taylor. The architectural firm of Banwell, White, and Arnold was eventually selected. The concept of the school building as a community center was incorporated into the design. The school plan included the town offices as well as a full-sized gymnasium that could double as a meeting place for the community. The plan provided for twelve classrooms, a large library area, and other modern educational facilities.

At the March 1972 School Meeting, the Plainfield School Board, consisting of Sylvia Clark, William McNamara, and William Quimby, presented a bond issue to build a new school. When the first vote was taken, the bond issue lost by seven votes. At that meeting, however, money was appropriated to buy land and to pay the architects. Nelson LaPan then offered to sell the school district forty acres of land on Bonner Road, and the site was purchased for \$25,000. Three months later, on May 13, 1972, the recessed annual school meeting was convened. This time the bond issue was passed by the necessary two-thirds majority. The new, consolidated Plainfield School, located on Bonner Road, opened in the fall of 1973.

1973 to Present

A resident remarked at the 1973 opening of the new Plainfield School in Meriden that it resembled "a cement factory in the middle of a field." The gym was unfinished until Christmas because the plumbers went on strike. The new roof began to leak. Not until 1980 was the roof properly repaired. Due to the oil embargo, the school week was shortened to four days for one year. Despite all these initial difficulties, the new school hummed with excitement.

During the 1974-75 school year, the Meriden Village Water District developed a new water system adjacent to the grounds. During construction of this project, a softball field was excavated in order to provide a pipe right of way. Although an attempt to construct outdoor swimming ponds failed to gain sup-

port at Town Meeting, the playgrounds, soccer field, and extensive landscaping were added to the ample school acreage. Programs for the student body increased: an expanded library program, additional health facilities and health education, girl's basketball, and a musical instrument program. Talk of adding a kindergarten began. Although the vote on the kindergarten was defeated in 1979, it became a reality in 1983.

The school has also fulfilled its role as a community center. The town offices in the building give people more reason to visit the school. Celebration of the national bicentennial year in 1976 also took place on the school grounds. The landscaping around the flagpole was a gift of the Bicentennial Committee.

In that year, the teaching-principal, Stephen Beaupré, became the full-time principal. Title IX became federal law and required co-ed physical education classes as well as equal opportunities for both boys and girls in team sports. Programs for the gifted and talented were set in motion. The federal government provided funds for the Maximum Talent Program and the Artist in Residence Program implemented by Dartmouth College. Plainfield scored first in The Olympics of the Mind in New Hampshire and won third place in the national competition.

In 1978, federal legislation was passed which required the education of the handicapped from ages two to twenty-one. In response, Plainfield hired its first teacher for the learning disabled. The spirit and abilities of the staff and students were high when five Mexican children arrived to offer Plainfield's first experience with non-English speaking students.

Stephen Beaupré chose to retire as principal in 1983 in order to return to full-time teaching. These exciting ten years in the new school are best summarized by his words in the School Report of that year:

Looking back over these past years, I see some major points as important to the positive running of the Plainfield School. The friendly and personal atmosphere that has developed over the years is very evident to people coming into the school. The building is a community building, as planned, with outstanding cooperation between the two bodies of government—school and town. We have developed a fine staff who encourage and work well with each other. The physical facilities of the school have proven advantageous to a number of programs within the curriculum. The playing fields and the nature areas are well-utilized. The learning center has remained a focal point of the school. Classrooms have shown great flexibility over the years.

The transition between the retiring principal and the new principal, Joan Garipay, was a smooth process. The following year a new playground was completed thanks to the hard work of 130 volunteers. The presence of many volunteers as well as the availability of some of Kimball Union Academy's facilities

and academic programs, have all served to enrich the lives of Plainfield students.

In the mid-1980s, computers arrived on the scene with enthusiastic learners and users eagerly awaiting the opportunity to acquire this new skill. A guidance counselor was added to assist with many of the problems that arise in our complicated society.

In 1985-86, a population study committee reported that "more space was needed to house the number of students we expect in the next five years and to allow us to maintain current programs." After two defeats of a bond issue, a new addition to the school was approved at the March 1989 School Meeting by a 79-percent vote. The addition provided space for six more classrooms. At the same time, the Plainfield School Board was increased from three to five members.

It took a century to change the character of Plainfield schools from scattered one-room buildings, tucked into the rural countryside, to one consolidated school. The curriculum now offers opportunities unheard of at the turn of the century. The essential nature of Plainfield's commitment to its children, however, remains unchanged. The expectations for the next century are rooted in those values that Plainfield has always cherished.

Kindergarten

While Plainfield has had several private nursery schools and day care providers in the years following World War II, it had no kindergarten until 1971 when the Plainfield Cooperative Preschool was organized. The founding directors were Emily Quimby, Sylvia Clark, Gretchen Taylor, Donna Beaupré, and Betty Burgess.

The Meriden Congregational Church donated use of space in the Duncan Parish House. The school opened with an initial enrollment of about twenty five-year-olds from Plainfield and Cornish. Tuition was charged for each student; kindergarten children attended each morning and nursery school children twice a week. Parents who served as volunteer aides and cleaned the classroom were charged a lower tuition. The Plainfield Cooperative Preschool provided kindergarten services for fourteen years until the town voted to provide a full-time kindergarten at the Plainfield School.

School Remembrances

• *Winifred (Hall) Barton Brooks*

Winnie's first teaching job after graduation from Keene Normal School was in Meriden. Her sister Bertha taught in Plainfield. Winnie came here in 1930 and taught for two years in the Brown School situated just west of the town hall in Meriden. She had room and board across the street from the school with Edith Whitney. The school was a two-story wooden structure with two rooms up and two down. The town library was also in the building. There was no

plumbing, so drinking water was carried from the Whitney house. The toilet facilities consisted of a two-holer in the wooden shed attached to the building. It could be pretty cold out there. The classroom was heated by a wood stove. Winnie was in charge of keeping the fires going and most of the other general duties. She was assisted by the older boys.

Winnie taught the four upper grades with an average of thirty pupils. There was no busing so the students had to find their own transportation. The students also had to bring their own lunches. Winnie was often embarrassed to eat the good lunch provided by Edith Whitney when the pupils had so little.

Competition was keen in the classroom and playground. Schools competed in baseball, horseshoes, one-act plays, notebooks, and compositions, which were judged by the townspeople.

The teacher was also responsible for all extracurricular activities: field trips, games, and the like. Money was raised from admissions to their plays, and parties funded an eighth-grade class trip to Boston for one week each year. Townspeople helped to make it possible. Their pictures and story were in the *Boston Post*.

For all this, Winnie received \$900 a year.

The Hall sisters worked hard to develop friendships between the two villages through the children. The sisters liked Meriden so much that they returned to marry Meriden men. Bertha married Charles S. Sullivan and Winifred married Elbert S. Barton.

• *Helen (Streeter) Chapman: Memories of Methodist Hill, 1930-1932*

I graduated from Keene Normal School (now Keene State College) in June 1930 after taking the two-year course required to teach grades 1-8. Teacher vacancies were very scarce at that time because of the Depression. We were advised at Keene to take any school offered to us. By August, I had no teaching position and was discouraged. One day the telephone rang, and it was President Mason of Keene Normal School, dearly loved by us all and more often called "Daddy" Mason. He inquired if I had a position. When I answered, "No," he replied, "Well, you have one now at the Methodist Hill School, and you will be hearing from Mr. Averill soon," which I did. I still have the teacher's contract signed by Andrew P. Averill, superintendent, dated August 8, 1930, and the chairman of the School Board, Blancha L. Daniels. I agreed to teach the Methodist Hill School for thirty-six weeks beginning the second day of September 1930 for a salary of \$800 payable by monthly installments. If I remember correctly, I received \$36 extra per year for being janitor.

At that time, there were four families who had children to send to school. I think there were two or three other houses in the area. Mr. Averill and I drove up to visit the school and to find me a boarding place. There was only one home that he felt was suitable for the "teacher." I joined the Charles Langley family which had seven children ranging in ages from about twenty to four years old. The three older children worked out when they could find employment.

For awhile there were twelve of us. A man and his daughter (too old for our school) also boarded there. As I look back now, I wonder how Mrs. Langley managed with the income they received from the farm as I only paid \$5 per week for my board and room. I never was hungry or cold, and I went home to Charlestown nearly every weekend.

The schoolhouse was about one and one-half miles from East Plainfield. During the winter months, I would walk or snowshoe down to the main road to meet someone who would bring me home. Then Sunday night we would walk up the hill. The road was plowed, but not good enough for a car because of one bad hill. After the snow went, we had mud and that made it an impossibility sometimes.

The schoolhouse was not very large. As you opened the door, you stepped into a small entry. Right in front of you was the wood all ready for the winter, nicely piled. You then turned to the right and opened a door into the schoolroom, and as you did, the children were facing you. There were two windows on each of three sides. On two sides was a blackboard between the windows. Down front was the stove, teacher's desk, and a door that opened into a small supply closet which we went through to the toilet rooms (which were not steam-heated). The children hung their coats, etc. behind the stove. Once in awhile, the fire gave out a little too much heat, and the clothes had to be moved. The older pupils' desks were made differently than I have ever seen. Each child had a separate chair of his own fastened to the floor, but two children used one desk top. There was a division inside of the desks to keep their possessions separate. The desk was fastened to the floor.

Of course, we had no running water or electricity. During the short daylight in the winter months, we closed one-half hour early, so those who walked quite a ways could get home before dark. For our drinking water, the children went to the Langley home to get a pail of water which was poured into a large crock jar. Each child had his own drinking glass which he brought from home each Monday morning, and each Friday night, he took the glass home to have it washed. A ladle was used to get the water from the crock which was on a shelf below the glasses.

The Langleys lived near the schoolhouse, so in the winter months, I would go down to the schoolhouse before I ate my breakfast to make a path and to start the fire (hoping it would burn) and then return to the house for breakfast.

We had a Halloween party, Thanksgiving program, Christmas party with a Santa Claus, Valentine party, and a Memorial Day program. At the end of the year, we took a little walk away from the schoolhouse to have our picnic. We had graduation exercises for Elmyra Merrihew as near like a regular graduation as we could. I think Mr. Averill gave a short address and presented the diploma to her. Our parties were all held at night and we used kerosene lanterns, candles, etc., for the lights. All the parents and children (big and little) came.

The late Mrs. Robert Hassam from Claremont was our school nurse. We all enjoyed her visits very much, and I especially so. I can remember the first

day she visited the school and how surprised and happy I was to see her. First, because I did not know she was the school nurse and secondly, a few years before, she was the state child nurse (or whatever her title was) and had been to my home several times because I had two younger brothers.

The children and their parents who lived on Methodist Hill had very little contact with the outside world. Consequently, the "teacher" was very important to them. Any little extra kindness to them was so appreciated. When we had our parties, everyone came and entered into the spirit.

I often wonder if the people who live in the villages truly realize what a real blizzard is. I can remember vividly one winter day. It was snowing some when school began, but it did not act like a bad storm. As the day went on, it began to snow harder, and the wind began to blow. I sent the Woodward children home early because they had so far to walk. In fact, by noon, it was so terrible that I knew the best thing to do was to close school and to get the children home. The wind was so strong that unless you have been out in such a storm, you have no idea what it is. I was afraid the children would never make it home alone so we took hold of hands. I was on one end and the tallest and oldest girl on the other end. We "delivered" Frances and Elmyra Merrihew home first. They lived the nearest. Then the rest of us delivered Barbara and Kathern Merrihew who lived farther up a hill. By that time, the Langley children remained. We made it home and was I ever thankful.

I recall another incident which shows the dependability of "my" children. One weekend I had come home and found my mother very ill with a "flu" bug. When it was time for me to leave Sunday night, I decided to wait until morning to see how she was. I had my own car then. During the night, it snowed. By morning there was a good amount on the ground. My mother was feeling much better, so I felt I could leave the rest of the family to care for her. As long ago as that, our roads were not plowed as they are now. I had quite a trip, including a flat tire, but finally arrived to the school at least an hour late. Much to my delight, the school was in session. The older girls were working with the first and second graders, and the others were very busy doing their assigned lessons. I really do not know who was the happiest: the teacher to see what the children were doing by themselves or the children to see me because they were worried.

One more incident comes to my mind. During the muddy season one Friday afternoon, I prepared to walk down the hill to my car where I had left it Sunday night on account of the mud. Mr. Crate came with his team of horses hitched to a dump cart and offered me a ride down the hill, which I gratefully accepted. We had many laughs over the "teacher" riding in the dump cart.

One more interesting fact: when I taught for the town of Plainfield, I boarded in the town of Enfield, and my mail went to Lebanon. There was no mail delivery to the people on the Hill.

I returned in the fall of 1931 for my second year. According to the contract which I signed on May 16, 1931, I promised to teach for thirty-six school weeks beginning August 31, 1931, for \$800 plus the \$36 for being jan-

itor. It was signed by Andrew P. Averill, superintendent, and John F. McNamara as chairman of the School Board.

When school opened, I greeted three new pupils, Shirley Woodward (grade 1), Donald Crate (grade 2), and Margaret Crate (grade 5). The Crate family had come from Lebanon to a farm not far from the schoolhouse. Donald Crate and his family now live in Enfield, and Margaret Crate is Mrs. Raymond Ashey and lives in Lebanon.

My second year, like the first one, was a happy one. When it was time for the closing of the school year, I knew that I was not returning. The children did not know my plans, but I wanted to do something special for them. I decided that we would all go to Lake Mascoma for the day (parents included) and have our picnic there. (It is hard for the children of today to comprehend what a treat that was.) A friend of mine gave me the use of a truck and a driver for the day. One mother decided to go and rode with the driver. The rest of us sat on the floor in the back, which had high sideboards. It was a chilly, June day, threatening of rain, but we started out. I was one disappointed and heartbroken teacher to have such weather. When we got to Lebanon, the driver stopped the truck and told me that he and his wife owned a cottage at Goose Pond, and we would be welcomed to go there if we would like. I did not waste any time accepting his kind offer. We all had a wonderful time. I will never forget the children going outdoors to play, and every few minutes some of them returning to see if I was still there. It was a great experience and a happy day for us all.

That year we had two graduates: Berna Langley and Barbara Merrihew. It was at the close of the graduation exercise when I told them I would not be back in September. It was not an easy thing to do, and I am afraid that I shed a tear or two. I left because a position with the four upper grades at the Farwell School in North Charlestown was offered to me. I felt it was an advancement, and I would be nearer my family.

Of course, most of the parents are gone now. Mr. and Mrs. Langley moved to West Lebanon, but they have both passed away. Mr. and Mrs. Crate remained there until he passed away, and then she moved to Lebanon. She has left us now. I am sorry to say I lost contact with the Merrihews and Woodwards. The only one living on the Hill now who was there when I was is Mr. and Mrs. Alexander "Boy" Crate, Sr. He was a young man when I was on the Hill. I am happy to keep in touch with some of the Langley children and most of the Crates, even if it was forty-five years ago that I went upon the Hill as a young school teacher.

• *My memories of Andrew P. Averill, superintendent*

Mr. Andrew Averill, my superintendent while I was at Methodist Hill, was a very wonderful person. He was a friend to the children and to me. I recall that first October when the State Teachers' Convention was held. I wanted to do what was expected of me, so I asked Mr. Averill if I was to attend. He replied, "The convention lasts two days. You have no car of your own, and it will be



Black Hill Schoolhouse, Plainfield, about 1890. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

expensive for you. Truthfully, the only thing you will learn will be who is wearing a new hat and who has a new boyfriend.” Consequently, I did not go. Later on, after I had attended the conventions, I sometimes felt he was right.

We did have what were called Rural Institutes attended by teachers of the two-room schools. They lasted a day and were very helpful. I was at one of these Institute meetings in Cornish Flat when word came that Mr. Averill had passed away (1933). He lived in Cornish Flat until he retired and had moved away. There were several teachers who had taught under him at that meeting. It saddened the gathering, but I have always thought how nice it was that so many of us had the happy chance to be one of “his teachers” and to be together when we received the word.

I will never forget the two happy years I spent teaching at Methodist Hill and the many friends I made while I was there. Maybe I am “old fashioned,” but I feel that teachers today in large schools with so many modern conveniences cannot know the real enjoyment of teaching. I am so glad that I did.

• *Stanley Colby*

Yes, indeed, there was a school on Black Hill. My brother, sister, and I went there, all the brothers and sisters of my father, and as far as I know, my grand-



Interior of the Black Hill Schoolhouse, Plainfield, about 1890. Courtesy Doris Plummer.

father, Carlos Colby. It was a one-room affair with an entry-way where the water bucket sat on the shelf along with a tin dipper used by everyone until somebody got the idea it was an unsanitary arrangement. Then, the superintendent brought in an earthen crock (glazed) with a push button on the bottom. The water, except for brief periods, came out of the brook. When Clarence King's cattle walked through it, in the pasture above (and did what cattle frequently do), we brought the water from King's house.

Another door to the school opened from the outside into the wood shed. The entrance was opposite the back of the teacher's desk. It was equipped with a chopping block for kindling and an old axe. I was introduced to its mysteries on several occasions.

The heating system was composed of a box stove near the front of the room: the colder the day, the nearer we sat. I recall that one day Pauline Guillott backed up to it to warm her posteria and came away with the word "Elmwood" imprinted on her woolen bloomers.

The seats were designed to accommodate two students each and one inkwell. About the inkwell, in cold weather, they were emptied each night. The contents were poured into a bottle that was taken home by the teacher to keep it from freezing and bursting.

The only light in the school came through the windows. If any night functions were held, each family brought a kerosene lamp. They were set on the window sills and the teacher's desk.

The building sat on rocks and the dark recesses under it were occupied by skunks. Once in a while, woodchucks and dogs took refuge there while waiting for the children to be let out from classes.

The toilet facility was a "Chic Sale" affair attached to the building out back. No one had to be told how to find it.

Andrew P. Averill of Cornish Flat was the superintendent. He was a ponderous man who wore a vest with a watch and chain draped across it. He sported a huge "cookoo duster" on his upper lip. We all sat very straight and quiet in our seats when we heard his Model T chug to a stop in the door yard. Once, I recall, he sat down on a front seat to watch a blackboard recitation. No sooner had he made contact than the castings gave way, and he crashed to the floor. We thought sure the beavers were going to descend on us because it seemed obvious that he felt we had arranged it, which was untrue.

My graduation from grammar school was without fanfare. Superintendent Averill showed up one day in June and asked the teacher who was going to graduate. She pointed me out. She got up from her desk so he could sit down there to write. I was ordered to rise. After looking over his glasses, he swelled out his chest and delivered a five-minute dissertation on the problems of the world which I was about to face. He then invited me to come forward and delivered the certificate to me appropriately signed by both he and the teacher. It was approximately thirty inches by thirty without ribbons.

I remember three teachers. Gladys Hunt of Windsor who later married Supreme Court Judge John Leahy; a Miss Camp (I can not recall her first name; she was a sister of Maurice Camp, Meriden); and Marjorie Williams, sister of Wallace Williams of Meriden. She was the only one that ever threatened to whip me.

I have no pictures of the old school. It now is a rotting pile of rocks and rubble and was closed when my brother Byron was in the eighth, or perhaps it was the seventh grade. He ended up driving a little hard-bitted Morgan mare to Plainfield every day. The horse was a "good roader," and Byron could be heard quite away as the "iron tired" two-wheel road cart came clattering down through Puckershire.

I used to pick up a little spare money by trapping skunks. I had several traps to tend each morning on the way to school. I never figured out how the teachers knew I had pelted another skunk. I never made it through the schoolhouse door. In fact, I was ordered home in no uncertain terms and told not to report back until I "got cleaned up."

I graduated from Black Hill in 1926. My sister Bertha was allowed to skip the eighth grade and to go to Kimball Union Academy with me in the fall. My dad must have graduated in 1901 or 1902 since he was the class of 1905 at Kimball Union Academy.

• *Marion (Cutts) Hall*

Mrs. Hall was associated with three of the one-room schoolhouses in Plainfield. As a young girl, she lived in the Millar residence on Colby Hill Road and attended the Whitaker School just up the road. There was not a large student body. She remembers that Harriet (Rogers) Williams was one of her teachers, and that she boarded with them. Her remembrance of another teacher, Lilla Tuttle, was unhappy. There was no discipline in the classroom.

Mrs. Hall left this school to take her eighth grade at Kimball Union Academy in their pre-prep class. She graduated from Kimball Union in 1917 and took her first teaching job at the Brook School at the age of seventeen. Two of the boys in the school were sixteen years old, but she did not have discipline problems.

The school was a one-room wooden structure with an outhouse set apart. Drinking water was brought from Dan Westgate's house by the older boys. The teacher had to get to school early in the morning to start the fires. The boys helped with the janitor work. Mrs. Hall drove a car to school whenever possible. Other times, she drove a team. Vacations were planned around mud season because of the road conditions. The town provided hot lunches in the winter time, mostly soups which the teacher prepared. They were needed because many of the students only brought bread and butter sandwiches.

Gladys Cantlin was the school nurse. Mrs. Hall taught here for four years. About fourteen pupils were the maximum enrollment. Occasionally, there were only one or two in a grade, and sometimes there were none.

At Christmas time, they would have a program and party at the school at 8:00 p.m. Parents, children and neighbors would come. They exchanged presents. Mrs. Hall then taught at the Hough School in Lebanon for awhile. When her children were grown, Mr. English persuaded her to teach in the East Plainfield School. It was quite a trip from the Hall Farm on the Brook Road to East Plainfield.

The school was very near the road, and the students had very little area for a playground. There were ten to fifteen students. As she recalls, not too many went on to high school, but rather went to work.

Mrs. Hall was very proud of one event. Four boys found a packet containing \$150 on their way to school, and they turned it in to the teacher. The owner of the money was able to describe the packet and denominations of the bills, so they returned it to him.

• *Clifton and Doris (Barker) Porter*

Clifton was born and grew up in North Plainfield. The school for this area was called the Brook School. He remembers visiting the school many times before he was old enough to attend. This was a common practice. Doris mentioned that she did the same thing at the East Plainfield School.

The schoolhouse on the Brook Road was used for many gatherings. There was a great community spirit in this area. Mrs. Porter (Clifton's mother)

started a 4-H Club that met there. In the 1900s, Clifton's grandmother held Sunday School in the schoolhouse. George Junkins, minister at the Meriden Baptist Church, would come down and hold Sunday afternoon services. There were ice cream sociables and always a big Christmas party. Mr. Porter brought the wood for these occasions because he thought that the town should not pay for wood used outside school events. Electricity did not come to North Plainfield until 1941, so the school was lighted by bracket lamps on the walls.

Clifton started school in 1928. His first grade teacher was Irene Hunt. He was only in school a short time. He became ill and did not return that year at all. His mother had been a teacher, and she taught him so well at home that they wanted to put him in the third grade when he returned to school the next fall. Mrs. Porter would not allow it.

The teacher taught all eight grades in the one-room schoolhouse. The average student body was twelve students. The teachers boarded at the Williams place (Jessie English, 1991). Clifton's teachers were Minnie Smith in second grade and a Mrs. Crane the next year. Evelyn Barton taught Clifton in the fifth grade. Lilla Tuttle was the sixth-grade teacher, and Clifton had Cassie Sweet in the seventh and eighth grades. He said she was a fine teacher and did many extra things for the students.

Clifton Porter's father sold the wood to all the schools in the north end of Plainfield. The older boys helped with the chores around the school, but Dan Westgate was the regular janitor.

The students were very proud of a nature walk and garden behind the school called Paradise Park.

Herbert Ward always gave each child an orange at Christmas time. He felt they should have fresh fruit at least once.

One of the special events at school was the Memorial Day ceremony. They had speeches, took flags to the little cemetery on Ladieu Road, and put a wreath in the brook in remembrance of the sailors lost at sea.

There was a two-week vacation during the school year. Other days were declared by Harriet Williams when the weather was bad. She would call the nine families in the area.

Clifton entered Kimball Union Academy in 1936 and was well-prepared for the courses offered.

Doris attended the East Plainfield School in 1929. Her teacher for the first six grades was Hazel Dodge. She had Maxine (Weston) Nelson for the seventh and eighth grades. She added a bit to the cod liver oil story told by Maxine. One of the boys in school ate all the peppermint candy, and the students still had to finish up the cod liver oil without the candy chaser.

Doris thinks that East Plainfield was electrified in 1936 or '37. The school got its drinking water from the Blairs, a family who lived nearby.

Doris was the janitor for the school when she was in the seventh and eighth grades. She had to get to school early to light the fires and to tidy up.



Brown School and the Meriden Town Hall, about 1920. The shingled building served as a cabinet shop for Daniel Morrill during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It was later used as a store by Moulton and Roberts. About 1910, the structure was purchased and remodelled as the village school and library by John D. Bryant. The Meriden Town Hall, at the right, was constructed in 1895 after fire destroyed the old church and meeting hall on the hill. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

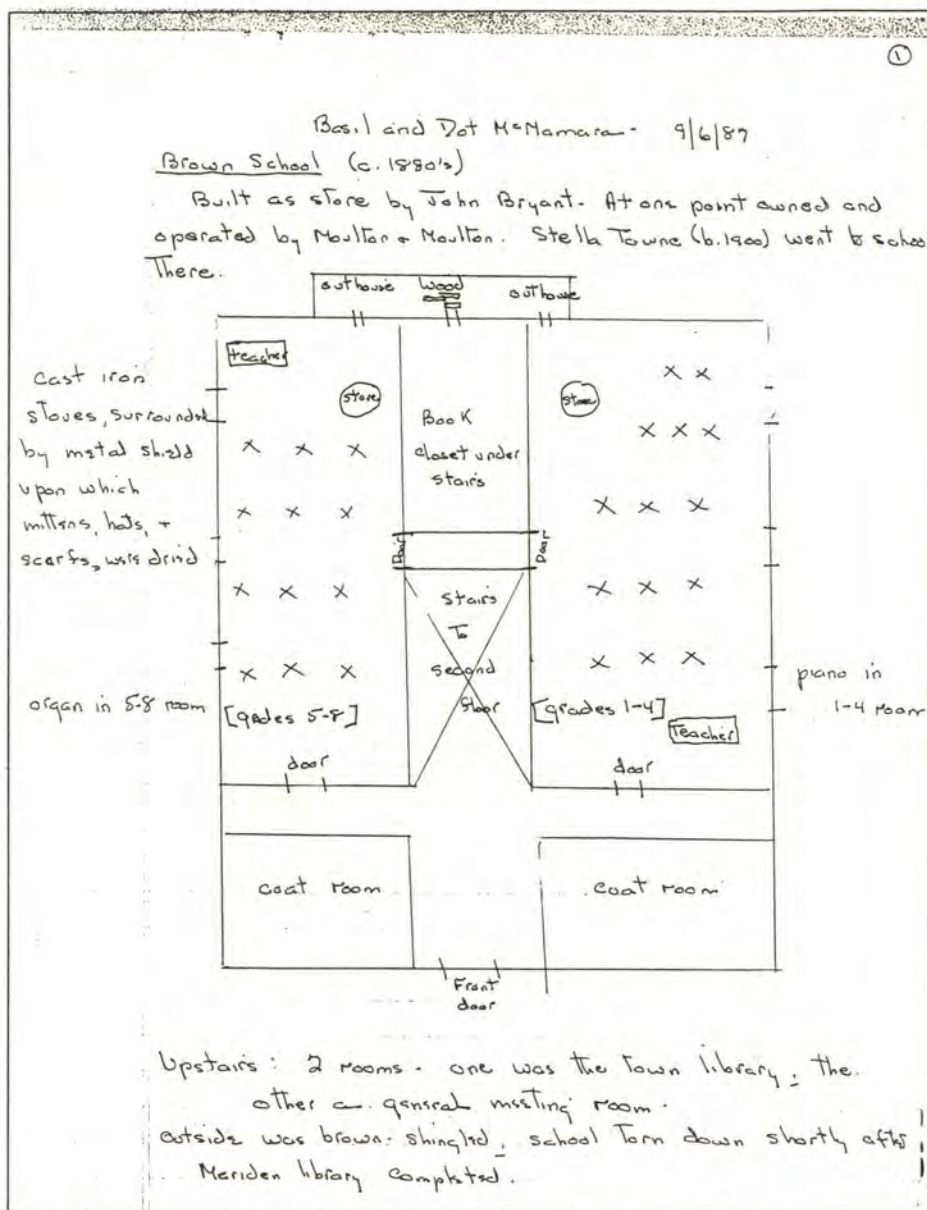
• *Philip Porter*

Philip Porter, son of Bertha and Wayland Porter, came to Meriden in 1935 when his father began to teach physics at Kimball Union Academy. He entered the second grade in the Brown School. It was heated by a wood stove. Two outhouses were in the rear of the building. In the winter time, he would take his sled down Duncan Hill to school. He remembers that a bob sled would go all the way to the Baptist Pool on the Brook Road.

His first teacher was a Mrs. Thornton. He remembers that she pinched for little reason and that she had a wart on her forehead. Buzz Jones agreed with him. He had Mrs. Dodge in the third and fourth grades. Her classroom was on the east side of the building.

His fifth grade teacher was Miss Lois Ware. She lived at Edith Whitney's house across the road. His sixth, seventh and eighth grades were in the new White School across from Route 120 in Meriden Village. His teacher was Bunny Berry. Phil was a patrol boy at the crossroads and received a citation from the governor.

The school had a baseball team. Phil was the captain because his father had a station wagon.



Sketch of the interior first-floor plan of the Brown School after 1910 by Dorothy and Basil McNamara, 1991.

There were three pupils in the graduating class in 1942: Philip Porter, Lena Chapman, and Naomi Harlow. The class gave their teacher a graduation gift, a marble-based pen and pencil set. Phil was selected to give the presentation speech. He said, "Miss Berry entered the stage from one side and I from the other. I held out the gift and said, 'here.'"

• *Barbara (Dannel) Stone Leonard Rogers Talbert*

My earliest recollection of Plainfield schools is when I was about four years old. My mother, Mildred (Whitaker) Dannel, was teaching school in the Hersey District Schoolhouse located past the Quimby home on Gleason Road in Meriden (1991). It was a great treat for me to spend a day in school with her. She would pack our lunch, and we would drive to the school in a horse and buggy.

At the ripe old age of five years, in 1921, I entered the first grade in the Penniman School located on Penniman Road near the intersection of Whitaker Road. My mother was teaching there in another one-room school with toilets outdoors and in the rear. The drinking water was kept in a big earthen crock with a tin dipper. There were about fifteen students or so, ranging in grades one through eight. My mother obtained permission for me to start school early from Mr. Averill. It was understood that he would give me a special test at the end of the year. If I passed, I could go into second grade. I did pass, but the next year attended the second grade in Claremont. My mother taught in Claremont and then North Charlestown. When she remarried, we moved to Somerville, Massachusetts. The fondest memory of my first grade is sliding down Penniman hill in the winter over "bumps" and having a nosebleed or two.

I returned to Meriden as a sophomore at Kimball Union Academy where I graduated from in 1933. I was married to Roland Stone in 1935. Before long, my own children were starting school. Patricia started in 1942 at the White School in Meriden. At the time, the transportation of children was reserved for children two miles or more from the school. The bus routes were put to bid for people who would transport the children in their own vehicles.

Improvements in education were needed in town. There were still one-room schools with a single teacher for eight grades. There were two larger schools in Meriden and Plainfield, each with two rooms. These lacked the advantages that children enjoyed in the larger towns around the state. At the school meeting in 1948, it was voted to authorize the moderator to appoint a committee, called the "Consolidated School Committee," to investigate the possibilities of forming a consolidated school district with Cornish, a central school in Plainfield, or adding onto the present two schools. I served as secretary for the committee. We were given \$200 for the project. We kept our expenses to a minimum and secured the services of William Platt to draw up plans and sketches free of charge. Platt was a well known architect and a native of Cornish. The plans were presented to the town after a great deal of study, and the committee recommended a centrally located consolidated school for the towns of Cornish and Plainfield. The article did not pass, and many shortcomings remained.

In the early fifties, I was elected to the School Board. I served for six years and enjoyed it very much. During that time, several of the small schools were closed, and the property sold. The town eventually voted to add on two rooms to the existing larger school buildings on each end of town and to transport the children to them.

Meriden Grammar School Class Song—1932

(Probably written by Eva Chapman and Mrs. Elmer Wheeler. Tune is "Maryland, My Maryland.")

1. Our work is done at MGS
Now the parting hour draws near.
So let us smile in our farewells
Just to check you classmates dear.
Remember tho' we severed be,
And these loved scenes we cannot see,
Fond memories of you will stay
With us ever day by day.
2. The many lessons we have learned
Sheltered in our schoolday home,
I'm sure will help us on our way
When to distant scenes we roam.
We know just what we want to do
Now that from graded school we're thro
Let's not forget whereere we dwell
What we do to do it well.
3. Then let us ever onward go
Striving hard our goal to win.
Nor our hearts are brave within.
We know to win the heights sublime
That we must ever onward climb
And keep our class motto in view
"Deeds not Words" that are so true.
4. To teacher kind and friends and all,
We extend our thanks tonight,
For all the kindly words and deeds
That have made our pathway bright.
And when our schooldays all are past
And we have reached our goal at last
Of this dear school upon the hill
May we say we love it still.

Kimball Union Academy

Rita Cherington
Polly Davie
Katharine Feichtinger
Jane C. Fielder
Paul Sheff

In 1811, John Foord, a young man from Vermont, was studying in a tuition-free theological seminary in Scotland. He wrote a letter back to his congregation urging them to start a similar school in the Piermont, New Hampshire, area. He felt that there was a need for a seminary that could help poor, young men. A meeting was held in Piermont, but no consensus on a school was reached. Another meeting was held in Windsor, Vermont, on October 21, 1812, to establish a seminary for the education of poor and pious young men for the Gospel Ministry.

The Board of Trustees was appointed, and the charter was drawn up. No less than six nor more than nine of these men could be ministers. The trustees had their first meeting on November 4, 1812, and Union Academy was formed. When Daniel Kimball agreed to donate \$6,000 and the balance of his wealth at his death, the trustees agreed to his condition that the Academy be situated in Meriden where he lived. The school was named Kimball Union Academy after its benefactor. On June 16, 1813, John Taylor Gilman, the governor of New Hampshire, signed the charter for Kimball Union Academy.

The first Academy building was dedicated on January 9, 1815. It stood across Chellis Road from the northeast corner of the green. The following day, seven students attended their first class under the direction of Otis Hutchins, Kimball Union's first headmaster. His tenure was short as was his successor's, John Parkhurst. At first, the Academy struggled. During the first seven years, the school held few regular sessions of classes. It floundered under the brief leadership of the two headmasters and was unable to graduate many students.

Hope arrived with Kimball Union's third headmaster, Israel Newell, a graduate of Andover Theology Seminary and the husband of Esther M. Whittlesey of Cornish. One Academy building burned, but he was able to rebuild the structure within one year and improve the reputation of the school.

If Newell is credited with putting the Academy on firm footing, then his



The first Kimball Union Academy building, constructed about 1815, Meriden, before 1839. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

successor Cyrus S. Richards, an alumnus of Kimball Union, should be credited with bringing the Academy to prominence. Richards' term of office began in 1835, the very day after he was graduated from Dartmouth College. He stayed for thirty-six years. Like his predecessor Newell, Richards was met with an immediate challenge. Hannah (Chase) Kimball, who had been raised in Cornish and was the widow of Daniel Kimball, decided through her will to "appropriate a portion of the little property I possess towards the establishment of a school in this place for the benefit of females exclusively." Mrs. Kimball's female seminary threatened the financial base of the existing school. She would bequeath \$1,250 if her neighbors would meet this challenge. The female seminary would have the advantage of a beginning endowment of \$2,500. By January 5, 1837, Hannah had found a place for her academy. She was prepared to buy Samuel B. Duncan's land only one-quarter of a mile from Kimball Union. However, the Academy had unofficially welcomed women as early as its opening day of classes. Mrs. Kimball came to believe that the addition of a female department was more desirable than administering a separate school. The trustees accepted her gift. In 1840, a new wing was added to the existing Academy building, and a female department, with Miss Martha Green as its first preceptress, was opened.

For the next thirty-six years, Kimball Union prospered. The Academy grew from a school of 100 boys when Richards arrived to a coeducational institution



The Meriden green with the Bryant Block, the Congregational Church/Town Hall, and school, 1890–1894. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.

of sometimes 300 pupils. At first, students from outside Meriden boarded with local families or lived in the Meriden House, the inn, located at the top of the hill. Eventually the Bryant Block and Rowe Hall were acquired. The students came from great distances and diverse backgrounds: as far away as Tennessee and Scotland, although most were from New England. Because there was no central dining room on campus, the students formed eating clubs, which varied in expense. Some students ate at the Meriden House. The more frugal, working their way through school, provided for themselves with less ample fare. During Richards' tenure, discipline was strict, and education was classical. The sexes were strictly segregated. Under his leadership, the school grew. In 1871, Richards left the Academy for a professorship at Howard University to pursue his keen interest in the welfare of recently emancipated black people.

The number of students had steadily increased from the 1830s through the 1860s. But in the 1870s, school enrollment fell to an average of 175 students due to the development of public school systems. As New England established public high schools, fewer students chose to attend the Academy. At this time, there was talk of moving the school closer to the railroad. During these difficult years, endowment money was used, and tuition was raised. The Academy rooms cost between \$6 and \$8 and the tuition was \$10 per term.

By the 1890s, the survival of the school was in doubt. Cummings, like his



Baxter Hall, Kimball Union Academy, May 30, 1886. Courtesy Wallace Williams.

predecessor, Israel Newell, had to contend with a calamity and save the Academy: The school building was hit by lightning and burned to the ground in 1891. The tenth headmaster, William H. Cummings, opened in 1892 the third Academy building, Baxter Hall, which still stands today. Tuition rose and exceeded \$200. It surpassed what many families could pay. The school might not have survived, but a former teacher, Myra L. Everest, devised a plan that boosted enrollment. After teaching at the Academy in 1880 and 1881, she went to work in a New York business house. She was struck by the contrast between the grim experiences of factory workers and the healthy atmosphere enjoyed by Kimball Union students. She proposed to the trustees that they institute the \$100 plan. Under this annual plan, a student paid \$100 for board, room, fuel, lights, and full tuition rights. The student was then required to work "cheerfully" one hour every day in addition to the \$100 paid.

After three intervening headmasters, Charles Alden Tracy, who was born and raised in Cornish, and graduated as valedictorian from Kimball Union Academy, took over as headmaster in 1905. Under his leadership, the Academy once again assumed a new spirit. He turned his attention to the physical plant. Under his tenure, Bryant Hall was constructed, the Silver Gymnasium and Barnes Library were built, and the playing fields were created. Furthermore, he introduced a domestic arts program for the girls and an agricultural program for the boys



Clarence Bean with the first bull owned by the Kimball Union Academy farm, Meriden. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

which he based at the Hall Farm, across from the Baptist Church. The produce both educated and fed the Kimball Union community.

It was also under Tracy's leadership that the school celebrated its 100th anniversary. Kimball Union hired a writer from New York and called on prominent artists, writers, and sculptors from the Cornish Art Colony. The resulting outdoor pageant was an historical re-enactment. A grandstand that accommodated 2,000 people was built into the hillside of the "pageant hill" just off Flat Iron Road.

In 1935, two major changes occurred at the Academy. The first was the demise of coeducation due to societal and financial pressures. Support for coeducational institutions dwindled after World War II. In 1935, the Board of Trustees voted to make the Academy an all-male college preparatory school.

Secondly, two new leaders developed the school. William Brewster, the headmaster of Newton Country Day School, came to Kimball Union in 1935. Frederick Carver, a graduate of Dartmouth and the assistant principal of Lebanon High School, arrived as a teacher in 1936. Together, they provided uninterrupted leadership for thirty-four years.

The specter of World War II dominated the early part of Brewster's tenure. Many of the boys went off to war, and the Academy made room for V-12 cadets, who trained on campus. After the war, still under the leadership of Brewster,

enrollment increased considerably, and Kimball Union became as strong as it had ever been.

In 1952, Carver replaced Brewster. He initiated several building projects: Densmore Dormitory, Miller Student Center, the Duncan Hockey Arena, Fitch Science Center, and a major addition to the Silver Gymnasium. He also started an alumni magazine and the Annual Scholarship Fund, now known as the Annual Fund.

When Fred Carver died in 1969, John Cotton took over as headmaster. During the Vietnam era, rapid changes occurred in most educational institutions across the country. Kimball Union was no exception. Probably the most significant change was the Board of Trustees vote in 1972 to reinstate coeducation.

This decision was implemented by another man, Thomas M. Mikula, Kimball Union's sixteenth headmaster. Under Mikula's leadership, women returned to campus in 1974, and the enrollment grew from approximately 160 boys to 280 men and women. Furthermore, with his direction, the Coffin Library, a new dormitory, the Akerstrom Arena, and the Flickinger Arts Center were added to the campus. Mr. Mikula retired in 1989, and Timothy Knox became headmaster.

Headmasters

| | |
|------|--------------------------|
| 1815 | Otis Hutchins |
| 1819 | John Luke Parkhurst |
| 1822 | Israel Newell |
| 1835 | Cyrus Smith Richards |
| 1871 | John Ellsworth Goodrich |
| 1872 | Lewis Augustine Austin |
| 1875 | George Jotham Cummings |
| 1880 | Marshall Richards Gaines |
| 1884 | David George Miller |
| 1890 | William Henry Cummings |
| 1900 | Ernest Roliston Woodbury |
| 1905 | Charles Alden Tracy |
| 1935 | William Russell Brewster |
| 1952 | Frederick Eugene Carver |
| 1969 | John P. Cotton |
| 1974 | Thomas M. Mikula |
| 1989 | Timothy Knox |

• *William Russell Brewster*

For seventeen years, from 1935 to 1952, William Russell Brewster led Kimball Union as its thirteenth headmaster. Mr. Brewster was born in Windsor on August 11, 1893. He attended Kimball Union, graduating in 1914, and received a diploma from Middlebury College in 1918. At this time, he also served in the U. S. Signal Corps, a division of the Army Air Corps.



William Russell Brewster, headmaster of Kimball Union Academy, Meriden, about 1940. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.

In 1919, Brewster married Leona M. Wright, a graduate of Boston University. They devoted their entire married life to the enrichment of young people, "Chief and Onie," as they were known, founded the Birch Rock Camp in East Waterford, Maine. The camp opened in 1926 and was directed by the Brewsters each summer. Many Kimball Union Academy students were former campers. During the war, the Brewsters ran the camp at Kimball Union Academy along with the V-12 (pilots' basic training). Many Kimball Union Academy teachers taught the pilots.

Working as a teacher and athletic coach, Brewster was on the faculty of the Burr and Burton Seminary in Manchester, Vermont; Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida; and the Master Country Day School in Newton, Massachusetts.

He left Newton in 1935 to assume the duties of headmaster at Kimball Union. During the next several years, he remained active in the classroom and on the playing field. He was innovative at the Academy. The school farm particularly interested him. He believed in a family style school and involved the faculty and students in farming projects. The dormitory, Dexter Richards Hall, was built during his tenure, and several houses were bought.

In 1945, Mr. Brewster, along with Dr. Ernest Martin Hopkins and Harold Hinman, saw a need for the private schooling of younger students and founded the Cardigan Mountain School in Canaan, New Hampshire. He also served as a trustee of the Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital in Hanover and the Stephens Memorial Hospital in Norway, Maine. Onie Brewster was a mother



Headmaster Frederick Carver and Jessie Carver with Kimball Union Academy students, Meriden, about 1958. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.

figure to many students. She had a degree in remedial reading and tutored the students. The Brewsters retired to Beesburg, Florida. William Brewster died at the age of seventy-nine in 1973 and is buried in East Waterford, Maine.

The Brewsters had two sons: Seward, and William, Jr., a noted physician, who died at the age of fifty. When Bill, Jr., was in the service during the war, he met Gaston and Olga "Mausi" Hamory (now Olga Manno) of Hungary in Heidelberg, Germany, where they were displaced persons. He sponsored them, and they went to Birch Rock Camp and then came to Kimball Union Academy where Gaston introduced fencing and taught German. He was killed in a plane crash, but Mausi stayed at Kimball Union Academy as librarian and hostess at the Brewster Guest House until 1977 when she returned to Vienna to live.

• *Frederick Eugene Carver*

Frederick Carver was known by the Meriden community as "Coach," a term of endearment, respect, and admiration. Mr. Carver served as Kimball Union's fourteenth headmaster for seventeen years.

Frederick Eugene Carver was born at home on October 24, 1904, in Newburyport, Massachusetts, the third son of John Herman and Grace (Estes) Carver. Fred's love for sports began in grammar school. In 1919, the *Newburyport Daily News* published his eighth-grade class prophecy. His schoolmates decided that Fred "first became famous when he introduced athletics at the North Pole." At Newburyport High School, Fred was an outstanding athlete, winning three letters as a freshman in football, baseball, and basketball. Even in his obituary, he was "well-remembered as one of the greatest all-round athletes in Newburyport's history."

Fred was also successful academically. He was president of his class at graduation, captain of the football team for two years, and winner of the Ryan Cup at graduation for "being the best athlete in the school, combined with character and scholastic standing." Fred chose, as his brother had, to attend Dartmouth College. There, he majored in education and belonged to Kappa Phi Kappa, a professional educational society, the Sigma Chi fraternity, and the Green Key. Due to a high school injury, Fred only played football at Dartmouth for one year, but he distinguished himself as a pitcher in baseball. A Dartmouth classmate, reading in the *New York Times* of his appointment as headmaster at Kimball Union Academy in 1952, wrote to congratulate him and added, "My only criticism of the news story is that it failed to mention the fact that you beat Holy Cross back in 1926. I am sure nothing more important has happened in your life."

After Dartmouth, Fred secured a teaching job at Lebanon High School in 1927. He taught mathematics and continued his interest in sports as a coach. Fred's leadership abilities were equally as prominent in the classroom. Many former students recall to this day his clear and patient teaching of math as well as his pitching arm when a well-aimed piece of chalk brought them back to attention. Fred was appointed assistant principal at the high school, but in 1936 was lured away by Lebanon resident and Kimball Union Academy alumnus and trustee, J. Alfred Densmore, to teach at Kimball Union Academy.

In 1936, Fred married Jessie Graham of Lebanon. They began their married life at Kimball Union Academy where Fred joined the math department. During their years at Kimball Union Academy, Jessie opened her home to students, faculty, and local residents and devoted endless time and energy to every phase of life at the school, in the village, and as a volunteer at the local hospitals. Their first years at Kimball Union Academy were marked by the hardships brought on by the Depression. Faculty were often recruited to perform farm chores and to pick potatoes at the school farm. Jessie recalls one year when the school could not afford cleaning people to prepare the rooms for opening day. Bertha Porter, a faculty wife, joined her in volunteering to clean the rooms for the school. Through these hard days came a love and devotion for the school and its students that has lasted for many years.

In 1939, Fred was appointed admissions director, and later in 1941, assistant headmaster. Fred continued coaching at Kimball Union Academy and molded many fine teams, including the unbeaten '37 football team which was unscored upon.

Fred always stressed the personal approach to education. He was concerned with all phases of the students' lives at Kimball Union Academy from the first tour of the school to handwriting college recommendations for all the seniors. Long after becoming headmaster, he was seen on Sunday afternoons giving tours of the school to prospective boys and their families. As headmaster, he had no time for coaching, but continued his interest in sports by attending as many games as possible. Eventually, he watched his own three sons gain enormous success in hockey, lacrosse, and other sports. Fred believed equally in the importance of art and music in the lives of young people. Jessie sometimes acted

in the plays that called for a woman's role. Many times, the boys played the female parts themselves.

When Fred took over as headmaster in 1952, times were hard financially for private schools. There were only eighty students. Within 17 years, the school had developed a strong student body of 210, many loyal faculty members who retired in Meriden, and new facilities. Kimball Union Academy's assets grew from one million to six million dollars. With the receipt of the Charles Ransom Miller estate of two million dollars, the Fitch estate, and a bequest from Miss Annie Duncan, the school was able to improve dramatically its physical plant. The Alumni Gym, Miller Student Center, Fitch Science Building, Densmore Hall, Tracy Infirmary, and the Duncan Arena were built. The Monroe property and the Rogers house were bought, and other buildings were remodeled. Fred revitalized the Alumni Association in 1957 and began a series of alumni dinners in key cities around the country. He supported and initiated the A Better Chance (ABC) program for minority students at Kimball Union Academy.

While headmaster, Fred found the time and energy to give his service to the Meriden Congregational Church as a deacon and a trustee. He was also a trustee of the Alice Peck Day Hospital in Lebanon. Fred was president of the New England Association of Headmasters, which supported Channel 11 in bringing educational television to New Hampshire. During his tenure, the relationship between the town and school was excellent.

In 1937, Dartmouth conferred the degree of Master of Arts on him in recognition of advanced study done there and at Harvard. His greatest honor was that of Honorary Doctorate of Education from Norwich University in 1961. His award reads in part, "...the physical and scholastic growth of the school have been to a considerable extent the result of your efforts and energy...As a counselor you are ever patient, wise, considerate and encouraging in your relationship and dealings with students..For the position you hold in the vital education and guidance of our youth, for what you have done and will continue to do to provide a wholesome atmosphere, an appropriate educational pattern and environment, and an academic challenge to boys during the difficult, lackadaisical, baffling teen-age years, Norwich University confers upon you the honorary degree of Doctor of Education..."

Fred and Jessie Carver had four children: James, David, Douglas, and Jane, and seven grandchildren. The three boys graduated from the Academy during their father's tenure as headmaster, and Jane attended Gould Academy in Bethel, Maine.

Frederick Carver died of cancer on July 29, 1969, at the age of sixty-four just after his retirement from the Academy.¹

• *Daniel Kimball*

Daniel Kimball, founder of Kimball Union Academy, donated \$6,000 and bequeathed much of his estate with the stipulation that the school be located in Meriden rather than Windsor. His name was added to Union Academy in



Hannah (Chase) Kimball by Zedekiah Belknap, Meriden, 1819. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.

appreciation of his generosity. Daniel Kimball was born in Preston, Connecticut, on May 20, 1753, the son of Benjamin and Hannah (Richards) Kimball. His family moved to Plainfield in 1769 when his father purchased 750 acres of land surrounding and including Meriden Village. He enlisted in the army in 1776 and, with the rank of sergeant, served at Quebec, Ticonderoga, and West Point. On December 4, 1777, he married Hannah Chase of Cornish. Mr. Kimball served in many public offices: selectman, justice of the peace, state representative, and state senator.

He also served as an original trustee of the Academy. Unfortunately, Daniel Kimball did not live to see the fruits of his generosity. He died at the age of sixty-three, "with an affection of the lungs," on February 27, 1817.²

• *Hannah (Chase) Kimball*

Hannah (Chase) Kimball, founder of the female department of Kimball Union Academy, watched over the school "with a lively and motherly interest." Born in Sutton, Massachusetts, on February 7, 1758, she was the daughter of Moses and Hannah (Brown) Chase. The Chase family were among the early settlers of Cornish and were active community leaders. On December 4, 1777, Hannah married Daniel Kimball of Meriden and remained a resident of the village for the rest of her life. She was a teacher, both before and after her marriage, and became involved in the founding of Kimball Union Academy with her husband Daniel. She outlived her husband by thirty years and assumed great interest



Cyrus Smith Richards, headmaster of Kimball Union Academy, Meriden, about 1870. Richards is shown in what may be the interior of the Meriden Congregational Church. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.

in the school. She gave generously, spiritually as well as monetarily, for its success. The Kimballs had no children, and Hannah died at the age of eighty-nine on June 17, 1847.³

• *Cyrus Smith Richards*

The fourth headmaster of Kimball Union Academy was Cyrus Smith Richards, who was born on a farm in Hartford, Vermont, on March 11, 1808. Because his parents had too many mouths to feed, they sent him to a nearby farm to live with a childless couple. He was rarely permitted to go home for a visit, although he lived near enough to see the smoke from his mother's chimney. Cyrus was an apt student at the village school, and the schoolmaster was sorry to see him removed from class to work on his adopted farm. He impressed upon the boy's parents that he should continue his education. A compromise was reached that allowed him to attend school in alternate years. Neighbors raised money to pay for his enrollment at Kimball Union Academy.

One of his older brothers drove him over across the river to Kimball Union Academy and picked him up for holidays. One spring, upon his return from delivering Cyrus to Kimball Union Academy, his brother was swept away by a flood along Blood's Brook and was drowned.

Cyrus was an excellent student and leader at Kimball Union Academy and was graduated in 1831. The school offered him a scholarship at Dartmouth College if he would agree to take the post of headmaster at Kimball

Union Academy when he graduated in 1835. He did so at twenty-seven years of age.

Richards was a strict disciplinarian, and the students were afraid of him. He caned them liberally to keep them in line. Once, when a prominent citizen of Meriden lay dying, he ordered the boys to keep the village quiet, but graduation was near, and the final athletic event was in progress. Traditionally, if Kimball Union Academy won, the bell was rung to announce victory to all of Meriden. Kimball Union Academy won, and the boys broke their promise. The bell rang long and loud. The leaders were members of the senior class and the punishment was severe. The headmaster dismissed the entire senior class, held *no* graduation ceremony, and awarded no diplomas that year.

The Board of Trustees had grown concerned about Richards' heavy hand. At the final board meeting, it was voted that Richards would deliver the diplomas or lose his position. He chose the latter and retired in 1871 after thirty-six years as headmaster.

Cyrus Richards wrote a book entitled: *Latin Lessons and Tables* and received an honorary Doctorate from Dartmouth in 1865. After leaving the Academy, he went to Howard University where he became dean of the preparatory department and a professor of Latin and Greek. Mr. Richards died in Madison, Wisconsin, on July 19, 1885, at the age of seventy-seven.⁴ Cyrus Richards' first wife, Helen Dorothy Whiton, came from Antrim, New Hampshire. They reputedly carried on their courtship by writing letters in Latin. They had two children, Charles and Abby.

• *Charles Alden Tracy*

Charles Alden Tracy was born in Cornish on November 16, 1872, at the Tracy farm which had been in the family since 1793. Mr. Tracy graduated as valedictorian of his class at Kimball Union Academy in 1893. He received his Bachelor's degree from Dartmouth four years later. In 1922, he was also awarded a Master's degree.

Following graduation from Dartmouth, Tracy was appointed principal of the elementary school in Middleton, Vermont. Later, he became the principal of the high school in Hillsboro, New Hampshire. While in Hillsboro, he married a teacher, Grace M. Powell, on January 1, 1902. Tracy was appointed superintendent of schools in Claremont.

The Tracys moved to Meriden in 1905 when he became Kimball Union's twelfth headmaster, a position he would hold for thirty years. During that time, he was also a trustee and treasurer of the school. Known as an eloquent orator, Tracy often spoke at chapel services and other gatherings. He was instrumental in starting the school farm and enjoyed tending his own sheep.

Tracy held many posts outside of the Academy, including membership in the Constitutional Convention and the New Hampshire legislature. He was president of the Meriden Light and Power Company and was instrumental in bringing electricity as well as paved roads to Meriden Village.



Charles Alden Tracy, headmaster of Kimball Union Academy, Meriden, about 1915. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.

Charles and Grace Tracy had three children: Elizabeth, Stephen, and Charles Alden, Jr. Charles, known as "Junior," died of pneumo-peritonitis at Phillips Andover Academy. The infirmary at Kimball Union is dedicated in his name.

During a short retirement in Amherst, New Hampshire, Mr. Tracy took up furniture making and edited textbooks for a publishing firm. Grace Tracy died in 1941, and Charles returned to teaching in Hampstead, New Hampshire. In 1948, he married a former pupil, Marguerite Norton. Charles Tracy died in 1951, at the age of seventy-nine. He is buried in the family plot in the Gleason Cemetery.⁵

Plainfield and The Cornish Colony Through Biographies

Virginia Colby

The art colony of sculptors, painters, lawyers, poets, writers, and well-to-do was begun at the turn of the century. The "colonists" clustered along the Cornish-Plainfield town line near the Connecticut River. It started when Charles Coatesworth Beaman, a lawyer with a prominent New York law firm, married his senior partner's daughter, Hettie Evarts. The Evarts family owned a large parcel of land in Windsor, Vermont. After the marriage in 1874, Beaman began to acquire land across the Connecticut River in Cornish where he built his house called Blow-Me-Down Farm.¹ The land was available because the population of Cornish had declined with migration to cities and the Midwest and with the failure of sheep farming. Land and farms could be bought at a reasonable price.

Beaman enjoyed the company of artists and writers and was willing to sell or rent to them. He first encouraged Augustus Saint-Gaudens to come to Cornish. The sculptor rented "Huggins Folly," a stark Federal brick structure, which he eventually bought from Beaman for \$2,500 and a *bas-relief*. Thus began the Cornish Colony.² While these people called themselves "Cornish Colony," many of them actually lived in Plainfield. Homer Saint-Gaudens referred to Mrs. Davidge's old mill as sited in Cornish when it was really on Daniels Road in Plainfield. Ellen Shipman's stationery was printed "Poins House, Cornish, N. H." when she was living on Main Street in Plainfield Village. On the reverse of one of her calling cards, she had penciled "Geographically in Plainfield, Socially in Cornish."³

Following Saint-Gaudens came other artists: George deForest Brush, well known for his "modern madonna" paintings; Thomas Dewing, known for his portraits of women; William Henry Hyde who also did portraits; Henry Oliver Walker who painted a series of murals in the Library of Congress; Charles A. Platt who came to Cornish as an etcher and painter and took up landscape architecture before becoming an architect; Stephen Parrish, etcher and painter, and his son Maxfield, an illustrator; and Kenyon Cox, muralist and art critic with his wife Louise, a portrait painter.⁴

There were also the artists Henry and Lucia Fuller from Deerfield, Massachusetts, who later rented their house to actress Ethel Barrymore and to the sculptors Paul Manship and William Zorach, with his artist wife Marguerite. Then there was sculptor Herbert Adams; artist Everett Shinn with his artist wife Florence Scovel Shinn; artist John Elliott and his wife Maud Howe Elliott, whose mother was Julia Ward Howe; artist John White Alexander, who was famous for his pictures of women; Willard Leroy Metcalf, a landscape painter; Frederic Remington, noted for his paintings and bronze sculptures of the wild west. Also came Dr. Alfred Nichols, a doctor from Boston, whose wife was a sister to Mrs. Saint-Gaudens. Many of the artists exhibited in The Armory Show in 1913 in New York City, Chicago, and Boston. This show proved to have a lasting influence on art in America as it was the first large exhibit showing modern art.⁵

The artists were followed by the writers: Winston Churchill, the American novelist; Louis Evan Shipman, playwright, with his wife Ellen, who became a landscape architect; Herbert Croly, founding editor of *The New Republic*; author Philip Littell; poet and dramatist Percy MacKaye; writer Langdon Mitchell; Norman Hapgood, editor of *Collier's*; George Rublee, a member of the Federal Trade Commission; Judge Learned Hand, chief justice of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Musicians included Arthur Whiting of the Boston Symphony and Otto Roth as well as singer and pianist Grace Lawrence and her sister Edith.⁶

After the artists and literary folk came the rich, such as Albion Lang and Robert Barrett. In all, there were over 100 well-known people who were considered part of the Cornish Colony. Some stayed a season while others stayed a lifetime. Among those who only stayed awhile was President Woodrow Wilson who rented Winston Churchill's home "Harlakenden" and brought the Summer White House to Cornish. Most of the people built their houses to take advantage of a view of Mt. Ascutney, except Stephen Parrish who built his house to face the north.

Saint-Gaudens was the magnet, and people wanted to be associated with him. He had a warm personality, loved people, and had established an enviable reputation in the art world. This artists' colony was different from others because it had not been planned nor was it a teaching colony. It just happened.

"Little New York," as the Colony was sometimes referred to (whether they were from New York or Boston), had a profound effect on the economy of the community. Local people, "natives" as they were called, were hired as carpenters, chauffeurs, gardeners, and caretakers. Women did housework, laundry, and cooking as well as waiting on tables for elaborate dinner parties. Colony people bought their vegetables, meat, eggs, milk, and butter from local farmers.⁷ The natives also earned a little extra income by opening their homes to boarders. Among those who did were William Westgate, Elwin Quimby, S. A. Tracy, Charles Eggleston, Ralph Jordan, and George S. Ruggles.

The natives were glad for the extra income, but at times resented the demands and snobbery. Social contacts between the townsfolk and the Colony were few and far between. The farmer was up at dawn and to bed early while the lifestyles of the artists and others in the Colony drew them late into the night. The Victorian attitudes of the time also prevented employers socializing with the hired help. Although one Cornish native would muse, "They wiped their feet on us a little," the income from the Colony was too good to pass up. However strained as the relationship may have been, the Colony survived.

In 1890, George Ruggles, a local carpenter, built a studio, later called "The Woodchuck Hole," for use by some of the Cornish Colony artists and writers. Its three rooms and large window with its northern exposure and veranda surrounding two sides provided comfortable working quarters for both artists and writers. It was located on his property on Thrasher Road, surrounded by pine trees. Among Colony members who used the studio were Percy MacKaye, Abbott Thayer, Kenyon Cox, Thomas Dewing, A. H. Prellwitz, George deForest Brush, Barry Faulkner, and Paul Manship.

The Colony became nationally famous for its beautiful flower gardens. Thomas and Maria Dewing are credited with introducing flower gardening to the area because Maria was a flower painter who needed live subjects. Ellen Shipman and Rose Nichols became garden architects of note. Charles A. Platt had been a landscape architect before he started designing houses, and he exerted a definite influence on garden plans. Probably the most intense gardener among the Colonists was Stephen Parrish. He kept very detailed descriptions of his gardening activities in his daily journal. *Century Magazine*, *House and Garden*, *Country Life in America*, and *Suburban Life* all published articles about the gardens in Cornish.⁸

To celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Saint-Gaudens' arrival in Cornish in 1905, the Colony produced a masque written by Louis Evan Shipman with a prologue by Percy MacKaye. *The Masque of "Ours"*, *The Gods and the Golden Bowl* was presented June 22 on the grounds of "Aspet," the Saint-Gaudens' home, followed by a supper, and then by a ball in the new studio. The event received national publicity. An article by Kenyon Cox appeared in *The Nation* on July 1, 1905: "It was crammed with local allusions, many of which were more for the benefit of the chief guest and of the actors themselves than of the other guests, who could hardly be expected to understand them all, but it was meant only for agreeable nonsense and as an excuse for the spectacle...." The next year Saint-Gaudens designed a medallion which was reproduced in silver and inscribed with the names of the ninety participants. Although Saint-Gaudens was ill at this festivity, his wife presented the plaque to the players. (See Appendix D.)

In 1913, Percy MacKaye wrote a bird masque, *Sanctuary*, for the naturalist Ernest Harold Baynes. He was concerned about the possible extinction of birds whose plumage was used for women's hats. The masque was produced in September at the Bird Sanctuary in Meriden with President and Mrs. Wilson in attendance to see their two daughters perform in the play. The stage pro-



Cast members of *The Masque of "Ours," The Gods and the Golden Bowl*, Cornish, 1905. Courtesy Philip Read Memorial Library.

duction was directed by Joseph Lindon Smith with dancing by Juliet Barrett Rublee. The following year, the Masque was given at the Hotel Astor in New York City. The Redpath Chautauqua toured the country presenting *Sanctuary* and many bird clubs were established in its wake.⁹

Painter William Howard Hart was very interested in dramatics. In 1916, he donated a stage and professional lighting system for the Plainfield Town Hall and commissioned Maxfield Parrish to design the stage set (see Maxfield Parrish).

Hart also established the Howard Hart Players, a group composed of local talent, who produced many plays, musicals, and theatrical productions. Mr. Hart's sister sent three or four trunks full of costumes for the groups to use. In 1988, the remaining members of the Howard Hart Players donated its treasury to the Plainfield Historical Society for the purpose of setting up a fund for the preservation of the Parrish stage set. Fund raising for this purpose continues.

Many other groups also used the town hall stage including the Plainfield School who produced "The Lass That Loved a Sailor" in 1938. The Mothers' and Daughters' Club presented "Red Acre Farm" in 1926 and "The Village

Schoolma'am" in 1947. An Operetta, "The Woodland Princess" was produced in 1916 in the outdoor theater before the stage was built and the Parrish backdrop in place. It was repeated at the dedication of the stage in September of that year.

The Plainfield Town Hall was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. It is also included on The National List of Historic Theatre Buildings.

Hart and sculptor Herbert Adams were close friends who lived near one another in Plainfield. Adams created an outdoor theater in the pine woods on his property while Hart organized the Howard Hart Players in the late 1930s. Many Howard Hart performances took place at the town hall and at Herbert Adams' outdoor theater.

The First World War dealt a blow to the Colony. The economic collapse of 1929 sealed its fate. By 1935, the Cornish Colony was only a memory of gaiety and creativity in the hills along Blow-Me-Down Brook.

As a small token of remembrance of this famous artists' colony, the state of New Hampshire has erected a roadside historical marker at the Blow-Me-Down Mill to commemorate the Cornish Colony.

The following artists in the Colony were either year-round or summer residents of Plainfield:

Herbert Adams and Adeline Pond Adams

Sculptor Herbert Adams (1858–1945) met his future wife, Adeline Valentine Pond (1859–1948), in Paris, and they were married in Auburndale, Massachusetts, in 1889. This happy meeting led to an Adams sculpture that made him world famous. His bust of Adeline was shown at the Paris Salon. This piece was done in marble and shows Adeline with her beautiful smile. At the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago, Adams entered the bust of Adeline Pond along with two others. He caused quite a stir in the art world by coloring the marble.¹⁰

Adeline Adams and her husband arrived in Cornish in 1894 and boarded with the Frank Johnsons. In 1896, they brought their artist friend William Howard Hart and boarded with S. A. Tracy. They also spent a summer in a little house on Freeman Road in Plainfield, the same house used by George deForest Brush. The house no longer stands.

By 1903, they were owners of 105 acres of the Elmer DeGoosh farm on Stage Road in Plainfield. Charles Platt had designed the house which was called "Hermitage" (James Jerry, 1991).¹¹ William Howard Hart rebuilt a small house near the rear of the Adams house. (This house has been torn down and rebuilt as part of the Powerhouse Shopping Complex in West Lebanon, New Hampshire.)

Some of Adams' important commissions include: The McMillan Fountain in Washington, DC; the bronze doors representing "Writing" and a statue of



Herbert Adams in front of the bronze doors he sculptured for the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, 1930. Courtesy American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

Joseph Henry, both at the Library of Congress; a statue of William Cullen Bryant in New York City. Also listed are "Primavera" in the Corcoran Gallery of Art and "La Jeunesse" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Adams completed more than 160 commissions during his lifetime.

Adams won medals at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915, the National Academy of Design, and the National Institute of Arts and Letters. For the exhibition of the Cornish Artists at Dartmouth College in 1916, he exhibited five works.¹²

Adams was president of the National Academy of Design and also the National Sculpture Society. He was a member of the Art Commission of the city of New York, a member of the Federal Commission of Fine Arts, and a trustee of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, just to name a few.¹³ He was president of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial from 1933 until his death in 1945.

While in Plainfield, Adams designed the bronze doors for the Mariners Museum in Newport News, Virginia.¹⁴ He produced a marble *bas-relief* of the Fraser-Campbell children entitled "Singing Boys" which is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Adams used a local model, Charlie Hill, for his statue of Captain Matthias Baldwin which is in Philadelphia. Albert K. Read, II, of Plainfield posed for a statue of General Grant.¹⁵ This commission went to Henry M. Shrader. Kay (Jordan) Garey posed for a fountain statue when she was a very young child. Adams sculpted the head of Albert K. Read, III.¹⁶



Mt. Ascutney and "Welcome to Plainfield," approaching Plainfield Village from the north, 1991. Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel.



Stage set designed by Maxfield Parrish, Plainfield Town Hall, 1916. Photo shows the set in full lights with the presidium. Photos by Jeffrey Nintzel.



The set at dusk.



Photo shows the use of yellow and red lighting.



Photo shows the use of red lights.



Signboard, "The Pageant of Meriden," 1913. The play was presented in celebration of the centennial of Kimball Union Academy. Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.



Mural by Lucia Fairchild Fuller, Blow-Me-Down Grange, Plainfield. Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel.



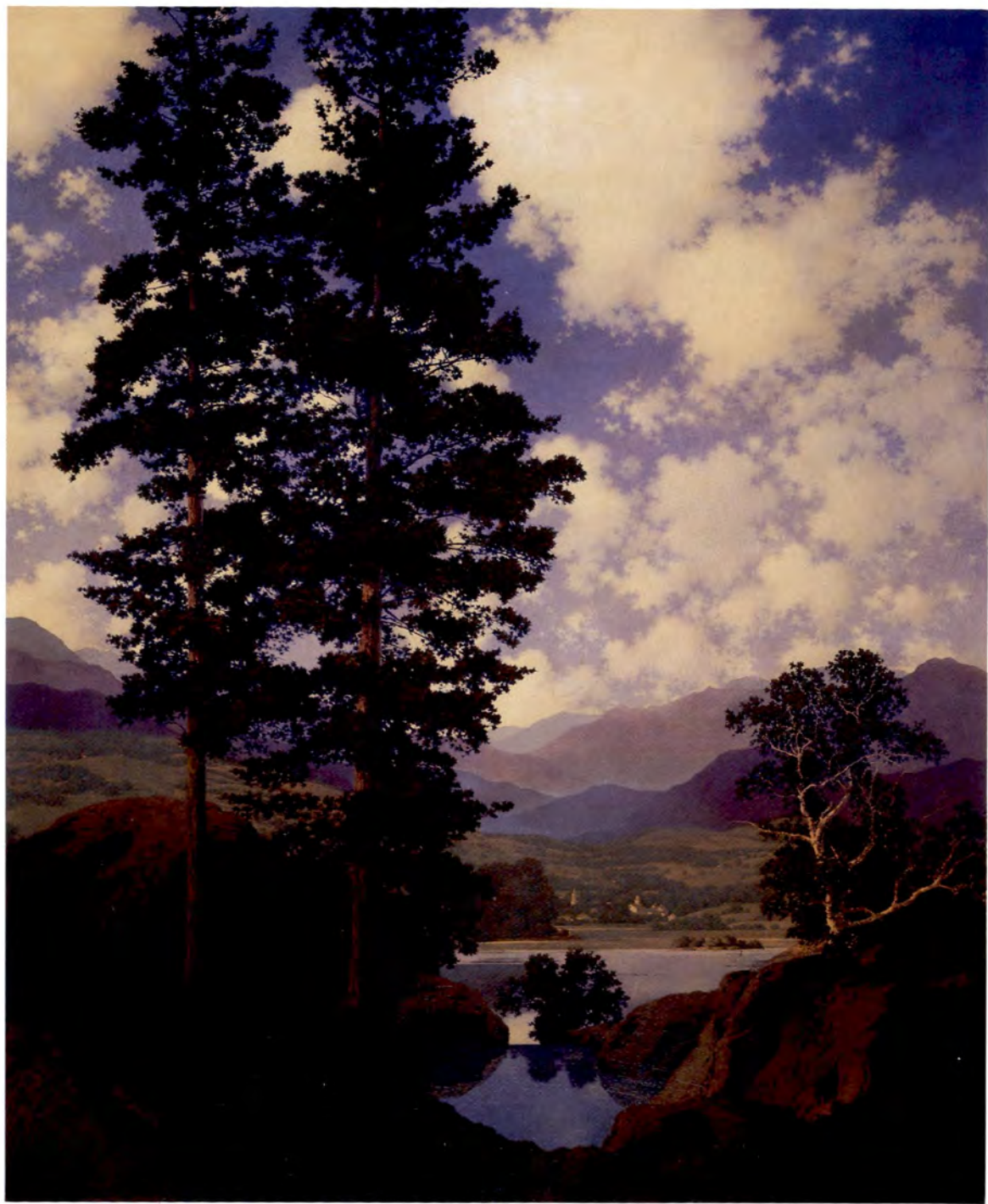
"September Morn, Plainfield, N.H." by Willard Leroy Metcalf, Plainfield, 1910. Courtesy R. H. Love Galleries, Inc., Chicago.



"Kimball Union Academy" by Paul Sample, Meriden, 1963. Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.



A garden in the horticultural competition sponsored by Ellen Shipman, Plainfield, 1931. This was the garden of Etta True (Raymond Morin, 1991). Across the road is the home of Eunice and Ned Waite (Christine (Waite) Dow, 1991.)



"Thy Templed Hills," by Maxfield Parrish, 1910. Courtesy the Employees of the Windsor Office, Vermont National Bank. Parrish gave the painting to the bank employees in appreciation of their service. Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel.



Portrait of Adeline Adams by William Howard Hart. Photo by Nancy Norwalk. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

In the woods near his house, Adams built an outdoor amphitheater which became the site of many theatrical productions such as *Robin Hood*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and *Folk Dance*. Albert K. Read, II, built the stone wall which formed the outdoor stage. The outdoor theater was destroyed by a logging operation in the 1980s.

Adeline Adams became a biographer of artists and contributed to *Arts in America: A Bibliography*. She also wrote critical reviews and articles for *House Beautiful*. In an article written in 1924 on the subject of "Sculpture in the House," she writes, "A portrait, marble toned, of Mrs. Billings, by Herbert Adams, is intimate enough to be lived with comfortably in the home." Mrs. Billings was from Woodstock, Vermont.

Mrs. Adams became an authority on the history of sculpturing and her book *The Spirit of American Sculpture* was published in 1923.

Mrs. Adams published a book of poems and dedicated it to their daughter Mary who lived only about six months. This book was published in 1900, and another book, *Sylvia*, was published in 1912, and was written in memory of Sylvia Platt.

Mrs. Adams became an active member in the Cornish Equal Suffrage League which was organized in 1911.¹⁷ She was also a member of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club in Plainfield.

Mrs. Woodrow Wilson mentions in her diary of August 12, 1913, attending a dinner at the Kenyon Coxes, "But the only other guests, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Adams, are among the choice spirits of the Colony,—both intellec-

tually and spiritually. I could really love them both. He, you know, is the sculptor whom I met in Washington. They are Boston people. She also 'studies art' but I do not hear of her doing anything now. It is pretty to see how much they are loved and honoured by the younger people here."¹⁸

Mrs. Adams was a faithful companion of the sculptor for fifty-six years. She continued to make her home in Plainfield until her death on July 1, 1948, at the age of eighty-nine.

Ernest Harold Baynes

Ernest Harold Baynes was the naturalist who came to live and work at Corbin's Park. He was born May 1, 1868, in Calcutta, India, the son of John and Helen Nowill Baynes. His father was engaged in foreign trade. He returned to England with his family and eventually emigrated to the United States to settle in Westchester County, New York. He had a very inventive mind and perfected many processes connected with photography. As a young child, Ernest Harold Baynes held a very strong fascination for animals. After leaving the College of the City of New York, he worked as a reporter for *The New York Times*.

By 1900, Baynes was lecturing and writing magazine articles on wildlife. He wrote nature articles for the *New York Herald*, *Country Life in America*, *Nature Magazine*, *Scribner's Magazine*, and *Century Magazine*, and illustrated them with his own photographs.

By 1901, Baynes married Louise Birt O'Connell of Boston. They moved to Stoneham, Massachusetts, on the edge of the Middlesex Falls Nature Reserve, where Baynes continued writing and observing wildlife.¹⁹

The Blue Mountain Forest Association in Sullivan County, New Hampshire, was established by railroad magnate Austin Corbin in 1890. It is comprised of 28,000 acres surrounded by a fence 8 1/2 feet high and 36 miles long. The park contained herds of deer, elk, wild boar, buffalo, and a large variety of birds.

Austin Corbin learned of Baynes' wish to settle near such a reservation and offered him a house and the use of the park. The house is situated in the northwestern section of the park, about two miles from Meriden Village. The Bayneses occupied the house, which they called "Sunset Ridge" in 1904.²⁰

Baynes became acquainted with the animals in the park, making friends with a wild boar, fox, and others; using their antics as subjects for magazine articles and books. He authored such books as *Wild Bird Guests*, *Jimmie*, *Polaris*, and *War Hoop and Tomahawk*. The latter was a book about two buffalo calves which were broken to yoke and trained to pull carts. Baynes often drove them to Meriden for his mail. In 1905, they carried him to the county fair at Claremont.²¹

Baynes championed the national campaign to save the nearly extinct buffalo. He elicited help from President Theodore Roosevelt, who had visited Corbin's Park in August of 1902 on his way to Cornish and Windsor.²² Baynes was instrumental in the formation of the American Bison Society in 1905, which lob-



Ernest Harold Baynes with his buffalo cart, about 1910. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

bied Congress to provide refuges and ranges for herds whose nuclei often came from Corbin's Park. He also had the help of others who championed the cause. Among them was Norman Hapgood who, at that time, was editor of *Collier's Weekly* and a resident of the Cornish Colony.²³

Baynes and poet Percy MacKaye became fast friends.²⁴ The naturalist asked MacKaye to write a poem to celebrate the dedication of the Meriden Bird Club, which he had established in 1910 as the first bird club in America. He also organized the Cornfield Bird Club in Cornish and Plainfield. Caring for birds was new to most people. MacKaye responded by writing *Sanctuary*, a bird masque, dramatically underscoring the loss and extinction of birds for their colorful plumage used for women's hat trimmings and other domestic products.

The masque was performed in Meriden at the outdoor bird sanctuary on September 12, 1913, with a number of the artists' colony taking part or as patrons of the production. (See Appendix E.) The play was attended by President and Mrs. Woodrow Wilson with their daughter, Margaret, singing the prelude, while her sister, Eleanor, took the part of "Bird Spirit." By 1933, when the Meriden Bird Club marked the twentieth anniversary of the first performance of *Sanctuary*, the play had been performed hundreds of times across the country, and had inspired the creation of about 120 bird clubs.²⁵ (See Chapter 13, Societies and Organizations.)

When Baynes returned from his long campaign for the birds in the fall of



Ernest Harold Baynes with his tame coyote, about 1910. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

1916, he rented the house that artist Everett Shinn had built in Plainfield in 1902 (John McNellis, 1991). Some of his good friends, Percy MacKaye, Herbert Adams, William Howard Hart, and Louis Evan Shipman were all nearby.

Baynes became embroiled in the vivisection controversy. In the fall of 1923, Baynes was instrumental in organizing the "Friends of Medical Progress." His opinion held that animals could be used for medical research in a very humane way, without pain and suffering to the benefit of mankind. The *Women's Home Companion* had the courage to expose the untruths about anti-vivisection.²⁶ His syndicated newspaper columns appeared in newspapers across the country, entertaining and educating the public in the ways of nature. His magazine articles were illustrated with his remarkable photographs, most of which were taken in Meriden and Corbin's Park.

Baynes decided to move out of the park and create his own sanctuary, so he bought the Lewin Farm in Plainfield. He dug a cellar, which can still be seen. He planned to fence the entire acreage, but died in Meriden on January 21, 1925, before he finished the new house.²⁷ The following spring his ashes were sprinkled over his favorite spot in Blue Mountain Park and a bronze memorial was affixed to a boulder in the Meriden Bird Sanctuary.²⁸

Ethel Barrymore

Actress Ethel Barrymore (1879–1959) came to Cornish on June 2, 1906. According to poet William Vaughn Moody, Miss Barrymore's arrival was highlighted by a railroad wreck. She rented the Fuller house (Dowd family, 1991) on Route 12A in Plainfield across the road from where Moody was staying. The night she arrived, a large party was held to introduce her to members of the Colony. She did not expect to stay long because of Cornish's "dullness," but was captivated by the coming fall foliage season. The Fuller house boasted a large swimming pool, under a vine-covered pergola, with Greek pillars. "Bathing suits are furnished by rotation of peg, and the fit shall be as God wills."²⁹ The pool was described in Frances Duncan's article "A Swimming Pool at Cornish" published in *Country Life in America*, July 1906. As Moody became better acquainted with Barrymore, he describes her as "The best fun in the world, quite unspoiled, and a first-rate fellow."

During Ethel's stay in Plainfield that summer, Kenyon Cox was painting a mural decoration for the new Essex County courthouse in Newark, New Jersey. He painted her head for the figure of "Justice." Cass Gilbert, the architect, objected to the portraiture as the murals were supposed to be only decorative. Cox had to alter the features so that they would look like nobody in particular.³⁰ Miss Barrymore was fascinated by Cox's enormous studio, with its tall door to enable the murals to be removed, and by his climbing up on ladders to paint the huge murals.³¹ Ethel Barrymore also felt it a great privilege to be let into Augustus Saint-Gaudens' studio to watch him work on his wonderful Lincoln.³² Artist Frances Houston also painted Ethel Barrymore's portrait during that summer. It was the artist's last work. She died in October of that year.³³

Ethel Barrymore saw much of the Maxfield Parrishes that summer. She was fascinated by Stephen Parrish's elaborate flower gardens which she thought more beautiful than either Charles Platt's or Norman Hapgood's.³⁴

Barrymore also relates in her *Memories* how Mrs. Winston Churchill asked her if she would drive her beautiful horses in the horse show. Barrymore had never driven at all, but had seen many horse shows, so she said yes and won the blue ribbon. Reflecting on this incident years later, Barrymore said "How extraordinarily cheeky I must have been!"

Winston Churchill

Churchill was born November 10, 1871, in St. Louis, Missouri, and graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1894. After leaving the Navy, he worked on the editorial staff of the *Army and Navy Journal* before becoming editor of *Cosmopolitan*. His first novel, *The Celebrity*, attracted a lot of attention because the public saw it as a satire of the popular novelist, Richard Harding Davis. *Richard Carvel*, his novel, enjoyed unprecedented success and sold over a million copies, making him independently wealthy.³⁵



Winston Churchill, 1912. Courtesy Virginia Colby.

On October 22, 1895, Winston Churchill married Mabel Harlakenden Hall of St. Louis.

In the spring of 1899, Churchill, the English politician, began receiving letters of congratulation on his skill as a novelist. He came to realize that the praise was intended for an American novelist of the same name. The two Churchills met at dinner in Boston and it was decided that the Britisher would use his middle name or initial because the American did not have one. Henceforth, the Englishman signed his name Winston Spencer Churchill or Winston S. Churchill.³⁶

Churchill went through three distinct periods of writing, beginning with a series of historical romances, followed by political novels, and concluding with several books covering religious and social topics. In later years, Churchill took up painting, and he frequently could be seen in a field working at his easel.

Winston Churchill's name appears on the Cornish tax records in 1899 as having purchased ninety-five acres of the Leonard Spaulding farm. Churchill commissioned Charles A. Platt, the Cornish architect, to design his house which was the most elaborate in the Cornish Colony.³⁷

After moving to New Hampshire, our Churchill became interested in politics. He was elected representative in November 1902, and served two terms in the New Hampshire legislature where he authored numerous reform bills. He proposed measures to improve the state's forests, reforms of election procedures, and various other progressive programs, most of which were rejected.

In 1906, he was urged to seek the Republican nomination for governor, but was defeated for the nomination largely because of his opposition to railroads. In 1912, he ran for governor on the Progressive Party ticket, but was defeated.³⁸ His home, Harlakenden, became the Summer White House in 1913-15 when he rented it to President Woodrow Wilson. The Churchills were spending time in California.

In early days, Churchill was known for his beautiful four-in-hand, and later for his big automobiles. Tax records show ownership of several horses, carriages, cows, and sheep. By 1908, his inventory also listed one auto. He acquired more land in Plainfield until his holdings totaled nearly 500 acres.³⁹

The Maxfield Parrishes frequently entertained the Churchills at dinners and parties. Stephen Parrish's diary notes evenings spent at the Churchills' home, adding that he was not fond of political talk.⁴⁰

Winston Churchill was a financial supporter of the Meriden Bird Sanctuary. He and Mrs. Churchill were members of the Cornish Equal Suffrage League in 1911, with Mrs. Churchill serving as its treasurer.⁴¹

In 1902-03, neighbor John Freeman was campaigning to replace Sumner's Bridge between Plainfield and Hartland which had washed out during the 1870s. Churchill was led to expedite the project in Concord and pledged \$500 if the project went through.⁴²

Churchill was the featured morning speaker at Meriden's Old Home Day in 1901. It was a great success with attendance estimated at 1,200. He also spoke at many other Old Home Day celebrations as well as numerous other local functions.

A tragic fire struck Harlakenden on October 6, 1923, and the house burned to the ground. Many of the furnishings were saved. The Churchills temporarily moved to the Churchill Inn in Plainfield until their house on the corner of Route 12A and Freeman Road was ready (Van DeWald, 1991). The original structure, enlarged for the Churchills, had been built by John Freeman.

Mabel Churchill died in 1945 and Winston died in 1947. Both are buried in a private lot on their Plainfield property.

Clarissa (Potter) Davidge

Clarissa (Potter) Davidge (1858-1921) (Mrs. Mason Chichester Davidge) inherited the old Kingsbury Tavern in Plainfield, constructed by Asa Kingsbury, a carpenter, in 1802 (Judy Atwater, 1991).⁴³ Mrs. Davidge was the daughter of Rt. Reverend Henry C. Potter, Episcopal Bishop of New York. Mrs. Davidge had a sister, Mary Hyde, wife of William Henry Hyde, an artist, who were members of the Cornish Colony. Author Mabel (Dodge) Luhan described Clarissa Davidge as the unconventional one of her family (animated, eccentric, rattle-brained). She was middle-aged and partially crippled so she walked with a limp. She was warm-hearted, rather bad-tempered, and fond of expressing herself in a loud high-pitched voice in language rich with her own variations. She col-



The old Read mill owned by Clarissa Davidge on Daniels Road, Plainfield, about 1910. Courtesy Virginia Colby.

lected old furniture and promising artists.⁴⁴ The Madison Gallery in New York City was started by Mrs. Davidge to enable artists to exhibit their work before the public.

In Plainfield, she purchased several properties which she made available to artists. Among them was Echo Farm located on Old County Road, now occupied by Perry LaPotin (1991). She promised this farm to William and Marguerite Zorach for use in the summer of 1917.⁴⁵ She even offered to give it to the Zoraches, but they could not accept it. The potter, Frank C. Applegate of Morrisville, Pennsylvania, came to Plainfield and stayed with the Zorach family. Mrs. Davidge next offered the farm to him. Applegate told her to make him out a deed, which she did, and he spent two summers there before moving on to Santa Fe.

Clara Davidge purchased the old mill on Daniels Road, originally built by David and Septimus Read, and made it into living quarters. The old mill ceased operation about 1880. Langdon Mitchell, William Vaughn Moody, Willard Leroy Metcalf, Mattie Brown, and Frances Grimes were among those who used the old mill.

Mrs. Davidge and Henry Fitch Taylor had taken over the management of the Madison Gallery in 1908. The exhibition there in 1911 laid the foundation for the Association of American Painters and Sculptors to start the Armory Show—the exhibition at the Sixty-Ninth Regiment Armory in 1913—which was the first exhibition of modern art held in this country.

In 1913, Mrs. Davidge married Henry Fitch Taylor. According to Marguerite

Quimby, Mrs. Davidge belonged to a group called "Unity" which had its headquarters in Lee's Summit, Missouri.⁴⁶ It emphasized constructive thinking, affirmative prayer, and spiritual healing. Mrs. Davidge believed that we are surrounded by subjectivity and this new mode of thought could produce positive results. She started to work on artist Henry Fitch Taylor to stop drinking. She never mentioned drink at all, but every night she sat and willed him to stop drinking. She also did the same for the poet Edwin Arlington Robinson. It worked in both instances. She was also interested in comparing music with color—such as certain colors would register as certain notes. Mrs. Quimby said she used to rub her face with carrots every morning.

Mrs. Taylor drowned in 1921 at the home of her brother Alonzo Potter, at Smithtown, Long Island. She and her husband had been living in the cottage on her brother's estate. She had been suffering from spinal trouble, which partly paralyzed her and caused her to walk unsteadily, and it is thought that she had fallen into the marsh and was unable to free herself. She had no children.⁴⁷

John Elliott and Maud Howe Elliott

Artist and muralist John Elliott (1859–1925) and his wife Maud Howe Elliott, daughter of Julia Ward Howe (who wrote the Battle Hymn of the Republic) came to Cornish in 1903. They rented the home of artists Henry and Edith Prellwitz. In 1904, they bought twenty acres of DeGoosh pasture land along with some land from N. E. Williams and Walter Williams, all in Plainfield.⁴⁸ A friend, Mike Stillman, helped design their new kitchen ell, which Maud said "was the best of all the many kitchens she had presided over."

"Jack" Elliott named the little farm he bought "Farthest North" (George Grabe, 1991).⁴⁹ Their Cornish Colony neighbors were the Herbert Adamases and Peter Finley Dunne, the creator of Mr. Dooley. Farmer Read and his wife were good friends, and Jack enjoyed visiting with them and talking about "crops and critters."

While in Plainfield, he painted many landscapes, including Mt. Ascutney, and was also fond of depicting birch trees. A number of these local canvases were exhibited in Boston at 31 Beacon Street in December 1903.

Maud Howe Elliott and her two sisters wrote a biography about their famous mother for which they won a Pulitzer Prize for biography.⁵⁰ She once spoke at a meeting of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club in Plainfield and described it "for the farmers' wives, to help the women out of their very narrow lives by giving them a simple and exact account of the daily habits of life."⁵¹

John Elliott's best known paintings were "Diana of the Tides" at the Smithsonian Institute,⁵² "The Triumph of Time" for the Boston Public Library, and "The Story of the Vintage" for Mrs. Potter Palmer's house in Chicago. Elliott painted many portraits, including those of British royalty. He was very fond of his mother-in-law, Julia Ward Howe, and painted a well-known portrait of her in her later years.



Barry Faulkner. Courtesy Virginia Colby.

Barry Faulkner

Barry Faulkner was a member of the Dublin Art Colony and also maintained strong ties to the Cornish Colony. Born in Keene, New Hampshire, on July 12, 1881, Faulkner spent one year at Harvard where he met Homer Saint-Gaudens, the son of Augustus Saint-Gaudens whose home and studio, Aspet, were in Cornish. In the years immediately ahead, he was fortunate to visit Aspet on various occasions and to work for the great sculptor as well. He often boarded with Mrs. George Ruggles while in Plainfield and used Ruggles' studio, as did artist Cliff Young who also assisted Faulkner with his murals. Cliff Young is now completing the murals in the United States Capitol Building left unfinished when eighty-five year old Allyn Cox, son of Colony member Kenyon Cox, retired in 1981.

Faulkner received a medal from the Architectural League of New York for his "Famous Women." With his career established, his commissions included "The Tempest" for Washington Irving High School; "Sea Charts of the World" for the Gunard Building, New York; "Dramatic Music" for the Eastman Theatre, Rochester.⁵³

Faulkner served in World War I in the U. S. Army in the American Camouflage Corps with Homer Saint-Gaudens, Harry Thrasher, and Richard Meryman. Following the war, Faulkner collaborated with architect Eric Gugler and sculptor Paul Manship on a memorial to the two slain Fellows of the American Academy in Rome, Harry Thrasher and Walter Ward.⁵⁴



"Apple Girl" by Barry Faulkner, Cornish, 1938. The sitter is Hazel (Gibson) Amidon of Plainfield. The image was incorporated in the murals in the Oregon State Capitol Building. Courtesy Virginia Colby.

Barry Faulkner did a series of mural panels for the new Oregon State Capitol Building in 1937–38. He drew the head of Hazel (Gibson) Amidon of Plainfield as model for the "Apple Girl" in one of the murals.

Charles and Eleanor Platt offered Barry Faulkner the use of a vacant room in their house in Cornish for a studio during the summer of 1933. They found living accommodations for him with Ralph and Susie Jordan in Plainfield. In the mid-'30s, Faulkner bought a sixty-acre farm in Keene, which he named "The Bounty." He continued to use it as a summer place until he retired there permanently.

Faulkner received several New Hampshire commissions, first, for the Elliot Community Hospital in Keene. Then he painted four historical panels for the Senate Chamber in the state capitol building in Concord. For the panel entitled "The Childhood of Daniel Webster," Charles A. Platt, son of William Platt, and grandson of Charles A. Platt, the noted Cornish Colony architect, posed as a young Daniel Webster, kneeling over a copy of the newly ratified United States Constitution on the floor of a Salisbury general store.⁵⁵ Young Platt died in 1990 at his home in Cornish.

Faulkner died in Keene October 2, 1966.



Henry Brown Fuller.
Courtesy Virginia
Colby.

Henry Brown Fuller

Artist Henry Brown Fuller (1867–1934) was the son of an artistic family. His father was George Fuller (1822–1884) of Deerfield, Massachusetts, who maintained an international reputation. Fuller studied with Dennis Bunker at the Cowles Art School, with William Merritt Chase, H. Siddons Mowbray, and Kenyon Cox at the Students Art League, and at the school of Raphael Colin in Paris.

Henry, with his artist wife, Lucia Fairchild Fuller, came to the Cornish-Plainfield area about 1897, purchasing the Solomon Stone house on present Route 12A in Plainfield (Dowd family, 1991).

The house was renovated around three sides of a courtyard with a columned portico facing the court. In 1899, the house was almost completely destroyed by fire. Only the main part of the house was rebuilt. Pillars from the former portico were left standing. Subsequently a swimming pool was added to the courtyard and a wall built on all four sides of the courtyard to incorporate the pillars.⁵⁶ Many happy hours were spent in the pool where all the neighborhood children learned to swim.

Henry Fuller's most famous paintings were done in Plainfield. "The Triumph of Truth Over Error," a large eight by ten foot painting, won the Carnegie Prize of \$500 at the winter exhibition of the National Academy of Design in 1908. Criticism came when it was discovered that Fuller had been assisted by Everett Shinn, William Chadwick, and the late Mr. Saint-Gaudens.⁵⁷ He rebutted that all of the old masters had assistants who helped with the preliminary work. The *Evening Post* commented, "He must know whether he has carried

out his plan with somebody's aid or whether somebody else has aided him in finding a plan to be carried out. In one case, he is master; in the other, a manufacturer employing specialists."

The painting "The Triumph of Truth Over Error" was inspired by Mary Baker Eddy and the Christian Science movement. It was the first painting by an artist of Mr. Fuller's rank to illustrate a text from Mrs. Eddy's book, *Science and Health*.⁵⁸ When the painting was unveiled, Henry Fuller shared his commitment to Christian Science. The painting was finally sold in 1930 to a California couple who donated it to Principia College in Elmhurst, Illinois, where it remains. Fuller also won a silver medal at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915 for the painting.

Fuller made other notable pictures. His "Three Fates" is owned by the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D. C., and his "Illusions" received a medal at the Pan-American Exposition. Other paintings were a portrait of Cornish Colony member "George Rublee," a painting of "Mt. Ascutney," and "Ebba Bohm" who was a Swedish girl, an auburn-haired model who lived with them. Henry Fuller exhibited two paintings in the Exhibition of Cornish Colony artists at Dartmouth College in 1916.⁵⁹ Fuller was noted for developing a new medium, the mellowtint etching process, in 1919. Fuller's achievements were noticed, and he became an Associate of the National Academy.

When Fuller and his wife Lucia separated amicably, he returned to Deerfield to live with his mother. He died in 1934.

Lucia Fairchild Fuller

Lucia Fairchild Fuller (1872-1924), a miniature painter, wife of artist Henry B. Fuller, studied art under Dennis Bunker at the Cowles Art School in Boston and under Henry Siddons Mowbray and William Merritt Chase at the Art Students League in New York.

For the *Masque of the Golden Bowl*, she and her husband, Henry, painted the Greek chariot that carried Augusta and Augustus Saint-Gaudens to the studio.⁶⁰

The following year, the Cornish Colony children performed in a play *The Rose and the Ring* in which the children were "coached" by Ethel Barrymore. The scenery was painted by Lucia Fuller, who was also stage manager.⁶¹

According to local tradition, Lucia painted a mural for an exhibition, but the colonial scene that she depicted was rejected because a tree stump looked sawn instead of chopped. Local people posed for it including Tracy Spalding, Kate Davis, and Mrs. Eleanor Platt. The mural now hangs in the Blow-Me-Down Grange Hall in Plainfield.⁶²

Augustus Saint-Gaudens asked Lucia to paint a portrait of his son Homer. In return for the portrait, Lucia selected copies of Saint-Gaudens' bronzes "Victory" and "Puritan."

Henry Fuller was subject to severe spells of depression. It fell to Lucia to

provide most of the income to pay the family's bills. The Fuller children had carpentry lessons at the Nichols' house, and in 1909, Clara was enrolled in school in Cornish. Lucia still found time for painting. She gave miniature lessons to Carlotta Dolley Saint-Gaudens and painted portraits of Sylvia Platt and Norma Hapgood. She also belonged to the Cornish Discussion Club. On a national level, Lucia was president of the American Society of Miniature Painters in 1913 and a member of the Pennsylvania Society of Miniature Painters. Lucia Fuller also wrote a column entitled "The Field of Art" for a popular magazine.

A bronze medal was won by Lucia at the International Exposition in Paris in 1900, a silver medal at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo in 1901, and a gold medal in 1904 at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in Saint Louis. At the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915, she exhibited five works; and at the Dartmouth College exhibit of Cornish Colony artists in 1916, she entered three works.⁶³

Stephen Parrish frequently wrote in his diary about dinner parties and other social affairs at the Fullers' house. They also came to his home at Northcote. The Fuller tennis courts were often the center of interest with artist Everett Shinn, actor John Blair, philosopher Herbert Croly, *Collier's* editor Norman Hapgood, and Lucia's husband Henry, all participating.

Frances Duncan wrote "A Swimming Pool at Cornish" for the July 1906 issue of *Country Life in America* and described the pool at Fuller's house and all of the neighborhood activity. The total cost of the twelve by twenty-eight foot inground pool was \$200. In 1906, they rented their house to Ethel Barrymore. They also rented the house to Ernest Lawson and his family one season.

After the Fullers separated amicably, Henry still made occasional visits to Cornish. Multiple Sclerosis consumed Lucia later in her life and she had to quit painting. She died in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1924.

Frances Grimes

Frances Grimes (1869–1963) came to the Cornish-Plainfield area as an apprentice to sculptor Herbert Adams in 1894. She lived with the Adamses in a little cottage on Freeman Hill which was owned by C. C. Beaman. The house was originally assembled from some out-buildings for George deForest Brush. It no longer stands.⁶⁴

In 1901, Frances Grimes became an assistant to sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens. That year she stayed with the Houstons. Known as "Grimesy" in the studio, she worked on several of Saint-Gaudens' commissions, and following his death completed the remaining unfinished works. Her good friend, Lucia Fairchild Fuller, wrote for *Arts & Decoration* in 1920, "But Miss Grimes appeared to have almost the power of second sight in the sympathy with which she could divine his intentions and perform whatever he wished done."⁶⁵

While at Saint-Gaudens' studio, he encouraged Grimes to pursue independent work. She modelled a bust of Bishop Henry C. Potter who was the father of



Frances Grimes in *The Masque of "Ours," the Gods and the Golden Bowl*, Cornish, 1905. Courtesy Saint-Gaudens National Historical Site.

Mrs. Henry Fitch Taylor and Mrs. William Henry Hyde, both members of the artists' colony. Grace Church in New York City owns the bust. Other portraits of Cornish Colony neighbors included a *bas-relief* of Clarissa and Eleanor Platt, Frances Hand, and Winston Churchill. Her *bas-relief* of Arthur Whiting is in the music department of the New York Public Library. Stephen Parrish notes in his diary on September 8, 1905, "With Anne, drove over to Saint-Gaudens' and brought home plaster cast of Anne made by Frances Grimes. It was commenced nearly two years ago and is a beautiful work of art and a perfect likeness." Later on Stephen Parrish painted a picture to give Grimes in exchange for the *bas-relief* of Anne.

Frances Grimes is best known for her sensitive and delicate portrait busts and low reliefs, especially those of children, such as "Head of Frederick Eberstadt." She also executed several fountain pieces. She worked in plaster and bronze, but it is her work in marble which most effectively reveals her talent.⁶⁶

Grimes stayed at the Westgate Farm just up the road from Saint-Gaudens' studio along with Elsie Ward and Henry Hering, two of Saint-Gaudens' other assistants. She later lived in Clara Davidge's renovated old mill in Plainfield in 1910. Stephen Parrish noted in 1906 that Grimes was staying at the Bryants'.

Grimes lived for many years in a little house on Stage Road near Route 12A in Plainfield. During World War II, she assisted with the Plainfield British War Relief Society.⁶⁷ She died on November 9, 1963, at the age of ninety-four in New York City. She is buried in Chase Cemetery in Cornish.



Postcard, William Howard Hart House, Stage Road, Plainfield. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

William Howard Hart

William Howard Hart, a landscape and figure painter, was also known for his interest in drama. He first came to Cornish with Herbert and Adeline Adams, and boarded at the Stephen A. Tracy farmhouse.⁶⁸

Hart first appears on the Plainfield tax list when he purchased part of the Lewin property next to the Adamses. Hart added a couple of dormer windows and a porch at one end of the house. He also built a terrace to provide some flat area in front of his house. Vines and shrubbery were planted in the right places, the entrance door was enclosed with a lattice, and the lawn was encircled with flower beds.⁶⁹

In 1916, Hart's interest in dramatics led him to offer the town a stage with professional lighting and a stage set designed by Maxfield Parrish (see below). Hart organized the "Howard Hart Players" in the late 1930s, a drama troupe of local people. They produced plays such as *Hansel and Gretel* in 1937 and 1938, *The Late Christopher Bean* in 1938, and *Folk Dance Festival* in 1938.⁷⁰

Hart attended the Art Student's League and also studied at the Académie Julian under Boulanger and Jules Lefebvre. In 1896, he painted "Country Lane Landscape." Other works are "Landscape of Mt. Ascutney," "Portrait of Mrs. Herbert Adams," "Woman in a Garden," and "Mrs. Herbert Adams at Home," all of which are locally owned. Hart exhibited two of his works, "Lady in Shawl" and "Girl in Cloak," at the Twenty-seventh Annual Exhibition of the Society

of American Artists in 1905. Two of his figure paintings were included in an exhibition of Cornish artists at Dartmouth College in 1916.⁷¹ Hart died, unmarried, on February 20, 1937, and bequeathed most of his estate to Herbert Adams.⁷²

Albion and Mary Lang

Mr. and Mrs. Albion E. Lang came to Cornish during the third wave of wealthy newcomers to join the Cornish Colony. The Langs were from Ohio where he was engaged in the organization of street railway service in northwestern Ohio.

Albion and Mary Lang purchased part of the Chapman farm in 1906 and then added acreage from the F. J. Chadbourne farm on the Cornish-Plainfield line on Dodge Road. They were always taxed for horses and cows, and some years for fowls, hogs, and sheep. Stephen Parrish noted in his diary on September 28, 1905, "I am in despair at the inability to get any 'help' including a stonemason to lay the new wall south of the present garden. Lang's new house takes all the men available." Edward M. Dannatt, a Windsor cabinet-maker, also worked on the twenty-seven-room house which had three furnaces. Burtel Philbrick operated the Lang farm for a number of years. William Jenney and Francis Perry were among those serving as caretakers of the property.

Mary Lang was a sister to Admiral William Folger, who had come to Cornish in 1901. Albion Lang was very interested in the local area and contributed generously of his talents and money. He spoke frequently in Old Home Day celebrations.

In 1906, at a meeting of the Interstate Bridge Commissioners of Vermont and New Hampshire held to discuss "freeing the bridge," Lang and William Balloch were the speakers from Cornish. Mr. and Mrs. Lang were members of the Cornish Equal Suffrage League which was formed in 1911; Mrs. Lang was a member of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club of Plainfield. Mr. Lang was a member of the Plainfield Progressive League which was organized the winter of 1908-09.⁷³ The Langs contributed books and magazine subscriptions to the Plainfield and Cornish libraries,⁷⁴ and were generous contributors to the Meriden Bird Club Bird Sanctuary.⁷⁵

At one time, Lang tried to give Plainfield running water. However, the pipes had to run through the Shipman's property, and they refused the right-of-way. Plainfield never got the water.

After the fire on the hill in Meriden in 1927 when water was obtained from a small cistern, the idea came to construct a pool for fire protection as well as swimming. Lang provided generously for the construction of the swimming pool at Kimball Union Academy and the installation of the electrically driven pump.⁷⁶

Following the death of Mary Lang in 1931, Albion's sister, Lily, came to stay with him. Lang died in 1938 at the age of eighty-nine. The Lang house, which was called "Highlands," burned April 11, 1945, under suspicious cir-



Percy MacKaye.
Courtesy Virginia Colby.

cumstances. The ensuing trial, which was held in Newport, made spectacular headlines. Arthur W. Fedor, a wealthy Linden, New Jersey, realtor, had purchased the property for \$6,000. He was alleged to have bought \$80,000 worth of insurance on the twenty-seven-room house. It was determined during the trial that the house was worth \$180,000 at the present day value. After many witnesses, laboratory tests, etc., Fedor was acquitted on November 21, 1945. The trial lasted from October 30 through November 20, the longest trial in Newport in twenty-one years.⁷⁷

Percy MacKaye

Poet and dramatist Percy MacKaye came to the Cornish Colony in 1904 after completion of the *Scarecrow* (1903, staged 1909) and *Canterbury Pilgrims* (1903, staged 1909). His numerous plays and poems, many of which were written in his New Hampshire studio have given him stature in the literary and theatrical worlds. The son of Steele MacKaye, an actor and producer, Percy was educated at Harvard where he graduated in 1897. The next year, he attended the University of Leipzig. He taught at the Craigie School for Boys in New York City from 1900 to 1904 and lectured on theater throughout his life at Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and other universities.

Jeanne d'Arc was written in 1906 in "Woodchuck Hole" where he worked until he had his own studio. Following *Jeanne d'Arc*, he wrote *Sapho and Phaon*,

1907; *Mater*, 1908; and *Yankee Fantasies*, 1912. In two of his books, *The Playhouse and the Play*, 1909, and *The Civic Theatre in Relation to the Redemption of Leisure*, MacKaye expressed the idea that theater had redemptive potential and that drama could have a civic and an educational purpose.⁷⁸

MacKaye revived public pageantry—simple dramatic productions performed outdoors by local amateurs rather than by professional actors. One of the first publicized pageants was the *Masque of the Golden Bowl* performed in Cornish in June 1905. MacKaye wrote the prologue and played the part of “Hermes,” god of the roads. Although this masque was performed by the members of the Cornish Colony for themselves in honor of Saint-Gaudens, MacKaye believed that pageantry was “poetry for the masses.”

The most spectacular was the St. Louis Masque by MacKaye called *A Masque of American Civilization*, performed in 1914. Ten thousand citizens of St. Louis performed before a half million spectators in five performances. This was presented in Forest Park May 28 to June 1, using a stage area of 91,000 square feet.⁷⁹ “The Pageant Ear,” attached by an elastic band, augmented hearing in the more remote sections of the vast audience. It was a curved cardboard extension of the human ear. The mayor of St. Louis, Henry W. Kiel, said the masque was of great benefit to the city and instilled civic pride.

Caliban, was a community masque on the art of the theater. It was written to commemorate the tercentenary of William Shakespeare’s death. The only time Isadora Duncan ever danced in public outside of her own productions was on the opening night of Percy MacKaye’s *Caliban*, in New York, May 23, 1916. MacKaye also wrote poems for her dances.

In 1914, Dartmouth College conferred upon MacKaye The Honorary Degree of M.A. with these words: “Master of Arts to Percy MacKaye, poet, dramatist, critic, whose large vision of the theatre includes the pageantry and idealism of all men.”

MacKaye is best remembered locally for writing *Sanctuary: A Bird Masque*, performed as part of the dedication of the Meriden Bird Sanctuary in 1913. In collaboration with Ernest Harold Baynes, who established the sanctuary, MacKaye wrote the masque with the idea of arousing community interest in protecting wild birds.⁸⁰ More than 400 people attended the pageant. The masque received national attention. Performances were held all over the country and stimulated the organization of over 100 bird clubs.

In a diary entry, Stephen Parrish wrote, “Evening Percy MacKaye read his play ‘Jeanne D.Arc’ at his studio at Ruggles’ to a company of 21 persons—all the Colony here at present.” On October 11, 1906, Parrish noted, “Left for Phila. to see first performance of ‘Jeanne D.Arc’ by Percy at the new Lyric Theatre—Southern and Julia Marlow.”; October 15, 1906, “Play a success. Met the actors.”

The first eight years MacKaye was in Cornish, he rented three different places before he built his own home, “Hilltop.” Not far from the house, he built his studio where he lived and worked up to eight months of the year until his death

in 1956. Many of his works were written there, and some were based on his experiences in New England, such as *Yankee Fantasies* (1912), a series of one act folk plays. MacKaye also wrote *Gettysburg: A Woodshed Commentary* which was based on the life of Link Chapman, a neighboring farmer.

In 1904-5, MacKaye rented the Snuff Box House (which belonged to Admiral Folger, William Gersumky, 1991), where he wrote *Ferris, the Wolf*, and from 1905-06 he stayed at the Fuller house, but boarded at the Tracy's during the summer of 1906. From 1906-12, he stayed at "The Wayside," a house that once stood on the corner of Lang and Hayward Roads. During their stay at the Snuff Box house, William Vaughn Moody lived there with the MacKays.

"Hilltop" was constructed in 1913 and Ned Waite and Gene Rice were the builders. The studio from "Wayside," which had burned, was moved up the hill and placed near "Hilltop." President and Mrs. Wilson visited at "Hilltop."

Percy and Marion (Morse) MacKaye had three children: Robin "Keith," Arvia, and Christy. Carlotta Saint-Gaudens painted a portrait of Percy, and Frances Grimes did a sculpture of Arvia. Louise Cox also painted a portrait of Arvia. MacKaye was the first American Fellow in Poetry and Drama at Miami University, Ohio, in 1920. Maxfield Parrish, in commenting on the appropriateness of the appointment, said Percy's "a poet twenty-four hours a day."

Among the fifty writers who paid tribute to Percy MacKaye on his fiftieth birthday were Witter Bynner, Walter Damrosch, Hamlin Garland, Walter Lippmann, Langdon Mitchell, and Ridgely Torrence, all of whom had spent time in Cornish. This tribute was published in book form in 1925.⁸¹

In the summer of 1930, MacKaye worked at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. He was a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters and the Poetry Society of America.

Paul Manship

Paul Manship (1885-1966) was a prolific sculptor and was America's most popular during the 1920s and 1930s. He was a fellow at the American Academy in Rome from 1909-12, and produced "Centaur and Nymph Dancing" in 1910, and "Duck Girl" in 1911. Manship made a trip to Greece in 1912 and was very taken with early Greek art, which inspired his archaic style. Manship was regarded as extremely "modern." Later he was considered a "tastemaker" in the art deco period.

Manship started his art career as a painter but switched to sculpture after painting a portrait in shades of green. He discovered he was color blind. In his lifetime, Manship produced a large number of public monuments as well as many decorative bronzes and marbles. He designed "Moods of Time" which consisted of four allegorical figures: "Day," "Evening," "Morning," and "Night" as well as "Time and Fate" (a sundial) for the 1939-40 New York World's Fair. His works are found in collections of many of the nation's prominent museums. His best known sculptures are "Prometheus," which is located at



Paul Manship.
Courtesy Virginia Colby.

Rockefeller Center in New York City, and the famed entrance gates to the Bronx Zoo. Many of his sculptures included animals.⁸²

Manship spent the summers of 1915 through 1927⁸³ in Plainfield. He rented the Fuller house (Dowd family, 1991) and the Wood cottage on Freeman Road, which had been used earlier by George DeForest Brush. He also boarded with Mrs. George S. Ruggles and rented the Ruggles' studio.⁸⁴ Manship was represented in an exhibition of Cornish artists at Dartmouth College in 1916.⁸⁵ He received frequent commissions from Charles A. Platt for garden sculptures. Manship and Barry Faulkner were life-long friends, and later collaborated on the memorial to Harry Thrasher, 1922–23, at the American Academy in Rome.

While in Plainfield, Manship completed sketches for "Diana" and "Actaeon." In 1915, he did a portrait medal of Barry Faulkner and Maxfield Parrish. He was also a trustee of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial in Cornish.⁸⁶

Willard Leroy Metcalf

Willard Leroy Metcalf (1858–1925) was an accomplished artist when he first visited Cornish in 1909 at the invitation of poet and playwright Louis Evan Shipman. Metcalf was born in Lowell, Massachusetts, July 1, 1858. He studied at Julian Academy in Paris under Boulanger and Lefebvre. He was a member of the American Watercolor Society, Architectural League, and American Academy of Arts and Letters. Metcalf became one of the founding members

of "The Ten," a group of American impressionists organized in 1897.⁸⁷ Metcalf enjoyed the still quiet of winter in New Hampshire. He painted many beautiful snow scenes which brought high critical acclaim and an income.⁸⁸ By 1925, when he died, his paintings were hanging in many museums.

Metcalf stayed at the Shipman's house, "Brook Place," located on the Meriden Stage Road (Dennis Dinan, 1991) where he produced a number of paintings including "Winter Afternoon," a scene incorporating Shipman's house.

January 1911, Metcalf returned to Cornish with his bride, twenty-year-old Henriette McCrea of Chicago, thirty-three years his junior. He produced some of his best paintings during the early years of their marriage. Charles Platt lent the honeymoon couple his house in Cornish. Elizabeth deVeer, in her article "Willard Metcalf in Cornish, New Hampshire," *Antiques*, November 1984, records that Henriette eagerly toted Willard's canvases "calling herself his 'willing slave,' while learning at firsthand the meaning of plain-air painting in bitterly cold New England weather. She found her husband firm in his commitment to paint from nature, retiring to the studio only for the finishing touches."

When the Metcalfs returned to Plainfield in early summer of 1911, they stayed at Mrs. Clarissa (Potter) Davidge's old mill. Here Metcalf did some of his most outstanding paintings. They returned to New York where their first child, Rosalind, was born. Metcalf came to Cornish early in 1913 to paint four snow scenes.

Paintings by Metcalf done while in the Cornish-Plainfield area include: "Winter Afternoon 1917," "Hauling Wood," "Le Sillon" (1911), "The Winter's Festival" (1913), "Symphony in Yellow" (1911), "Cornish Hills" (1911), "Blow-Me-Down" (1911), "Thawing Brook" (1911), "The Hush of Winter" (1911),⁸⁹ "Ice Bound" (1909), "September Morn, Plainfield, New Hampshire" (1911), "The White Veil" (1909).⁹⁰

Robert Treat Paine

Robert Treat Paine (1870-1946) came to Cornish in 1907 as an assistant to Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Paine had helped to devise an accurate system of enlarging sculpture using a point system.⁹¹ He worked with Louis Saint-Gaudens to develop a cubical pantograph which plotted up to 400 points a day. It was the fastest known method of enlarging a sculptural design and permitted accurate work.⁹² The first use of Robert Treat Paine's device for mechanical enlargement of sculpture was by Saint-Gaudens in his New York studio for his Sherman Monument (1896, Grand Army Plaza, New York City).

Paine studied at the Chicago School of Art and later became a student of Saint-Gaudens at the Art Student's League.

Paine's wife, Mary (Trueblood) Paine, bought the Everett Shinn house, on what is now Daniels Road in Plainfield, in 1907.⁹³ The property was originally part of the old Westgate farm. In 1944, Mrs. Paine, who was then in Carmel, California, sold the property to Bruce Beals, Jr. (John McNellis, 1991).⁹⁴



Lydia Parrish,
Plainfield. Courtesy
Philip Read Memorial
Library.

Lydia (Austin) Parrish

Maxfield Parrish married Lydia Austin, daughter of a Quaker family from Woodstown, New Jersey, in 1895. Three years later Parrish bought land in Plainfield. During the construction of their house, the couple stayed with his father, Stephen Parrish, and boarded at S. A. Tracy's.⁹⁵ *The Vermont Journal* for December 24, 1898, states that "Fred Parrish [as he was called] will move to his new house in a few days." Following the births of their four children, John Dillwyn (1904), Maxfield, Jr. (1906), Stephen (1909), and Jean (1911), Mrs. Parrish became more involved in community affairs.

Fred and Lydia were members of the Cornish Equal Suffrage League which was formed in 1911. Lydia was an active member of the Cornish Discussion Club which Rose Nichols, the landscape architect, had organized. She was also active in the Mothers' and Daughters' Club of Plainfield.⁹⁶

Lucy (Ruggles) Bishop tutored the Parrish children in all of their subjects. She especially enjoyed the pictures that John Dillwyn drew in the margins of his papers.⁹⁷ Marguerite (Lewin) Quimby taught music to the children. Miss Hattie Read, of Cornish, was employed by Mrs. Maxfield Parrish for seventeen years.

Maxfield Parrish had owned automobiles a number of years before this advertisement appeared in 1913: "Wanted—a small, light second-hand sleigh for my 650 pound pony. I wish to sell my excellent driving horse not afraid of auto-



Parrish family, L-R Stephen, Maxfield, Jr., Mrs. Parrish, Jean.
Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

mobiles as have no further use for him. Price reasonable for cash.—Mrs. Maxfield Parrish.”

The autumn of 1914, at the beginning of World War I, Lydia Parrish organized the young people of Cornish and Plainfield and started the School Gardens. Local children who participated in the gardening project included: Erwin Williams, Max Plummer, who was the youngest, Stephen Plummer, Ruth (Whitaker) Northrop, Benjamin Lewin, Sylvia (Waite) Gray, Adelbert Westgate, Grace Whitaker, and Rachel Daniels. Prizes were given for the best spring garden and the best autumn garden.⁹⁸

While Mrs. Parrish was at St. Simons Island, Georgia, Maxfield spent his winters in New Hampshire. Lydia Parrish wrote a book entitled *Slave Songs of the Georgia Sea Islands* (1942) which has been hailed as a contribution to recording Negro music and its origins. Creighton Churchill, son of the American author Winston Churchill, and Robert MacGimsey transcribed the music.⁹⁹ Lydia Parrish also wrote another book which was never published, *Records of Some Southern Loyalists*. This manuscript is located at the Harvard College Library. Mrs. Parrish died in 1953 in Georgia at the age of eighty-one.

Maxfield Parrish

Fred Maxfield Parrish (1870–1966) was one of the most popular artists of the early twentieth century. He lived and painted in Plainfield for sixty-eight years. Parrish is remembered for his illustrations of children's books, his whimsical and sometimes impish advertisements, calendar prints, and art prints highlighted by his famous “Parrish Blue.”

On June 9, 1898, Maxfield Parrish purchased nineteen acres for \$950, with money borrowed from his father, Stephen Parrish, an internationally known etcher and painter.¹⁰⁰ The land consisted of rock strewn sheep pastures and woodland, overlooking his father's home, “Northcote,” in Cornish with Mt. Ascutney beyond in Vermont. Stephen Parrish had arrived in Cornish just five years earlier.

Construction of Maxfield Parrish's house, “The Oaks,” was begun immediately. Parrish designed his house which was built dodging oak trees and rocks. In fact, when a large section of ledge was encountered, instead of blasting, Parrish just built over it, creating a ground floor on two levels.

Parrish studied architecture at Haverford College in Pennsylvania before going on to study art with Thomas Anschutz at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia. He was well-equipped to be his own architect and contractor, but he engaged George S. Ruggles, a neighbor, as his chief carpenter. Ruggles once commented that “the house started as a rectangle and then Parrish built east, west, north, south and up.” (See Chapter 22, Biography.)

When the Oaks was completed in 1906, it contained fifteen rooms, the largest and most spectacular of which was the music room. It was some forty feet in length and twenty feet in width, with fourteen-foot high ceilings. With its huge



Maxfield Parrish, about 1925.
Courtesy Virginia Colby.

twelve-foot fireplace and a stage at one end, this room was the scene of many entertainments during the days of the Cornish Colony. The house burned in 1979, but the studio was not damaged.

Parrish's studio, which is some forty paces north of the house, was begun in 1905 when Parrish found it difficult painting with the distractions of normal household activities. Parrish often referred to himself as a "mechanic" who painted. The ground floor of the studio was fully equipped as a machine shop. Parrish would say to visitors exclaiming over the extensive machine shop that he had to paint in order to earn enough money to buy the machinery he enjoyed.

Parrish frequently painted from wooden models turned out on the wood lathes. He made wooden urns, vases, models of houses, furniture, and much more. In preparation for a painting, he often would set up a small scene and cast the proper shadows with a floor lamp before photographing it. His studio also included a well-equipped darkroom.

A large room in the studio used for painting during the winter was equipped with a round pot-bellied stove which served for warmth and also helped to dry the glaze on the paintings. Parrish often had many paintings in progress because of the ancient, slow method he used of glazing between each layer of paint. Each layer had to dry thoroughly before the next color could be applied.¹⁰¹



Maxfield Parrish in his machine shop about 1940. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Parrish often used local models: Arlene (Jenney) Wilson, Sue Lewin, Sam Clark, Kathleen (Philbrick) Read, Jean Parrish, Maxfield Parrish, Jr., Kitty Owen, John Daniels, and George Ruggles.¹⁰²

Mechanical labor-saving devices engineered by Parrish included a set of tracks and a car for bringing wood from the woodpile to an elevator which lifted it upstairs to the fireplace. A birdbath, which is located out on a roof was filled through a copper tube.

Both painting rooms in the studio have very large high windows equipped with worm gear segments for opening them by simply turning a lever. The larger of the two rooms was built to accommodate mural panels. Parrish installed a trap door in the floor which could be opened to lower a mural into the garage.

Upon completion of important paintings, Parrish often held an "open house" and invited friends and neighbors in to view the pieces before crating. On October 24, 1909, Stephen Parrish noted in his diary, "p.m. drove over to see the decoration "The Pied Piper of Hamlin"—for a San Francisco hotel—everybody there." The Palace Hotel (not the Sheraton-Palace Hotel) commissioned the mural in 1909 which is still there.

Plainfield has its own Maxfield Parrish "mural" and a reputation of own-

ing the "most beautiful stage north of Boston." In 1916, Parrish painted a scene with Mt. Ascutney in the background. The following year professional scene painters, under Parrish's direction, reproduced the painting on the town hall stage backdrop, six wings, and three overhead drapes. The original design was gridded and then projected on a large canvass.¹⁰³ (In 1982 the painting was owned by a resident of Los Angeles, California.) The entire stage, including the lighting system, was a gift to the town of Plainfield by William Howard Hart (see above).

Article X in the 1916 Plainfield Annual Town Report reads: "To see if the town will vote to raise the sum of three hundred dollars to build a foundation at the east end of the town hall at Plainfield in accordance with a proposition submitted by William H. Harte." The following year, the annual report noted that the foundation for the town hall addition had cost the town \$270. Hart proposed that the town appropriate money to build the foundation, and Hart and his associates would finance above the foundation including staging and lights. The set is still in use today. The stage lights could create daylight to dusk to twilight and all degrees in between.

Mr. Richard Stoddard, an authority on American theater scenery states: "The Parrish set has considerable historical importance. Very little actual scenery (as contrasted with scenic designs on paper) has survived from the American theatre before 1920, and most of what survives is journeyman work from studios specializing in supplying stock scenery...None of them have the distinction of being based on designs by a famous American artist. The Plainfield set is remarkable, then, not only because so little such scenery has survived, but because it was designed by and painted under the supervision of a celebrated American artist. In this respect, the Parrish set appears to be unique...The Plainfield set is also notable because it is not a stock scene, but rather a view of a well known Plainfield landmark. The condition and the color of the scenery are also remarkably good, considering its age and the fact that it has been used on and off for more than seventy years."¹⁰⁴

In 1911, the Curtis Publishing Company commissioned Parrish to paint a series of eighteen mural panels for the Ladies' Dining Room in their building in Philadelphia. Known as the "Florentine Fete," Sue Lewin posed for most of the characters.

Other mural commissions included "The Old King Cole" mural for the old Knickerbocker Hotel in New York City (1906, now in the St. Regis Hotel), "Sing a Song of Sixpence" in the Hotel Sherman (1910, Chicago), and his first major commission "Old King Cole" for the Mask and Wig Club of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia (1894).

Parrish's career as an illustrator began with a cover for *Harper's Weekly*, April 1895. Commissions followed from *Century*, *St. Nicholas*, *Scribner's*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Collier's* for which Parrish did sixty-six covers.

Parrish's book illustrations included L. Frank Baum's *Mother Goose in Prose* (Chicago: Way and Williams, 1897); Washington Irving's *Knickerbocker's*



Reproduction of the costume designed and worn by Maxfield Parrish in *The Masque of "Ours," the Gods and the Golden Bowl*, in 1905. The costume was reproduced for filming the television movie *Saint-Gaudens; Masque of the Golden Bowl*, June 1985. Photo by Nancy Norwalk. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

History of New York (New York: R. H. Russell, 1900); Kenneth Grahame's *The Golden Age* (London and New York: John Lane, 1899), and *Dream Days* (London and New York: John Lane, 1902); Eugene Field's *Poems of Childhood* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904); and Edith Wharton's *Italian Villas and Their Gardens* (New York: The Century Co., 1904).

Commissions for advertisements came from Edison Mazda Light Bulbs as calendars from 1918–34; Fisk Tires, 1917–19; Oneida Silverplate, 1918; and from the Genesee Pure Food Company for Jell-O, 1921, 1923.¹⁰⁵

"Daybreak," Parrish's most famous painting, of which many thousand chromolithographs were made, was painted especially for reproduction. In this painting, as well as in a number of others, one may see several of Parrish's fingerprints left from lifting off excess paint with his finger. Some other paintings made for art reproductions included "The Garden of Allah," in 1919, and "October," in 1928. Brown and Bigelow reproduced Parrish's paintings on their greeting cards and calendars from 1936 through 1963. By this time, "Parrish Blue" had become household words.

The most outstanding social event in the life of the Cornish Colony was the celebration on June 22, 1905, of the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Colony. Curtains for the outdoor stage of *A Masque of "Ours"* were suspended between two pine trees and were held in place by two great gilded masks designed and executed by Maxfield Parrish, who took the part of Chiron, a wise and beneficent centaur. Maxfield's costume consisted of a rib cage made of barrel staves and wooden hind legs on wheels. These legs were connected

to Parrish's own by steel rods and moved when he walked. Unfortunately, nothing remains of Parrish's costume.¹⁰⁶

Maxfield Parrish received the gold-headed Boston Post Cane from the Plainfield selectmen in 1963, an honor for the town's oldest citizen.¹⁰⁷ He died in 1966 at the age of ninety-six. His ashes are buried in the Plainfield Cemetery.

Frederic Remington

Frederic Remington (1861–1909), best known for his action-filled paintings of the western plains, spent part of 1901 and 1902 in Cornish/Plainfield. During his short life of forty-eight years, he produced a great number of oil paintings, about fifteen bronzes, and was the author of several books.

Cornish playwright Louis Evan Shipman dramatized Remington's "John Ermine of Yellowstone" (1902), and he invited Remington to visit Plainfield to review the script. While in Plainfield, Remington socialized with artist Maxfield Parrish, editor and political philosopher Herbert Croly, and author Winston Churchill, among others. Remington liked the reception he received in the Cornish Colony and decided to buy some land. Remington was living outside New York City in New Rochelle at the time and felt that it was too full of commuters and millionaires. He wanted to buy an old farmhouse with some acreage. He picked out a tract of land on Prospect Mountain in Plainfield and told Shipman he would come with his attorney to get the deed. However, at the last minute, it occurred to him that Windsor/Cornish was the center of the academic artists, some of the very ones who were keeping him out of the National Academy, and for that reason he decided not to buy the land.¹⁰⁸

Apparently, Remington's land was so discussed that neighbors thought that he had actually purchased it. Many printed accounts attest to Remington owning land on Prospect Mountain. However, his name does not appear on the tax records in either Cornish or Plainfield.

He frequently stayed with the Shipmans when they were living in the nice old brick house at the corner of Route 12A and Westgate Road in Plainfield Village, which they called "Poins House" (Robert Lucier, 1991).¹⁰⁹

Everett and Florence Scovel Shinn

Everett Shinn (1873–1953) started his career as press artist for a Philadelphia newspaper. After attending the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts for five years and studying under Thomas Anschutz, he launched into a newspaper career. He subsequently became associated with "The Ashcan School" of painters that included Robert Henri, George B. Luks, John Sloan, William Glackens, and Everett Shinn. They were called "The Ashcan School" because they dealt with the colorful and intimate aspects of city sidewalk life.

Shinn was also fascinated by the theater and, with his wife, Florence Scovel (1869–1940), he organized the Waverly Players in New York, a theatrical

group that he also directed. He wrote the scripts and made the scenery for plays that were performed in their house on Waverly Place. Shinn became well known for his many paintings of the theater and New York City street scenes.¹¹⁰ In the 1940s, Everett Shinn also painted murals for the Oak Bar in the Plaza Hotel in New York City. The room retains its original treatment.

Shinn married Florence Scovel in 1898; the first of his four wives. Florence was an artist in her own right and had illustrated several books.¹¹¹ She authored *The Game of Life and How to Play It* (1925). It was privately printed and was sold by the New York Unity Society for which Florence lectured weekly. She also illustrated stories for *Women's Home Companion*, such as Anne Warner's "Susan Clegg's 'Improvements,'" July 1910, and "Susan Clegg Solves the Mystery," April 1910. Florence Scovel Shinn produced thirty illustrations for American novelist and Cornish Colony resident, Winston Churchill's book *Coniston* (1906).¹¹²

Everett and Florence Shinn bought land in Plainfield from Henry C. Daniels on Daniels Road and constructed their house in 1902 (John McNellis, 1991).¹¹³ Shinn and Harry T. Lindeberg, a New York architect, designed the house, which features a large hall with a Palladian window. The double open stairway leads to a gallery of mezzanine floor that provides entry to the second floor rooms. The house has nine fireplaces. Eight of them have decorative antique mantels. The one in the large hall is the most exquisite.

Shinn assisted Henry Brown Fuller on his mural painting "Triumph of Truth Over Error" (1906-07) which won for Fuller the Carnegie prize for the meritorious painting submitted at the winter exhibition of the National Academy of Design.¹¹⁴

Helen Henderson wrote in her article on the Cornish Colony in *The Lamp* that some people, like artist Everett Shinn, relied chiefly on the natural setting to provide beauty. "The natural beauties of the grounds are great. Six huge maple sugar trees screen the house on the east side, and the ledges of granite exposed about the summit of the hill, upon which the house stands, are in themselves immensely decorative."¹¹⁵

Florence and Everett Shinn divorced in 1912. Everett remarried three times. His early life inspired the main character in Theodore Dreiser's *The Genius*.¹¹⁶

Ellen (Biddle) Shipman

Ellen Biddle (1869-1950) married poet, editor, and playwright, Louis Evan Shipman. For the first two summers the Shipmans were in Cornish, they shared the Frank Johnson farmhouse (which later became the home of Homer and Carlotta Saint-Gaudens) with the Herbert Crolys. The Shipmans later occupied the old brick tavern at what is now the corner of Route 12A and Westgate Road, in Plainfield, and called it "Poins House" (Robert Lucier, 1991). The Shipmans leased the brick house for ten years using the money earned from Louis's story *The Curious Courtship of Kate Poins*. This house is located in Plainfield



Ellen Shipman about 1915.
Courtesy Plainfield Historical
Society.

Village, but, the Shipman's stationery was printed, "Poins House, Cornish, New Hampshire."¹¹⁷

The Shipmans appear on the Plainfield property tax rolls in 1903 owning one horse. In 1904, they owned one horse and 182 acres of the Gilkey farm located on the Meriden Stage Road, which they called "Brook Place" (Dennis Dinan, 1991). Over the years, they kept several horses and cows. By 1916, they were also taxed for one automobile.¹¹⁸

Mrs. Shipman received no formal training as a landscape architect. She attended Radcliffe College as an undergraduate and then Charles Platt took her under his wing as a student in landscape design. He encouraged her interest in this field, and she eventually worked with him on the grounds of several of his houses. However, with three children to care for, she did not pursue this interest as a profession until 1912. Following her divorce, she established an office in Cornish, and as the business grew, opened a New York City office on Beekman Place. She continued to work from her Cornish office in the summer. Ellen Shipman lectured at the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women in Groton, Massachusetts, until it became a division of the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence.

Mrs. Shipman's best known commissions were the Longue Vue Gardens in New Orleans and the six-mile Lake Shore Boulevard at Grosse Pointe, Michigan, which featured a combination of flowering trees, willows, and evergreens to vary the colors and shades of green according to seasons, and the

Botanical Gardens in the Bronx.¹¹⁹ Ellen Shipman told a reporter in 1938: "Until women took up landscaping, gardening in this country was at its lowest ebb. The renaissance was due largely to the fact that women, instead of working over their boards, used plants as if they were painting pictures as an artist would. Today women are at the top of the profession."

Her landscaping usually consisted of narrow walks, low hedges between or along walks with high hedges around the outside. She used perennial herbaceous borders that were narrow rather than deep, small gardens near the house with large lawn areas and large flowering trees. She liked vines espaliered on the house.

Mrs. Shipman wrote many magazine articles for *House Beautiful*. She was selected by the *House & Garden* Hall of Fame in 1933 as the "dean of women landscape architects, for adding immeasurably to garden beauty in many states and for having been so long a sane, understanding leader in her profession." Frances Duncan in her article "The Gardens of Cornish" published in *Century Magazine* for May 1906, shows a photograph of Shipman's garden profuse with blooming flowers. Ellen Shipman, in an article entitled "A New Hampshire House and Garden" published in *House & Garden* for March 1924, describes some of her garden as an extension of the living area.¹²⁰

Brian Hathaway, an Englishman, was employed as an assistant, and following his death, Charles Meyette took over. Wilmer Spalding was a Plainfield blacksmith. Ellen Shipman used to order fancy artistic iron gates for her various garden commissions which Spalding would make to order.¹²¹

Shipman turned to interior decorating during the depression when landscaping commissions slackened. At one time, she had Sylvia Gray of Plainfield make lampshades to match wallpaper. She paid twice what Sylvia asked because it was expert workmanship.¹²² Ellen Shipman died in 1950 and is buried in Gilkey Cemetery in Plainfield.

Louis Evan Shipman

When Louis Evan Shipman first came to Cornish in 1893, he and his wife Ellen shared the Frank Johnson farmhouse for two summers with the Herbert Crolys. They later lived in "Poins House" and on Stage Road. (See Ellen (Biddle) Shipman.)

An early newspaper notice read, "Rumor has it that Mr. Shipman, one of the city colonists, who leased the Hall place for a term of years, is to buy land and build a house the coming year. We are glad to hear this, as Mr. Shipman and family keep their house open the whole year spending their winters with us and have always shown courtesy and consideration for all with whom they had business dealings." Another early newspaper notice states, "Louis Shipman, the noted playwright, has bought the larger part of John Gilkey's place at \$30 per acre. Mr. Shipman will build in the near future."¹²³ The original part of his house was constructed circa 1790, but it has undergone many alterations.

Louis Evan Shipman wrote the masque *The Gods and the Golden Bowl*, which was presented in 1905 to honor the Saint-Gaudens' twentieth anniversary in the Cornish Colony, with the prologue by Percy MacKaye. Shipman also dramatized Winston Churchill's *Crisis* and *The Crossing*. Other works by Shipman include: *Urban Dialogues*, *D'Arcy of the Guards*, *Predicaments*, *The Curious Courtship of Kate Poins*, *John Ermine of the Yellowstone*, and *The Grain of Dust*. In 1914, Shipman published *Adventures of a Play* which tells the ups and downs, successes and failures of the production of a play.¹²⁴

The tennis court was also a challenge. Margaret Homer Shurcliff describes Shipman (on the tennis court) in her book, *Lively Days*, as "the fat roly-poly author and playwright always on hand, dripping with perspiration from the start and pouring forth a continuous line of boasting and teasing."

After Shipman and his wife, Ellen Biddle Shipman, were divorced, he traveled to France and died there. His obituary reads as follows:

Louis Evan Shipman, 64, author and playwright and former editor of the magazine, *Life*, died at his home in Boury-En-Vexin, Oise department, after an intestinal illness of five months. Louis Evan Shipman was 64 years old. He was born in Brooklyn, August 2, 1869. Among his editorial posts were editorial writer for *Leslie's Weekly* in 1895 and 1896 and the editor's chair of *Life* from 1922 to 1924. He also contributed to *Collier's Weekly*. Among his plays were *Fools Errant* and *Poor Richard*. During the World War, he was a member of the New Hampshire state committee of 100 of public safety, was the state director of the so-called "Four Minute Men" and was a local food administrator. He was decorated with the Chevalier Legion of Honor of France in 1930. Mr. Shipman lived in Plainfield, N.H., for a period of 25 years. He is survived by two daughters and one son.

Grace Lawrence Taylor

Grace Lawrence and her sister Edith came to Cornish in 1891.¹²⁵ They were the daughters of DeWitt Clinton Lawrence (1830–1897) and Elizabeth (Hoe) Lawrence (1836–1882) and the cousins of Annie C. Hoe, Charles A. Platt's first wife.¹²⁶ Grace had attended the Capen School (later Miss Burnham's) in Northampton, Massachusetts.

At first, they lived at "Chaseholme" (Anthony Neidecker, 1991) and then at the "Turnpike" (across from Saint-Gaudens' Road, no longer exists) which were both located on Route 12A in Cornish. The sisters bought a two-acre lot from George Freeman on the top of Freeman Hill beyond where Maxfield Parrish later selected a lot. They paid Freeman \$400 for the two-acre lot which many people thought was exorbitant.¹²⁷

Charles Platt designed the house in 1896. "It is the smallest house designed by Platt in the area but one of the most charming. The traditional character of its center-hall plan was modified by the large windows with narrow muntins, the wide-board siding, deep overhanging eaves, and loggia at the left."¹²⁸ Platt had learned from his design of "High Court" that a low-hipped shingled roof was not the style that withstood New Hampshire snowfalls. In the Grace Lawrence house, he increased the pitch of the hipped roof and retained the deep overhang. The loggia was attached to the drawing room which provided extra seating for Grace's piano recitals. Edith's interest lay in her horses and in gardening. They named the house "Hilltop" (Edith Taylor, 1991).

Stephen Parrish and his cousin Anne, who lived with him, were very friendly with the Lawrence sisters and frequently mentioned their social contacts. On July 2, 1899, Parrish noted in his diary, "Grace Arnold and Grace Lawrence to lunch, music all day. A very delightful Sunday." There were many concerts with Arthur Whiting, who was a composer, pianist and musician, and whose pieces were performed by the Boston, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestras and the Kneisel Quartet. There were concerts with Grace Arnold, whom Stephen Parrish noted had a beautiful contralto voice, and Grace Lawrence who was an accomplished pianist.

Grace was a fine musician and a great inspiration to her family, instilling in them a love and appreciation for good music. She helped Marguerite Quimby and Frances Platt with their music. Stephen Parrish mentions in his diary, October 11, 1903, that he attended church in Plainfield when Grace Arnold sang and Grace Lawrence played the accompaniment.

Grace Lawrence entertained on Sunday afternoons with chamber music at "Hilltop" as well as at the homes of Maxfield Parrish, the Platts and the Churchills.¹²⁹ She also gave a musical program for the wedding of Mabel Harlakenden Churchill to Allan M. Butler to which "most of Cornish" was invited.¹³⁰

A few months before her death Grace played Schumann's "Carnaval" for a group of friends at Mrs. Bullard's in Windsor.

Grace Lawrence married Robert Longley Taylor (1861-1923) in 1906. Professor Taylor taught Romance Languages at Dartmouth College. The Taylors moved to Norwich, Vermont, where they lived from 1906 to 1913. Anne Parrish visited them frequently, taking the train from Windsor and staying overnight.¹³¹

Three children were born to the Taylors: Lawrence Hoe Taylor (1910-1981), Philip Longley Taylor (b. 1912), and Rosamond (Taylor) Burling Edmondson (b. 1915). The Taylors later moved to Williamstown, Massachusetts, where Dr. Taylor was professor of Romance Languages at Williams College until his death in 1923. Mrs. Taylor died in April 1940 and is buried in Williamstown.



Henry Fitch Taylor. Courtesy Virginia Colby.

Henry Fitch Taylor

Henry Fitch Taylor was born in Cincinnati, September 15, 1853, and studied at the Academie Julian in Paris, with a strong influence of the Barbizon and Impressionist masters, some of whom he may have met in Paris. He was nearly sixty years old when he changed his style of painting from impressionism to cubism.¹³² He was also an accomplished sculptor which he turned to geometric abstraction in carving.

Taylor bought a house near Cos Cob, Connecticut, where he socialized with such artists as Elmer MacRae, Walt Kuhn, and Arthur B. Davies. Later, all four were to be active in organizing the Armory Show which took place in 1913. Taylor met Mrs. Clara (Potter) Davidge and together they managed the Madison Gallery where they sponsored exhibitions by anti-academic artists.

Taylor devised the Taylor System of Organized Color, in which psychological aspects of color were explored. He invented an instrument to measure the effect of various color combinations.¹³³

Taylor moved to Plainfield in 1913 after he and Mrs. Davidge were married in March. They lived at the Kingsbury Tavern which Mrs. Davidge had inherited some years earlier (Judy Atwater, 1991).

Mrs. Davidge died tragically in 1921, and Taylor left his art. He died in Plainfield, September 10, 1925. *The Granite State Monthly* reported:

Henry Fitch Taylor, 72, artist and originator of the Taylor System of Organized Color, a device for indicating harmonious color relations, died at his home in Plainfield. He had exhibited in London, Paris, Rome, New York and Philadelphia, Chicago and San Francisco, and was a member of the American Association of Painters and Sculptors. Mr. Taylor had made his summer home in Plainfield for several years.

Harry Dickinson Thrasher

Harry Dickinson Thrasher was born in Plainfield May 24, 1883, son of Wallace and Eliza (Dickinson) Thrasher. His father was a coffin maker, and they lived just over the Cornish line in Plainfield on what is now known as Thrasher Road. The house no longer stands. The marker for the town line was in the Thrasher dooryard, and as a child, Harry could stand with one foot in Cornish and one foot in Plainfield which he thought was great sport. He later attended Kimball Union Academy.

Thrasher began his career in 1902 as a "studio boy" in the atelier of Augustus Saint-Gaudens.¹³⁴ This position had formerly been held by Frederick MacMonnies. Saint-Gaudens gave Thrasher the benefit of his instruction until 1907 when he went to New York to work in the studio of Adolph Weinmann. He took the night class of sculpture at the Art Students' League where he had James Earle Fraser as an instructor. In 1908, he won the Saint-Gaudens prize for that year.

The next prize he won was the Prix de Rome of the American Academy. It carried a three-year scholarship abroad. There were nearly one hundred entries in the competition, which were finally eliminated to three. Thrasher won the prize with a subject entitled, "Memory," a small group of three figures, a man, woman, and child.¹³⁵

When World War I broke out, Thrasher immediately returned to his country and enlisted as a private. He was promoted to a sergeant and won his commission as a lieutenant after his command had reached the front. During his study in Europe, he met and married Carlotta Read of San Francisco. She returned with him to the battlefields as a Red Cross nurse. Harry Thrasher was killed in action in France August 11, 1918, while serving with the camouflage unit of the army. At the time of Thrasher's death, he was with the 103rd Engineers, engaged in camouflage work, assigned to painters and sculptors. This task called the artists right up to the front, to conceal the big guns. Among his companions on the battlefield were Homer Saint-Gaudens, son of the noted sculptor, and Barry Faulkner, a mural painter.¹³⁶ Faulkner said of Thrasher:

Harry Thrasher was among those killed. On the afternoon of the 11th, he was looking for fresh gun positions to the north of Death Valley when a shell got him. Thrasher made no great stir in the world, but those who knew him will remember him



Harry Dickinson Thrasher.
Courtesy Virginia Colby.

long and tenderly for his character was truly distinguished and noble. His nature was harmonious and well balanced. He loved beauty in any form; he had humor, a shrewd wisdom and a fine intolerance. Among his outstanding qualities were integrity and imaginative thoroughness. Where others procrastinated, he accomplished. He had no sentimentalities, and called all spades by their names. He had too much hard experience to be a gay optimist, but it never dimmed his courage and cheerfulness. He was a New Englander to the core and of that rare type which New England too seldom produces.

Two fellows of the American Academy in Rome were killed in the Great War: Walter Ward and Harry Thrasher. Eric Gugler organized a competition for a memorial to them in the courtyard of the new academy building. Competing teams were made up of an architect, painter, and sculptor, all alumni of the academy. The team of Manship, Gugler, and Faulkner won. Barry Faulkner designed a fresco for the memorial and beneath the fresco Paul

Manship designed a bench of red marble with the figures of two kneeling soldiers and a frieze of soldiers in combat. The project was finished in 1923.

Lieutenant Thrasher's last sculptural work was the modelling of the Prentiss Memorial for Lakeview Cemetery, Cleveland, which was designed by Kenyon Cox. This memorial represents two standing female figures clad in flowing robes. It is characterized by simplicity in treatment and feeling. The work was displayed at the last annual exhibition of the Architectural League of New York and was reproduced in the catalog. While in Rome, Thrasher designed the "Spirit of America" which represented an imaginary city beautified, with America the central figure in a court of honor. This work was accomplished by the sculptor in cooperation with a painter and an architect, and it received high praise from his fellow artists. Another work that attracted considerable attention was the imaginative figure of a boy holding a pair of horns on his head, fawnlike in effect. This figure was displayed in New York and is a typical example of the sculptor's art. He also designed a piece entitled, "American Embattled." There is a *bas-relief* in Cornish fashioned on the outside of High Court by Thrasher entitled, "Salome Dancing Before Herod." A "Young Duck," circa 1914 by the sculptor is owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art-Rogers' Fund, 1918. This duck was included in the exhibit "A Circle of Friends: Art Colonies of Cornish and Dublin," in 1985.

Thrasher modeled "Portrait Head of Frances Grimes" about 1911 and also one of his mother, Eliza Thrasher. From 1914-17, he worked in the New York studio of James Earle Fraser. The "Head of a Young Artist" by James Earle Fraser (1921-22) is probably the head of Harry Thrasher. An exhibit of Thrasher's works was at the Madison Art Gallery, in New York City, April 22-May 4, 1918, with Frances Grimes and James Earle Fraser. He also exhibited in the 1916 Cornish Colony Exhibition at Dartmouth College.¹³⁷ The selectmen chose the name Thrasher Road to honor Harry Thrasher after his death in France.¹³⁸

William and Marguerite Zorach

William (1889-1966) and Marguerite (1887-1968) Zorach came to Plainfield in 1917 at the invitation of Mrs. Henry Fitch Taylor (Mrs. Clara (Potter) Davidge) who owned Echo Farm, north of Plainfield Village, on the Old County Road (Perry LaPotin, 1991). She rented the farm to the Zorachs for the summer in return for cutting the hay to pay the taxes. The Zorachs planted a big garden and rented a cow for the summer for \$25 from A. K. Read & Son. They needed milk for their son Tessim and Marguerite was pregnant with their second child. According to William, it was a difficult task learning to milk the cow. They also bought a horse and buggy so they could get to town for supplies.¹³⁹

By this time, the young Zorachs had exhibited in shows and were making a name for themselves. Both had studied in Paris and were experimenting with the new cubism style which was not yet popular in this country. They exhibited in the Armory Show in 1913, the Forum Exhibition of 1916, and the Society of Independent Artists in 1917.

The summer of 1917 was very productive for the Zorachs. William cre-



Marguerite and William Zorach
with Dahlov and Tessim,
Plainfield, 1918. Courtesy
Virginia Colby.

ated his first carving from two small butternut panels, which were the fronts of two small bureau drawers, and painted a large picture of a figure with a scythe. Marguerite did a series of watercolors. Both artists liked strong bright colors.

The Zorachs stayed at Echo Farm until their daughter, Dahlov, was born on November 12, 1917, in Windsor. She is now Dahlov Ipcar, artist and children's book illustrator. The following summer Mrs. Taylor made arrangements for the Zorachs to use the Fuller house in Plainfield (Dowd family, 1991). It was so run down that no one would rent it. For the Zorach's standards, it was a magnificent house, complete with swimming pool. Sylvia Gray of Plainfield recalled babysitting for the Zorachs that summer, so they could work uninterrupted.¹⁴⁰

Marguerite had an order for two embroidered bedspreads from Nathan Miller, which she worked on all summer. The designs were of groups of people, mothers and children and animals on heavy linen with much linen exposed. Marguerite also embroidered their life in Plainfield: activities of the kitchen—all of the family eating at the table, the animals, patterns of curtains, linoleum, dishes—all interwoven, appearing and reappearing on different planes in different color patterns. The village of Plainfield is in the background: the trees, church and hills. She called it "Family Evening" and considered it her masterpiece.¹⁴¹ The location of the tapestry is unknown. Later Marguerite found it easier, with the children around and many interruptions, to work in wool.

The following summer they spent in Stonington, Maine. Mrs. Davidge died in 1921, and the Zorachs never returned to Plainfield.

Public Buildings and Domestic Architecture

Basil McNamara
Dorothy McNamara
William Quimby
Erich Witzel
Jane Witzel

This chapter surveys Plainfield's legacy in public and private structures. Most roads around town are blessed with fine examples of public and domestic architecture in each of the principal styles found fashionable from the late eighteenth into the twentieth century. In some instances, there may be only one example of a popular style, but it is invariably representative of regional preferences in design and materials.

"Cape Cod" House

The ever-popular "Cape" deserves a few words of explanation and examples. The "Cape" is not a style *per se* but rather the basic housing unit comprised of one and one-half story, central chimney plan with little overhang at the eaves. They were usually built with five-bay facades but three and four bays are also possible (half and three-quarter houses).

The name, "Cape Cod" house, was coined by the president of Yale College, Timothy Dwight, who visited the Cape in 1800 and recorded his observations. He noted how the inhabitants restricted themselves to a simple one and one-half story house with pitched roof and large central chimney. The decoration is dependent on whatever style was in vogue at the time of construction.

- *Duty Stickney House*—Route 120, Meriden (Lucy (Hulburd) Richardson, 1991); built about 1790. The age of this "Cape" is documented by its inclusion on Dr. Frost's 1808 map of Meriden. One of the purest remaining Capes in town, it retains its central chimney, doublehung twelve/twelve windows and small square garret windows.

- *William Franklin House* (1991)—Underhill Road, Meriden; built about 1840, probably by Benjamin F. Manchester. The Franklin House is a good example of a later Cape and shows the influence of the Greek Revival



Duty Stickney House, built about 1790, Meriden, 1985. Photo by Erich Witzel.



Underhill-Franklin House, built about 1840, Meriden, 1991. Photo by Erich Witzel.



Camp Meriden Lodge, about 1920. Courtesy Dorothy and Basil McNamara.

architecture in the doorway with sidelights. Its later date is also evidenced by higher plates or the distance between the tops of the window and the eaves which usually appear on earlier Capes.

• **Camp Meriden**—In the mid-1920s, Camp Meriden for girls was opened on a parcel of land owned by Annie H. Duncan a short distance south of the Meriden Baptist Church. The lodge was a renovated one and one-half story frame Cape Cod style house, circa 1850, with central brick chimney and clapboarded exterior. The front entrance had a gable roofed porch with round pillars supporting it and windows with six over six panes on either side. Inside was a living room with brick fireplace and wooden mantle, a kitchen, bath, and hallway on the first floor. On the second floor were three bedrooms, closets and storage space. Outside facilities included sleeping cabins and an assembly hall with a large stone fireplace. This building had two small windows on all sides except the fireplace wall and had brown stained exterior siding. A riding ring and tennis court were among the facilities. The camp was operated for only a few years. After use as rental property, it was purchased by Basil and Dorothy McNamara in 1946. The sleeping cabins had been removed prior to the sale for use as chicken houses at Kimball Union Academy.¹

Georgian: 1760–1800

This style is characterized by symmetry and heavy classical moldings. The roof is usually capped by a large central chimney, although some Georgian houses have two chimneys, with a central hall. A gable roof is common, but buildings of this style were frequently built with hip and gambrel roofs. A common variation of this basic house form is one and one-half story “Capes.”



Postcard, Kingsbury Tavern, built in 1802, Plainfield, about 1920. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

• ***Asa Kingsbury Tavern***—It is handsomely located on a rise just north of Plainfield Village on the east side of Route 12A. It was built by Asa Kingsbury over a period of two years after he purchased the land in 1801 from Josiah Russell of Tolland, Connecticut.² It was designed as a tavern with a bar room on the first floor and a ballroom on the second floor with a wall bench all around it. The first license to sell liquor was granted to Asa Kingsbury in 1803 and in most years thereafter through 1813. The building also served as a store for a few years. (See Chapter 10, Business and Commerce.) The house has a low-pitched hip roof and a symmetrical arrangement of windows and transomed lights over the doors. Over the years, the house became run down, and Curt Lewin kept chickens there in the late 1800s. One section of the tavern, used for the servants' quarters, was moved down the hill and is now part of the home of David Scott (1991). Subsequent owners were Charles Empey, Mrs. Clara Davidge Taylor, Mrs. Cutler, Dr. Burton and Mrs. Renihan, Donald and Vera MacLeay, Alfred and Susan Posnanski, and Judith Atwater (1991).

• ***Penniman House***—Sited on a hilltop at the southeast corner of Whitaker Road and Penniman Road (Douglas Grearson, 1991), it was built in 1797 by John Stevens, Jr., member of the Meriden Company Militia. A large house, it has a central chimney, symmetrical window arrangement, and gable-end overhang, a detail often found in eastern Connecticut houses.

• ***Bean House***—Located on Bean Road east of Meriden Village (Lafayette Noda, 1991), it was built about 1790. This property lies in the easternmost sec-



Stevens-Penniman-Gearson House, built 1797, Meriden, 1985. Photo Erich Witzel.



Bean-Noda House, built about 1790, Meriden, 1991. Photo Erich Witzel.



Fifield Tavern, built about 1790, Meriden, about 1900. Courtesy Erich Witzel.

tion of town that was formerly a part of Grantham and annexed to Plainfield in 1856. It has characteristic twelve over twelve window sash. The fenestration and double chimneys illustrate the costly four-room plan with a central hall.

- ***Fifield Tavern***—Located on Main Street at Bean and Flat Iron Roads, east of Meriden Village (Erich Witzel, 1991), this early stage coach stop served as a public building until nearly the end of the nineteenth century. It housed travelers and served as a place to change teams of horses on the route between Boston and Montreal. Local meetings were also held on the premises.

Edward Fifield, a Revolutionary War veteran, who was born on January 22, 1748, settled in Meriden by way of Kingston and Salisbury, New Hampshire, in 1791. Family notes indicate he built this tavern the same year. Fifield died in Plainfield on August 19, 1834, following his wife, Dorothy (Sleeper) Fifield, on August 26, 1827. They had twelve children, among them several sons. Two of them, Perley and Stephen, are noted in the liquor license and innkeeper records of the town.³ By the mid-nineteenth century, the temperance movement and the growth of the railroads created financial hardships for innkeepers and resulted in the decline of taverns. Mrs. Elizabeth Sanders Jones of Plainfield, a direct descendant of the Fifield family, records that by the turn of the twentieth century the extensive horse sheds⁴ at the northeast side of the property had been taken down and that the family took in boarders to fill the many rooms of the inn.⁵ According to Samuel Cole, some time in the 1840s, the inn had the honor of sheltering for a night New Hampshire's only president, Franklin Pierce.⁶

This large two and one-half story white painted frame structure appears on Dr. Frost's 1808 map of Meriden and also on the 1892 Meriden post office map. Architectural evidence shows that when the house was built, it had a hipped

Georgian roof and must have looked like the Kingsbury Tavern. Dr. Frost's map shows such a four pitched roof. There are mortices to receive the rafters on all four plates and the chimneys have been made higher to accommodate the higher pitched roof. Two other houses in Meriden had the four pitched roofs changed to two. They are the Deacon Miller house (now torn down) and the Captain Eliphalet Adams house, now the Millar home (1991). The broad gable end to the street with its well-defined triangular pediment suggests the Greek revival influence so popular in many early New Hampshire inns.⁷ However, the front entryway reflects the late Georgian design. Broad pilasters, transom lights, a wide lintel, topped by a deeply molded drip board surround the massive door.⁸ Six large fielded panels adorn the forty-two and one-half inch wide door still outfitted with its hand-wrought strap hinges. The five-bay gable end facing Main Street (a southwestern exposure) is imposing due to its large size. This front portion of the building is two rooms deep with a central hall between twin chimneys. A long ell extends to the rear. A spring dance floor is in the second story of the ell in the old ballroom area. A spring-floor is a double floor, constructed of heavy joists to carry the weight and a lighter floor five to six inches above, allowing the surface to spring when people danced. The ballroom was fitted with wooden benches and hinged seat covers that revealed storage space within.⁹ During excavations in 1978, remains of an early hearth were discovered at the base of a chimney in the rear of the ell. It is believed that this fireplace was the primary cooking hearth from the tavern days.¹⁰

The water supply was provided by a spring on the hillside above the stables on the northeast side of the tavern. It was piped into a water barrel. The photograph also shows a barn to the right, portions of which still stand. Four fireplaces remain with their fine hand-carved mantelpieces. The mantels on the east side of the house, including the old tap room, are in the bolder style of the Georgian period. Those in the westerly rooms are in the more delicate style of the Federal period. One wooden ceiling remains of feather-edged sheathing. The symmetrical fenestration also suggests the earlier Georgian influence. The sash, with some of the original glass panes intact, vary from twelve over twelve to two over two. The huge granite steps were quarried from the local hills and dragged into place by teams of oxen.¹¹

Federal: 1790-1825

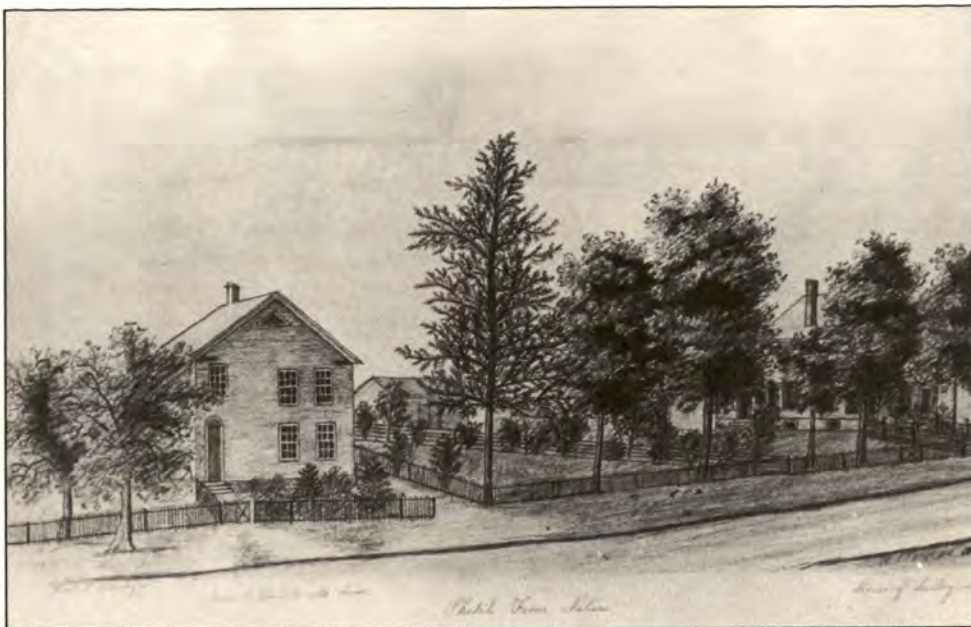
So-called because it appeared in America in the decade following the Revolution, the Federal style is a refinement of the Georgian style. It is characterized by lighter, more graceful details. It has symmetrical fenestration and a prominent entrance, often with a fanlight above and sidelights extending half-way to floor level. The ornamentation is classical, but the moldings are more delicate. Frequently, though rarely in this area, these houses were built with three stories and with a low-pitched gable or hip roof and ornamental balustrade.



Silas Read House, built about 1820, Plainfield, early 1980s. Photo by Peter Stettenheim. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.



Levi Bryant House, built about 1820, Meriden, 1985. Photo by Erich Witzel.



"Sketch from Nature." The drawing depicts the Asa Russell House and the Levi Bryant House, about 1845. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.

They often have chimneys at each end of the house, and occasionally four. The houses and public buildings were often constructed of brick.

- **Silas Read House** (also known as the Spalding homestead)—West side of Route 12A in Plainfield Village (recently owned by Joan (Spalding) Roeber, O'Brien Rental Properties, 1991), it was built in 1820 for Silas Read. This choice example of Federal architecture is a two-story brick dwelling with hipped roof and exhibits a four-room, four-chimney, central hall plan. There is a fanlight over the door and side lights extending halfway to floor level at the front door. The two-over-two window sash is of a later style.

- **Levi Bryant House** (late Federal)—Main Street, Meriden, about 1820. This red brick house is now known as Kilton House at Kimball Union Academy. It is a fine example of Federal architecture exhibiting three two-story arches in the brick work of the facade as well as an arched fan light and false window in a gable. It also has flared lintels over the windows. Its gable front and side hall plan anticipate the Greek Revival style.

- **Asa Russell House**—Main Street, Meriden, about 1827 (Gardiner MacLeay, 1991). Transitional in style, this house combines the fanlit doorway typical of the Federal style with inset pediments and gable front, sidehall plan popularized by the Greek Revival. Until 1934, it served as the parsonage of the Congregational Church. The original windows probably had six panes per sash.



Joseph Freeman House, built about 1835, Plainfield, 1985. Photo by Erich Witzel.

Greek Revival: 1825–1860

The advent of the Greek Revival style in Plainfield and elsewhere in the period prior to the Civil War gave rise to gable-fronted triangular pedimented structures which replaced earlier buildings with their long facades to the road. An attempt to simulate a Greek temple-like facade with or without columns, most often with a side hall entry, is characteristic of this style.

Plainfield contains a large number of Greek Revival structures. Their variety is a credit to the skills of local builders. Important examples include both private and public buildings.

- **Joseph Freeman House**—Located on Route 12A, one and one-half miles south of Plainfield Village at the foot of Freeman Hill (Mary Cassedy, 1991), the main house was built about 1835 by Joseph Freeman, grandson of Joseph Freeman who had built the kitchen ell about 1790. One of the finest houses of its type in town, it is owned by descendants of the Freeman family. There is a recessed porch supported by fluted Doric columns, elongated front windows, transom lights, and full-length sidelights at the front door. This house is also a good example of the northern New England custom of attaching out-buildings to the main house.

- **Monroe House**—Chellis Road, Meriden, built about 1856. Currently owned by Kimball Union Academy and used as the headmaster's house (1991), it has a monumental two-story portico supported by fluted Doric columns, also peaked lintels over windows.



Barrows-Monroe House, built 1856, Meriden, about 1865. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

• *The Plainfield Community Baptist Church*—Main Street and Peterson Road, Plainfield Village, 1840. (See figure in Chapter 5, Religion.) The forty by fifty-five foot Union Meeting House was built in 1840.¹² The two and one-half acres of land were deeded to the proprietors by Thomas and Ruth Stevens. Other records state that the brick structure was built by Colonel Charles Eggleston.¹³ The church features the precise brickwork of a Federal era. Attenuated Ionic columns recessed in the second stage of the tower contrast with the Tuscan order used in the rest of the building. The two-stage tower with louvered belfry is a later addition.¹⁴ The colored windows on the front facade were added about 1903 in honor of Reverend and Mrs. George Trow. The three frosted windows on the north and south sides along with the interior paneling were installed in 1907.¹⁵ The wooden pews are arranged with a single row on each side and a double row in the center allowing for two aisles from front to back. The wrought iron oil light fixture on the ceiling in the sanctuary was later converted to electrical lighting along with three of the four wall sconces. A new one was commissioned to match the other three. In 1903, the bell, which had cracked, was replaced.¹⁶ On August 22, 1948, when the Reverend Dickerson was just starting the service, the steeple was struck by lightning. Repairs were made and since then the basement has been renovated for meeting space and a kitchen area. It was named Pierce Hall after Edward Pierce, deacon. Entrance to the bell tower is by a ladder beside the organ. A new organ was installed in 1984. It is a "tracker" organ built by T. Lance Nicolls from

parts recycled from older organs, principally an A. B. Felgenmaker, Erie, Pennsylvania, Opus 526, built in 1885. The new pipes (542) were made in Leeds, England, to the builder's specifications. The casework is new and was designed by Mr. Nicolls to fit the architectural requirements of the Plainfield church. Arthur Quimby organized the effort and fund-raising to acquire the organ.¹⁷ Facilities are shared with the Catholic community. In 1987–88, the Cory Taber Memorial Field was constructed in the area behind the church. Basketball and tennis courts, picnic tables, and play areas were installed as a memorial to eight-year-old Cory Taber who died after being struck by a car. (See Chapter 5, Religion.)

• *Messenger House*—Main Street, Meriden, about 1800 and 1840 (Robert Steinsieck, 1991). This is a good example of an earlier structure that was completely remodeled in the style of the day (1840). The result is a country Greek Revival house with a recessed porch in the pediment at the second floor level. This characteristic is apparently unique to rural, northern New England. Typical is the wide frieze that encircles the structure below the eaves. The house was occupied by the Messenger family when Dr. Frost depicted it on his memory map of 1808.



Messenger House, built before 1808, remodeled about 1845, Meriden, 1985.
Photo by Erich Witzel.



Colonel Charles Eggleston House, built about 1842, Plainfield, 1991. Photo by Erich Witzel.

- *Colonel Charles Eggleston House*—Route 12A, south of Plainfield Village, about 1842; formerly the home of Vernon A. Hood, Plainfield historian, until his death in 1971 (George Grabe, 1991, now rented). This house has an especially pleasing recessed door with panelled entryway. It has sidelights, transoms, and pedimented front indicative of Greek Revival. The house was built by Colonel Eggleston for his own use.

- *Hotel*—The site of Meriden's first hotel was on top of Meriden Hill on Main Street facing the Congregational Church. The facade faced north. The building was west of Rowe Hall on the site currently (1991) occupied by Kimball Union Academy's Dexter Richards Hall. The building has been known by various names: "The Union Hotel," circa 1825, later, "The Temperance Hotel,"¹⁸ still later, "Old Meriden House."¹⁹ It was begun in August 1818 by John Bryant and burned March 20, 1890.²⁰

The building was a large and imposing four-story frame building, gable end to street, with a triangular pediment above. The Greek Revival influence is evidenced by the overhang at the top of the third floor level with four columns extending down to the ground. Porches ran the full width of the front with waist high railings. At the fourth level, in the pediment, is a Roman arched,



Meriden House, built about 1818, Meriden, before 1890. The building at the left housed Moulton and Roberts Store. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

recessed porch.²¹ Precise symmetry prevails on all levels with the central doorways and side lights and windows on either side. The depth of the building appears to run five windows deep. Four exceedingly high interior chimneys painted white rise from near the eaves' edge of the broadly pitched roof to a height approximating the ridge pole. There were also two smaller central chimneys. From the photo, it is unclear whether or not a two-story structure running easterly from the back portion of the main section is an attached ell or separate building.

• **Blow-Me-Down Grange**—In 1839, the Union Congregational Church Society bought a half acre of land from Jeremiah Dow on the east side of the main street in Plainfield Village. (See figure in Chapter 5, Religion.) Colonel Charles Eggleston, a local resident famous for the building of brick structures, built their meeting house. This fifty-foot by forty-foot structure was also known as Old South Church and is strikingly similar to the Plainfield Community Baptist Church. These two churches suggest the influence of Ammi Burnham Young (1798–1874) of Lebanon and Boston who designed Greek Revival buildings for Kimball Union Academy in Meriden and others at Dartmouth College in Hanover. The facade of the building displays flat brickwork and a plain wooden

pediment with two doors leading into a hallway.²² Three large windows on the north and south sides of the church are thirty over thirty of plain glass. On the side of each of the front doors, there is another large window like the north/south windows. After the Hurricane of 1938, the top half of these large front windows were badly damaged and were bricked in. The roof, two-stage tower, steeple and chimney were also badly damaged. Many repairs were made, but the steeple was not restored. Over the doors, serving the upper floor, are two smaller windows of six over six. A set of cement steps, somewhat wider than the front of the building, with a ramp lead to the two doors.

Immediately inside is an entry hall which leads into a meeting/dining room with a kitchen area at the rear. The stairs leading to the upstairs assembly room rise from the front entry hall. A tall brick chimney is on the south side of the back of the building.²³ The building was acquired by the Grange in 1899.

Harold Chellis of Meriden, owner of Meriden Electric Light and Power Company, wired the hall in the summer of 1914. In 1921, a twelve by fifteen foot wood shed was added at the rear of the building. A second floor room was constructed using lumber donated after the hurricane by Mrs. Charles Platt, Mr. Rublee, Hattie Kenyon, and Mrs. Goodyear at High Court.²⁴ A low stage was built at one end of the room. A mural by artist Lucia Fairchild Fuller covers the back wall of the stage. (See Chapter 13, Societies and Organizations.)

Gothic Revival: 1835–1880

This style was not extensively used in this area because the loss of population reduced the need for new construction. Its presence is limited to the use of decorative bargeboards, steeply pitched gable dormers and pointed, arched windows. Slotted porch posts, loosely based on Gothic Revival detailing, may also be seen on occasion.

• *Meriden Baptist Church*—The church, of red brick, stands on the northwest corner of the intersection of Route 120 and Main Street. (See figure in Chapter 5, Religion.) The lot for the church was purchased from Dr. Elias Frost whose frame house, built about 1808, still stands just west of the church. Dr. Frost used this land for his garden. He agreed to part with it only because of his close friendship with Major Reuben True, one of the early leaders in the church. Others involved in the building of the church were Osgood True, Clement Hough, and Captain Moses Eaton.²⁵ The clay out-croppings in the nearby banks of Blood's Brook were used to make the bricks for the church. The clay was excavated near the Moulton Bridge, whose decayed abutments may still be seen by the corner of Bonner Road and Route 120. This clay was also used in the brick Academy buildings: Kilton House, Bryant, and Chellis.

The church was completed in December 1838. The main auditorium was forty by fifty-five feet beneath a symmetrical steeple. An early photograph, taken before 1874, shows a flat roofed belfry with a low steeple on each corner, much like the Congregational Church in Claremont, New Hampshire. The Greek



Daniel Kimball House by anonymous Kimball Union Academy student, built about 1777, Meriden, about 1845. Courtesy Kimball Union Academy.

Revival style with its triangular pediments are combined with Gothic Revival's pointed arched windows. The decorative brackets on the porch (a later addition) enhance the Gothic flavor.

A pipe organ was installed in the balcony in 1867 and remained there until 1896 when it was moved down to its present location. The choir sang from the balcony, and church members turned around to face them during the hymn. In 1946, \$200 was given by Mrs. Amelia A. Mason in memory of her husband Charles to be used toward a new pipe organ,²⁶ but the 1867 organ is an excellent tracker-action instrument built for this church by Samuel S. Hamill (1830–1904) of East Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mr. Hamill's opus 147 was installed in the rear gallery in 1867 at a cost of \$1,000. Except for an electric blower added by James Ingerson of Meriden for a recital in 1970, the organ remains unchanged. Its chestnut case is trimmed with black walnut and displays five flats of wooden dummy pipes. The manual pipework is enclosed behind horizontal swell shades operated by a hitch-down pedal at the right of the pedal keyboard. The large sixteen-foot pipes are visible at the rear of the organ.

In 1916, under the leadership of John F. Cann, many improvements were made to the church. He had the stained glass windows at the front of the church placed in memory of his wife Minnie, c. 1916. Curtains and moldings were put up, electric lights and a furnace installed, and a door cut through the brick wall to the vestry, which had been added in 1867.



John D. Bryant House, built about 1777, remodeled about 1860, Meriden, about 1865. Bryant remodeled the house of Daniel Kimball about 1860. The brick building was constructed before 1817 as a store by John Bryant and Kimball. By 1865, Kimball Union Academy used the building as a girls' dormitory. It burned in 1927. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

About the year 1930, Mrs. Mary Millicent Miller willed \$2,000 for the purpose of repairs to the church. A new chimney was built for the furnace, and a new hardwood floor was laid in the auditorium. The stained glass windows were sent away for repairs and the interior walls were painted. More recent changes and improvement include the regilding with gold leaf of the unusual crown atop the spire and the enclosing of the belfry in 1984.²⁷ (See Chapter 5, Religion.)

• *Kimball-Bryant House*—Built on the common in Meriden about 1777 by Daniel Kimball, the benefactor of the Academy, it was extensively remodeled by John D. Bryant about 1860. Although one of the earliest houses in town, Victorian detail hints at “Gothic” in the gingerbread bargeboards outlining the gable. At the death of John D. Bryant, the house was left, in trust, for the use of the trustees of his estate. About 1934, the trustees relinquished their interest in the house and grounds, and it was made available to the Congregational Church for use as a parsonage. Should the Church ever disband, the house would return to the trustees. Numerous other houses in town exhibit a steeply pitched central gable which is indicative of a country Gothic influence.

Second Empire: 1860–1880

The style takes its name from the French Second Empire, the reign of Napoleon III (1852–1870). Its trademark, the steeply pitched mansard roof with dormers, derives its name from Francois Mansard, a seventeenth century French architect. This style often exhibits heavy brackets under the eaves and elaborately molded window caps. Classical pediments and balustrades can also be seen on Second Empire style buildings. Our Plainfield structure is a simple example of the style and exhibits little detail other than the characteristic mansard roof.

• **Plainfield General Store**—On Route 12A in Plainfield Village, it was built about 1905. It is the second general store on the site. The first, which had been moved here prior to the Civil War from near Westgate Road and Route 12A was destroyed by fire in 1906. John Whitaker assisted by other local men, including Herman Plummer, rebuilt the store.

The building is Second Empire style. The most distinctive feature is the use of a steeply pitched mansard roof with projecting dormers. The main structure is three stories, the ell is two. The style used in this building was in vogue thirty to forty years earlier. One wonders why a later, more current style was not selected. At the end of the ell on the north side was the ice house. Ice cut from local ponds in winter was stored in sawdust for use in the store refrigerator. There was a well in the cellar from which water was pumped upstairs by a hand pump. (See Chapter 10, Business and Commerce.)



Plainfield General Store, 1985. Photo by Erich Witzel.



Baxter Hall, Rowe Hall, and Dexter Richards Hall at Kimball Union Academy, about 1910. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

• **Dexter Richards Hall**—The site for this wooden frame building, the second structure here, was the top of the Meriden Hill opposite the Meriden Congregational Church, west of Rowe Hall. It opened September 6, 1892, as a residence hall for Kimball Union Academy students. A substantial amount of money was given by the Honorable Dexter Richards of Newport, New Hampshire.²⁸ The building was used during the months of July and August as Meriden's only hotel, and it was referred to in the early 1900s as the "Bird Village Inn."²⁹ Numerous post card views exist, showing the interior as well as exterior aspects. (See Chapter 10, Business and Commerce.) This structure was demolished in the spring of 1936 for the present brick Dexter Richards Hall at Kimball Union Academy.

The old Dexter Richards Hall was a wonderful example of Second Empire architecture. Facing north, it was a large, three and one-half story structure with a projecting central pavilion, which culminated, at its top, in a straight-sided mansard roof and tower with roof casting. The dormer windows in the tower were arched with heavy moldings.³⁰ The rear facade had multiple eaves of varying levels with fine southerly views. The dining room occupied the large one-story projection at the rear. Wide verandas encircled the first floor ornamented by elaborate designs in the lattice work. Ornamental brackets adorned the cornice boards and veranda roof supports. The numerous large windows were fitted with two over two sash. Interior post card views show large high ceilinged open parlors with fireplaces. Thirty to fifty guests could be accommodated during the summer season. An advertisement from the *Kimball Union* of May 1899, solicits transient guests with the enticement of "good beds and steam heat."

Romanesque Revival: 1880–1900

Popular at the end of the nineteenth century, this style was used primarily for churches, libraries, and other public buildings. It is characterized by the use of polychromatic brick or stone with semi-circular arches to form the windows and door openings. The facades are flanked by square or polygonal towers of differing heights and covered with various roof shapes.

• *Meriden Congregational Church*—On the Green, Meriden Village, 1899. (See figure in Chapter 5, Religion.) This is the third church building to stand on this approximate site. The second structure, a plain white frame building erected about 1799 (remodeled in 1847 and about 1871), was destroyed by fire in June 1894. John D. Bryant was trustee for the estate of Frederick E. Weber which funded one of the stained glass windows. The plaque read: "This tablet is here placed, in grateful memory of Frederick E. Weber. By generous aid from whose estate the building of this church edifice was made possible. He was born at Heiligenstadt, Bavaria, September 5, 1829. He died at Boston, Massachusetts, September 29, 1891." Bryant stipulated that the church be constructed of stone. Italian stone cutters, from Boston, were hired by Bryant to cut the stone from granite glacial boulders on the hill behind the Chellis Farm. These stone were hauled to the church location by horse drawn wheeled drays. After the stonemasons had split a stockpile of the stone, the men of the church would have a "bee" and draw the stone to the building site.³¹ These stones have a pink tinge to them. There are grey granite stones, in the entry ways, that were purchased from the Barre, Vermont, granite quarries. The resulting stone edifice exhibits a tripart arched window on the front elevation with a sixty-foot square tower on the southeast corner housing the belfry and topped by a copper-covered pyramidal roof.³² The central stained glass window is a memorial given by John D. Bryant and designed by the famous artist Charles J. Connick. Another window, given in memory of Spencer J. Hawley was dedicated in 1910. It was designed by Harry W. Lloyd of Claremont and the work executed by the studios of Harry Goodhue Company of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Queen Anne: 1880–1900

The Queen Anne style is varied and decorative. It is one of many styles sometimes labeled "Victorian." Following the lead of English architects, including Richard Norman Shaw, the style became popular in America after 1876 when the British built two Queen Anne houses at the Philadelphia Exposition. The style is characterized by irregular, asymmetrical facades, complicated roof and tower forms, turrets and projecting pediments, roof cresting, decorative shingles, and elaborate paneled chimneys. Molded decorative bricks and terra cotta elements were often used. Different materials (stone, brick, shingles, clapboard) were regularly applied to each story. Stained glass and bay windows are

common as well as windows with every imaginable combination of large and small panes built into the same sash. Paralleling the Queen Anne style was the Shingle style which sought a monochromatic look through a uniform covering of unpainted wood shingles, often looking to Colonial forms for inspiration. During this period, little construction took place in Plainfield. There appears to be only one building with Queen Anne characteristics.

- **Baxter Hall**—Corner of Main Street and Chellis Road, Kimball Union Academy; built about 1882 and 1921. Named for E. K. Baxter, M.D., of Sharon, Vermont, this is the fourth Academy structure to stand on the approximate site since the founding of the school in 1813. The original 1882 appearance was a good example of the Queen Anne style with its irregular facade, complicated roof and tower forms, roof cresting, projecting bays, and panelled chimneys. A major renovation in 1921 altered the appearance drastically, removing many of the Queen Anne features and introducing the Colonial Revival characteristics.

- **Brown School**—In 1911, John D. Bryant proposed to the town of Plainfield that he remodel an old store building just west of the Meriden Town Hall for use as a school and library.³³ (See figure in Chapter 16, *Going to School*.) The building had once housed the shop of cabinetmaker Daniel Morrill. His plan was accepted,³⁴ and the two and a half story building, remodeled in the Shingle style, with attached wood shed and outhouses and a detached horse shed, was available for use in the fall of 1911. Prior to 1911, the district used a building that was located just inside the two stone posts that are the entrance to the present Kimball Union Academy headmaster's residence (1991). The Bryant and Monroe families disliked the noise from the school children. In exchange for the new building, Mr. Bryant had the old schoolhouse moved to the Academy's school farm at the foot of the hill. It was used for storage and for hogs. The outside finish of the new building was brown stained shingles with the exposed structural work and trim painted white. The ridgepole of the building ran parallel with the street. The chimney on the north side of the building accommodated a number of wood stoves. Entrance to the building was by two sets of wooden steps leading to a railed landing. There were two classrooms, with coat rooms at the front and a very wide staircase with a plain wooden railing attached to the wall, leading to the public library upstairs on the east and a meeting room on the west. Double doors, leading to the stairs, had glass in the upper parts. In the downstairs classrooms, the sash windows had eight over eight panes whereas the second floor windows were similar but in a smaller size and symmetrically arranged.³⁵

This building was used for grades one through eight until 1940 when a new two-room school was built across the street from the Meriden Grange Hall.³⁶ One room in the Brown School was re-opened in 1949 when the so-called White School became overcrowded.³⁷ Upon completion of the additions to that building in 1955, the Brown School was again abandoned for classrooms.³⁸ In 1965, the library was also moved since a new one had been built just east

of the Meriden Grange Hall.³⁹ In 1966, the town voted to allow the Brown School to be sold,⁴⁰ and a deed was passed to Frank and Edwina Orth⁴¹ who owned the Eastman-Penniman house directly west of it. The school building was demolished.

Bungalow: 1910–1940

A Bungalow is a small, one or one-and-a-half story house of simple design. Its characteristics are a gabled porch or veranda across the front facade, projecting eaves, exposed rafter ends and straight brackets supporting the raking trim. Porch posts can be truncated pyramids and are sometimes of cobblestone. Large windows and prominent, irregularly placed chimneys are other common features.

- *Mothers' and Daughters' Clubhouse/Plainfield Historical Society*—Located on the east side of Route 12A at the north end of Plainfield Village, the clubhouse is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was built in 1902 with designs by well-known New York architect Charles A. Platt, a member of the Cornish Colony. The Mothers' and Daughters' Club held their meetings here and carried on the rug industry. It is one of the earliest clubhouses established for women in America and the first in New Hampshire. It is a bungalow style, simple one-story, hipped roof structure exhibiting exposed rafter ends and with a pergola-like porch at the front. A unique feature are the round corners on the interior ceiling. The clubhouse remains basically unchanged. (See Chapter 12, Mothers' and Daughters' Club and Mothers' and Daughters' Rug Industry.) Few other buildings of this style exist in Plainfield.

Colonial Revival: 1890–Present

An awakened interest in native architecture followed the American Centennial in 1876 and led to the emergence of the Colonial Revival style. Its popularity continues. Also called Georgian Revival, it represents an attempt to recapture the proportions and details of Georgian and Federal style architecture. It is characterized by the abundant use of fanlights and sidelights, Palladian windows, porticos, elaborate classical cornices and pediments over windows. Small dormers are common, and some high style examples have hip roofs topped by ornamental balustrades. Colonial Revival houses are commonly symmetrical.

- *Everett and Florence Scovill Shinn House*—North off Daniels Road, Plainfield; built in 1902 (John McNellis, 1991). The house was designed and built by Everett Shinn (an artist of the Ashcan School of art) in consultation with New York architect Harry T. Lindeberg. (See Chapter 18, Plainfield and the Cornish Colony through Biographies.) This shingled house is rectangular and symmetrical in plan. The front door with its portico, supported by six Doric columns, also exhibits sidelights with tracery. Tripart windows, decorative lin-



Everett Shinn House, built in 1902, Daniels Road, Plainfield, 1985. Photo Erich Witzel.



Philip Read Memorial Library by Evelyn (West) Brown, pencil drawing, 1981. Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel. Courtesy Philip Read Memorial Library.

tels, fan ornamentation at the gable ends, a large Palladian window on the north elevation and an elaborate entablature crowning the structure, all contribute to a fine example of the Colonial Revival style.

- **Philip Read Memorial Library**—The library is on the west side of Main Street (Route 12A) at Plainfield Village, nearly opposite the junction of Daniels Road. It was constructed in 1921 on a lot 100 by 100 feet.⁴² This red brick structure represents the Colonial Revival style. It features a central pavilion with simple fluted pilasters, a lunette window, and transom lights. A modillioned cornice is present in the pediment of the central pavilion. A central red brick chimney tops the slate-covered hipped roof. Cement lintels adorn the large nine over one windows.⁴³ The front portico was made by Ned Waite.⁴⁴ Harold Hoisington, a local blacksmith, installed the iron railing.

According to Librarian Nancy Norwalk, no floor plans or drawings of this building have been discovered. The main room features natural finished woodwork and hardwood floors. Its entryway is framed by classic pilasters with simple capitals. Stylized palmetto leaves form the motif for the painted tin ceiling with deep cove moldings. Also featured is a fireplace. Its mantelpiece is composed of three tiers of red brick topped by a final tier of cement. A bronze memorial plaque is mounted on the wall above the fireplace. (See Chapter 21, Town Services.)

- **Bryant Hall**—Chellis Road, Meriden Village, about 1910. This imposing gambrel roofed, three and one-half-story brick structure was built by



Postcard of Bryant Hall, Kimball Union Academy, about 1940. Courtesy Jane Witzel.



Meriden Public Library, 1991. Photo Erich Witzel.

Kimball Union Academy, a gift from John D. Bryant. Its central pavilion incorporates a fan and sidelights at the front door, simple Doric column supports a portico with a Palladian and a lunette window on the upper stories. A pronounced keystone is utilized above each main floor window while small pediments adorn each of the many top floor dormer windows. Quoins appear at each corner of the main structure as well as on the central pavilion.

• *Meriden Public Library*—The library is on the southern side of Main Street, just east of Route 120. It was completed and dedicated November 23, 1965.⁴⁵ The architect was Archer Hudson and the contractors, McGray and Nichols.⁴⁶ The design of this red brick building is a simple representation of the Colonial Revival style. A central pedimented pavilion gives importance to the raised main floor entryway. The six-panel door with side lights opens into a small vestibule. A plain entablature painted white adds classical enrichment to the structure.⁴⁷ A small wing on the westerly end houses lavatory facilities, a staircase, and an entryway to the two levels.

In addition to its primary use, many town organizations utilize the building for their meetings. A semi-circular driveway at the front lends a distinctive note. Librarian Bettyann Dole reports that the old granite watering trough on the front lawn was moved to its present location from the 1840 stone house on Route 120 known as the Dubois place (Kenneth Tashro, 1991).⁴⁸ (See Chapter 21, Town Services.)



Barnes Library Building, Kimball Union Academy, 1985. Photo by Erich Witzel.

Classical Revival: 1890–Present

Paralleling the popularity of the Colonial Revival styles, the Classical Revival reflects the resurgence of the classics in architectural training in Europe and the United States. Freely combining elements of Greek, Roman, and to a lesser extent, Egyptian architectural orders, the Classical style is distinguished by symmetrically arranged buildings, usually of stone, often adorned by pediments. This style is especially popular for governmental and institutional structures.

- **Barnes Library**—Kimball Union Academy, Meriden Village, about 1924, served as the library until 1982. This handsome stone structure epitomizes the best of its style. Especially noteworthy is the classic temple front, supported by Doric columns and the entablature with its triglyph ornamentation. A dome-shaped cupola adorns the roof. The stone in this building was taken from stonewalls around nearby fields.

Other Public Buildings

- **Gun House**—A structure was built to shelter the cannon used by the local militia. It stood near the Plainfield Village Cemetery.⁴⁹ Another gun house stood just to the east of the Meriden Congregational Church.



The Meriden Congregational Church and Town Hall with the gun house and school by Maria Hatch, Kimball Union Academy, 1846–1850. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

• **Meriden Fire Station**—The Meriden Volunteer Fire Department's first building, built in 1954 was a one-story wood frame structure with a pitched roof, two manual overhead doors, and gable end to the street. This building, thirty by twenty-four feet, is situated on about a half acre of land donated by Kimball Union Academy on the westerly side of Route 120 approximately a quarter of a mile south of the Main Street intersection and directly across the street from the Meriden Garage (1991). Volunteers under the direction of Fire Chief Harold "Pete" Pringle constructed it.

In 1976, a one and one-half story, frame addition, fifty by forty-three feet, with ridge pole parallel to the road was added. This has four electrically operated overhead doors on the street side and is set back approximately two feet, but adjoins the older section. Both sections have poured cement floors. The interior consists of a large open area with space for four regular sized fire trucks, a hose drying rack, firemen's coat rack, supply cabinets, and storage area. The furnace is an oil fired unit that exhausts into the cement block chimney at the rear of the original building. Non-potable water is available from a shallow well. The latest addition was built by LaValley Builders, under the direction of the fire chief, Arthur Thompson. The station has been named the Harold "Pete" Pringle Memorial Fire Station and was dedicated on October 2, 1977. (See Chapter 13, Societies and Organizations.)



Curtain, obtained about 1940 for the Meriden Grange Hall, 1991. Photo by Erich Witzel.

• **Meriden Grange Hall**—In 1910, Master of Meriden Grange Fred A. Rogers donated material from an old farmhouse located on his property on True Road for the construction of a Grange hall on land acquired from Chandler Mason.⁵⁰ The gambrel roofed fifty by thirty foot, two and one-half story frame building, finished in white-painted clapboards, has a main hall and ante room on the first floor. A wide staircase with handrail at the front of the building leads to the kitchen and dining room on the second floor. Above is the attic storage area. Dormers, two on each side, were placed on each side of the upstairs area. The front entrance with double doors is centrally located with a small indented porch area. The sign over the front door carries the words “Meriden Grange #151.”

A stage is at the south end of the main hall and has a curtain acquired in the 1940s by selling advertising. At this date (1991), the advertising has not been painted out. The building was originally heated by wood stoves. The one in the main hall was replaced by a gas furnace in the 1960s. The other wood stoves remain, and pipes feed into the center front brick chimney. To meet fire regulations, a fire escape tube, originally in use at the White River Junction Elementary School, was installed along with an access door, on the south side of the upstairs dining room.

• **Meriden Town Hall**—In 1896, the town of Plainfield paid George Taylor Stockwell of Claremont (a great, great uncle of David H. Stockwell of Plainfield, 1991)⁵¹ \$2,000 to build a town hall in Meriden on a parcel of land purchased from Darius Moulton for \$25. An additional amount of \$13.93 was charged by Mr. Stockwell for “extras.” George S. Cole and Orzo V. Eastman helped to prepare the site.⁵²

The two-story frame building is forty by seventy-two feet and has a slate, hip roof and exterior clapboards. A seven by twelve foot covered porch with gabled roof is at the center front entrance. The main hall, with maple floor and



Rear of the Meriden Grange Hall, 1985, showing the fire escape. The tube was obtained from the old school in White River Junction, now the municipal office building for the town of Hartford. Photo by Erich Witzel.



Meriden Town Hall, 1985. The building was constructed in 1895. Photo by Erich Witzel.

waist high wainscoting has been used for movies, dances, roller skating, theater productions, craft sales, community parties, and town meetings. In back of the stage, at the north end of the building is a wood shed and primitive toilets. On either side of the front entrance are two small rooms on both the first and second floors. Frequently the downstairs rooms were used for the selectmen's office and at one time one was used for police headquarters. The upstairs rooms were used for a library at one time and now are storage space for town records. Two high brick chimneys are equal distant from the center at the forward section of the front. The main hall has similar window placement on the east and west sides consisting of three oversized windows nearly two stories in height. The front facade has two conventional sized windows with three above symmetrically arranged.

In the early 1930s, the building was heated by two wood stoves placed at the north end of the main hall with stove pipe extending the length of the hall to the chimneys at the south end. In the middle twentieth century, a gas furnace was installed with a small gas stove in the small, downstairs east room. In 1908, Fred A. Rogers was contracted to build a road machine shed to be attached to the rear of this building, as a cost of \$67.57.⁵³ In the late 1920s, the town hearse was stored in this road equipment shed along with the wooden snow roller.

• *Plainfield Town Hall*—The frame of the town hall was built in 1798 on the Center-of-Town Road approximately one-quarter mile north of Porter



Plainfield Town Hall, 1991. The building was first erected at the center of town in 1798. Photo by Nancy Norwalk.

Road. Its stone foundation is partly visible. Religious services and annual town meetings were held there until 1810 when it was moved or dismantled and rebuilt on Route 12A just south of the Plainfield Cemetery. Known as the West Parish Meeting House, it measures fifty by sixty feet.

On March 11, 1844, the town voted to raise \$60 for the purchase of the structure from the two proprietors. The meeting house was no longer needed for church services after the construction of the brick Union Meeting House (now the Plainfield Community Baptist Church) and the Congregational Church (now the Blow-Me-Down Grange) in 1840. The building was moved and rebuilt at a cost of \$800 on its present site in Plainfield Village in 1846 by Bradbury Dyer and Charles Eggleston at which time the tall windows were put in, the shutters added, and the interior plastered.

It served as a location for annual town meetings (in alternate years at the Meriden Town Hall) until 1973 when the gymnasium was completed at the new elementary school on Bonner Road in Meriden.

The building, known as the Town House in its early days, was equipped with complete facilities for theatrical productions, including stage, curtain, lighting, and a stage set designed by Maxfield Parrish, all contributed by William Howard Hart, a distinguished New York stage designer who summered in town for many years during the "Cornish Colony" era. Over the years, a variety of town activities have taken place in it including plays, dances, movies, bingo,

PTA fund raisers, Historical Society meetings, basketball games, variety nights, library programs, rummage sales, concerts, bicentennial celebrations, and, of course, town meetings. (See Chapter 18, Plainfield and the Cornish Colony through Biographies.)

• **Plainfield Village Fire Station**—The first Plainfield Village Fire Station, acquired to house a 1929 Chevrolet 250 pumper, was used from 1955 until 1968.⁵⁴ This structure was the former road machine shed built in 1908 by C. H. Peterson at a cost of \$68.60 and attached to the Plainfield Town Hall. It was leased from the town for ninety-nine years for \$1. This was a twenty by twenty wood frame building with a single pitched roof, about twelve feet high, slightly slanted toward the back and with two sliding doors on the front. In 1968, a thirty by seventy-foot building was constructed on a private road with a right of way leading to William Smith's Auction Gallery (the Plainfield Elementary School until 1973). In 1982, an addition, thirty by thirty, was constructed on the front, costing \$10,000 in donations. There is a two-pitch roof of galvanized metal, two overhead doors manually operated and one side door. There are no divisions inside. Water is piped to the building, but there is no plumbing.

Trees for the rafters were donated by Maurice Perron. They were dragged from the woods by oxen owned by John Meyette and Wayne Wheeler. Gordon LaPan's portable sawmill cut the trees into lumber. The rafters were constructed in William Smith's Auction House parking lot, and Johnson's Home Center's pole truck was used to raise them.⁵⁵ (See Chapter 13, Societies and Organizations.)

• **Town Garages**—At the March 1944 Town Meeting, it was voted to build a town garage on a piece of land at the corner of Penniman and Stage Road acquired from William and Amelia Gile and Lizzie Haven. Dolphus Guillotte and Son of Plainfield were the builders, for \$6,000.⁵⁶ The wood framed building had a single pitched roof and doors on the Stage Road side. On October 23, 1982, this garage burned to the ground, with all the road equipment and tools at an estimated loss of \$350,000.

At a special Town Meeting on August 26, 1983, a \$90,000 bond issue was approved for the construction of a new garage.⁵⁷ A contract with George Madeira Company, Inc., of Cornish was signed on September 8, 1983, and the building was completed before December 1, 1983, on the same lot as the former building. The frame building has a two-pitch metal roof, a poured concrete floor, and four-foot concrete walls above which the material is wood. The interior sheetrock walls have six-inch insulation and the ceiling has twelve inches. The automatic doors, for equipment entrance, are on the Penniman Road side of the building as is the hazardous waste room. On the north side of the building are a lunch room, police office, road agent's office, and bathroom, above which is a storage area.⁵⁸ Entrance to these rooms is by doors on the north side of the building.

On the same lot is a three-sided equipment shed thirty-two by fifty-two feet with a one-pitch roof, also a salt shed of similar design. In 1990, the equipment shed was enlarged to house the town's recycling center.

. 20 .

Major Fires and Disasters

Kathryn F. MacLeay
Edmund Wright
Howard W. Zea

A series of fires reshaped the appearance of Meriden Center during the early 1890s. On March 20, 1890, the most disastrous fire in the village's history occurred. It started in the Meriden Hotel and consumed it. This building stood on the site of the present Dexter-Richards Dormitory. A barn and shed behind the hotel also burned. Just to the east of the hotel was Moulton and Robert's Store, a two-story structure that stood between the present Dexter Richards and Rowe Hall. It was a total loss. Rowe Hall was also set ablaze. The Duncan house to the west was more heavily burned. The blaze spread to the Congregational Church, which housed the town hall on the lower floor. A fire brand lit high in the steeple. While the steeple burned far above the available water to extinguish it, four men climbed the steeple and chopped through the four main posts. The steeple and bell fell to the common, and the building was saved. Two of these men were James P. Cuddy and Eugene Beers. The fire melted the bell, and the metal was broken up for souvenirs.¹ (The Plainfield Historical Society has a piece in its collection.) The damage to the steeple was about \$1,000. The steeple was rebuilt at a lower elevation so water could reach the top of it.

On February 21, 1891, the brick Academy Building (site of Baxter Hall, 1991) was completely destroyed. A faulty chimney was the cause of the fire. The building, valued at \$10,000, was insured for \$5,000.

The whole month of June 1894 was hot and muggy. On Saturday, June 16, lightning struck the shortened steeple of the Congregational Church, with no damage. At Sunday service, the minister gave thanks that the church had been spared. The next day during a second heavy thunderstorm, the church was struck again. Workmen on the side porch of the Monroe House (headmaster's home, 1991) saw the bolt strike and ran to the church. The whole interior was ablaze, and they could not enter the sanctuary. Alice Fellows, the custodian, had washed the globes that morning and had filled all the kerosene tanks in the chandeliers. The lightning was thought to have entered the church down the rods that held the chandeliers, throwing the kerosene over the interior of the church. The town hall on the lower floor was saved.



Plainfield, Meriden, and Cornish firefighters at a controlled burn in Meriden.
Courtesy Meriden Fire Department.

This time the bell metal was kept for recasting. The new bell had been given by the Alvah Chellis family, but was out of tune with the bell at the Baptist Church. When rung simultaneously, there was no harmony. After the present stone church was built, the new bell was raised to the steeple. A man from the bell foundry tuned it by climbing French's Ledges and listening to the two bells. He then returned to the village and shaved the rim of the Congregational bell. This process continued for several days until the two bells complimented one another.²

Major Fires³

June 6, 1785: Robert Miller's house at Meriden burned before date. The proprietors' records say that the original surveys of his pitch, "was burnt."

October 22, 1812: Schoolhouse at District No. 4, Plainfield Village. Probably burned before the meeting of that date.

1824: Kimball Union Academy burned including collection of books of the first library at Meriden.

1838: Theda Cory house on High Street in Meriden burned. Townspeople built her a new house in 1839 by subscription.

About 1845: Schoolhouse in District No. 8, Penniman District burned.

March 6, 1856: The Alms House on the first Town Farm burned with most of its contents.

January 30, 1860: Stephen Hersey's barns with their contents burned.

May 7 or 8, 1878: A house burned that stood on the east side of Dodge Road. Nettie H. Read's clothing caught fire when she was at the scene the next day. She died soon after. She was the daughter of Harvey S. Read.

About 1882: Albert K. Read's house and most of its contents burned.

1885: Schoolhouse in District No. 7, Willow Brook burned.

December 1885: Walter Hunt's house burned "the night of the Christmas tree."

About 1885: Edward Freeman house burned. Known as the Dr. Ebenezer Wright place.

1890: Kimball Union Academy girls' dormitory burned. Formerly the hotel, where Dexter Richards Hall is in 1991.

July 4, 1890/91: The last two houses in Puckerpod and the Erastus Nash house at the corner of Old County Road and Hedgehog Road burned. They were vacant and in poor condition. It is said the fires may have been set by drunks who were celebrating the Fourth.

January 30, 1891: David Deans house, "burned last week," Mountain District.

February 27, 1891: Kimball Union Academy classroom building burned.

June 18, 1894: The Meriden Congregational Church (town hall in the basement) was struck by lightning and burned. It had been struck by lightning June 16 without serious damage. The town records and town library in the basement were saved.

About 1900/01: Charles Empey's barn on Black Hill burned and the house soon after.

About 1900/01: Harry Fuller's house burned (old Stone place) on Chellis Road. Oil stove overheated.

March 5, 1904: Turner Peterson house destroyed by fire. Stood on site of William Jenney's house (1991) at Plainfield Village.

May 1904: Charles Wood's house near Willow Brook burned. House was owned by Charles Empey.

October 25, 1904: The Dr. Beckley house burned, thought to be arson, but not proved.

June 18, 1906: Charles Empey's Store burned. Stood on site of Beckley house which is now the site of the present Plainfield Post Office.

July 7, 1906: John Whitaker's Store and Post Office at Plainfield Village burned. Plainfield General Store now on site.

July 15, 1911: Frank Jenney's barns burned. Struck by lightning.

March 1, 1913: Lute Westgate's house burned.

January 28, 1914: Allie Jenney house destroyed by fire (the "old Bailey Hanchett Place," stood on Old County Road near site of Kenneth Moore's house.

About 1914/15: Farmhouse of Dr. Hayward burned. Said to have started by children playing with matches.

May 18, 1917: C. G. Doyle's buildings in Meriden village burned. They were located across from the Meriden Bird Sanctuary.

August 14, 1918: Frank Pierce's barn on River Road burned.

January 19, 1920: Frank Pierce's house, formerly Alfred Hadley place, burned with its contents; stood south of where Mrs. Elizabeth Jones lives on the River Road (1991).

July 10, 1920: Lewin's little house burned, stood just north of the Samuel Clark house across the road from the Plainfield General Store.

December 8, 1920: Philip Hadley's little house burned; near where Wayne Wheeler now lives (1991).

August 1925: Fred Barker's barn, East Plainfield, struck by lightning and burned.

August 26, 1926: Henry Penniman's barn struck by lightning and burned.

November 15, 1927: Bryant Block of Kimball Union Academy burned; stood north of the Congregational Parsonage.

May 5, 1928: "Last Saturday Mrs. Ella Cutts' brick house burned." Most of contents lost. Raymond Cutts was the occupant (George Hynes, 1991).

September 3, 1931: Bryant Cottage (near the Congregational Church) in Meriden burned. Owned by Helen Richards.

October 1, 1931: Mrs. Margaret Dana's house burned.

March 1932: William Skinner house on Freeman Hill Road burned. The Skinners had moved to Mrs. Skinner's family (Ward) farm on River Road and rented the house to lumberjacks. The lumberjacks had gone to Windsor and left the draft on a stove wide open.

December 11, 1933: Harry Waite's house burned from kerosene lamp being upset.

March 12, 1935: A. Hayes Jones's Store and Post Office burned, Meriden Village.

December 10, 1935: Austin Carr house on Brook Road burned.

July 4, 1937: Harold Dutcher house, "old Jenney place" in True District, burned.

1937: Paul Baptista house, known as the "Dearth place" on Whitaker Road in Meriden, burned.

November 5, 1937: Raymond Bowles place near Willow Brook School burned. Mr. and Mrs. Bowles disappeared at the time and were never found.

1938: Lorren Magood place at Meriden burned.

July 31 or August 1, 1939: Hanson Nash house owned by Kate Davis burned. Winston Spencer, Sr.'s house is now on the site (1991). Believed to have been children playing with matches in the barn.

October 19, 1939: Maxfield Parrish's "Will Freeman house" burned. Glenn Parks was living there at the time.

January 16, 1941: Lucy Bishop's house burned at 2 a.m. with most of the contents lost. Mrs. Bishop, Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Tracy, and Mr. and Mrs. David Armstrong were living there.

1941: Edward C. Merrihew place on Methodist Hill burned.

July 12, 1943: Mrs. Ernest Hill's barn struck by lightning and burned. Her attached house was damaged. Ellen Maylin's house was also damaged.

April 11, 1945: A. E. Lang house burned. Owned by Arthur Fedor. He was tried for arson and for lack of evidence was not convicted.

1945: Wood Farm barns burned; Ephraim Whitaker place in center of town.

1948: Charles Strobel house on Methodist Hill burned.

1948: Lee Pickens' house burned.

1950: Vern Barton's garage burned; the Smoot place on Thrasher Road.

1950: Albert Esterbrook's barn at East Plainfield burned.

1952: Lawrence Taylor's garage and sheds struck by lightning and burned.

June 1953: Corbin's Park Fire started by lightning and burned until late fall. Some areas were not out until snow flew. Cost the town of Plainfield \$6,534.37. Cost the state of New Hampshire over \$1 million. No homes were destroyed in this forest fire.

September 3, 1953: Harry Carlson's garages attached to house burned and severely damaged the main part of the house.

1954: Ralph Macie's barns burned on Red Hill Road in Meriden.

March 12, 1954: Old Thibault Place on Croydon Turnpike burned.

October 2/3, 1954: R. Lyons' barns burned (Edward Smith farm).

1956: Julian Bellavance's barn burned in East Plainfield.

November 17, 1957: Richard Wallace's house on Route 12A, the "Churchill Inn," burned.

1959: Ralph Macie's house burned, Red Hill Road, Meriden.

November 1959: Donald Crate's house on Methodist Hill burned.

January 15, 1962: Henry and Dora Farnsworth's house and contents on Dodge Road burned.

May 12, 1962: Fred Talbert's house at East Plainfield burned. He had just had electricity installed.

December 2, 1964: House trailer at the Powell residence on Penniman Road burned. Douglas J. Aldrich, son of Mrs. Powell, was killed. The fire was caused by a kerosene explosion.

1973: LeVarn's house on Chellis Road burned.

January 28, 1977: Mrs. Hodgeman's house on Hedgehog Road was damaged by fire.

February 5, 1978: George B. Kimball house on Brook Road burned.

February 13, 1979: Pringle's Garage on Route 120 burned and was completely destroyed.

February 24, 1979: Maxfield Parrish home, The Oaks, was totally destroyed by fire.

January 1980: George Woods' trailer in Plainfield burned.

April 10, 1980: Paul Denton's home was struck by lightning and burned, on Underhill Road.



The fire at The Oaks, 1979. Photo by Erich Witzel. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

October 23, 1982: Plainfield Town Highway Garage destroyed by fire.

May 29, 1983: Richard Atkinson's house on Penniman Road was destroyed by fire.

November 29, 1984: Northern New England Storage, Inc., steel frame building, two businesses, and an apartment burned. The building was owned by William Jenney and located in Plainfield Village. People were evacuated from the area because of toxic fumes.

March 24, 1985: Tom and Marilyn Kolar's house (former George Lieb property) on Pierce Road was destroyed (site, Andrea Zabski, 1991). Their two daughters and their grandmother escaped. The Kolars were in Hawaii on a vacation trip they had won. Although the house was destroyed, sheet music on the piano was untouched by the fire.

February 25, 1988: The barn at Home Hill Country Inn burned.

The Hurricane of 1938

The 1938 hurricane was the worst storm on record in the town of Plainfield and in many communities throughout New England. On September 21, 1938, the storm traveled up the Atlantic coast and passed over Long Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. When it reached the Plainfield area, the hurricane was estimated to have winds of nearly 80 miles per hour with gusts up to 125 miles per hour.⁴

Personal diaries and recollections recall that the week preceding the hurricane was exceptionally rainy and unpleasant. Mrs. Mary Chellis wrote that it rained almost continuously and often very heavily from September 12 until the hurricane struck. The only exception was September 18, which was overcast and "miserable." These rains swelled the brooks and made the ground soft.

According to Abe Read and several other Plainfield residents, the afternoon before the hurricane struck was very "eerie." The air was strangely still and sultry with an unusual greenish darkness appearing in the early afternoon. The cows in the fields seemed frightened, and they would periodically race across the pastures for no apparent reason. Yet there was no warning of the approaching hurricane from the radio or any other source.

The winds began to blow with unusual force at about 4:30 in the afternoon. Soon, the first effects of the storm became apparent. Howard Zea of Meriden remembers seeing massive trees simply toppling over with the branches first touching the ground and then the entire tree soon following. The extreme wetness of the ground helped to uproot the trees. Basil McNamara, also of Meriden, remembers the wind sounding like a freight train coming down from Grantham Mountain and seeing the trees fall down in sequence from the approaching wind.

By evening, the wind was blowing at full force, and some residents began to fear for their lives. The wind seemed to blow through the walls of the houses, and the roofs blew off many of them. Pieces of metal roofing were flying about, causing tremendous rackets as they wrapped themselves around the trees that were still standing.

Many barns also lost their roofs, and a number of outbuildings were destroyed. In some cases, chicken houses and sheds were blown far off their foundations. Basil McNamara recollects a barn roof completely destroyed except for the four inch by six inch by thirty-six foot ridgepole, which was found intact at the edge of the field. It was reused for the new roof. The winds were so strong that one resident reported being blown down when he stepped out of the door of his house, and a man in Cornish was blown over 800 feet as he held onto a barn door that was blown off its hinges.

At Kimball Union Academy, Headmaster Brewster was concerned that the students might wander outside during the storm and become injured. He decided to gather them in the gymnasium to sing songs under supervision. However, the storm worsened so quickly that he fortunately had to abandon this plan. The hurricane toppled the school's large brick heating plant chimney onto the center of the gymnasium roof which then partially collapsed. The imprints left by the bricks on the gym floor could be seen for many years. The extent of damage is still indicated by the different colors of the tiles in the gymnasium roof.

The whole town lost electric and phone service about six o'clock that evening. In most cases, electricity was not restored for two weeks, and phones were not in service for nearly four weeks. Because of the lack of telephones and radios, many people walked around their neighborhoods when the winds first began or early the next morning.

Late in the night of September 21, it snowed briefly and the following morn-

ing was cool and crystal clear. Virtually all of the roads were impassable because of the hundreds of trees that had fallen across them. Bea Clark remembers that she walked over a mile along Route 12A to Plainfield Village and was unable to step down on the road itself because of the fallen trees. Road crews immediately took their cross-cut saws (chain saws were unheard of) and cleared some of the major roads by the end of the day (September 22). Of course, the fields were also covered with fallen trees. Unfortunately, many farm animals were trapped in the blown-down trees and died.

The weather remained clear for more than a week, giving time to repair many roofs. Neighbors helped each other with this work. Dan Westgate reports that neighbors helped put a new roof on his barn in eleven days. His father, who had been very ill, had an appointment at Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital the day after the hurricane. Headmaster Brewster sent the Kimball Union Academy boys with saws to clear the Brook Road so he could get to the hospital. Since there was no electricity, most people adjusted to doing their tasks during daylight and used candles at night. Since there were only three tractors in all of Plainfield, most of the cleaning up was done by hand.

The most far-reaching destruction in Plainfield was to the forests. Many people lost their entire sugarbushes, in some cases hundreds of maples. Huge tracts of valuable timber were blown down, particularly large stands of white pine. Landowners and foresters tried to salvage as much as possible, but only a small fraction of the blown-down trees could be harvested. And because of the huge glut of logs on the market, the timber became almost worthless. The U. S. Government set up small sawmills on Stage Road, the Fuller Farm on River Road, and on the Benware Farm off the Brook Road. They bought up some of this timber, but even their prices were very low. Wallace Williams remembers receiving \$51 for four large loads of lumber, minus \$10 for hauling. The pine bought by the government was floated in large ponds to keep pine borers from getting into the logs. In at least one case, the government employees never removed the logs from a pond and the logs eventually sank to the bottom.

The trees not quickly harvested were soon ruined by insects or by the weather. Even today (1991), moss-covered remnants of the trees blown down in 1938 can still be seen lying in the woods southeast to northwest. The woods were so littered with blow-downs that they were impassable, and the fence around Corbin's Park was so badly damaged that the game animals there were free to come and go. Hunting was virtually impossible for twenty years after the storm.⁵

Sheila (Boyd) Hoermann also had vivid memories of the 1938 hurricane which destroyed so many of the Boyds' pine and sugar maple trees. Some of the lumber was used in the paneling of the new art school which the Boyds built on their property. Downed trees were everywhere, and their shattered hulks littered the landscape. Ralph Jordan, son of the original owner of Pinehaven, chanced by, and Clare Boyd moaned to him about the devastation. After striking a thoughtful pose, Ralph responded in an unmistakable Plainfield accent, "Saves thinnin' 'em, though."

Town Services

Bettyann N. Dole
Kathryn F. MacLeay
Nancy Norwalk
Stephen H. Taylor
Howard W. Zea

Constables and Police

Police protection in Plainfield has had two distinct eras. In 1975, voters decided to abandon the constable system of part-time law enforcement and establish a formal police department headed by a full-time police chief. Population growth, greater mobility, and changing times brought an end of the constable system in Plainfield. Part-time constables with full-time civilian jobs were hard-pressed to keep up with complicated problems like juvenile delinquency and domestic violence.

Constables were elected until 1885 and thereafter were appointed by selectmen. They traditionally wielded broad but loosely defined powers. Plainfield had its first constable even before the town was settled. At a proprietors' meeting in Plainfield, Connecticut, on March 12, 1765, Joseph Kimball was chosen constable and tax collector. He was re-elected at the first Town Meeting held in Plainfield, New Hampshire, March 11, 1766. The number of constables varied a great deal. Up to 1861, there were one or two per year. In 1862, there were ten and in 1920, there were twenty-three constables appointed. After 1920, two constables were appointed, one from each side of town. In Plainfield, constables were confronted with little real crime and dealt more with unruly behavior at dances and town meetings.

Ralph K. Jordan, in a 1979 interview, recalled the town meetings that he attended as a boy about 1900. The constable was constantly engaged in breaking up fights. Hard liquor was sold from the rear of the hall, and a few nips would set some men to brawling "just like a bunch of young bulls," he recalled.

Serious crime was handled by the Sullivan County sheriff in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the 1930s, the New Hampshire State Police was established to provide better public protection in rural communities like Plainfield.

With the aid of a federal grant, the full-time Plainfield Police Department was established in 1975 with Terry Kelley as chief. A veteran of police work

in Vermont and Florida, Kelley felt that serving as police chief in Plainfield was "90 percent social work, 10 percent police work." His management of many complicated matters during the three years that he served as chief convinced most of the skeptics that a full-time police department was right for the town. (See Appendix B for a list of constables and police chiefs.)

Corder of Wood

Laws passed June 15, 1791, provided that "all cord wood exposed for sale shall be four foot long, well and closely laid together, and measure eight feet long and four feet high." Each town chose one or more persons whose duty was to measure all cord wood offered for sale within the town. For this duty, the corder of wood received three pence per cord.

Fence Viewer

At a time when large tracts of common land were being divided, laws passed on February 8, 1791, gave directions for dividing and fencing this common land. Fence viewers were chosen at the annual meeting of the town. Their duties were to act as arbitrators and supervisors in the construction and maintenance of fences on property lines. The fence viewer received four shillings per day for viewing fences or two shillings for any time less than a day. Fence viewers were still appointed by the selectmen in 1991, but the position is essentially honorary in nature.

Hog Reeve

The General Court passed a law on June 16, 1791, that no swine were allowed to run at large between the first day of April and the last day of October without being yoked and ringed. The owner was to be fined one shilling, six pence for each offense. The yoke was to be "as much as the depth of the swine's neck above the neck, and half as much below, unless the sole or bottom of the yoke be three times as long as the thickness of the swine's neck." The hog reeve's duty was to see that all swine running at large were properly yoked and ringed so that they would not root through neighboring gardens. He received three pence for notifying the owners of the swine that they were in disobedience of the law. If they failed to comply, the hog reeve received one shilling for yoking and six pence for ringing each swine.

Libraries

The first library in Plainfield Village was established in 1805. Thomas Gates, Albe Cady, Elisha Williams, Isaac Chapman, Solomon Dow, Jonathan Harroun, and Bezaleel Gates petitioned the General Court of New Hampshire

for permission to establish a social library in Plainfield. The petition was approved on June 15, 1805. No records other than the "Act of Incorporation" have been found on activities of this first library in Plainfield.

The township of Plainfield has two public libraries: one located in Plainfield Village and one in Meriden Village. Both are presently funded by a combination of town appropriations, trust funds, fund raising, and gifts.

In 1892, the Plainfield Town Warrant asked the voters to elect a board of library trustees and to appropriate money (\$150) for the benefit of the "Town Free Library." That action enabled the town to accept \$100 worth of books from the state. The trustees divided the books and operated branches in both sections of town. The books were periodically exchanged between villages. The Plainfield and Meriden Libraries shared the same Board of Trustees until 1932 when separate boards were elected. The libraries also share two trust funds: The Abby Spalding Fund (1915) and the Mary True Fund (1911).

Other early libraries in Plainfield Village were run by the churches and the Mothers' and Daughters' Club. After the town voted, in 1892, to establish the "Town Free Library," the Plainfield branch was located in Elizabeth Ward's house (on the south side of the present library; Doris Plummer, 1991). Mrs. Ward was the first librarian, and when she moved out of town in 1897, the library was moved to the upstairs room of the Plainfield Town Hall.

In 1920, Edmund S. Read, a native of Plainfield, who resided in Washington, D. C., wished to honor his father and at the same time provide the people of Plainfield with their own library. Mr. Read purchased the land and constructed the Philip Read Memorial Library at a cost of \$8,000. He stocked the bookcases with 1,200 discarded books from libraries in other states at a cost of \$2,000. He then offered the library to the town. In 1921, residents voted to accept the building. Mr. Read also established a trust fund to finance the operation of the library. The present collection consists of over 14,000 volumes plus a noncirculating historical collection. In 1981, Lucia (Read) Bryant, a native of Plainfield and relative of Edmund Read, established a trust fund for the purchase of books.

The original brick Georgian Revival style building, which consists of two rooms with a fireplace, has never been altered. In 1971, Lucia (Read) Bryant formed a committee and solicited funds from town residents to finish one-half of the basement as a meeting and historical room. The room served as a depository for historical artifacts until the establishment of the Plainfield Historical Society. In 1974, town appropriations funded the addition of a children's room and bathroom at the back of the building. Town appropriations also enabled the construction of a firewall around the furnace (1988) and a junior room in the remaining basement area (1989).

The Philip Read Memorial Library has left the stereotyped library image far behind. The library is now a lively, active facility. The process of creating a modern library began in the early 1960s when Helen Snider, a professional librarian at Dartmouth College, organized many volunteers to weed the collection

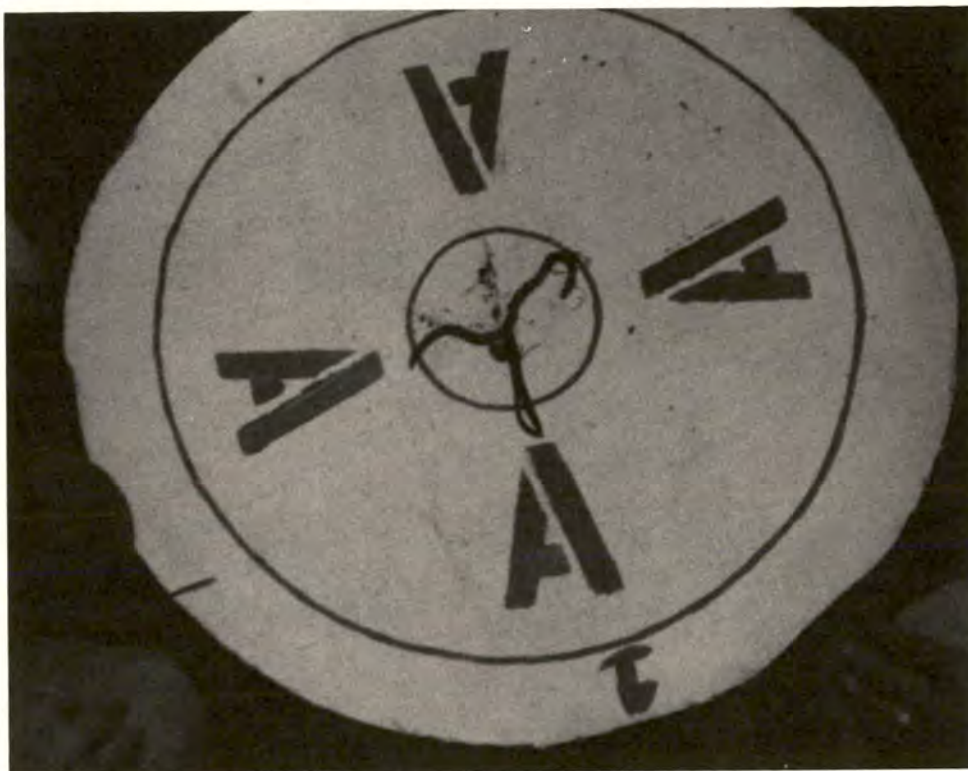


Story hour at the Philip Read Memorial Library, 1988. L-R William Moeller, Brendan Moeller, Patrick Moeller, Abigail Nintzel, reader Lauryn Moeller, Kate Nintzel, Shawna Pillsbury, Robbie Pillsbury. Photo by Jeffrey Nintzel. Courtesy Philip Read Memorial Library.

and to catalogue books. After Helen moved from town, the effort lapsed until Lucia (Read) Bryant returned to Plainfield after retirement from the Library of Congress. She became a trustee and along with Trustee Ruthann Wheeler organized volunteers into a Friends of the Library group that worked weekly under Lucia's guidance.

Volunteers still play a large part in all phases of the library's operation. Many new programs have been added because of their help: additional hours, a copy machine, regular story hours and movie programs, a computer, talent shows, contests, quilt making, book discussions, book delivery to shut-ins, and many other informative and entertaining programs for adults and children. In 1990, the library's computer was connected to the New Hampshire State Library's computerized information network, enabling patrons to borrow books and obtain information from most of the public and school libraries in the state.

In 1982, the "Plainfield Puffer," a worm well-trained by Librarian Nancy Norwalk, won the championship in the Third Annual Claremont Library Annelid Race in a field of fifty participants. As champion, Puffer appeared on



The Plainfield Puffer in winning form, 1982. The worms were laid in the center circle, and the first to crawl over the outer circle was declared the winner. Photo by Nancy Norwalk.

television, radio, and in newspapers across the country. Puffer was also awarded an engraved silver bowl as "Pet of the Year" by *Sports Illustrated Magazine*.

The Philip Read Memorial Library is heavily used by town residents. Since 1974, circulation has increased 560 per cent. Library use and services have long outgrown the current facility. A building committee has been established to formulate plans for expansion.

In Meriden Village, the New Hampshire legislature approved a petition from Daniel Kimball and other villagers to incorporate a library on December 11, 1797. Various village homes were used to house the library until 1815 when Kimball Union Academy offered space in their new building. It was destroyed by fire in 1824. A new collection of books was assembled on the first floor of the Congregational Meeting House in Meriden. Electa A. Chellis was appointed librarian. When fire destroyed the church, the library books were saved and moved to the home of Marion Eastman where they stayed until the Meriden Town Hall was built in 1896 with space set aside for the library. The Meriden Library was well-established before the "Town Free Library" was voted on in 1892.

John D. Bryant bought and renovated an old store building in 1911. The structure was located west of the town hall and was deeded to the village for use as a grammar school and library. The "Brown School" became the home of the Meriden Library. Located on the second floor, the Town Free Library remained in operation there until 1965 when the present building was constructed.

When Millicent Miller, wife of a Kimball Union Academy master, died in 1929, her will stated that "a portion of the monies from her estate be set aside for the maintenance of her home." Her friend, Lillian Kelley, retained life rights. At the decease of "Ma" Kelley, "the balance of those monies and others from the estate were to be given to the public library in Meriden for the benefit of the children." The books purchased with the David G. Miller Fund are so labelled. Also, Miss Annie Duncan and Miss Marion J. Carter each left \$500 to the library fund.

On the advice of David Pingree, a lawyer, a group formed the Meriden Library Association in 1930 to oversee the investment of monies from the Miller Trust and to promote education.

In 1960, a committee was chosen to study the renovation of the Brown School to make more desirable quarters for the library. The plan was infeasible, and residents formed the Friends of the Meriden Library to promote the use of books and to help increase facilities. In 1961, and again in 1962, the Friends won first and second place in the state for the best publicity of any library during National Library Week. Summer reading programs for the children were sponsored in the library by the Friends. They also renovated one room of the Brown School for films and adult programming that included book discussions and book reviews.

The Miller Trust funds had been invested wisely. On May 5, 1962, the Meriden Library Association purchased a parcel of land located next to the Meriden Grange. Two years later, a building campaign was begun. Community pledges totaled over \$3,000, the funds from the Meriden Library Association totaled over \$17,000, a town vote raised \$1,000, smaller funds produced another \$1,000, and the Federal Library Fund added over \$7,000. The campaign was successful, and the Meriden Library was dedicated with a ribbon cutting ceremony on November 20, 1965. It was a joyous day for many dedicated and giving folks of the Meriden Village.

The Meriden Library continues to increase its services. The interior was renovated in the '80s. The children's section was moved to the Millicent Miller Room in the basement to create space for expanding adult services on the first floor. Funds from the estate of Guido Rosa were used to purchase shelving. Movies, story hours, summer programs, and special occasion parties are held in this room.

Adult services have expanded to include a collection of large print books and books-on-cassette, purchased with memorial funds. Other services include interlibrary loans, adult book discussions and other adult programming. The library

has purchased a computer with memorial money and funds from the Library Association. The Meriden Library continues to be a library of and for the people. Its future is secure, and expansion is once again a dream on the horizon.

The two village librarians and boards of trustees co-operate to give the town of Plainfield the best library service with up-to-date library materials. The trustees hold two joint meetings each year. All policies are written jointly, so that library service for the community is uniform. The libraries try not to duplicate expensive books and materials. They also borrow titles from one another several times a year to expand their patrons' reading pleasure.

Joint programs are presented regularly. One started in 1985 is called Kid-Pic and involves photographing and fingerprinting all children under eighteen for use in identification if a child is lost or abducted. Under the direction of Ruthann Wheeler, the two libraries also started a pilot town-wide recycling program which was later expanded by the town. Another joint project is building a float for the annual Fourth of July parade.

A special joint effort is the Local Author Collection. The libraries have collected over 300 books and magazine articles written by or about local authors and artists including members of the Cornish Art Colony. The residents of the town of Plainfield are well-served by their libraries.

Poor Farm and Town Paupers

In the early days of Plainfield, when residents fell on hard times, neighbors pitched in and helped each other, but hard lives left little resources to help strangers who were unable to support themselves. When such destitute strangers or "foreigners" arrived, the selectmen often "warned" them out if they lacked visible means of support.¹

Plainfield

State of New Hampshire January ye 10th AD 1779

You are Hereby Required to warn Susanah Weston and Her Child Tranchant Parsons Now Residing at the House of Mr. Josiah Russell in Sd plainfield forthwith to Depart sd Town and also warn Sd Russell not to hearber Sd Tranchant Persons any Longer. Sined by us

Francis Smith

Benjn. Kimball

Joseph Kimball

Benjn. Chapman

This action seems cruel, but was common in colonial New England. The homeless were shunted from town to town. If the vagrants did not leave, they

were jailed. In response, the legislature enacted "Pauper Laws" which set rules for defining the residence of poor persons. Towns were reluctant to assume responsibility for indigents and often sued each other for the costs. Plainfield brought suit against Hartford (Vermont), Claremont, and Cornish, among others and was sued in return. The last record of vagrants warned out of town was in 1791 when the families of Nathaniel Goodail and Samuel Templeton were asked to depart within fourteen days. There were few problems in following years.

Columbia April 19th 1856
To the Selectmen of Plainfield

Dear Sirs Mr. Joseph Jordan has made application to us for some provisions he says he is entirely destitute and we have let him have one Bushel of Corn and some fish now I wish you would let us know as soon as possible whether we shall punish him or whether you will come and take him away.

David Legro, Selectman of Columbia²

The earliest mention of the poor in the town records is in 1786 at Town Meeting: "To see what the town will have done with Phebe Hills' child." In 1787, a Mr. Baker of Charlestown asked to be reimbursed for taking care of the child, and the town voted to pass over the article.³

In 1788, an orphaned boy, Ephraim Dunlap, was indentured to Atwood Williams for six years, four months, and thirteen days. Many similar agreements were made over the years. The boys were taught a trade and girls were taught "the duties of a housewife." Both boys and girls had to learn how to read and write. After the district schools were established, they were obliged to attend.

The following handwritten contract was made in 1871 and is in the town records:

This indenture between the Selectmen of Plainfield and Norman C. Williams of Said Plainfield. Witnesses that Said Selectmen bind out Fred Seavy a minor residing in Said Town and whose parents are unable or neglect to maintain him untill he shall be fourteen years of age if he lives So long to work on his farm during all of Said time to faithfully Serve and his lawful commands to obey. And Said town is to pay said Williams the Sum of forty dollars in three installments, fifteen dollars on the first day of March 1871, ten dollars on the first day of January 1872 and fifteen dollars on the first day of January 1873. And Said Williams covenants that the Said Fred Seavy Shall be instructed to read and write cipher and attend School during the winter

term in the District School where Said Williams lives and Shall teach him to work and business as Suitable for him and Shall provide Suitable food, clothing, nursing and other necessary attendance for his comfortable Support in Sickness and in health.

Plainfield Feb. 21st 1871

A. S. Bartholomew
Fred B. Hanchett
Elias Freeman
Norman C. Williams
Selectmen of Plainfield

The selectmen became overseers of the poor and made contracts with people for the care of younger children. In 1821, the town appointed an overseer of the poor, Thomas Penniman. He was paid \$16.60 per year. After 1830, the poor became more of a problem, and voters authorized the selectmen to "dispose of the poor." The selectmen either contracted with individuals for their care or held "pauper auctions." They sold the "keep" of the poor to the lowest bidder. This method was used only for persons who needed full-time care. If a person could work for their keep, they brought a lower price. The majority of those "auctioned" were women and children. This process was highly criticized. In 1832, the town chose a committee to decide on a solution for the support of the poor. The committee recommended that the town buy a farm. As a temporary measure, a farm on Underhill Road was leased (William Franklin, 1991). Elijah Underhill and later Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Kenyon were employed as superintendents.

There are several examples in our town records of neighbors caring for each other. One example is the house built for Theda Cory (1797-1869). Miss Cory was known as a generous and caring person and lived in a house on High Street in Meriden. After losing her house, by fire, Dr. Elias Frost circulated a subscription to obtain money and materials to build a new house. One hundred fourteen persons and businesses signed the subscription for a total of \$133.62 in money, materials, and labor. The conditions of the subscription were that Theda Cory should live in the house as long as she choose "so that she may contribute to her own maintenance" and that the subscribers would be co-owners of the property.⁴

In 1890, friends and neighbors of Ezekiel Stone, an indigent, circulated a subscription to purchase a horse for him. He was to care for the horse, and after his death, the horse, if it were still living, would be sold to purchase a gravestone for Ezekiel. The horse outlived him. Ezekiel died June 12, 1899, and is buried in Mill Cemetery.⁵

After much study, the town purchased the Samuel and Ruhamah Johnson farm, located off Stage Road, for \$2,400 in 1840. Livestock, equipment, furnishings, and personal items for the poor were purchased for \$773.01. The farm



The second Town Farm, off the old Stage Road, about 1940. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

was known at various times as the Town Farm, the Poor Farm, and the Almshouse.

At Town Meetings in 1848 through 1855, the matter of selling the town farm, buying another, or repairing the house was brought up. The question was either voted down or, if in the affirmative, action was never carried out. In 1856, the house burned. The town voted to sell the farm and to purchase the property next door. Jacob Smith, owner of the property, had died and the selectmen were able to purchase the house and 180 acres for \$2,916. An addition to the house was built for \$500. A description of the house notes that it included "an insane room...with a stove in one part, (separated from the rest of the room by wooden bars) so the maniac can be made comfortable and still not able to do much damage to himself or anybody else."⁶

The selectmen and the overseer of the poor were required to include a detailed report of expenses in the town reports beginning in 1857. They continued to contract the care of some poor. During the Civil War, separate accounts were kept for soldiers' families made destitute by the war. They were designated "worthy poor."

In 1862, the town purchased a hearse, and stored it at the town farm. A building was erected to house it called "the hearse house." The town kept title to this building even after the farm was sold. Current deeds still state the town has the right to maintain such a building on the site (owned by Paul Franklin, 1991).

In 1867, all the towns in Sullivan County voted whether to transfer the care of the poor to the county. Most towns voted in favor. Plainfield voted against

it, but, also voted to sell the town farm. This action was not carried out, and the matter was brought up the following year. Finally, in 1869, the farm was sold by auction to James Wardner Jordan. Hereafter, town poor who needed full maintenance were sent to the County Farm. The care of those needing partial help were still contracted out to their neighbors.

Post Offices

Early peddlers and travelers were the first persons to carry the mail. When better roads were built, the stage coaches brought the mail to centralized inns and taverns. Asa Kingsbury and Abel Gates were the first recorded post masters in Plainfield. Perhaps, they served in two different locations. The next two were appointed on April 6, 1805: they were Asa Kingsbury and Joseph Wood. Asa Kingsbury ran a tavern in Plainfield. By 1906, the post office was located at Whitaker's Store, on the site of the present Plainfield General Store, but on July 7, that building burned.

The first postmasters named in the village of Meriden were Thomas Chellis, Jr., and Benjamin H. Pierson. No date is given for their appointments. On December 8, 1825, Levi Bryant, who owned a store, was named postmaster. Mr. Bryant's Store was located on the west side of the church common.⁷ The Meriden Post Office has been at the general store location for many years. In March 1935, the A. Hayes Jones Store and Post Office burned and was rebuilt.

A news clipping, June 9, 1882, states "that a new mail line was established, going from Meriden to Plainfield to Windsor." Leather bags were hung on posts beside the road to receive the mail from the stage drivers. In the early 1950s, the Beers family, on the Stage Road, still used a leather bag for their mail.⁸ Verna Moulton recalls that her mother had a plaid satchel she hung on a post out in front of the family barn.⁹

Two early postmasters in East Plainfield were John Harris and Sylvanus Martin. The first dated appointment marks the installation of Thomas I. Harris on January 18, 1831. The post office in East Plainfield was established about 1830. The house owned by Grace Currier (1991) is the only known location of a post office. The East Plainfield Post Office was closed June 21, 1877, but reopened November 1, 1877. Then on August 31, 1910, the office was permanently closed and moved to Meriden Village Post Office. The residents of East Plainfield received delivery from the Lebanon Post Office by a stage route address.

Rural Free Delivery of U. S. mail was established in West Lebanon and Plainfield on September 1, 1900. The route covered twenty-eight miles and was driven every afternoon after the morning mail was sorted. When the afternoon mail arrived, it was sorted in time for the carrier to start his route at 1:00 p.m. The mail was organized in little boxes in the order that they appeared on the route. The boxes were loaded into the wagon along with the newspapers and packages. A supply of stamps, envelopes, and postal cards were also put

on board. The mail was counted to record how many pieces were delivered. Finally, the carrier had a revolver to protect the mail.

The service was intended for those living in the country. No mail was delivered within one mile of the post office. Each family purchased a box and placed it on a suitable post accessible to the carrier without leaving the wagon. The iron post boxes were protected by a fine of \$5,000 or imprisonment for five years. If the mail recipient had mail for the carrier to pick up, signals were placed on the box: anything from a piece of torn horse blanket to a rag doll. The carrier, at his own expense, bought small U. S. flags for each householder. So "Old Glory" waved at many boxes each morning. The first carrier was T. S. Sinclair, a young man in his twenties, who visited an established route in Concord, to see how the system worked. No mail route was established with less than 100 families. Business more than doubled during the first two months. The total number of pieces of mail delivered and collected on the second trip was eighty-three. In less than two months, the number had increased to 204.

Because carriers like Sinclair only received \$500 a year, they often supplemented their incomes with an express business. They could carry passengers and freight, purchase produce, butter, and eggs, if it did not interfere with the mail delivery.

Sinclair's route followed the Connecticut River for about six miles south to James Hildreth's. He returned northerly without delivery to Pierce's Corner, thence southerly to George Hanchett's Corner on the Plainfield Plain Road, thence northerly to Swett's Corner, easterly over Black Hill to Cross Corner or Coreyville, so called; thence northerly to Henry Hall's, then northerly to Slack's, easterly to Stearn's Corner, Poverty Lane; thence southerly to M. V. Gove's and easterly to W. W. Benson's, northerly to Foster's Corner and northerly to Scythesville (a suburb of West Lebanon), and westerly over the main road to the West Lebanon post office.

After the route had been in operation for six months, the Honorable Everett B. Norton, special agent of the Postal Department, came to inspect the route. A month later, West Lebanon Route No. 1 was official.

In the early 1900s, a rural free delivery route was established operating out of the Windsor Post Office and crossing the Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge to serve southwest Plainfield, western parts of Cornish and West Claremont. For the half-century up to 1988 this route was run by just two men, Harvey Chase of Hartland and then John McAuley of Windsor. McAuley was a colorful sight, making his rounds in the summer in a small yellow convertible stuffed with packages and sacks of newspapers and mail for some 500 patrons along the route.

Today, mail sent to Plainfield is delivered to many different addresses:¹⁰

1. Plainfield, New Hampshire 03781—The Village Post Office with lock boxes and call boxes and also rural route north of Plainfield Village and the Stage Road.

2. Meriden, New Hampshire 03770—Village Post Office with lock boxes and call boxes.

3. Star Route—later changed to RFD #2 (Rural Free Delivery), Windsor, Vermont, which covered the roads south of Plainfield Village, Dodge, Kenyon and Hell Hollow Roads, parts of Cornish and West Claremont. In 1981, the Postal Service decreed that all New Hampshire RFDs would have to have a New Hampshire town and zip code, so this route was changed to RR #2, Cornish, New Hampshire 03745. In 1989, the route was declared too large and was divided. The Plainfield portion and some parts of Cornish changed to RR #3, Cornish.

4. Stage Route—later changed to RFD #2, West Lebanon 03784. This route begins at the post office in West Lebanon and goes south along Route 12A, the upper portion of River Road, Black Hill, and Brook Road as far as Coreyville (Robert Orr, 1991).

5. Stage Route or Star Route, Plainfield—which covered Route 12A, the Stage Road to Meriden and Mill Village. In 1989, this was changed to HCR (highway contract rural) 75.

6. Stage Route, Meriden Road, Lebanon—later changed to RFD, Lebanon 03766, which covers Route 120 from Lebanon to Meriden, Methodist Hill and Croydon Turnpike. In 1989, this route was changed to HC 64.

7. Stage or Star Route, Meriden—which covered Bonner Road, Route 120 south to Underhill Road, and Underhill Road.

Postmasters¹¹

Date of Installation

East Plainfield:

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| John Harris | |
| Sylvanus Martin | |
| Thomas I. Harris | January 18, 1831 |
| Sylvanus Martin | May 2, 1837 |
| William S. Bragg | October 7, 1840 |
| Sylvanus Martin | March 26, 1844 |
| Artemus Blanchard | September 24, 1849 |
| Stephen R. Moulton | September 27, 1849 |
| Samuel W. Emerson | October 30, 1850 |
| Parker Carr | February 5, 1851 |
| Susan Ann Martin | November 24, 1852 |
| George S. Thompson | June 16, 1856 |
| Elbridge G. Beers | January 28, 1862 |
| (Post Office discontinued June 21, 1877; Re-established Nov. 1, 1877.) | |
| Emma F. Currier | November 1, 1877 |
| Katie M. Saltmarsh | May 9, 1884 |
| Sadie F. Currier | December 17, 1884 |
| Sadie F. Stearns | December 30, 1895 |
| Clara E. Cobb | May 25, 1896 |
| Sadie F. Stearns | November 25, 1905 |

Postmasters

Date of Installation

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Ida M. Ragan | July 11, 1908 |
| Olive M. Cobb | February 11, 1909 |
| (Post Office discontinued August 31, 1910; moved to Meriden.) | |

Meriden:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Thos. Chellis, Jr. & Benj. H. Pierson | |
| Levi Bryant | December 8, 1825 |
| Benj. H. Pierson & Danl. Merrill | April 1, 1837 |
| B. H. Pierson & Thos. Chellis, Jr. | April 12, 1837 |
| Sam'l B. Duncan & Wm. Shattuck | February 7, 1842 |
| Seth Richards & Dr. D. Nettison | April 5, ??? |
| Perley Fifield | May 16, 1845 |
| John Bryant | April 28, 1849 |
| Converse Cole | May 3, 1853 |
| John T. Duncan, Jr. | June 17, 1861 |
| Converse Cole | January 10, 1868 |
| Irving A. Hurd | February 18, 1869 |
| Abbie F. Spaulding | December 14, 1874 |
| Darwin B. Cole | August 17, 1885 |
| William C. True | March 25, 1886 |
| Abbie F. Spaulding | April 9, 1889 |
| James L. Stickney | June 6, 1893 |
| Alvah B. Chellis | May 22, 1897 |
| James L. Stickney | December 1, 1900 |
| Sadie M. Morse | March 5, 1906 |
| Wallace D. Jones | March 12, 1920 |
| G. Gardiner MacLeay, Jr. | September 20, 1962 |
| Joseph Salsbury | July 6, 1985 |

Plainfield:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Asa Kingsbury & Abel Gates | |
| Asa Kingsbury & Joseph Wood | April 6, 1805 |
| Ai Read | January 17, 1827 |
| Asa Kingsbury & Joseph Wood | April 30, 1837 |
| Asa Kingsbury | April 18, 1841 |
| Bradbury Dyer | February 9, 1848 |
| Benjamin F. Ward | April 15, 1863 |
| Sophia R. Spalding | February 13, 1866 |
| Israel D. Hall | March 24, 1868 |
| William Hall | April 11, 1870 |
| John H. Westgate | September 4, 1876 |
| William Hall | October 12, 1877 |

| Postmasters | Date of Installation |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| John H. Whitaker | March 24, 1893 |
| Georgiana P. Chadbourne | December 10, 1910 |
| E. Mae Bridgford | June 9, 1921 |
| Stephen F. Plummer | November 13, 1923 |
| Franklin A. Barto | August 20, 1962 |
| William L. McHugh | January 23, 1979 |

Pound Keeper

The General Court passed legislation on February 9, 1791, requiring each town to build and maintain a good and sufficient pound, at the expense of the town. "All swine, cattle, sheep, and other creatures running at large and damaging property will be impounded at the expense of the owners." The pound keeper was to receive a fee of three pence per head for every creature impounded. It was the duty of the pound keeper "to cause the creatures impounded to be relieved with meat and drink suitable for such creatures." Also, if the owner was known, the pound keeper was required to notify said owner within twenty-four hours. The Plainfield town pound is located on Center-of-Town Road. The stone walls are still there.

Sealer of Weights and Measures

Laws were passed on December 15, 1797, authorizing the selectmen of each town to "provide, at the proper expense of their respective towns, a complete set of weights and measures and scale beams for the use of the town." At their annual meeting, each town was to elect a sealer of weights and measures. In the month of May, it was the sealer's duty to appoint a day for all weights, measures, beams, scale beams, and stilyards used by the residents of the town, to be brought to him and examined for accuracy. He received two cents for each sealing. The sealer of weights and measures was also empowered to go to the house of any person who neglected to bring or send the weights, measures, beams and stilyards to the appointed place. For this service, he was to receive twenty-five cents. Any person who refused to bring the standards to be viewed, proved and sealed, was fined the sum of \$10. The monies were to be used for the town poor. The location of Plainfield's original sets of weights and measures are unknown.

Surveyors of Highways

An act was passed by the General Court on February 29, 1786, regarding the highways in each town. At the annual town meeting, a sum of money for making, mending, and repairing the highways was raised by the vote of the town.



Grading the road on Black Hill, about 1900. L-R David Emery, Gene Rice (driver), Sherman Jordan, and Walter Williams. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.



The snow roller, about 1910. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

It was the selectmen's duty to divide the town into districts for the care of the highways. In Plainfield, the highway districts coincided with the school districts. As the number of school districts increased, the highway districts increased proportionally. The town credited the utensils, materials, and labor applied to the roads against individual taxes. At the annual meeting, the surveyor of highways was given a list of the persons in his district with their respective proportions of the tax burden for maintaining the highways. The surveyors also set the time, place, and tools needed for the work on the highway.

Surveyors of Lumber

On June 21, 1785, the General Court enacted standards for "accurate measurement of boards and for regulating the sale of shingles, clapboards, hoops, and staves." All types of timber, lumber, shingles, and etc. were to be surveyed for the grade, drying, shrinking, and clarity from knots. The surveyor of lumber was to receive, from the buyers, six pence per thousand feet for viewing only and six pence more per thousand feet for measuring and marking.

Town Hearse

In November of 1860, the town voted to "buy a hearse and build a house to store the same." It was purchased some time in 1862. In the Annual Report for the year ending March 1, 1863, the expenses were:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Paid for hearse | \$225.00 |
| Paid for harness | 33.75 |
| Paid for hearse house | <u>86.24</u> |
| | \$344.99 |

The hearse was an expensive community investment. Using the figures from the treasurer's report, the hearse alone equaled 281 ten-hour days of labor on the highways. In 1877, the hearse received an overhauling. In the treasurer's report for that year:

| | |
|---|-------|
| L. F. Stone was paid "painting and repair of hearse" | 33.50 |
| Elmer Jacobs, cloth for hearse, trimming, and repair of hearse harness | 8.62 |
| W. H. Sisson, trimming hearse | 6.00 |

In 1876, the hearse driver became an elective office. The driver furnished the team and received an average of \$2 per trip, the equal of two days' pay. In the 1890s, it was decided that many town offices, including the hearse driver, should be appointed by the selectmen. The year 1891 was the last Town Meeting where the hearse driver was elected.

The last hearse driver was appointed in 1922. Before the roads were maintained for winter automotive traffic, the hearse was stored in a lean-to attached to the woodshed of the Meriden Town Hall. Sometime in the 1940s, the town obtained a new piece of road equipment. Fred Mark, selectman, took the hearse up to his farm on Gleason Road for storage. Later the body was taken off and the running gear was used as a wagon. There are no known pictures of the hearse.

Tything Man

The observation of the Lord's Day was strict and monitored by the tything man. Although restrictions had been enforced since colonial times, they were made law by acts passed December 24, 1799. No labor nor games were allowed on the first day of the week or Lord's Day. The fine was not to exceed \$6 nor be less than \$1. There could be no travel on the Lord's Day between sunrise and sunset, except to attend public worship, visit the sick, or to perform some office of charity. The fine for travel was \$6, nor no less than \$1. No person on the Lord's Day could behave rudely nor indecently within the house of public worship nor between morning and afternoon service. The same fines were imposed. Each town, at annual meeting, was to elect two tything men, "being of good substance and sober life" to enforce the laws pertaining to the Lord's Day.

Water Districts

• *Plainfield Village Water District*

Residents of the Plain began to meet in 1965 to solve the water shortage problems in the village. The problem was caused by droughts and by new wells. The widening of Route 12A through the village caused salt contamination of many wells. Vernon Hood handled the legal aspects of forming a water district.¹² The Plainfield Village Water District was legally formed in January 1966.

On July 28, 1971, bids for the construction of the village water system were awarded to Munson Earth-Moving Corporation of South Burlington, Vermont, and Neil Daniels, Inc., of Ascutney, Vermont. A grant of \$100,000 from the New England Regional Commission and a loan from the Farmer's Home Administration financed the construction. The system was planned for ninety subscribers. In 1972, the district awarded a contract for installation of a pump-house, pump, and storage tank. The water system started operating on June 11, 1972. At opening ceremonies, Congressman James Cleveland, Wallace Pickering, and Don MacLeay flipped the switch to start the flow of water.

• *Meriden Village Water District*¹³

In 1973, at the request of Plainfield selectmen, voters residing within a proposed water and sewer district approved the creation of a municipal corporation to provide water, sewer, and other services. The district then purchased



Selectmen's meeting in a member's kitchen, about 1940. L-R Clarence King, Fred Mark, Earle Colby, unknown, John Willard Whitney, Herbert King (standing). Courtesy Mary Cassidy.

the land, structures, and accounts of the private Meriden Water Company. In 1974, a new well was dug along Blood's Brook adjacent to the Plainfield School property. The new system, which was financed by a \$50,000 loan and \$50,000 grant from the Farmers Home Association, began operating in 1975. The original water source was maintained as a backup. The water system serves approximately fifty-five residential and commercial users, plus Kimball Union Academy.

In 1976, an engineering study for a wastewater collection and treatment system was initiated. Design and approvals were completed by 1978, but, financing problems prevented construction until 1982. Total project cost was \$1,335,000, financed by loans and grants. The waste water treatment facility includes three aerated lagoons, a headworks building, a control building, and garage. The plant is designed to treat 80,000 gallons per day and has an average daily flow of 24,000 gallons. The facility serves approximately twenty-three users, plus Kimball Union Academy. Since not all customers on the water system are serviced by the wastewater collection system, the two budgets are kept separately.

Both the Plainfield and Meriden Water Districts are financed by the users in the districts.

Biography

Walter A. Backofen
Mary Cassedy
Virginia Colby
Bettyann N. Dole
Jane C. Fielder
Sheila (Boyd) Hoermann
Kathryn F. MacLeay
Verna Moulton
Nancy Norwalk
Jane Stephenson
Stephen H. Taylor
Wallace Williams
Howard W. Zea

Jeanie Begg (1903–1976) (Jeanie Begg Terrett Markmann)

Jeanie Begg was born in Dundee, Scotland, to Francis and Jeanie (Hunter) Begg. She came to America at an early age and graduated from Mount Holyoke College. A professional actress mentioned in Eugene O'Neill's biographies, she directed the play, "New Hampshire Neighbors," which won a state-wide contest. Jeanie Begg was a journalist and worked on the staff of the *New York Herald Tribune* and the "Voice of America." Locally, she contributed to the *Claremont Daily Eagle* and the *Valley News*. She also worked in publicity for Dartmouth College and headed the publicity department at the University of New Hampshire. She contributed many articles on country life and local folks in Plainfield and Cornish to numerous magazines.

Miss Begg came to Meriden in the 1930s and married Courtenay Terrett. In 1938, she purchased the Nathaniel and Polly Manchester house, now (1991) owned by Leonard and Susan Timmons on Sanborn Road. After separating from Mr. Terrett, she took back her maiden name. Miss Begg loved nature and was well-educated about the flowers, birds, and animals in this locality. She was known as an authority on mushrooms. She had large gardens and shared the crops with friends. She also made wines from carrots, beets, dan-

delions, and other plants. She wrote a long article about her experiences in Meriden, on file at the Meriden Library. In 1965, she married Max. A. Markmann and moved to a new home in Unity, New Hampshire. She died at the age of seventy-three in 1976.¹

Byron David Benson Sr. (1890–1970)

Byron D. Benson, Sr. was born in New Jersey and graduated from Princeton University. He married Annie Ball in 1913 and worked for Tide Water Oil Company (founded by his grandfather) and then entered banking. He retired in 1939 and with his son David, Jr., began to look for a farm. David had attended the University of New Hampshire and had met Larry Taylor. Larry invited him to work on their farm in Plainfield during the summer of 1938. Byron and David learned of Cloverland Farm in Meriden and purchased it from Mrs. Fred Rogers after the 1938 hurricane. The old Jenney place nearby was purchased shortly afterwards, and the Woodward farm was added in 1939. These farms were known as Cloverland Farms for many years. The Bensons raised grade sheep and pure bred Herefords. Mr. and Mrs. Benson were very active members of the Meriden Congregational Church. She died in December 1962. Mr. Benson married Constance Wallace in December 1964. They summered at Cloverland Farm and wintered in New Jersey. Mr. Benson died in December 1970, and the Benson home was sold to Dorothy and Edmond "Peanie" Goodwin in 1973.



Lucy (Ruggles) Bishop, about 1950. Courtesy Beatrice Clark.

Lucy Bishop (1893–1980)

Lucy Bishop was born in Plainfield in 1893, the daughter of George and Marion (Eggleston) Ruggles. She graduated from Kimball Union Academy in 1910 and taught in both Cornish and Plainfield. Mrs. Bishop tutored the children in the Cornish Art Colony and gave piano lessons. Active in local choral groups, her musical talents have left a legacy. She wrote "Oh Plainfield" for the town's bicentennial in 1961 and several hymns still sung in the Plainfield

Baptist Church. For many years she was the organist there. She was active in the State Federation of Women's Clubs and was also a fifty-year member of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club, a member of the Blow-Me-Down Grange, and a trustee of the Philip Read Memorial Library. She married George C. Bishop in 1916 and had four children: Dorothy (born 1917), Beatrice (born 1920), Sylvia (born 1922), and Alfred (born 1924). They made their home on Thrasher Road and rebuilt their house after a fire in 1941. She was the original "Pollyanna" who believed that life was beautiful and that there was nothing bad in anyone.



Fiske and Clare Boyd at their home, Pinchaven, about 1940. Courtesy Hillary Sundell.

Albert Boyd (1901–1965)

Clare Boyd (1895–1986)

Fiske Boyd (1895–1975)

In 1926, Lydia Boyd bought the house, barns, and 125 acres of land which were collectively known as Pinchaven at the old Center-of-Town from Willis Jordan. Mrs. Boyd, from Leonia, New Jersey, purchased the property as an occasional haven for herself and as a full-time residence and workplace for her twenty-six-year-old author son, Albert. He had heard about the scenic qualities of the region from his friend and colleague, John Coles of Meriden. On one of his many visits to Meriden, he and John had scoured the hills for a suitable writing studio. During the next ten years, Lydia Boyd, a widow, shared the residences of two of her sons, Albert in Plainfield and John in New Jersey.



Plainfield Village by Fiske Boyd, woodcut, 1949. Courtesy Hillary Sundell.

Albert settled in for an active and happy life at Pinehaven. He wrote and published a large number of works including short stories, essays, and novels among which was the best selling *Reba Durham*. He promoted and participated in the Howard Hart Players. He also took advantage of his agricultural surroundings by raising a few cows and geese. During this period, Albert met and subsequently married a young lady who agreed to give rural life a try. After a few years, the experiment failed, and they moved back to the city in 1936.

The Boyd family debated the future of Pinehaven for two years. Albert's older brother, Fiske, and his wife, Clare, were looking for a quiet place to practice their art and to raise their nine-year-old daughter, Sheila, away from New York City or its residential suburb of Summit, New Jersey.

Fiske Boyd, the middle boy of three sons and one daughter born to Peter Keller and Lydia (Butler) Boyd, was born in Philadelphia on July 5, 1895. Fiske attended the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts from 1913 to 1916. After graduation, he studied from 1921 to 1924 at the Art Students' League of New York. While there, he met and subsequently married his fellow student, Clare Cross Shenehon, on May 1, 1926.

From the mid-twenties until his death on September 21, 1975, Fiske produced a prodigious number of woodcuts, pencil sketches, oil paintings, and etchings of landscapes, people, and animals. Many of these works depict Plainfield as well as Florence, Italy, and other areas in New England and the mid-Atlantic states. His reputation spread throughout the nation and his works were exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney

Museum in New York, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Library of Congress in Washington. The quality of Fiske's works won him the Boericke Prize of the Philadelphia Print Club in 1931, the American Artists Group Prize of the Society of American Graphic Artists in 1947, the John Taylor Arms Memorial Prize in 1954, the Cannon Prize N.A.D. in 1955, purchase awards from the Library of Congress, Brooklyn Museum A.N.A. Memorial Society of American Graphic Artists, Audubon Artists, Xylon, Boston Printmakers, and the Philadelphia Print Club. In between pursuing his art career, Fiske served his country as a lieutenant in the U. S. Navy from 1917 to 1921.

Fiske's wife, Clare, was also born in 1895, on July 28, in Minneapolis. She was the middle of three daughters born to Francis Clinton and Katherine Cross Shenehon. Her father was the dean of the Engineering School at the University of Minnesota. Previously, he had designed and co-directed the construction of the Sault Ste. Marie and the Chicago Canals, the latter of which changed the direction of the Chicago River. After graduating from Sweetbriar College, she also studied at the University of Minnesota, the Sorbonne in Paris, the Minneapolis Art Institute, and the Art Students' League where she met her future husband.

During their early married life, the Boyds lived in Summit, New Jersey, where Clare taught art and art history at the Kent Place School. In 1928, their daughter Sheila was born. [Sheila died June 22, 1990.]

The Boyds' grand plan for picturesque Pinehaven included the establishment of a small art school and a functioning art studio and gallery in the several available farm buildings. In pursuit of this plan, they remodeled two of the barns and part of the main house with lumber salvaged from the 1938 hurricane. Through word of mouth, potential students heard of the Pinehaven School of Art and began to arrive for their art training. They included some of Clare's ex-students from the Kent Hill School, art students from Dartmouth, and the daughter of Thomas Hollerith, developer of the punch card data processing system. The curriculum consisted of courses in drawing, painting, oils, woodcuts, and individual consultation. The school lasted until 1942.

The Boyds turned to the land and began to raise sheep, pigs, turkeys, chickens, ducks, and bees, and in their spare time amateur archeology. The Boyds bought two boars which were kept in an enclosure that Fiske had built around the foundations of an earlier house at Pinehaven. One day, Clare noticed some china shards that the pigs had apparently uprooted. She and Fiske thoroughly explored the old cellar hole and found a large number of additional chips and some almost complete serving pieces. In addition, Clare found a gold button with the letters GW and the names of the thirteen original states. The curator of the Brooklyn Museum later identified it as a 1792 campaign button of George Washington and the cellar-hole ceramics as from the same period.

The Boyds explored many cellar holes which were rich in shards and other artifacts from colonial days brought originally from Connecticut to the New Hampshire grants. The Boyds collected whole ceramics at antique shops and

auctions. The Smithsonian Institution heard of their efforts and expressed interest in 425 ceramic pieces which Clare later donated.

The Boyds' experience in ceramics led to an interest in the history of Plainfield and nearby settlements. Over the years, they conducted intensive local research. Typed and bound, this unpublished manuscript was donated by their daughter, Sheila, to the Plainfield and Meriden public libraries in 1987 and has proven a very useful research tool.

During this entire period, Fiske pursued his art in addition to teaching and farming. He died in 1975. Clare also pursued her art, but family and civic responsibilities made serious inroads on her art career. She was president of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club and chaired the Town Bicentennial Committee in 1961. Clare attended all town meetings and functions and was always available for any volunteer work related to the art field or town history. She died in January 1986.

John Duncan Bryant (1829–1911)

John Duncan Bryant was born on October 21, 1829, at the family homestead (now the Congregational Church Parish House) in Meriden. He was the oldest son of John (1784–1886) and Mary Ann (Duncan) Bryant (1800–1890). There were three other sons: Daniel Kimball Bryant (1831–1903), James Duncan Bryant (1836–1865), and William Henry Bryant (1840–1883).

His father, John, was a native of Cornish and a partner and nephew of Daniel Kimball in the mill and store business in Meriden. He became the executor of Kimball's estate and inherited the Kimball home (built about 1777) and the brick store north of it. This structure was later known as the "Bryant Block" or the "Old Block" on the west side of the common. The Kimball Union Academy archives have a license granted to John Bryant by the "Collector of the Revenue for the 4th Collection District of New Hampshire" in 1817 to "sell by retail Merchandize, including Wines and Spirits...." The brick block was purchased by Kimball Union Academy for a boarding and rooming house for girls in 1858. In 1910, the block was deeded to John D. Bryant. Although destroyed by fire in 1927, the use of the property, including the "sunken garden" (the remaining cellar hole), was left to the trustees of his estate, who made it available to the Congregational Church.

Bryant responded to a biographical inquiry from Kimball Union Academy that he could not recall when he was a student there. Bryant wrote, "Don't know. Prior to 1846. Not a graduate. No diploma. Fitted for college at Boston Public Latin School, Boston." The Kimball Union Academy records give the dates of his attendance as 1840–1845. Bryant earned his A. B. degree from Harvard in 1853 and afterwards attended Harvard Law School. He was admitted to the Suffolk Bar, Boston, in 1857, after studying privately with William Dehon of Boston, whom he joined in partnership. Bryant never published any books or pamphlets, but wrote numerous law briefs.

Bryant lived in Boston after 1846 for the rest of his life. He married Ellen M. P. Reynolds of Boston on October 18, 1864, and had no children. The Bryants resided at 356 Commonwealth Avenue, but kept ties to Meriden where he owned a great deal of property. The Bryants often visited the old Daniel Kimball house.

Bryant did not serve in the Civil War. His younger brother William went in his stead. In the same Kimball Union Academy questionnaire, he gave his reasons for not going to war.

Not in the war. I wish to state here that in 1861 I was making my arrangements to join the army in support of the Union, when my youngest brother, William H. Bryant, then of Boston, also, I believe, a Kimball Union Academy boy [class of 1856], came in one morning and said: "Now, you can quit all that. One of us has got to go. One must stay and take care of the old folks at home. You are used to that and can do it better than I can. I can fight better than you can. I have enlisted this morning to keep you from going." He enlisted in the 45th Massachusetts as a nine months man. He was by his own wish transferred to a New Hampshire regiment, I think the 12th. William's New Hampshire regiment was the same in which [his cousin] Samuel Augustus Duncan, afterward General Duncan, went out as a Major, and in which Carroll D. Wright, afterward Colonel Wright, Civil Service Commissioner, etc., went out as Adjutant. Before the nine months expired, William said he saw they needed soldiers more than at the beginning; and he enlisted for the war. After more than two years faithful and loyal service, most of the time as 1st Lieutenant, and on detached service as Adjutant, he was disabled, near the point of death, and by the doctor's orders resigned and was honorably discharged. Another brother James Duncan Bryant, was also in the Union service, and died of malarial typhoid contracted on the lower Mississippi. Both were tenderly laid to rest in the Mill Cemetery at Meriden.

Bryant made a great deal of money, and he bequeathed much of his property to relatives, friends, and law associates because he had no children and his immediate family had predeceased him. Bryant's original will was unusually long and contained sixty-five articles. He added a codicil consisting of twenty-one articles of changes after his wife's death.

Throughout his life, Bryant continued his interest in Meriden and Kimball Union Academy. He provided a generous endowment to the Congregational Church which was partly applied to establish a Church Preservation Fund to care for church land and buildings. He also made provisions towards the minister's salary.

Bryant was extremely specific in the care and preservation of the buildings

and grounds left to the church or to Kimball Union Academy. The thirtieth article states in regard to the church property: "It is my wish that the grounds above designated be kept suitably fertilized from year to year; that the grass on such grounds be carefully cut with a lawn mower, or otherwise, at least once every two weeks from the first of May to the first of October in each year; that the walks and driveways should be kept free from weeds and the borders properly trimmed, and that the shrubbery on said grounds be kept suitably trimmed, fertilized and otherwise cared for. . . ."

In order to preserve his summer home and birthplace, "the old Daniel Kimball place, the house being the old Daniel Kimball mansion remodelled, the timbering is mainly that of the old Daniel Kimball house," he left the house to the Church for use as a parsonage. He made it a condition of bequest that the home be kept

as nearly as may be, as they at present are; and that the pictures of my mother, Mrs. Mary A. Bryant, and my second mother, Mrs. Susan D. Reynolds, which now hang in the parlor be allowed to remain where they now hang. The paneling in the remodeled dining room was from the old Daniel Kimball house, is probably over one hundred years old, and should in no wise be removed. The marble mantels in the parlor and in the sitting room are from the Reynolds home on Fort Hill, Boston. They should be kept in place for their intrinsic value and rarity and for their associations.

Bryant originally left \$25,000 to Kimball Union Academy. After his wife's death, he reduced the bequest to \$15,000 because work had already begun on Bryant Hall which was a gift from him. The building was dedicated in October 1910. Bryant also left land known as "Bryant Pond," about twenty acres, located east of Route 120 opposite Bonner Road. A condition of the offer was that "the dam across the brook and a suitable fence along the roadside be maintained, and that after the Academy has secured its supply of ice each winter, the public should be allowed, under suitable regulations as to ingress and egress, to take ice from the pond." This fence and dam were maintained until a flood washed the dam out.

Although Bryant had many stipulations to his bequests, he was a very generous man and allowed some discretion to be used by the trustees of his will in carrying out his many requests.

Several Bryants are buried in the Mill Cemetery: Bryant's parents, brothers, and Uncle George Bryant (1794-1879), his wife Hannah Roberts (1808-1839), their daughter, Hannah B. Bridgman (1839-1913), Levi Bryant (d. 1878, a. 84) and his wife Susan (d. 1851, a. 56), and their daughter Susan F. (d. 1900, a. 73), and son Darwin Bryant (d. 1892, a. 67). John Duncan Bryant died on July 27, 1911, in Meriden. He and his wife are buried in Boston.²

Harold Watkins Chellis (1876–1935)**Mary (Westgate) Chellis (1879–1968)**

Harold Chellis was born in Meriden, the son of Andrew Jackson and Electa (Watkins) Chellis, on March 14, 1876. He was graduated from Kimball Union Academy in 1894 and married, on August 5, 1903, Mary E. Westgate, the daughter of Daniel and Clara (Stone) Westgate.

In 1897, he installed a telephone wire from his house to the home of his cousin, Alvah Chellis, on Gleason Road. By 1904, that wire had grown into the Meriden Telephone Company with twenty-five subscribers. The switchboard and all of the company's equipment was located at the family homestead, built in 1825, on Chellis Hill.

While Mrs. Chellis was away from her home giving birth to her first son, Howard, the first switchboard was installed in her dining room. It remained there for thirty-five years when it was moved to a separate room.

In 1954, the Meriden Telephone Company had 118 subscribers, all but eighteen on party lines. Mrs. Chellis, fondly known as "Mother Chellis," operated the switchboard with help from her daughters, Clara (Chellis) Huse, Ruth (Chellis) Brown, daughter-in-law Hazel (Eastman) Chellis, and other townspeople, like Eva King and Henrietta Davis. In 1954, Mrs. Chellis was honored for fifty years of service to the company.

After the death of Harold Chellis on October 11, 1935, Howard Chellis returned to Meriden from his position with Western Union in New York and served as manager until his death in 1971. The second son, the late Frank Chellis, assumed the manager's position until his own death in 1980. On August 24, 1973, the ring-down telephones were converted to dial. One of Mr. Chellis' grandsons, David, son of Frank and Vera (Davis) Chellis, became manager of the company, which is now owned by Telephone and Data Systems, Inc. At the time of the conversion to dial, the company was relocated to a brick building behind the Grange Hall.

For twenty-five years, Harold W. Chellis was also manager and treasurer of the Meriden Electric Light and Power Company, which he organized, and a director of the New Hampshire Telephone Association.

He was a member of the town of Plainfield Board of Selectmen; town treasurer (1925–26); and a town representative to the state legislature (1920–21).³

Arthur Chivers (1878–1981)**Helen Chivers (1888–1971)**

Arthur and Helen Chivers purchased the Nate Andrews house on Route 120 in Meriden in 1952 after his retirement from the faculty of Dartmouth College. Arthur was an avid gardener and maintained beautiful grounds around their home. Both were active in the Congregational Church, and Arthur served as a trustee. He also was on the Plainfield Planning Board and a trustee of the trust funds for Plainfield. Arthur donated and directed the planting of

shrubbery around the Meriden Town Hall. He served as president of the Meriden Library Association. Helen studied stenciling under Esther Stevens Braser. She was a charter member of the E.S. Braser Guild and a member of the Historical Society of Early American Decorators. Helen taught stenciling and assisted in decorating the Ladies' Fellowship Room when the Duncan Parish House was built. Samples of her art work can be found in Meriden homes, the Duncan Parish House, and the Meriden Library.

Earle W. Colby (1886-1974)

Earle Colby was born in Plainfield on January 12, 1886, son of Carlos and Edith (Westgate) Colby. He attended local schools and was graduated from Kimball Union Academy in 1905. After two years of study at Brown University, he went to Montana for a year and was hired to operate a 640-acre ranch. His success enabled him to buy a 300-acre farm with a 50-cow dairy.

While in Montana, Earle was married to Miss Gertie Wood of Plainfield. Earle and Gertie moved to Beacon, New York, where he became foreman of a large estate. In 1919, Mrs. Colby died leaving three children: Stanley (a long-time agricultural extension agent in Windsor County and Sullivan County as well as selectman of the town of Cornish), Bertha (Mrs. Everett Cameron), and Byron (Agricultural Extension Professor at the University of Massachusetts).

Mr. Colby later married Alice Wilson of Beacon, New York, and came back to Plainfield to carry on a successful dairy and chicken farm on the River Road (Lockwood Sprague, 1991).

Earle served a term of two years in the New Hampshire State Legislature and was selectman for a number of years. His second wife, Alice, died in 1959, and the next year he married Susan Lewin. Earle was a member of the Plainfield Community Church and a Past Master of Cheshire Lodge, F & A.M. He died at the age of 88, March 20, 1974.⁴

Susan L. (Lewin) Colby (1889-1978)

Susan (Lewin) Colby was the daughter of Elmer and Nellie (Westgate) Lewin and was born November 22, 1889, in Hartland, Vermont. For almost fifty-five years, she worked and lived at The Oaks, home of Maxfield Parrish.

Sue went to work for the Parrish family in 1905 when she was sixteen years old. She waited on tables for their many dinner parties and helped with the children. She also modeled for Maxfield Parrish and was able to capture the pose and mood required for his paintings. She modeled more than anyone for Parrish. In 1910, Edward Bok, editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*, with headquarters in the Curtis Publishing Company building in Philadelphia, commissioned Parrish to paint eighteen large murals for the girls' dining room. Parrish chose the theme "Florentine Fete" and painted groups of young, happy people going to a carnival. Sue Lewin was the model for most of the subjects depicted



Sue (Lewin) Colby, about 1910.
Courtesy Les Allen Ferry.



(L) Sue (Lewin) Colby posing for "Sweet Nothings," 1913. Photo by Maxfield Parrish. Courtesy Les Allen Ferry. (R) "Sweet Nothings," cover, *The Ladies' Home Journal* (April 1921), featuring one of eighteen murals painted by Maxfield Parrish. The murals were commissioned for the girls' dining room of the Curtis Publishing Company. Courtesy Virginia Colby.

in the painting. This commission was among Parrish's most significant achievements.⁵

Sue also posed for many paintings used on *Collier's*, *Hearst's*, and *Scribner's* magazine covers. She was three of the four characters in "The Tea Tray"; both male and female characters in the "Rubaiyat," a decoration for gift boxes of Crane Chocolates; the two girls in "The Venetian Lamp Lighter"; "Polly Put the Kettle On"; and "The King and Queen Might Eat Thereof and Noblemen." She appeared on advertisements for Jello; all the characters in "The Lantern Bearers"; "The Frog Prince"; "Reveries," a cover for *Hearst's* magazine; an advertisement for Djer-Kiss cosmetics; a World War I Red Cross poster; a Community Plate ad; and a Swift's Premium Ham advertisement. She also modeled for one of the faces in "The Pied Piper," a mural for the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, painted in 1909; "The Lute Players"; and many more.

Sue made most of the costumes, using drapery fabric or cheese cloth. They were made on a small hand crank "Wilson & Gibbs" sewing machine which had belonged to Parrish's grandmother.⁶

Sue also took an active role in the community. She belonged to the church, the Ladies Aid, and the Mothers' and Daughters' Club. She frequently had her friends to tea at the Parrish studio, where Maxfield always made a point of dropping by for a few moments to chat.

In 1960, at the age of seventy-one she married a childhood sweetheart, Earle W. Colby.

Clarence E. Cole (1878-1969)

May (Fellows) Cole (1871-1965)

Clarence was the son of George S. and Mary (Jordan) Cole. He had a small farm south of Meriden Village on the corner of Route 120 and Stage Road. He owned a large gasoline engine, threshing and sawing machines, and did custom work around Meriden as well as caring for his cattle and large work horses.

He married May Fellows on April 28, 1906, in the Baptist Church. She was a native of Washington, Vermont. When she was five years old, in 1876, she came with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Fellows and her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John H. Calif, to live on Methodist Hill in East Plainfield.

May did laundry for people during most of her working life. As a young girl, she went every day to pick up laundry in Lebanon and returned it all ironed. She ironed many times until 2 a.m. For a long time, May had to draw her water from a pump in the field. In the winter time, she discovered it was easier to fill the wash tubs by the pump and allow them to freeze. She drew them into the house on a sled in the evening to thaw out by morning. Later, she did washing and ironing for Kimball Union Academy boarding students and some local residents. She also helped her husband with the farm work. There is a picture of her when eighty-four years old on a load of hay, driving the horses. May, a tiny woman, would do the grain purchasing and load the 100-pound bags onto the wagon herself.



Clarence and May Cole of Meriden at their fiftieth wedding anniversary, 1956. They were married on April 28, 1906. Photo by Gordon Leland. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

She was a faithful member of the Meriden Congregational Church and was regularly seen on Sundays, walking at a fast pace, to and from church. For her, walking was a gentle trot with a hop, skip, and slight jump.

May was fond of woodchuck and coon meat. The local hunters kept her well-supplied. May's outspoken ways made her a colorful commentator on local affairs.⁷ One Sunday, when May was in her early eighties, she entered the church and paused to say good morning to Lonie Trombly. The conversation could be heard all through the church: "Good morning Lonie, how are you?" "Good morning, May. I'm very tired this morning. We went to the fair yesterday and I'm all tired out." May's reply was: "Humph—I worked in the hayfield all day yesterday and I feel fine!"

The Coles did not have children. May's brother, Don Fellows, was a carpenter and sawmill operator who lived in Meriden Village. Her sister was Cora Bragg. Clarence had two brothers, Herbert and Perley.

Mary (Sarson) Cushing (1918–1986)

Mary Elizabeth (Sarson) Cushing was born on June 20, 1918, in Needham, Massachusetts, the daughter of Hazel and Henry Sarson. Most of her childhood was spent in Bartlett, New Hampshire. She attended schools in Bartlett and Waterville, Maine, and graduated from the University of New Hampshire in 1940 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. While at the university, she was a member of the Mask and Dagger Acting Group and starred as Kaye Hamilton in George S. Kaufman's comedy *Stage Door*.

In 1942, Mary married Frederick Goss Cushing, Jr., and they had two sons, Frederick G. Cushing III (born 1944) and Stephen I. (born 1950). Mary and Fred bought Currier and Company in Lebanon, and she worked there as a fashion buyer for the women's department and as corporate vice president for twenty-six years.

Mary taught English in the Lebanon schools during World War II. Her interest in children and education continued when she moved to Meriden in 1952. Mary worked with others to raise funds for equipment for the Meriden White School, especially the cafeteria. She was also instrumental in having the blinking light installed at the intersection of Route 120 and Main Street for the safety of schoolchildren.

Mary actively participated in town organizations and is credited with coining the phrase *Mericrafters*—crafts of Meriden. As a member of the Meriden Bird Club, she was involved in refurbishing the club museum (sold in 1976) and instigated the Margaret Rosa collection of carved birds, which is housed in the Meriden Library. Mary was a member of the Meriden Congregational Church and served on many committees.

Mary readily served and contributed to the community in many ways. In 1984, she was elected to the Board of Trustees of the Meriden Library and served until her death in 1986. Her interest in the library had begun many years before as a member of the Friends of the Library engaged in providing a library for the children in Meriden.

Through the generosity of her family and friends and her own bequest, the Meriden Library has been able to fund programs and services for its patrons that will continue in her memory.

Mary's good ideas and stimulating conversation brought much to any committee she served on in this community. Her sense of humor and joy in living was always present.

Marion V. Cuthbert (1896–1989)

"A pioneer in the study of Black women, advocate of interracial cooperation, and accomplished writer of several genre, Marion Vera Cuthbert was one of the most progressive thinkers of her day. From her experiences as teacher and administrator in the segregated South and as a professional woman in the North, she gained an understanding of the unique position of Black American women in the twentieth century. It is this position, circumscribed by race and sex prejudice, which provided the framework for a lifelong commitment to equality and interracial harmony."⁸

Marion Cuthbert was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, the daughter of Thomas C. and Victoria (Means) Cuthbert. She attended the University of Minnesota and graduated from Boston University and Columbia University where she was awarded a doctorate in philosophy.

Miss Cuthbert was a teacher and principal of Burrell Normal School in Florence, Alabama, Dean of Women at Talladega College, and was the first black on the faculty of Brooklyn College. She was on the National Board of the YWCA and on the national boards of many religious and educational groups. She traveled world-wide in these capacities.



Marion Cuthbert. Courtesy
Young Women's Christian
Association, New York City.

Miss Cuthbert had a dream of owning a home in the country, and in 1951 took a year's sabbatical from Brooklyn College to find one. A friend brought her to New Hampshire. She bought the first farm she saw (the Mercier property off Stage Road, 1991). "The moment I saw this house and view and the land around it, I knew I was home."⁹ Neighbors took her into their hearts. When she arrived that first summer, she found a garden planted and her house remodeled. She retired here permanently in 1961.

Miss Cuthbert belonged to the Home Demonstration Club, the Mothers' and Daughters' Club, the College Woman's Club and the Community Baptist Church and was a trustee of the Plainfield Library. In later years she resided in area nursing homes.

Miss Cuthbert was the author of *We Sing America* (a children's book), *April Grasses* (poetry), *Juliette Derricotte* (biography), and *Songs of Creation* (a religious philosophy in poetical prose). Her college thesis *Education and Marginality: A Study of the Negro Woman College Graduate*, written in 1942, was published in 1988 as part of a series entitled *Educated Women*.

I and He *by Marion Cuthbert*

I told my child
God could make worlds.
Delight was a fountain in his eyes.
Remembering his own secret world
Which he might turn to in any wakeful hour

Or enter in a dream.
It was good to know
That God, too, could make a garden
Or a friend.

I told my child
God was not greater than the rules.
This seemed right to him—
To know that things are as they are
And will not change except as they must
Because of what they were created for.

If you have a little puddle of water,
You have to play in it fast.
Putting your hands over it won't help long
Because little puddles go back to the sun.

I told my child
God was always becoming.
He said this was true, of course, because
All alive things were growing all the time.

When he was a little boy, he thought
Lilacs died forever, but they don't;
They just like to come before us in spring.
And then, too,
He, himself, was four, going on five,
And after that would be six.¹⁰

Alpheus Cutler (1784–1864)

Alpheus Cutler was born in Plainfield, February 21 or 29, 1784, the son of Knights Cutler. He and his father removed from town and went "west" after 1800. Alpheus died at Manti, Iowa. His tombstone is one of the few remaining in the pioneer cemetery.¹¹

A master stone cutter, Alpheus Cutler became a Mormon and was one of the builders of the temple built in Nauvoo, Illinois. He was an Elder in the Church of the Latter Day Saints until the death of its founder, Joseph Smith. After Smith was killed, the Mormons left Nauvoo under the leadership of Brigham Young. They headed west to Utah. At winter quarters (near Omaha, Nebraska), Cutler became disenchanted with the leadership of Young. He and several families remained behind when Young left for Utah. After living near Malvern, Iowa, Cutler's followers, about forty families, went to Kansas where he felt a call to Christianize the Indians. The group did not remain long in Kansas and eventually found their

way to what is now southwestern Iowa. They formed the community of Manti and began the Cutlerite Church. A part of the group left for Minnesota and settled the town of Clitherall. Cutler was fearful of the Civil War and the proximity of the Missourians. The Mormons had been outspoken against slavery.



Blancha Daniels, about 1940.
Courtesy Mary Cassedy.

Blancha L. Daniels (1879–1959)

Blancha Daniels was born in Plainfield on August 4, 1879, the daughter of Willis K. and Emma (Hall) Daniels. She was graduated from Kimball Union Academy in 1900 and from Mount Holyoke College in 1904 with a BA degree and with her master's in 1907. She taught high school chemistry, physics, and mathematics in Newton, Massachusetts; Ridgewood, New Jersey; and Windsor and Rutland, Vermont. She was a member of the Plainfield School Board for twenty-two years. Miss Daniels was treasurer and chairman of the Plainfield Red Cross for forty-three years and received the highest American National Red Cross award. The Certificate of Appreciation was signed by President Eisenhower and E. Roland Harriman, National Chairman of the Red Cross.

Miss Daniels was clerk of the Plainfield Community Church, president of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club, a member of the Woman's College Club of Windsor, and the Hartland, Vermont, Nature Club. She was the organist of the Community Church for twenty-four years and town auditor for eight years. She wrote an article in 1920 on "Old Time" Industries which was included in *A Brief History of Plainfield* in 1975. She wrote other papers on similar topics and presented them at meetings of various organizations. She maintained notebooks on genealogy and Plainfield history. Vernon Hood, town historian, often referred to her. She always hoped to find time to write a history of Plainfield herself.

Aside from her long-term service to the community, Miss Daniels had an

enduring love for sheep and sheep raising, an interest passed from her ancestors who raised large flocks in Plainfield during the nineteenth century. She maintained a small flock until the final months of her life. She also kept bees and always gardened. Miss Daniels was instrumental in helping Ellen Shipman encourage local women to compete for cash prizes for their flower gardens during the 1920s and 1930s. She knew all local flora and fauna by common and scientific names. Her love of music started early in life, and she learned to play piano, organ, mandolin, banjo, and guitar.

Friends and relatives of the Winston Churchill and Maxfield Parrish families and other Cornish Art Colony families were paying "guests" in her home nearby, which led to lasting friendships.

Miss Daniels "upheld the worth and dignity of women and probably would have been active in ERA and 'women's lib' movements. She considered herself equal to men; in her generation, this attitude did not promote romance and marriage. However, she had many long-lasting friendships with men, stemming from mutually shared intellectual interests."¹² She was a doting aunt, yet demanded excellence in academic work. Miss Daniels died on July 29, 1959.¹³

Edward C. Daniels (1850–1936)

Edward C. Daniels was born in Plainfield, the son of William and Fanny (Cotton) Daniels. Edward's grandfather, John Daniels, was born in 1755 in Mendon, Massachusetts. John came to Plainfield in 1801 with \$3,000 in silver and bought 300 acres of land from Simon Smith and built his home on Black Hill Road. John and his wife Zipporah had fourteen children.

Their son William was married twice, first to Eunice True. They had seven children. Then he married Fanny Cotton, and seven more children were born. William died in 1876, and the farm was taken over by his son Edward C.

Edward specialized in raising sheep and fruits. He kept about 500 sheep and raised all the grain and feed for them. His farm was said to be one of the largest and best sheep farms in the state. Every year he would profit \$2,000. He was the last of the big sheep farmers. Many apples, pears, plums and grapes were produced on this farm. Edward prided himself on being odd, but he was a kind and honest neighbor.

When a young man, he planned to marry a distant relative, Mary Daniels. He built a beautiful story and a half house up the road from his birthplace and a barn large enough to keep a cow and a horse. He set out a hedge of hemlock trees in front, and had three cords of wood cut and fitted for the stoves. She turned him down for another man, Eben Lord, who had "more style," she said. The house was never lived in until it was taken down and moved to a neighbor's (Clarence Cole) many years later—about 1928. The hedge grew to more than forty feet tall. The wood pile rotted. People asked to rent it, but Edward said, "Not for rent." He lived with his mother who survived into her nineties.

When Ed was seventy-seven years old, he married Martha Louise Thorne,

twenty-five years his junior on August 14, 1927. The marriage lasted only a few years. Edward willed the farm to his nephew and namesake—Edward Cotton Daniels (1904–1971), who was known as Ted, the son of Henry C. Daniels.

Curtis George Doyle (1882–1926)

Curtis Doyle was born in Meriden on October 8, 1882, son of George W. Doyle and Mary Jane Stearns Howe. He attended Meriden schools. The Doyle family lived on Route 120 (Gerard Nadeau, 1991). Curtis married Maude Bell Palmer from West Acton, Massachusetts, and they had one child, Nathan Curtis Doyle, born May 2, 1911.

Curtis and Maude lived, for a time, with Mrs. Watson, at her home on Main Street in Meriden (Joseph Salsbury, 1991), and later bought the Freeman home on Main Street (Martha Doolittle, 1991).

Mr. Doyle was editor and proprietor of the *Weekly Enterprise*. (See Chapter 10, Business and Commerce.) He was also an auctioneer. The following item appeared in the December 14, 1911, issue of the *Enterprise*.

Any auction that is to be held in the town (presumably those served) ought to be well-advertised in this newspaper—if it's at all important that people should attend it.

Mr. Doyle was an entrepreneur. Ads for his different enterprises can be found in the *Weekly Enterprise*. In real estate, his motto was: "Quick sales at low commission. To buy or sell a farm, house, or building lot, employ C. G. Doyle, Meriden, New Hampshire."

As a local agent (one of many) for the DeLaval Cream Separator, Mr. Doyle sometimes became quite upset, to put it mildly, if a farmer, particularly one of his *Weekly Enterprise* subscribers, bought a separator from another salesman. Wallace Williams has a letter from Mr. Doyle to his father with a returned check for his subscription. Doyle decided that if Williams could make purchases elsewhere, he did not need a subscription to the *Weekly Enterprise*.

Mr. Doyle also operated the Peoples' Cash Store, located on the site across from the Salsbury home (1991). In his store, Doyle ran contests and offered many specials. An ad from the 1909 Meriden Telephone Company Directory reads as follows:

Peoples' Cash Store
Staples and Fancy Groceries. We
solicit a share of your patronage
Cash Discounts
Phone 1-12

At the *Enterprise*, one could have stationery printed as well as commercial items. Mr. Doyle advertised as "The Enterprise Stationery Store" and had a separate box ad stating "Commercial Printing at the *Enterprise* Office."

He stopped printing the *Weekly Enterprise* after his building burned in 1917. Mr. Doyle died in May 1926 at the age of forty-three.



Annie Duncan and a friend, about 1940. Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

Annie Holbrook Duncan (1877–1961)

Miss Duncan was born in Brooklyn in 1878, the daughter of Robert (1833–1902) and Abbie (Vining) Duncan (1838–1921), and the granddaughter of Samuel Bell Duncan (1795–1869) and Ruth (Ticknor) Duncan (1798–1871). Her parents had both graduated from Kimball Union in 1853 and 1858 respectively.

Miss Duncan was a graduate of Smith College, class of 1901, and taught school for a brief period. Due to poor health, she returned to Meriden and the home of her grandfather, where her father and two uncles had been born. She had summered with her family at the Bird Village Inn when her father vacationed from his law practice in New York. The Duncan home was located west of the Dexter Richards dormitory and is now owned by her niece, Mrs. Holdaway (1991).

Very active in the Congregational Church, Miss Duncan served as trustee, Sunday school teacher, Women's Fellowship member, and as a trustee of the Church Board. She was the organizer of the children's Christmas pageant, choosing the parts, providing the costumes, and the kings' gifts. The myrrh and frankincense containers were antiques from her house. The gold coins were chocolate wrapped with foil kept inside an old tin tea box. These gifts are still used by the children in the annual pageant. Miss Duncan compiled a pamphlet entitled *Meriden Congregational Church, Meriden, New Hampshire, 1780–1955*. She wrote a brief history of the present church and the two previous buildings.

At one time, the custom was to designate a Sunday in August as "Bird Sunday."

Miss Duncan would invite a guest speaker, often a minister, to speak during an afternoon church service. The sermon related to nature, and special music was provided. Afterwards, Miss Duncan would invite guests for tea at her home. She served cookies cut into shapes of birds. Bird Sunday ended in the mid-1950s.

Miss Duncan was a charter member of the Meriden Bird Club and worked with Ernest Harold Baynes, the founder. She wrote an article entitled "The Bird Village" in the *Smith Alumnae Quarterly* in February 1926. She became the general manager in 1951-52. Upon Baynes' death, she became a member of the Board of Directors and a major benefactor. There is a plaque just beyond the entrance of the Meriden Bird Sanctuary on the right. A little winding stone path leads up to a rock. The plaque on it reads "Annie H. Duncan, 1877-1961, Charter Member, Generous Patron, Friend of God's Wild Creatures. In Memoriam, Meriden Bird Club." Miss Duncan also supported Camp Meriden for girls which was supervised by the Reverend and Mrs. N. O. Bowlby in the 1920s.

Because Miss Duncan was the sole survivor of her immediate family and inheritor of her brother Allen's estate, she was able to make a generous bequest to the Meriden Congregational Church. The Church used the money to build an addition to the Bryant Parsonage known as the Duncan Parish House.

She also left a timber lot on Red Hill Road to the state of New Hampshire which is known as the Duncan State Forest.

Miss Duncan bequeathed one-third of her estate to Kimball Union Academy. With this gift, Kimball Union Academy built the Duncan Hockey Rink in 1963. Although this building was dismantled in 1988 and sold to New England College for reconstruction, it was greatly appreciated at the time.

The Duncan family had a long association with Kimball Union. Her grandfather, Samuel Bell Duncan, was treasurer and trustee, during the successful headmastership of Cyrus Richards. His wife, Ruth (Ticknor) Duncan, one of the first women to attend the Academy, would have graduated in 1819 if diplomas had been granted "females" in those days. Their children attended Kimball Union Academy: John Ticknor also became trustee and treasurer in 1870 and served until 1902 and Harry Lee became a trustee in 1911 and served until 1917. Her great aunt, Hannah Duncan, who married Reuben True, went to Kimball Union Academy in 1818-1819, and many descendants have since attended. In 1910, she and her brother Harry, together with their late mother, created the Duncan Teachers' Salary Trust Fund of several thousand dollars in memory of their grandfather, General Samuel Bell Duncan, and their uncle, John Ticknor Duncan.

Miss Duncan was always interested in the young people of Meriden. She hired young boys in the village to come each morning to light her fire and to feed the birds. Although very young at the time, one man recalls this experience. After entering her kitchen, he called up the back stairs, "Good morning, Miss Duncan" and she, in her elderly voice, would rejoin, "Good morning, Douglas." He would then go to the woodshed and split kindling and wood

for the day which was stacked in the woodbox. He lit the cookstove, swept the kitchen floor and long veranda, and filled all the bird feeders. The bird seed was kept in an enormous bin in the cellar which gave the entire cellar a smell of bird seed. He chased away the blue jays and grosbeaks from the feeders and emptied the squirrel traps. Different boys took turns with this weekly employment at fifty cents a week. Miss Duncan died on February 28, 1961, and was buried in the family plot in Mill Cemetery. The earlier generations of the family are buried in Gleason Cemetery: Samuel Duncan who died in 1793, John Duncan who died in 1799, and Robert Duncan who died in 1806, with their wives and children.¹⁴

Samuel Augustus Duncan (1836-1895)

Samuel Augustus Duncan was born on June 19, 1836, in Meriden, the son of Samuel Bell and Ruth (Ticknor) Duncan. He received his education at Kimball Union Academy and Dartmouth College, graduating in 1858 as the valedictorian of his class. Duncan became principal of the high school at Quincy, Massachusetts, for two years and then for two years was instructor of languages and mathematics at Dartmouth College where he received the degree of A.M. in 1861. In September 1862, he entered the Union army as major of the Fourteenth Regiment of New Hampshire Volunteers. He served on the Upper Potomac and in the defense of Washington until September 1863. Duncan was then commissioned by President Lincoln as colonel of the Fourth Regiment of United States Colored Troops and assigned to command a brigade at Yorktown during the winter of 1863-64. When the Army of the James was organized, Duncan was assigned to the command of the Second Brigade of the Third Division of the Eighteenth Army Corps. He led his command in the combined operations of the Armies of the Potomac and the James in front of Richmond. Duncan led his men in the assault on the outer works of Petersburg on June 15, 1864, and was present with his brigade at the mine explosion in front of Petersburg. He was severely wounded in the engagement at Fort Harrison and New Market Heights on September 29.

For gallant conduct in the engagement at New Market Heights, Duncan received the brevet of brigadier-general and later in the war was brevetted major-general for gallant and meritorious services. In 1865, he served with General Terry in North Carolina, and after Johnston's surrender held local commands at New Berne and Wilmington, North Carolina. He declined a commission in the regular army and was mustered out in May 1866.

After leaving military life, Duncan became a special agent of the Treasury Department, and later entered the Patent Office. In 1867, he married Miss Julia Jones of New Hampshire and had five children. Three years later, he received a commission as assistant commissioner of patents from President Grant. He studied law at the Columbian Law School in Washington and was admitted to the bar. Duncan moved to New York in 1872 where he practiced patent law.

In 1892, he was elected senior vice-commander of the New York Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion.¹⁵

Charles Flanders (1788–1860)

Charles Flanders was the son of Nehemiah and Sarah (French) Flanders. He was born in Newburyport, Massachusetts, on February 11, 1788, and was fitted for college by Michael Walsh of Newburyport. After graduating from Harvard College in 1808, he chose the law profession and pursued his studies partly under the instruction of Samuel Lorenzo Knapp (Dartmouth College 1804), and partly with Little and Banister, of Newburyport (Dartmouth College 1797). After admission to the bar, Flanders established himself in Plainfield, and for nearly fifty years was a distinguished member of the New Hampshire bar. Flanders served several terms in the New Hampshire legislature and at one time was solicitor for Sullivan County. In 1847, the honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon him by Dartmouth College. About the year 1848, he moved to Manchester, New Hampshire, where he resided several years. He returned to Plainfield some four or five years before his death on April 15, 1860.¹⁶

Henry Flanders (1826–1916)

Henry Flanders was born in Plainfield on February 13, 1826. He was the son of Charles and Lucretia (Kingsbury) Flanders. After receiving his early education at Kimball Union Academy, and at Newbury Seminary, Newbury, Vermont, Flanders studied law with his father in 1842. He was admitted to the bar in 1845. Upon his parents' death, Flanders decided to remove to Philadelphia where he became known as an expert on maritime laws and the early statutes governing fire insurance. He published books on both these subjects as well as novels under the pen name Oliver Thurston. In 1870, Flanders was appointed a member of a commission which published the Acts of Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania. He continued this arduous task until 1900.¹⁷

Mary Ann Freeman (1853–1945)

Mary Ann Freeman was born on May 23, 1853, the daughter of Daniel and Mary (Macy) Freeman in Hartland, Vermont. She attended Meriden schools and was graduated from Kimball Union Academy. Her life work was teaching, first in Cornish and Plainfield, and over thirty years in schools in Waverly, Massachusetts. She became the principal of the Payson Park School in Belmont, Massachusetts. Her success as a teacher may have influenced her four nieces (daughters of her brother Fred Freeman) to become teachers—Helen Root, Susie Jenney, Florence Moulton, Hazel Dodge.¹⁸

In 1900, Miss Freeman compiled a birthday book entitled *Birthdays of Six Hundred and Fifty Authors with Choice Thoughts of Each*, published by Alfred

Mudge and Son, Printers, in Boston. Space on each page provided room for birthdays of friends and relatives.

In 1908, she retired to the home she had built in Meriden (current site of the Kimball Union Academy infirmary). For over fifteen years, she tutored private pupils in her home and served as the librarian for over thirty years on the second floor of the former Brown School next door to the town hall. She was also a trustee of the library and a member of the Congregational Church. She was a talented painter, taught basketry, and made beautiful braided and drawn-in rugs. She was a recipient of the Boston Post Cane.

She died on March 28, 1945.



Carriage wrench, patented by Frank French, Meriden, 1884. Photo by Erich Witzel. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Frank L. French (1853–1924)

Frank L. French born February 8, 1853, was the son of Jesse and Ann B. (Chamberlin) French. Hezekiah French, Frank's grandfather, had moved from Plainfield, Connecticut, to Plainfield, New Hampshire, in 1773. Frank's father and grandfather were carpenters who constructed a number of houses in Meriden. It was logical that Frank inherited a great deal of mechanical ability.

Frank was an inventor. His self-adjusting carriage nut wrench was patented October 28, 1884. This wrench made it possible to hold an axle nut of any size and to remove it without soiling the fingers with grease. Another invention was the "Imperial" carriage nut. It was a threaded nut within a threaded nut that allowed the inner segment to tighten the axle, while the outer nut tightened the wheel box, relieving the need of wheel washers. Another invention was the self-closing pruning hook. When the handle was pulled, the knife closed making the work around small trees and bushes much easier.

Frank was also a jeweler and repairer of clocks and watches. A number of older clocks in town still bear his name and the date they were cleaned.

On February 5, 1895, he married Nettie M. West, daughter of Elliot W. and Samantha (Chamberlin) West. Frank was a fiddler and a prompter of ability and in great demand. His wife, Nettie, accompanied him on the organ or piano. They not only conducted dances in Meriden and neighboring towns, but in the winter crossed the Connecticut River on the ice and played in Hartland and other Vermont towns. After playing far into the night, they would arrive home near dawn.

After Frank's death, August 2, 1924, Nettie continued to live in their home in Mill Hollow at Meriden. "Aunt Nettie" was a great favorite with the young people in the village. Dances were held in the Grange Hall, and she taught many children the contras and square dances as well as waltzes, gallops, and polkas. She later married Willard A. Stockwell.

Elias Frost (1782–1863)

Elias Frost's early years were atypical for any time. He was born in Milford, Massachusetts, on January 10, 1782, to Reverend Amariah Frost and Susanna Dorr. His father was sixty-two years old with a mature family from an earlier marriage. His mother died a year later, and his father followed in 1792. At age ten, he went to live with his half-sister, Olive, wife of Dr. Samuel Willard in nearby Uxbridge. He shared his new home with two younger uncles and a changing group of servants, farm workers, orphans, and resident patients. (Dr. Willard ran an early rest home.) He was well-treated and educated locally in the common schools and at Leicester Academy. He graduated from Brown University and was instructed in the "theory and practice of physic" by his extraordinary guardian, Samuel Willard, M.D.

Frost came to know Amos Farnum, who was the manager of Dr. Willard's substantial farm in Uxbridge. It was Frost's "old patron saint" Farnum, since removed to Meriden, who convinced Frost to follow him to New Hampshire and to open his practice there in 1808. Frost moved to a place he had once damned as "that cold and mountainous country." He remained in Meriden except for three years (1825–1827) spent back in Uxbridge until his death in 1863.

Frost first boarded at the home of Daniel and Hannah (Chase) Kimball on June 26, 1808, within days of arriving in town. He remained there, enjoying good rapport with both of them, until a political falling-out in March 1814. He was a democrat and "favorable to the administration of Jefferson." Kimball was a "staunch Federalist." Frost then moved in with Jesse Roberts and soon married his daughter, Mary Kimball Roberts, on December 3, 1815. They started a family of five children, born between 1817 and 1827, and lived in the house just west of the Baptist Church (Kimball Union's Frost House, 1991).

When Elias Frost opened his practice in June 1808, he was fortunate to attend Sally Brocklebank, a well-known citizen who was thought to have little chance of recovering her health. Frost visited her faithfully for five months. When she rose from her sick bed, his reputation was established. From there, he went on for many years to receive patients at his home and to visit others, usually within a twenty-five mile radius of Meriden.

Frost had considerable experience as a school teacher, and in the fall of his first year in town offered private tutoring in Latin, English grammar, arithmetic, and geography. In later years, he supervised the training of at least nine students of medicine, much as he had learned it under Dr. Willard in Uxbridge.

Frost's prominence in the community and medical profession was recognized in various ways. He was a town selectman in 1828, a representative to the New Hampshire legislature in 1829 and 1830, a Justice of the Peace from 1832 through 1852, president of the Grafton County Medical Society for at least one year, and apparently a recipient of an honorary M.D. degree from Brown University in 1824. His work was also rewarding financially. By 1830, he was paying the fourth highest tax in the Meriden School District (No. 9), behind the Chellis and Bryant families.

Because of failing sight, Elias Frost ended his practice in 1845. A cataract operation in 1848 by a professor of surgery at Dartmouth College gave him no relief. In 1853, helped with glasses, but often unable to find his ink stand or his hat if it blew off his head, he wrote the lengthy and detailed "Chronicle" with its extraordinary maps of Meriden, Milford, and Uxbridge. It is now to be found in Special Collections at Dartmouth College and is the source of most of the information given here. In the U. S. Census of 1860, he is reported as blind, and in 1863, at age eighty-one, he died tragically by falling down the cellar stairs.

Edmond G. "Peanie" Goodwin (1927-1990)

Only Benning Wentworth, colonial governor of New Hampshire who granted the town of Plainfield, has controlled more land in Plainfield than Edmond G. "Peanie" Goodwin. Between 1950 to 1990, close to 40 percent of the acreage of Plainfield, parcels of forest and agricultural land and residential property, passed through Goodwin's hands, sometimes twice or even three times.

Goodwin was born and raised in Lebanon. He first worked in the woods. With a bucksaw and a team of horses, he logged woodlots in Plainfield and other nearby towns, sometimes buying just the standing trees, or stumpage, other times he bought lots outright. After harvesting the lots he owned, he sold them for what he could get, which in the 1940s and 1950s might be as little as \$3 or \$5 an acre.

About 1960, knowledge that the interstate highway system would bring two superhighways to a confluence in White River Junction began to stir the real estate market up and down the valley. Peanie Goodwin sensed that prices for raw land would soon begin to rise, and he positioned himself to profit from the situation. He continued to buy lumber lots and hired others to do the actual logging. Many of these lots were in Plainfield. As the completion of the interstate highways drew near, Goodwin was subdividing land at a brisk pace and at rapidly rising prices.

He bought huge tracts on Snow Mountain and along Porter Road, logged them, divided them, and sold them. He did the same with former dairy farms on True Road, Whitaker Road, Black Hill, and many other locations. Most of the transactions he financed himself. Goodwin eventually boasted that he was living solely on mortgage interest and using capital gains for reinvestment.

Goodwin was a shrewd, no-nonsense businessman who was constantly on the prowl for new land deals. While he operated extensively in Plainfield, he also had many holdings in other towns on both sides of the Connecticut River, in Maine, and as far away as Florida. He also bought, developed, managed, and sold scores of apartment houses, trailer parks, and commercial properties in many locations.

After residing in Plainfield, Lebanon, and Hanover, Goodwin and his wife Dorothy purchased the Cloverland Farm on Jenney Road from the Byron D. Benson Estate in 1973. On the highest point on the farm they built a house which was their base of operations until Mr. Goodwin's death in August of 1990.

In addition to having a Midas touch in real estate, Peanie Goodwin was an avid hunter, conservationist, and collector of antique tools, vehicles, and furnishings. He was also a philanthropist and donated substantial holdings of land to conservation groups. He was a benefactor of various charities, including the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and the Upper Valley Humane Society.



Cynthia Hadley. Photo by
Gordon Leland. Courtesy
Plainfield Historical Society.

Cynthia Hadley (1867–1960)

Cynthia Hadley was born February 13, 1867, in Plainfield, the daughter of Harvey D. and Luthera (Jordan) Plummer. She married Arthur L. Hadley, on January 1, 1881. Mrs. Hadley was the holder of the Boston Post Cane, as Plainfield's oldest citizen, for the six years before her death on March 15, 1960, at the age of ninety-three.

Mrs. Hadley had been president of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club and a charter member of Blow-Me-Down Grange where she was chaplain for more than forty years. Mrs. Hadley was honorary deaconess of the Plainfield Baptist Church and a long-time secretary of the Sunday School. She was Plainfield Plain's correspondent for the Claremont *Daily Eagle* and White River Junction weekly *Landmark* for many years. Mrs. Hadley served

for many years as a domestic nurse and delivered many of the town's residents. She was well known for wearing hats. Regardless of where she went, she always wore one.

Her husband Arthur was town road agent for twenty-nine years, deacon of Plainfield Baptist Church for seventeen years. Mr. Hadley died in 1933, two years after their fiftieth wedding party held by the town. The Hadleys had two children: Alice (Hadley) Hood and Pearl (Hadley) Tracy.



Horatio "Bill" Hendrick, about 1980. Courtesy Alice Hendrick.

Horatio William Hendrick (1908–1986)

Horatio William "Bill" Hendrick was born in 1908 in Northumberland, New Hampshire. At the age of ten, he lost his eye when a schoolmate, playing William Tell, shot him with a bow and arrow. After the accident, he lost the sight in the other eye and was sent to the Perkins Institute for the Blind where he graduated. He taught braille, typing, and poultry care at Barnes School for the Blind in Henniker, New Hampshire.

Mr. Hendrick moved to Plainfield with his parents in the early 1930s. He cared for his mother after his father died. In 1947, he married Alice Palmer, and they had three children: David, John, and Ruth Ann. He was a devoted family man.

One of Mr. Hendrick's friends was the blind Judge Hannon, immortalized by Arlo Guthrie in the song "Alice's Restaurant." Bill really wanted to study law, but he became a poultry farmer on Stage Road near Boob's Lane. He walked the hills of his farm, caring for chickens and cows, and moving water pipes on the range by himself. Mr. Hendrick also did electrical work and tested the current by sticking his finger in the light socket. He was an able plumber and could take apart an electric water pump and reassemble it. He repaired tractors, cars, and motorcycles. Mr. Hendrick was determined not to be a "blind man" and acted as independently as sighted people. Onlookers were always

amazed to see him split wood. He held the billet with one hand and brought the ax down with the other, removing the first hand just before the ax reached the wood. He hammered nails the same way. He sometimes missed the nails, but not often.

Mr. Hendrick worked in the X-ray darkroom at Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital for thirty-two years. He had a wonderful sense of humor and loved to share stories which he had read in the *Braille Digest* or heard on Talking Books. He enjoyed reading, cribbage, carpentry, his friends, and animals.



Bessie Hill at her 100th birthday.
She was born on October 15,
1883. Courtesy Vera MacLeay.

Bessie (Westgate) Hill (1883–1986)

Mrs. Hill was born on October 15, 1883, in Plainfield, the daughter of Daniel C. and Clara (Stone) Westgate. She was graduated from Kimball Union Academy in 1903 and taught for a year at a church school for black students in Greenwood, South Carolina. She then taught in Cornish schools until 1915 when she married Charles H. Hill, a farmer and carpenter. Mrs. Hill took a nursing course and delivered babies at homes around the neighborhood. She was the town treasurer in Plainfield from 1937–1940 and a member of the Grange for eighty years. Other memberships included the Plainfield Community Church and the Mothers' and Daughters' Club. Her hobbies were photography, gardening, and knitting. For the last ten years of her life, she knitted mittens for the Springfield, Vermont, Santa Claus Clubs.

Mrs. Hill had a sound memory. Her taped interviews for the oral history project provided a wealth of information. The blizzard of 1888 was a vivid memory. Mrs. Hill was a holder of the Boston Post Cane. She died on December 19, 1986, at the age of 103. Her daughters are Vera (Hill) MacLeay of Cornish and Margaret (Hill) Audette of Springfield. Daughter Mary (Hill) Woodward predeceased her.¹⁹



Vernon Hood, about 1965.
Photo courtesy Plainfield
Historical Society.

Vernon A. Hood (1914–1971)

Vernon Hood was born in Fairlee, Vermont, the son of James and Alice (Hadley) Hood. His family moved to Cornish where he attended the one-room Tracy School. When he was thirteen, the family moved into the brick house built by Charles Eggleston at the Plain. Mr. Hood attended Windsor High School.

Vernon was a unique man of many talents and interests. He served the town in many capacities: first at the age of twenty-three as the tax collector for eleven years, trustee of trust funds for six years, Constitutional Convention delegate, precinct moderator, state representative for two terms, historical committee mem-



Vernon Hood and his pet motorcycle, about 1970. Courtesy
Celia Wilder.

ber, overseer of welfare, supervisor of the check list for one year, selectman for fifteen years (longer than anyone in Plainfield), dairy farmer, cemetery sexton, mobile home park operator, motorcycle fancier, newspaper correspondent, furniture restorer, map collector, rug hooker, and confirmed bachelor. He was a Justice of the Peace for thirty years and once married a couple perched on motorcycles while sitting on a motorcycle himself. The same week he married another couple on horseback.

Hood was the unofficial town historian and genealogist. The task of compiling this volume would have been immeasurably harder without his research. Hood copied all the minutes of Town Meetings from 1766 to 1896 (a 261-page notebook). He saved town records and once found nine missing volumes in a haymow. He copied family bibles and gravestones and worked on genealogies. He collected maps of Plainfield. One in his collection (1872) showed a proposed route for a railroad from Claremont to White River Junction via Mill Hollow in Meriden. He was a member and master of the Blow-Me-Down Grange and a member of the New Hampshire Historical Society. Vernon's concern for town history was paramount to other interests.

At the time of his death, Vernon Hood was working on a history of Plainfield composed of fourteen to fifteen notebooks, a result of thirty years of study.²⁰

Ernest Leslie Huse (1880–1940)

Dr. Ernest Huse lived in Meriden for thirty-one years. He was born in Amesbury, Massachusetts, studied at Dartmouth College, and interned at Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital. He was president of Sullivan County Medical Association and was on the staff of Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital in Lebanon.

Huse came to Meriden in 1909 and lived in the house east of the present Kimball Union Academy infirmary. He had patients in Meriden, Plainfield, and Cornish. In later years, the town of Plainfield voted to give him \$500 a year as an incentive to stay in the area. The town of Cornish also voted each year a gift of \$300. He was much liked and always went when called; day or night. He used horses or went on snowshoes in winter time. Many times he made calls with no charge to the patient. Huse died while making a house call. He had stopped to help shovel out a stranded motorist and collapsed.

He married Ida Pond and they had two sons: Ernest Leslie Huse, Jr., who married Clara Chellis of Meriden on October 5, 1940, and Raymond Addison Huse who married Charlotte Mackenzie on October 19, 1940. Dr. Huse's brother, Stephen Huse, was the Baptist minister here in Meriden between 1908 and 1910. Ida died in 1936 at the age of fifty-two. Later the doctor married his brother's widow, Helen Huse.²¹



William "Bill" Jenney
with a boar in Corbin's
Park, about 1925.
Courtesy Plainfield
Historical Society.

William Henry Jenney (1886–1943)

William Henry Jenney was born in Plainfield at the old family homestead on Jenney Road, the son of Frank and Lois (Cutting) Jenney. A graduate of Kimball Union Academy, Bill Jenney was a loyal alumnus, who rarely missed a football or baseball game. He loved to compete: snowshoe races, mowing contests, barrel runs, track, and wrestling.

Bill Jenney married Susan Mae Freeman in 1910, and they had three children: Arlene (born 1913), William (born 1916), and Beulah (born 1918). He served the town in many capacities: selectman, town clerk, school treasurer, and long-time Justice of the Peace. Bill Jenney was also very involved in theatrical events in the community, and was one of the original members of the Merifield Club and organized the Howard Hart Players. Playing the lead role in the play "Uncle Jimmy," he won a reputation throughout New Hampshire for interpreting the Yankee character.

Bill also had a deep love of nature and a keen understanding of wild animals. At one time, he worked as a guide in Corbin's Park where his job was to walk around the park fence—twenty-two miles per day. He enjoyed recalling his experiences there: wild boar hunts, buffalo stampedes, and the capture of his pet mink, "Eliza," who became the matron of his profitable mink farm.

Bill Jenney was best known for his friendliness and sense of humor. At the end of his life, when he was confined to bed, he wrote a great deal, and his manuscripts about his boyhood days on a small New England farm, and about nature and animals, are filled with wisdom and humor.

Ralph Jordan (1887–1985)

Ralph Jordan was born in Plainfield on November 13, 1887, the son of Willis and Ella (Read) Jordan. He attended the Plainfield School and Kimball Union Academy and married Susie Hill in 1912, daughter of Ernest and Nellie

(Donoghue) Hill. She passed away in July 1954. Susie took in boarders from the summer colony. Ralph farmed on his birthplace, Home Farm, in the Center-of-Town District until 1923 when he and his wife moved to Plainfield Village. Ralph trained and used many ox teams on the farm and in his lumbering operations. The milking shorthorns were his favorite breed of cattle.

Ralph was a successful farmer, gardener, and highly respected citizen. His dry, blunt sayings and opinions were enjoyed by all. He was a strong Republican and interested in all town affairs. His brother was William Wesley Jordan, and a sister was Bernice Jordan. His nephew, John Meyette, and family lived with him during the remaining years of his life. Ralph was deputy fire warden for more than fifty years, a member of Blow-Me-Down Grange over sixty years, and a member of the Community Baptist Church. He died April 3, 1985, at the age of ninety-seven.²²



Wesley, Grace, and Barbara Jordan, about 1912. Courtesy Donald Jordan.

William Wesley Jordan (1876–1940)

William Jordan, the son of Willis and Ella (Read) Jordan, was born May 8, 1876. He graduated from Kimball Union Academy in 1894 and from Dartmouth College in 1899. He was a successful farmer on Dodge Road for many years. The last three years of his life, he and his family lived in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Wesley, as he was called, served the town many years as town treasurer, school board member, and selectman. He represented the town in the legislature and was a director of the National Bank of Windsor. He married Grace Colby, who was the daughter of Carlos and Sarah (Westgate) Colby, on December 17, 1910. They had two children: Barbara and Winifred.

He had one brother, Ralph, a prominent citizen and farmer in Plainfield and a sister, Bernice, who lived and worked in Washington, D.C., for many years.

Wesley died July 1, 1940, at the age of sixty-four.²³

Benjamin Kimball (1722–1796)

Benjamin Kimball was born April 15, 1722, in Preston, Connecticut. He married Hannah Richards and their children, Sarah, Daniel, Mehitabel, Raume, and Elizabeth, were all born in Preston. He moved to Plainfield shortly after his brother, Lt. Joseph Kimball, and bought land about 1768. He is first mentioned in the proprietors' records in 1769 when a committee encouraged him to build a mill (see Chapter 10, Business and Commerce). In 1773 and 1774, Kimball served as proprietary clerk. Benjamin Kimball also had many responsibilities for town government. In 1771, the town voted twenty pounds to build a bridge over "Beaver Brook near Mr. Colton's." Along with Joseph Smith and Lt. Thomas Gallup, he served on the committee to see to the building of this bridge. On September 30, he was chosen to serve as grand juror at "His Majasity's Court of Common Pleas." Kimball was also appointed on July 23, 1775, to serve on a committee to meet with representatives from towns on the river from Walpole to Haverhill to see "in what shall be best for the 'Defence of our Liberties'."

He served in many capacities as an elected town officer: moderator (1778), selectman (1770–76, 1778, 1782), treasurer (1777–87). His tenure as treasurer is the second longest term in the history of the town.²⁴

The first gathering of the Meriden Congregational Church was held in Benjamin Kimball's kitchen. He became one of the fourteen founding members of the church. Kimball also gave one and one-half acres of land to Meriden Parish for the meeting house. Kimball served as parish treasurer as well as on a committee to secure "preaching."

In 1791 or 1792, Kimball's mill mysteriously burned and he rebuilt it. There was unrest within the church, and arson was suspected.²⁵

Hannah Kimball died September 26, 1783, at the age of sixty-five and was the first person buried in the Mill Cemetery. At the age of seventy-four, Benjamin Kimball fell off his mill dam and was killed on August 27, 1796. Their son Daniel later founded Kimball Union Academy.

Joseph Kimball (1732–1822)

Joseph Kimball was born January 9, 1732. His first wife, whom he married on May 2, 1754, was Hannah Morgan (born October 1, 1731; died March 1, 1756). He then married Mary Clift (born on October 1, 1738, at Marshfield, Massachusetts; died July 9, 1781). Joseph's third wife was Eleanore Dunlap (born on October 25, 1743, at Killingly, Connecticut; died December 18, 1833, in Plainfield).

Joseph Kimball settled in Plainfield in 1764. He was a soldier in the Revolution, a private in Captain Russell's Company in 1777, and took part in the battles of Fort Ticonderoga and Bennington. The inscription on his monument reads: "He was the first proprietor of a farm enclosing this cemetery, a successful hunter and kind neighbor, a soldier of the Revolution at Fort

Ticonderoga in 1776." The original slate stone still standing is inscribed "Lieutenant Joseph Kimball."

He settled first in the part of town now known as Plainfield Plain and later in life removed to a farm on Colby Hill Road where he lived until his death.

Joseph Kimball was the brother of Benjamin Kimball.

The following excerpt is from an article entitled "Reminiscences in the Life of Joseph Kimball" written for *Home Life* by "A Grandson."

I propose to outline a few incidents in the life of Joseph Kimball, an early pioneer settler in Plainfield, N. H. At forty years of age, he emigrated from Plainfield, Conn., to Plainfield, N.H., purchased a farm, and in this perfect Switzerland, outlined on the east by the mountain range of old Grantham, he felled the forest and carved out his home. He was a man of large stature and powerful physique; his face was stamped with a resolute will, yet he had a kind and benevolent disposition. The long winters of the olden time were periods of rest, with only the care of the stock and the supplying of wood for the huge domestic hearth . . . there was nothing produced upon a farm that could be exchanged for silver money, and the only resource . . . was to secure the fur of the fox and sable . . . [which] abounded in the Grantham mountains, and Joseph Kimball became the most famous hunter in all that region. . .

He had resided upon his newly located farm but a short period when he found himself the possessor of a most promising and beautiful heifer, of two years old, which he had raised. This calf—of all his possessions—was his pride . . . One morning, late in October, Mr. Kimball went out to the barn yard, in which the heifer had been put the night before, and behold, there lay this beautiful animal upon her side, dead. A large hole had been gnawed in her throat and her blood had been sucked out. Mr. Kimball stood transfixed with righteous indignation, and vowed vengeance upon the spoiler. He had heard from his neighbors of a wolf of enormous size that had been seen prowling about the vicinity, and had no doubt that it was this beast that had entered his fold. He at once took off the hide and hauled the carcass to the edge of the forest. He believed that the wolf would return for his meals, and having set his large bear trap in a bed of chaff, and attached a clog to an iron chain connected with the trap, he awaited developments. Upon going the next day to catch his horse, with only a strap as a weapon, not even a jackknife, he went to look at the carcass. The trap was gone! Whether carried away by the slayer of his heifer, or some other large animal, he was bound to find out. To follow the trail made

by the clog was an easy matter, and upon going about half a mile into the woods, he found the wolf who had so offended, with one leg fast in the trap. He approached nearer to him, and was received with barks and growls and showing of teeth. All this did not intimidate Kimball. Examining the wolf's situation, he discovered that in his frantic efforts for liberty, he had nearly gnawed off his leg above the jaws of the trap. This fact required immediate action on the part of the captor, and his resolve was taken at once—to wrestle with him despite the lack of weapons. He began walking in a large circle around the wolf, who continually faced him, snapping and snarling as he continued to gradually narrow the circle. The wolf finally becoming accustomed to seeing him, turned from him. The old hunter, with a desperate leap threw himself upon him, and by the weight of his body pressed the beast to the earth. By seizing him back of the ears, he pushed his head down, and thus prevented him from biting . . . It is said to be easy to catch a wolf by his ears, but very dangerous to let go. The problem was what to do next. Mr. Kimball was equal to the occasion. He managed, while holding the wolf, to open the jaws of the trap and thrust the leg deeper into it. The next thing was to get away himself without being lacerated and torn. To this end, his strap came into use. He placed it about the neck of the beast, tied it, passed one end about a small sapling close by, and pulling the head of the wolf hard up to it safely sprang out of reach. He then with great complacency looked at the ferocious animal, and regarded him as a sure captive. Having thus secured this destructive enemy of the sheepfold, he went for his gun, returned and dispatched him.²⁶

John F. McNamara (1897–1987)

John F. McNamara was born on February 5, 1897, and died July 30, 1987, at the age of ninety. He married Florence Downer of Lyndon Center, Vermont, in 1915. They came to Meriden in 1924 from North Acton, Massachusetts, and purchased the large brick house and 200-acre farm next to the Meriden Library (1991) in partnership with his father-in-law, William H. Downer. John McNamara farmed for a number of years and owned one of the first tractors used in Plainfield. He operated a small sawmill and shingle mill for a time as well as a stone crusher on Route 120 (Meriden Garage and Deli Mart, 1991).

After John left farming to start a plumbing and heating business, his son-in-law, Roy Barker, ran the first garage in Meriden in John's barn. After a short time, the building was converted to a plumbing shop. John's son, John H., continued the business.

John was very active in Meriden and Plainfield community affairs. He



John and Florence McNamara on their fiftieth wedding anniversary, December 25, 1965. Courtesy Dorothy and Basil McNamara

served the town as constable, selectman, census taker, ballot clerk, and school board member. He was instrumental in getting the town to use the Australian ballot for electing town officers. John was also instrumental in proposing that a Finance Committee assist selectmen in making up the budget. He was a fifty-year member of the Meriden Grange and a member of Chesire Masonic Lodge F. & A.M. of Cornish Flat. He was an independent insurance agent for many years and recorded the daily weather conditions in Meriden. He often told interesting anecdotes of activities during prohibition when he was a constable. Stills were searched out and destroyed with the assistance of the County Sheriff's Department.

During the uprising on the Mexican border with Pancho Villa in 1916, as a member of the First Vermont National Guard, he was stationed at Eagle Pass, Texas. Surprisingly, the trip from Eagle Pass back to St. Johnsbury, as recorded in a diary he kept, took only seven days. John kept a diary until the year before he died. It was used, one time, in court to prove weather conditions on a given day.

He and Florence had six children: Persis (married Roy Barker), Basil (married Dorothy Towne), Ronald (married Regis LaChance), Pauline (died young), Carolyn (married Clem Boisvert), John H. (married Doris B. Ferland).²⁷ As a result of having three sons and two daughters, John became quite adept at cutting hair and often an evening was spent shearing the locks of neighbors.

David Millar, Jr. (1906–1987)

David Millar, Jr., was born in St. Louis on April 25, 1906, the son of David and Millie (Young) Millar. He was graduated from Columbia College, New York City, in 1928. He entered advertising in New York City and worked for R. H. Macy, Montgomery Ward, and the Conde Nast Publications. David mar-



David Millar, modeling an advertisement for Ferrari Berlinetta, 1966. Photo by Larry McDonald. Courtesy Maria Millar.

ried Maria Leiper in 1933 at her family home in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. While she worked as an editor at Simon and Schuster, David continued as an advertising executive. They lived in a New York apartment building where they kept a tame bobcat as their pet.

After their retirement in 1961, the Millars moved to Meriden and bought the Adams-Bartlett house on Colby Hill. David continued his association with Conde Nast in a free-lance selling capacity. He also worked as a model to earn money for a special hobby, fancy sports cars. David was the original Marlboro Cigarette Man, rugged and suntanned, although he did not like horses. On his death, many newspaper writers around the world referred to this, as did the radio commentator Paul Harvey, who based an episode of his program "The Rest of the Story" on David's Marlboro character.

During his retirement, David was active in local affairs. He served as the president of the Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee Region Association, the president of Lebanon College; chairman of the Upper Valley Chapter of SCORE (the Service Corps of Retired Executives), chairman of the Plainfield School Board, trustee of the Hitchcock Foundation, and a member of the Governor's Task Force on the environment. He appeared nationwide in television commercials for SCORE. He provided the publicity for the Meriden Fire Department, especially the fund-raising dinners and barbecues. He was a member of the Meriden Library Building Committee.

David wrote for *New Hampshire Profiles*, *The New Hampshire Times*, and *PlainFacts*. An amusing article, "It's A Grave Matter" on selecting burial lots, appeared in the October 1987 issue of *New Hampshire Profiles*. His hobbies were mountaineering, skiing, and tennis which, according to him, he "pursued avidly and with no marked skill." He wrote an article "Hints for Beginning

Climbers” and the captions for “Sketches From a Rock Climber’s Notebook.” This material furnished the leaflet that the Appalachian Mountain Club published to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the organization.

David Millar died on September 30, 1987.²⁸

Darius N. Moulton (1838–1921)

Darius Moulton was born in East Plainfield on January 1, 1838, the son of Stephen R. and Sally (Noyes) Moulton. His grandfather, William, received a grant of land in Grantham which was later annexed to Plainfield.

Darius finished school and worked on the farm until his father died. At age twenty-one, he received a share in the family business: livestock raising. For twenty-five years, he traded in farms, cattle, and real estate while carrying on the home farm. He lived at Meriden during much of his adult life in the brick house at the corner of Stage Road and Route 120. He knew everyone up and down the Connecticut Valley and was always ready to lend money without interest, sometimes without repayment, in hardship cases.

In 1885, in company with Perley Roberts, he owned and operated a large store—Moulton and Roberts—in the former Brown School building adjacent to the Meriden Town Hall. He was interested in everything that concerned the welfare of his native town and served as a selectman. He was a great traveler throughout the United States and Canada.²⁹

Moulton had a shrewd mind and dry wit. His name was shortened to “Dry”: easy to say and quite appropriate with his bottle handy at all times. He had a way with many local girls, but is rumored to have married only briefly. Darius Moulton died on August 14, 1921, at age eighty-three.³⁰

Fred Moulton (1836–1912)

Fred Moulton was born in East Plainfield on July 11, 1836, the son of Stephen R. Moulton and Sally (Noyes) Moulton and the brother of Darius. Fred attended local schools and Kimball Union Academy. He went to Haverhill, Massachusetts, where he had a grocery business for four years. When he returned to East Plainfield, he engaged in extensive farming and poultry raising for over forty years. At age seventeen, he drove a flock of turkeys to Boston where he was well-known to the merchants. He continued to take the best turkeys and chickens from the town to market and was known as a veteran poultry man.³¹

He operated the Moulton-Freeman Store in Lebanon which had a flourishing trade with surrounding towns at the turn of the century. His hobbies were hunting and fishing in Maine where he spent his vacations with his life-long friend, Alvah Bean Chellis of Meriden. He also sketched and experimented with taxidermy as illustrated by some of the wildlife brought home from his sporting trips.

Moulton had an active interest in town affairs and filled several offices, includ-

ing selectman (1874–76), representative to the State Legislature Committee on Banking (1886), fish and game warden in Plainfield (1884–97), and town clerk (1903).

On May 6, 1858, he married Arable Rowell (died July 15, 1903), the daughter of Jacob and Mary (Currier) Rowell. They had one son, Elmer J. Moulton.³²



Jack O'Leary at the wheel, about 1975.
Courtesy Eric O'Leary.

John O'Leary (1918–1982)

One of Meriden's most free-thinking residents was "Jack" O'Leary, who lived with his wife Alice and children (Eric, Brian, Sharon, Michael, and Kevin) next to the Grange Hall. Jack was a potter for most of his life and operated the Tariki Stoneware shop and studio. Eric continues the business. Jack was born and raised in Andover, Michigan. He completed high school, but stopped there. He did not believe in the traditional educational system and drew a distinction between education and academics.

A Quaker, Jack O'Leary was a conscientious objector during World War II. He was arrested in Philadelphia by the FBI in a massive roundup of alleged draft evaders in the early 1940s. He was not a "draft dodger" in the strict sense of the word; he always told the FBI of his whereabouts. He was placed in the county jail for six weeks pending a hearing and then was released on bail with the help of a Quaker lawyer. A year and a half later Jack was back in jail for five months pending trial on charges of failure to report for induction. O'Leary entered a program for conscientious objectors run by the Civilian Public Service. The program allowed conscientious objectors to fulfill their military obligation by working in public service for four years without salary. He cut trees in northern Michigan and was given the opportunity to fulfill his obligation by being a "guinea pig" at Michigan State University in research on Vitamin B. He lived and worked in a laboratory underneath the football stadium for a year. The remainder of his time in public service saw Jack as an attendant in a mental insti-

tution. Following what Jack called his "prison days," he went into social work in Philadelphia and New York. He then enrolled in the School for American Craftsmen (SAC) in Elford, New York.

Upon graduation, Jack and his wife Alice worked at Old Sturbridge Village for five years in the pottery shop. After this venture, he moved to Keene, New Hampshire, and worked for a feldspar company. There, Jack made pots in his cellar and sold them at craftsmen's fairs around the area. He finally moved to Meriden in 1960 and established his shop. He sold most of his work in New York and Ohio.

Jack O'Leary was a true individualist. He valued the meaning of life more than the social goals of others. Jack did not think that everyone should follow his path.³³

Jack died September 3, 1982, at age sixty-four. His wife had died November 29, 1980, at age fifty-seven.



Morris Penniman, about 1943. During the World War II gasoline shortage, Morris favored established transportation. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Morris G. Penniman (1881–1966)

The Pennimans came to Plainfield from Uxbridge, Massachusetts, and settled near Blow-Me-Down Brook, downstream from Cornish Flat. One branch of the family settled in the valley along the brook; the other on the hill just above.

Ralston and Elizabeth (Colby) Penniman lived by the brook. They carried on a large farm, and raised sheep, cattle and horses. They had four children: Robert, born December 16, 1867, married Florence (Phelps) Kelsey; Brainard, born October 2, 1874, married Sunie Westgate; Hannah Dorinda, born January 22, 1871, married Frank Heyward; Lydia S., born January 11, 1869, who did not marry.

Thomas and Mary (Smith) Penniman lived on the hill and maintained a large farm of sheep and cattle. Seven children were born to them: Thomas, born

June 19, 1871, married Mary Curtis; Florabelle, born July 5, 1872, married Norman Penniman; Dorinda, born March 21, 1874, who did not marry; Frederick S., born April 19, 1875, who also did not marry; Mary Lizzie, born October 19, 1876, married Guy Haven; Henry, born January 18, 1879, married Marion Westgate; Morris G., born February 15, 1881, married Lucy Eastman.³⁴

The last child, Morris G. Pennimann, was five years old when his father died. Morris stayed at home to help his mother raise sheep and a large dairy herd. He attended the Penniman District School and went to Kimball Union Academy with the class of 1902. His responsibilities on the farm precluded graduating with his class.

On November 5, 1915, Penniman married Lucy L. Eastman, daughter of Orzo V. and Marion E. (Westgate) Eastman of Meriden. They lived in the Eastman home while Morris carried on the Penniman farm. Lucy was interested in music and directed and sang in the Meriden Congregational Church choir. After Lucy's premature death on January 19, 1932, Morris withdrew his life savings and gave the Lucy E. Penniman Organ to the Meriden Congregational Church in memory of his wife's love of music and devotion to the church.

Morris Penniman was very active in the affairs of the church and town. He served as deacon, trustee, and clerk of the Meriden Congregational Church. He was town clerk for five years, selectman for eight years, and treasurer for five years. He was friendly and outgoing in nature and beloved by all that knew him. A lover of nature, Penniman was active in the Meriden Bird Club and farmed the club's land adjacent to his home. The Grange meant a great deal to him; he served in many capacities including master. One of his greatest joys was acting in the dramas that the Grange sponsored. As a member of the Cheshire Masonic Lodge #23 A. F. & A., he served many years as chaplin.

When living alone became too great a burden, he sold the Eastman and Penniman homesteads and went to live with Stephen "Bud" Davis in Charlestown. Morris Penniman died on June 14, 1966.

Robert Penniman (1867-1940)

Robert Penniman, son of Ralston and Elizabeth (Colby) Penniman, graduated from Kimball Union Academy in 1890 and from Dartmouth in 1894. Robert was Plainfield's representative to the state legislature in 1909, president of the Republican Club for thirty years, and served on the Constitutional Convention Committee among other posts. He settled many family estates and was guardian for a number of people.

Robert married Florence (Phelps) Kelsey in 1915. She was widowed with three teen-age children: Dorothy, Alice, and Howard. Robert always lived on the home farm of 500 acres. The house and a few acres of the farm are now owned by step-grandson Carlton Strong, Jr. (1991).³⁵



Stephen Plummer with a nine-pound laker caught at Newfound Lake, the Plainfield Store, 1942.
Courtesy Doris Plummer.

Stephen F. Plummer (1903–1990)

Postmaster, storekeeper, outdoorsman, raconteur, Steve Plummer was a fixture on Plainfield Plain throughout his lifetime. As a young man, he purchased Chadbourne's Store next door to the Baptist Church and, with his wife Doris and brother Maxwell, operated it for more than thirty years. Plummer's Store, as it was known to all in Plainfield and north Cornish, carried a vast array of groceries, fresh meat, grain, hardware, sporting goods, work clothing, gasoline, and newspapers. It catered to both year-round residents and the summer people and provided delivery service, too. Steve was appointed postmaster by President Roosevelt in 1923 and operated the post office in a corner of the store until his retirement in 1962. Steve was an avid hunter and enjoyed discussing the progress of the deer season with store customers. He possessed a dry sense of humor and always whistled popular tunes of the day as he sorted the mail. He and Doris were parents of four children: Stephen, Richard, Polly, and Gail.

Micaiah Porter (1745–1829)

The Reverend Micaiah Porter came to town in 1804 when he was installed as pastor of the first church built at Plainfield Plain. He was born in Braintree, Massachusetts, and was ordained at Voluntown, Connecticut, in 1781. When he moved to Plainfield, Porter lived one year on a river farm and then moved inland to the Black Hill section where there was more land and more rocks to build fences. He married Elizabeth Gallup. They had seven children born to them before coming to Plainfield. Micaiah died September 4, 1829, at the age of eighty-four. His wife, Elizabeth, died December 25, 1843, aged eighty-eight.

Jabez Porter (1796–1886)

Jabez, son of Reverend Micaiah and Elizabeth (Gallup) Porter, practiced

medicine and was known throughout the area for his cure of lip cancer. His cancer patients often settled their accounts by work on the Porter farm. He also bought and sold farm products and often went to Boston to bring back goods to sell. The trips took five days. Jabez also made charcoal by burning hard wood in a pit tended day and night. The charcoal was sold in Lebanon. His gravestone in the Plainfield Plain Cemetery is marked "Col. Jabez." He must have been a militia officer.

Jabez was married in his fifties to one of his hired girls, Eliza Green of Cavendish, Vermont. To them were born five children, two who died in infancy. Jabez died in 1886 at the age of eighty-nine. His wife had died on September 7, 1872, aged fifty-seven. Their children were: Benjamin, Sophia, and John.



Harold "Pete"
Pringle, about
1955. Photo by
Gordon Leland.
Courtesy
Plainfield
Historical
Society.

Harold "Pete" Pringle (1913–1976)

Harold Audry "Pete" Pringle, son of Robert and Nellie (Mayhew) Pringle was born in Scottstown, Quebec, Canada, in 1913. He came to Meriden in 1947 and owned and operated the Meriden Garage for many years. Pete was one of the organizers of the Meriden Fire Department and the construction of the fire house. He was the chief for over twenty years. The addition to the fire house is named in his memory. Pete was the town constable for the same length of time and served as the fire warden for Plainfield, a member of the Sullivan County Law Enforcement Association, and a life member of the Grafton County Fish and Game Club. He was an avid hunter and fisherman. He was also active in the Masons and Eastern Star Organizations. Pete had a vast knowledge of forests and wildlife. He could survive for long times in the

woods. At the time of the Grantham forest fire, he spent many weeks on the mountain fighting the fire without returning to the village to rest.

He married Pearl Marie Andreason, and six children were born to them: Gerald A., Patricia Avery, Lawrence W., Joann Gauthier, James B., Donna Kimball.

Harold died January 4, 1976, at age sixty-three.³⁶



At the piano,
Arthur Quimby
with his grand-
daughter Lucy
(Heath)
McLellan, 1975.
Courtesy William
Quimby.

Arthur Westgate Quimby (1898–1987)

Marguerite (Lewin) Quimby (1896–1983)

Arthur Quimby was born on the family farm in Cornish where he attended local schools. Later, at Harvard University, he majored in economics and music education. He returned to Cornish and taught music in Claremont and other local schools. He married Marguerite Lewin of Plainfield in 1921, and they had three children: Conrad (born 1925), Carol (born 1926) and William "Tony" (born 1928). They left the area when Arthur took the position of music director at the Cleveland Museum of Art and chairman of the music department at Western Reserve University. They continued to spend part of each year in Plainfield.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Arthur made several trips to Europe to study under the great masters of the time. During the Nazi era, his home became a refuge for persecuted musicians and composers.

In 1942, he left Cleveland to become chairman of the music department at Connecticut College in New London. Upon his retirement in 1963, they returned to Plainfield where Arthur directed musical activities at the Church of Christ in Hanover. He later played the organ at the Plainfield Community Baptist Church and was active in the church choir. He played an active role in assisting the church to locate and install a wind pipe organ.

Arthur also served as chairman of the Plainfield Conservation Commission and was a trustee for many years of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial where he arranged



Plainfield - Grantham
Representative Candidate
Marguerite L. Quimby
Grantham - Daughter
Plainfield - Native
SPECIAL INTERESTS
 + Fair Tax
 + Education
 + Local Problems
 4 Years Connecticut Legislature
Sincere Agent
M. Quimby
Plainfield, N.H.
 "Please Vote Nov. 8"
 1966

Marguerite Quimby, in an unsuccessful bid for the New Hampshire legislature, 1966. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

the summer music program. He and Marguerite were organizers of the Howard Hart Players. Arthur was also an avid reader, gardener, maple syrup maker, and Red Sox fan. He was active in local Democratic politics.

Marguerite was born and raised in Plainfield. She was a college mathematics professor and was also interested in politics, genealogy, hooked rugs, maple syrup making, family planning, and singing. In the early 1950s, she served two terms in the Connecticut state legislature. Marguerite was well-known for her singing voice and received training from Cornish Colony member Grace Lawrence Taylor. She sang at many of the Cornish Colony social gatherings including one held for President Woodrow Wilson. Before her marriage, she taught in the one-room Spencer Schoolhouse on Stage Road and then was a private tutor for the Maxfield Parrish children. She was a president of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club and an active member of the Plainfield Community Baptist Church.

Emily Quimby (1931–1986)

Emily Quimby was born in 1931 in Stamford, Connecticut, and moved to Plainfield in 1962 when her husband, William "Tony" Quimby, returned to his home town to take a position at Dartmouth College. Emily and Tony had three children, David (born 1954), Susan (born 1956) and Douglas (born 1959). She was a nurse, and then a social worker for Grafton County. She was a beloved piano teacher for many Plainfield and Meriden children.

Emily was an extraordinary woman of many interests. Her talent and her love of music led her to become active in the church choir, children's choir director, music director of the Meriden Players, and a founding member of the Plainfield Yankee Doodlers and Muskeag Music. She also helped to organize the Meriden Cooperative Playschool and the first school library. She enjoyed gardening and quilting and organized the Little Herb Society.

Emily's belief in peace on this earth led her to participate in numerous pub-

lic protests, particularly during the Vietnam War. She was always willing to act on her convictions and was once jailed for ten days for trying to prevent Vietnam draftees from leaving Lebanon. She was a member of the Quaker Meeting in Hanover, a member of Bridges for Peace, and a board member of the Upper Valley Hospice. She was also active in the anti-nuclear movement and the Cambodian Refugee Resettlement Committee. The Plainfield community celebrates Emily's life in an annual "Emily Quimby Night" at the Meriden Congregational Church. The pot luck supper followed by musical performances and community singing recalls and reflects the life of a remarkable woman.



Palmer C. Read, Sr., and Lena (Rogers) Read, 1952.
Courtesy Albert K. Read III.

Palmer C. Read, Sr. (1888–1960)

Lena (Rogers) Read (1892–1981)

Palmer Read was born in Plainfield, the son of Albert K., II, and Viola (Clark) Read. He married Lena Rogers, daughter of Fred A. and Addie (Rounds) Rogers, on September 23, 1910. They both graduated from Kimball Union Academy and had seven children: Phyllis (Read) Sutherland, Ada (Read) Smith (Mrs. James), May (Read) Atwood (Mrs. Francis), Kate (Read) Wilder (Mrs. Norman Wilder and secondly Mrs. Ray Gauthier), Jean (Read) Herbert, Albert K. Read, III (married Kathleen Philbrick), and Palmer C. Read, Jr. (married Lucille B. Plamondon).

The Reads lived and carried on the large dairy farm north of Plainfield Plain. Palmer was a cattle dealer and butcher and did some lumbering. For over fifty years he had held an elective public office: supervisor of the check list, selectman, auditor, representative to the state legislature in 1934, trustee of trust funds, and town moderator. He was very active in Grange work (local and state)

and a director of Grange Insurance Company. He was Sullivan County commissioner for eight years.

Mrs. Read was very active in statewide politics. She was representative to the state legislature and a state senator from the eighth district. She was the first woman in Sullivan County to serve in the state senate and on a Superior Court jury. She was instrumental in removing the toll charge for crossing the Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge. She was also active in Grange work (local and state). She was born in Hartland, Vermont, October 1892, and came to Meriden in 1900. She died in April 1981, eighty-eight years old.³⁷

Perley Roberts (1842-1904)

Perley Roberts was a resident of Plainfield for his entire life. He was town clerk for twenty-five years and carried on a store with Darius Moulton in the building that later became the village Brown Schoolhouse near the Meriden Town Hall. The business was known as Moulton and Roberts. Roberts was prominent in the Masonic Order. He died on February 9, 1904. His wife was Rosa Hadley, daughter of Alanson and Calista (Jordan) Hadley. They were married on June 28, 1873. She died on October 28, 1908. They had one son, Alpheus.³⁸

Fred A. Rogers (1866-1937)

Addie Rogers (1869-1961)

Fred A. Rogers was a successful Plainfield farmer who left his mark on the state of New Hampshire through his work as master of the state Grange, a representative to the General Court, and service in a variety of other public endeavors.

While master of the state Grange, he lobbied for progressive legislation that led to the establishment of the New Hampshire State Police to provide better protection for rural residents.

He was also a leader in the formation of farm cooperatives to bring supplies and marketing services to farmers at lower cost. He and Colonel Frank Knox, publisher of the *Manchester Union* newspaper, traveled to Denmark to study the cooperative movement and brought back ideas that were implemented in agricultural circles in New Hampshire and other states.

Fred A. Rogers was born in Hartland, Vermont, and came to Meriden about 1900. He purchased the large Nathaniel True farm in the North Plainfield section of town. He married Addie A. Rounds of Reading, Vermont, on February 26, 1890. They had eight children: Carrie (born March 1891, Mrs. William Westgate of North Plainfield), Lena (born October 1892, Mrs. Palmer C. Read of Plainfield), Harriet (born November 1894, Mrs. Charles Williams of North Plainfield), Addie Mae (born July 1896, Mrs. Matthew Watson of Taftsville, Vermont), Fred, Jr. (born March 1898,



Fred and Addie Rogers on their wedding day, February 26, 1890. Courtesy Albert K. Read III.

married Doris Cartee, East Thetford, Vermont), Flora (born November 1902, Mrs. Clarence King of Black Hill, Plainfield), Wendell (born March 1906, married first Sarah Stuart; second Mildred Churchill; third Martha Durkee), Herman (born April 1908, married Ruth Atwood and later Barbara Stone Leonard of Meriden). All their children were active in community life and public affairs.

He served many years as selectman and was tax collector. He was also gate-keeper of the National Grange at one time. He is believed to be the first farmer in Sullivan County to milk cows by machine.

Mrs. Addie Rogers served on the school board for a number of years and was also town tax collector for a time. She was Ceres of the state Grange when he was master. The couple was active in all Grange work.

Born in Compton, Quebec, October 29, 1869, she lived in Reading and Hartland, Vermont, before coming to Meriden in 1900 with her husband. Fred died on November 22, 1937, and Addie died on June 17, 1961, at the age of ninety-one.³⁹

Guido Rosa (1890–1978)

Margaret Rosa (1900–1973)

Guido Rosa was born in West Hoboken, New Jersey. He and his brother, Lawrence, were noted commercial artists. When his brother died in 1931, Guido closed his art career and began to travel. He published two books describing his travels: *North Africa Speaks* and *Mexico Speaks*.

He married Margaret Bell in 1943 when he was fifty-four years old. She was born in Williston, New York. They came to Meriden a few years later and



Guido and Margaret Rosa, about 1955 (Photos by Gordon Leland). Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

lived in the Stevens' house for a time. They built a house across from the Bird Sanctuary.

Margaret had been a nurse earlier in her life and became interested in accident prevention at the Dexter Folder Company in New York. It was largely through her efforts that the company's accidents were reduced 90 percent in five years time.

Later, Margaret specialized in silk screen handprinting. She was one of the key women who started the Mericrafters summer sales in the Meriden Town Hall. She was also publicity agent for the Hanover branch of the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen.

The Rosas willed most of their estate to a number of local families, the Meriden Library, and Meriden Volunteer Fire Department.

Guido's artistic talent is seen in the printer's type style called "Rosa Romans" which he used for many posters and signs in town. He made the Veterans Honor Roll that hangs inside the Meriden Town Hall.⁴⁰

George S. Ruggles (1859-1931)

Mr. Ruggles was born in Horicon, Wisconsin, in 1859, the son of William H. Ruggles of West Windsor, Vermont, and Mary E. (Bryant) Ruggles of Plainfield. His mother died at his birth, and his father brought him and his brother back to Plainfield where they were raised by his maternal grandparents, Henry and Seraph (Bullard) Bryant. George Ruggles carried on the family farm on Thrasher Road willed to him by his grandparents. He married Marion L. Eggleston of Claremont in 1884, and they had four children: Sydney, Harold, Lucy, and Deane. For several years he and his wife took in boarders, and many



George Ruggles
in Maxfield
Parrish's machine
shop. Courtesy
Virginia Colby.

residents of the Cornish Art Colony boarded with them while their houses were under construction.

George S. Ruggles was a man of medium build with a thick bushy moustache. He was also a neighbor of Maxfield Parrish and his chief carpenter for more than thirty years.⁴¹ Ruggles walked to Parrish's every day going through the woods. He supervised twenty-five workmen in building the Parrish house.

Charles Merrill wrote in *The Mentor* (June 1927), "Dreams Come True in His Workshop":

On the mechanical side of his activity, Mr. Parrish has a partner, Mr. George S. Ruggles. For twenty-seven years, this pair have toiled together in that shady New Hampshire retreat. They are inseparable, more like bosom chums than employer and employee. They have been together so long they have come to look like each other. "Take his picture and call it me," said Parrish when I had secured my much coveted interview and wanted a snapshot to accompany it. Mr. Ruggles speaks highly of his associate's ability in mechanical lines. "He could earn his own living as a mechanic," Mr. Ruggles tells you. "It's true that it runs in his family. His boys are all clever with tools. They have shops of their own here, and they like that kind of work just as much as their father. The fact is," adds the man who has been closer to Maxfield Parrish than any other for almost three decades, "Mr. Parrish is an exceptional man in more ways than one."⁴²

During the football season, Parrish would come by in his big car wearing his great raccoon coat, pick up Ruggles, and they would attend a football game at Dartmouth. When Ruggles grew too old to do heavy work, he made picture frames for Maxfield and his father, Stephen Parrish.

In 1891, George Ruggles built a studio at his home with lumber from an old abandoned schoolhouse on Freeman Road (located opposite the Parrish driveway).⁴³ It was built for use by the artists with a large northern exposure window, three rooms, and a veranda surrounding two sides of the structure. In later years the studio was dubbed the "Woodchuck Hole."

Cornish Colony artists who were known to have used the studio were: poet and playwright, Percy MacKaye, who wrote *Joan D'Arc* and *Canterbury Pilgrims* there; artists, George deForest Brush and Abbott Thayer, both of whom joined the artists colony in Dublin. Artists Thomas Dewing and Kenyon Cox also worked there. The boarders taken in by Mrs. Ruggles included: Barry Faulkner, Paul Manship, the Henry Prellwitzes, the Henry Fullers, and Mr. and Mrs. William C. Houston and daughter Miss Charlotte Houston, and also the H. O. Walkers.⁴⁴

In later years, Ruggles' daughter, Lucy (Ruggles) Bishop, also took in guests who included artist Cliff Young and sculptress Frances Grimes. Young was assistant to Allyn Cox (son of Kenyon and Louise Cox) who was painting the murals for the U. S. Capitol. When Cox retired in 1981 at the age of 85, Cliff Young was assigned the task of finishing the murals.

Mr. Ruggles possessed a good tenor voice and sang for years in the Baptist Church in Plainfield. He was in great demand to sing at funerals. He was also a member of a quartet which consisted of Albert K. Read II, Orlo Kenyon, and Elwin Quimby. This quartet sang at the Old Home Day festivities in Meriden in August 1901. Ruggles was a "cheerful neighbor and staunch friend, and possessed a buoyancy of spirit that is seldom equalled."

Ruggles modeled for the cover Maxfield Parrish painted for the July 20, 1922, issue of *Life Magazine*, entitled "TEA? Guess Again." It may have later been used as an advertisement for Baker's Cocoa.⁴⁵

Mr. Ruggles died in Plainfield in 1931 at the age of seventy-two.

Marion Lawrence (Eggleston) Ruggles (1858-1932)

Marion (Eggleston) Ruggles was born in Plainfield in 1858, the oldest daughter of Ai Franklin Eggleston and Spedie B. Farrington. Her father served in the Civil War, and "broken in health from imprisonment in southern prisons," moved his family west to Bloomington, Illinois. After his death in 1870, his widow returned to Claremont, New Hampshire, with their two daughters. Marion graduated from Stevens High School in 1876 as class valedictorian. She taught in the public schools in Hinsdale, New Hampshire, and Claremont until her marriage in 1884 to George S. Ruggles (see above). They moved to the Bryant homestead on Thrasher Road in Plainfield where they lived the rest of their lives. They had four children: Sydney L., Deane, Lucy F. (Bishop) and Harold L. All of her children were graduates of Kimball Union Academy and two of her sons were graduated from Dartmouth.

Mrs. Ruggles was one of the founders, and third president, of the Mothers'

and Daughters' Club. She was instrumental in the Mothers' and Daughters' Rug Industry, which was the first incorporated commercial craft industry in New Hampshire and among the first in the country. She was its business manager for many years and did most of the dyeing with barks of various trees and indigo. Mrs. Ruggles taught the intricacies of artistic weaving on 100-year-old looms. The work was exhibited and sold throughout New England and New York, and as many as 300 rugs and coverlets were made and sold annually.

Mrs. Ruggles was a member of the Congregational Church in Claremont, but was always active in the Plainfield Community Baptist Church as well. She promoted the Cornish Equal Suffrage League in 1911 and the Meriden Bird Club. She was well known for her love of flowers, especially forsythia.



Tracy Spalding, town moderator, about 1960. Photo by Gordon Leland. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Tracy Spalding (1902–1974)

Tracy Spalding was born in 1902, the son of Insley and Jennie (Meyette) Spalding. He lived all of his life in the Federal period brick house in Plainfield Village across from the Grange Hall. This house was occupied by the Spalding family from 1819 or 20 until 1986. As a boy, he posed for the colonial scene painted on the stage backdrop in the Grange Hall and was known among local painters for his "typical American head." He married Emma Schultz in 1927, and they had three children: Beatrice (born 1928), Eleanor (born 1933) and Joan (born 1937). He worked in the heat treating department at Windsor Cone Automatic Machine Company and was a game warden in the 1930s. He owned and operated a garage and a grocery store in Plainfield Village in the 1950s. Mr. Spalding was very active in town affairs. He was selectman from 1927–1930 and represented Plainfield in the New Hampshire Legislature for one term. He was best known in his role as town moderator for seventeen years in the 1950s and 1960s.

Harold L. Stone (1890–1976)

Harold Stone was born in Meriden on July 9, 1890, son of Thomas and Julia (Ward) Stone, and lived in Mascoma, Croydon, and Cornish Flat in his early years. He settled down in Plainfield and built a house and garage on Hayward Road. He added a slaughter house onto the garage and late in his life opened a grocery and meat market. A thriving business, his store was open seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. for eight years. Harold's butchering skills were built on sixty years of experience. Some years he processed over 100 deer for hunters who brought them to his slaughter house and cooler. He painted houses over a period of forty years and also liked to cane chairs. Harold was a seventy-year member of Blow-Me-Down Grange.

His wife was Willa (Stone) Stone. She was daughter of Reuben and Joshie (Walker) Stone of Croydon. Harold and Willa had seven sons and one daughter: Francis A., Jessie L., Harold E., Hiram (killed in World War II), Leslie R., Bernard W., David R. (selectman for a time), and Barbara (Mrs. Fred Sweet, now deceased).

Harold died in February 1976 at the age of eighty-five.⁴⁶

Oliver Baker Strobridge (1817–1857)

Oliver Baker Strobridge was born in Lunenburg, Vermont, on September 26, 1817, to Tullin (or Tully) Strobridge of Claremont (born 1789) and Samantha (Baker) Strobridge of Plainfield (1790–1826). A few years later, the family was in Peacham, Vermont, where two daughters were born.

By his eighteenth birthday, he was living in Plainfield and paid his first poll tax there. His mother was a daughter of long-time residents Oliver Baker (1755–1811), a physician from Tolland, Connecticut and Dorcas Dimick, who also had two sons, both prominent citizens: Oliver, Jr. (1788–1865), a physician like his father, and Dimick Baker (1793–1876), one of the town's more prosperous farmers who earned that distinction by paying the highest taxes in Meriden about the time of the Civil War and in 1873 and 1874.

In an act of classic school district nepotism, Oliver, the nephew, was hired by Oliver, the uncle, Prudential Committeeman for that year, as instructor for the winter term of 1845 in District No. 4 at Plainfield Village. The term lasted thirteen weeks, and he was paid \$4.75 per week (\$3.75 for teaching and \$1 for board). His performance also belied the usual problems with nepotism. He was an extraordinary teacher. In a small, run-down schoolhouse with a class of seventy-nine pupils, he offered English grammar, arithmetic, geography, history, writing, algebra, and natural philosophy. And he did this, according to the Superintending School Committee, with order, discipline, and good judgment. In 1845, the town's best school was kept in one of its poorer buildings. He was rehired in 1846 and 1847 without his uncle's help.

His description as a stone mason in the U. S. Census of 1850 might say

something about the physical presence that could have helped him in managing his winter schools. And he was chosen at Town Meeting on October 8, 1844, "...to advise the selectmen on the best manner of rebuilding the so-called High Bridge near Benjamin Stevens..."—testimony to the engineering sense and analytical skills that would also have served him as a schoolmaster.

He married Lucinda J. Spalding of Plainfield on March 15, 1847. A daughter, Harriet, was born in 1848. He died June 4, 1857, only forty years old.



Francis "Frank" Sullivan, at a testimonial dinner in honor of his retirement as Plainfield road agent, April 20, 1972. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Francis W. Sullivan (1907–1980)

Francis W. Sullivan was a Meriden native and a road man all of his life. Frank was characterized by one of his contemporaries as "the man who got Plainfield out of the mud," which he did during a twenty-year career as the town's road agent. When Frank took up the reins as road agent in 1952, most of the town highways were still dirt roads. Little had changed from conditions fifty years earlier. In the spring, the public schools often shut down for two or three weeks of "mudtime" vacation because sections were impassible. Using state aid programs, town appropriations, and enthusiastic support of many residents weary of battling muddy roads, Frank set out to systematically improve the many miles of highways stretching across the town. He convinced the town to buy a motorized road grader to replace a horsedrawn scraper dragged behind a farm tractor. He scouted out new supplies of gravel and he and three men plugged away at laying new culverts, putting down gravel, and applying tar surfaces wherever he could. By the end of his tenure, most major town roads had been paved, others had been made dependable, and transportation for residents, many of whom now commuted elsewhere to work, had become safe and convenient.



Lawrence Taylor, about 1945.
Courtesy Edith Taylor.

Lawrence H. Taylor (1910–1981)

Lawrence Taylor was born in Norwich, Vermont, the son of Professor Robert and Grace (Lawrence) Taylor. His mother was a concert pianist who had come to Plainfield with the Cornish Art Colony. With her sisters, she bought property on Freeman Hill and built the first house designed by Charles A. Platt in the area.

Grace married Robert L. Taylor, a professor of French at Dartmouth College, in 1906. They lived in Norwich in the house now owned by the local historical society. Larry Taylor attended Deerfield Academy, Williams College (1933), and received a Bachelor of Education degree from Dartmouth in 1941. He moved to the family home on Freeman Hill in 1934 after graduating from college and married Edith E. Howard in 1936. He was a gentleman farmer, raising sheep and dairy cows. They had three children: Stephen, David, and Helen. Larry also taught and coached at Lebanon High School, Kimball Union Academy, and Windsor High School where he was chairman of the English Department for twenty years.

An authority on wildlife of the Connecticut Valley, he gave frequent lectures on birds. He was also a lifelong collector and teller of the lore of rural New Hampshire and Vermont. During World War II, he was a field director of the Land Corps, a program which brought urban teenagers to Vermont to work on labor-short farms.

Reuben True (1781–1847)

Hannah (Duncan) True (1802–1896)

Reuben True, the eldest son of Benjamin and Abigail (Sanborn) True was born in 1781 in Plainfield. He was an industrious and prosperous farmer, a man of excellent business ability and was prominent in town affairs. He held several town offices and represented Plainfield in the legislature. His first wife was

Mary Dunlop Cutler by whom he had Bradley, Mary, Eunice, and Reuben, Jr. She died in 1830 at age forty-six. His second wife was Hannah Duncan.

Hannah (Duncan) True, daughter of Robert and Hannah (Emerson) Duncan, was born on March 28, 1802, in East Plainfield on the old Eaton property. She attended Kimball Union Academy in 1818-1819. Her baptism was by the Reverend Howard Malcom, DD, pastor of the Federal Street Baptist Church in Boston. In 1833, she married Major Reuben True in Meriden. Major True died on August 12, 1847. She and her husband contributed to the support of the gospel at home and abroad. She was a member of the Meriden Baptist Church for sixty years. She died in Meriden on October 15, 1896, at the age of ninety-four. A loom belonging to her was given to the Mothers' and Daughters' Club by Benjamin True. Her children were William C., George, Sidney and Susan (twins), and Benjamin O.⁴⁷



Eunice Waite at age eighty, 1965.
Courtesy Christine Dow.

Eunice (Stickney) Waite (1885-1977)

Eunice (Stickney) Waite was born in Plainfield, the daughter of Joseph and Emily Stickney. She married Edward C. "Ned" Waite in 1902, and they later lived on her parents' old homestead.

Before her marriage, she was the "leading soprano in the Baptist Church...and having a fine voice and a pleasing personality has always added to all our church and Grange entertainments." When she married Ned Waite, her new husband and his father were building a dam in Maine. The Waite family was famous for the dams that they built throughout New England. Ned and Eunice went to Maine to live during the building of the dam. Ned's father decided that he also wanted his wife to join him, so Ned, Eunice and Ned's mother went to Maine together on the "wedding trip." It was always a family joke about how much Eunice enjoyed her trip. "It would have been a perfect honeymoon if his mother, brother, and sister hadn't come along."

Mrs. Waite, in an interview at age ninety, also recalled a trip she and her husband made to Montreal during prohibition. "Prohibition hit the little town hard," she said, and as a concerned citizen, Mrs. Waite set out to do something about it. "Everyone was drinking 'hooch' and that stuff was half poison. I decided they should have good liquor to drink." She and her husband journeyed to Montreal "and we bought a fifth of the best whiskey you could buy. I strapped it between my legs and we made our way to the customs check . . . They let us right through, and we passed the liquor around to all the young people. I still have the bottle."

Eunice was a very kind, thoughtful woman and was always helpful to a friend or neighbor. She made everyone welcome in her home. Helpful in church clubs and active in all local town events, she helped bring electricity to Plainfield. In 1915, she and Ned along with other residents put on a Minstrel Show to raise money to have lights installed. They performed in Plainfield, Meriden, and Hartland, Vermont. Eunice also canvassed the town for donations until they had raised enough money to have three lights installed on the main street of Plainfield Village. Their house was the first in town to have electricity. Eunice had a switch in her house connected to the street lights and was responsible for turning them on and off. The Waites also had the first automobile in town.

Eunice was also responsible for having the windows cut in the sides of the Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge. She, her mother, and her sister Christine were returning from Windsor in a horse and buggy across the bridge. A car, driven by Vincent Cleary, was going to Windsor and ran into them, throwing her mother out of the buggy and knocking the horse down. Eunice called one of the stockholders of the bridge and asked him to cut some windows in the sides of the bridge. He protested that the rain would come in and rot the bridge. The windows were cut.

Eunice was a holder of the Boston Post Cane and was a librarian of the Philip Read Memorial Library for ten years. She was the mother of Sylvia (Waite) Gray (1905-1982) and Christine (Waite) Dow (born 1909).

Herbert E. Ward (1862-1947)

Herbert Ward was born in Plainfield February 4, 1862, son of William B. Ward, who was a native of Groton, Massachusetts, and Maria (Fuller) Ward of Plainfield. His father and mother were both educated at Kimball Union Academy and were school teachers. Herbert was valedictorian of the Kimball Union Academy class of 1881. For a time Herbert worked with his brother, W. H. Ward of Boston, in the milk business. He lost interest and turned to teaching school. He taught in the grade schools of Plainfield, Cornish, and Keene, New Hampshire. While teaching in Keene, he was made principal of the evening school.

Herbert decided to attend college and entered the Eastman Business College in Poughkeepsie, New York, where he was graduated in 1886 with a degree of Master of Accounts. In the fall, he secured a position with the Tiffany Company

of New York City and remained with them as their accountant for twenty-three years. In 1909, he had to leave Tiffany because of ill health and went to the country to recuperate. When his health improved, he carried on his own investment business through Henry Clews and Company of New York. He stayed in New York City during the winter months and at his Plainfield home in the summer with occasional trips to Washington. He was proud of meeting every President since Grover Cleveland. He was good friends with Calvin Coolidge.

In 1924, Mr. Ward became seriously ill and returned to his birthplace on the River Road (William McNamara, 1991). In 1930, he was elected to the legislature and served one term.

In the spring of 1933, Mr. Ward's interest in Plainfield schools prompted him to establish a trust fund to provide annual prizes at the grammar school graduation for the best essays on some patriotic, political, or cultural subject. He also gave money to each of the three churches in town for buying presents for the children at Christmas. Trust funds of \$1,000 each were established for the "Essay Prizes" and "Christmas gifts" in order to perpetuate these awards. He also left the town trust funds for the "worthy poor" and cemeteries.

Mr. Ward never married and died on August 5, 1947, eighty-five years old.⁴⁸

Daniel Cole Westgate (1857–1943)

Born on June 4, 1857, the son of Earl and Sarah (Cole) Westgate, Daniel Westgate married Clara Stone in the Plainfield Church Parsonage on June 13, 1878. Two daughters were born to them: Mary who married Harold Chellis of Meriden and Bessie who married Charles Hill of Plainfield.

Mr. Westgate served as town moderator for forty years, selectman for six years, and town clerk four years. He represented the town in 1895 in the legislature. Mr. Westgate organized the Blow-Me-Down Grange in 1895 and was a great promoter of its work. He was vice-president of Grange Mutual Fire Insurance Company for nine years. He settled many estates and was a Justice of the Peace. He was a staunch supporter of Plainfield Baptist Church and was Sunday School superintendent for many years.

He died on September 14, 1943, eighty-six years old. His wife Clara and daughter Bessie both held the Boston Post Cane. Mrs. Westgate was born on March 27, 1855, and died on December 13, 1945.

John Willard Whitney (1889–1951)

J. Willard Whitney was born on March 22, 1889, in Methuen, Massachusetts, to John Carlton and Ella (Peaslee) Whitney. He was the oldest of five children. The family soon moved into southern New Hampshire. When Willard was a young man, the Whitneys bought the Henry Farnum place in Meriden in 1916.

In 1922, Willard married Madge Marion Daniels of Plainfield, and they bought the "old French place" now owned by Ira and Sara Townsend (1991).



John Willard Whitney, about 1945.
Courtesy Mary Cassedy.

Two children were born: Mary, 1923, and John, 1927. The family bought the farm at the intersection of Route 12A and Stage Road in 1928, and Willard shipped milk the rest of his life. As was typical of men who had small dairy farms in the '30s and '40s, he was quick to adopt the use of tractors and other labor saving machines and the new modern practices in handling milk.

Willard was active in town affairs, serving as a member of the legislature, selectman, road agent, town treasurer, and finance committee member over several years. He was a loyal member of the Cheshire Lodge of the Masons. He was a man who had known hard times in his youth and always lent a helping hand to others, especially young people. Because of his generosity and practical knowledge, his opinion and advice were often sought.

Early Plainfield Doctors⁴⁹

• *Dr. Isaac Alden*

Born on February 11, 1770, he practiced in Cornish and Plainfield. He received pleasure in farming, gardening, and his family. In later years, he let his medical practice subside. He died on August 25, 1845.

• *Dr. John Waterman Harris Baker*

He was born in Chesterfield, New Hampshire, on August 25, 1821, the son of Oliver Baker, Jr. He attended Kimball Union Academy (1835–1837) and was graduated from Dartmouth Medical College in 1843. He practiced in Meriden from June 1844 until August 1853. He married Julia Richardson on January 1, 1845. He moved to California, then to Davenport, Iowa, where he died on April 7, 1905.

• *Dr. Oliver Baker, Sr.*

The first physician in Plainfield, he was born in Tolland, Connecticut, on October 5, 1755. He married Dorcas Dimick on March 23, 1780. She was born on September 23, 1760. They moved to Plainfield about 1781. He died October 3, 1811.

• *Dr. Oliver Baker, Jr.*

He was born in Plainfield September 16, 1788, the fourth child of Oliver Baker, Sr. He was graduated from Dartmouth Medical School in 1807 and practiced medicine in Chesterfield, New Hampshire, between 1810 and 1840; in West Hartford, Vermont, between 1840 and 1842; and in Plainfield between 1842 and 1852. In 1846, he agreed to "doctor all the town's poor for one year for \$15." He died in 1865.

• *Dr. Chester C. Beckley*

He was born January 25, 1876, in Plainfield and attended Kimball Union Academy, class of 1891. After receiving his medical degree from the University of Vermont, he became a physician in Meriden. He was a first lieutenant in the Medical Officers Reserve Corps, a captain in 1917, a major in 1918. He died on February 4, 1921, in Clinton, Massachusetts.

• *Dr. E. G. Beers*

He was known as the "herb doctor." He was a Civil War veteran. In 1857, he "agreed to care for paupers except county paupers for \$20." He was the town moderator between 1888 and 1896 and lived on Spencer Road. He sold a farm on High Street and, with the proceeds, purchased the bell for the Meriden Congregational Church.

- *Dr. John Sabin Blanchard*

He was born on August 10, 1805, in Canaan, New Hampshire. Blanchard entered Dartmouth Medical School but did not complete his studies. He studied with Drs. Smith and Muzzey and established himself in Cornish Flat in 1827. Five years later Blanchard married Louisa Jackson. In 1843, they moved to Meriden, so his children could attend Kimball Union Academy. In 1865, he succeeded Dr. John W. H. Baker. In 1860, he "agreed to care for paupers except county paupers for \$35." He died in 1861. An Empire chest of drawers owned by Blanchard is in the collection of the New Hampshire Historical Society.⁵⁰

- *Dr. Herman Cooper*

He was born on February 6, 1859, in Croydon, New Hampshire, and was an 1880 graduate of Kimball Union Academy and an 1883 graduate of Dartmouth Medical College. He was a physician-surgeon in Meriden from June 1883 to June 1888 when he went to Amesbury, Massachusetts, where he died on November 10, 1908.

- *Dr. Isaac Newton Fowler*

He was born in Havelock, New Brunswick, Canada, in April 1869. He received his medical education at the University of Vermont. He practiced in Meriden until he moved to Lebanon in 1902. He and his wife Josephine had three sons: Robert, Karl and Donald, and they lived in the house that stood on the corner of North Park and Campbell Streets (site of the Exxon Station, 1991).

- *Dr. Timothy Gleason*

He was born in Grantham (now part of Plainfield) in 1791, the son of Elijah and Lucy (Scott) Gleason who were among the earliest settlers west of the Grantham section. He and his brother Robert trained with Dr. Frost. Gleason practiced medicine in Meriden between 1812 and 1817.

- *Dr. Constant Wood Manchester*

Dr. Manchester was born in Plainfield on April 20, 1831, the son of Dr. John and Susan (Wood) Manchester. They moved to Morristown, Vermont, and then to South Royalton where he studied medicine with his father and with Dr. H. H. Whitcomb. He attended lectures at Dartmouth Medical College in 1853 and later at the University of Vermont where he was graduated in June 1858. In August 1858, he began the practice of medicine in Cornish Flat.

He married Amelia Chamberlain of Royalton in May 1859. In March 1861, a son was born, Frank Constant Manchester, who became a physician in Grafton, New Hampshire. Dr. Constant Manchester doctored the poor in 1869 for \$35. He remodeled the Dr. Frost house where he lived until he moved to Parkhurst Street in Lebanon and had a large practice. Two years later, he moved to Meriden where he practiced until February 1874. He died August 4, 1892.



Dr. Hubert Sleeper, about 1880.
Courtesy Howard and Philip Zea.

- *Dr. Sylvanus Martin*

On March 18, 1847, he “agreed to doctor the town’s poor for \$10 for the ensuing year.”

- *Dr. Hubert Sleeper*

He was born in Grantham on June 13, 1835, the son of Hiram Sleeper. He lived in Meriden in the house across the brook from the Baptist Church (later known as the Rogers House). He was a graduate of Kimball Union Academy in the class of 1855 and from Dartmouth Medical College in 1860. He served as a surgeon in the Sixteenth New Hampshire Regiment in 1862 and 1863. After the war, he continued his practice in Meriden where he died on October 22, 1902.

- *Dr. Frederick von Tobel*

Born in Torrington, Connecticut, on February 1, 1896, von Tobel received his medical education at the Baltimore Medical School. He practiced in Winchester, New Hampshire, for one year and then in Meriden where he married Rose B. Miller. They and their son Julian lived in Lebanon in the large brick house on the corner of School and South Park Streets. While taking a patient to Boston for surgery, he became ill with pneumonia and died on May 2, 1923.

- *Dr. Ebenezer Wright*

He lived near the Cornish line in Plainfield and practiced in both towns. He “was a well qualified and successful physician.” He died on October 28, 1798.

Other Plainfield doctors were: Dr. Brewster, Dr. Edwards, Dr. Griswold Hayward, Dr. Richmond, Dr. Silas Sabine, Dr. Sawyer, and Dr. John Short.

Appendix A

Proprietors of Plainfield

Theodore Atkinson, Esq.
James Bradford
Eleazar Cady
Jeremiah Cady
Daniel Clark
Waterman Clift
William Cutler
James Dean
Robert Dixon, Esq. of Valentown
Joshua Dunlap
William Edwards
Joseph Farnum, Jr.
Amos Frink
Joshua Frink
Zachary Frink
Ebenezer Gallup
John Gallup
Thomas Gallup
Samuel Gordon
John Hall
Stephen Hall
Thomas Heard
Samuel Hill, Jr.
John Howe
Jonas Howe
Benjamin Hutchins
Benjamin Hutchins, Jr.
William Kennedy
Samuel Kingsbury
Stephen Kingsley

Nathaniel Main
James Matthews
John Nelson
Jonathan Phillips
Caleb Shepard
Francis Smith
Joseph Smith
Martha Smith
Moses Smith of Canterbury
Andrew Spaulding
Benjamin Spaulding of Killingsly
Curtis Spaulding
Jesse Spaulding
John Spaulding
Joseph Spaulding
Josiah Spaulding
Samuel Spaulding
Abel Stevens
Cyprian Stevens of Killingsly
John Stevens
John Stevens, Jr.
Moses Tufts
Moses Warren
Stephen Warren
Joseph Williams
Daniel Woodward
Elias Woodward
Benning Wentworth
John Wentworth, Esq.
Mark Hunking Wentworth, Esq.

Appendix B

Plainfield Town Officers

Author: Howard W. Zea

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Assessor | | 1860 | John P. Chellis | 1873 | Unknown |
| 1768 | Francis Smith | | Edward Freeman, Jr. | 1874-75 | Andrew J. Chellis |
| | Lt. John Stevens | 1861-62 | Andrew J. Chellis | | William C. True |
| | Lt. Thomas Gallup | | Edward Freeman, Jr. | 1876 | Daniel G. Stickney |
| 1786 | Selectmen | 1863 | Stephen R. Moulton | | William C. True |
| | | | William C. True | 1877 | Fred Moulton |
| | | 1864 | Benjamin Daniels | | Daniel G. Stickney |
| | | | Stephen R. Moulton | 1878 | Lemuel Morse |
| Auditor | | 1865 | Benjamin C. Daniels | | William C. True |
| 1852 | None | | William C. True | 1879 | Fred Moulton |
| 1853 | Jesse Colby | 1866 | Benjamin C. Daniels | | William C. True |
| | Abel Merrill | | Frederick Moulton | 1880-81 | Samuel Bean |
| 1854 | James Gilky | 1867 | Unknown | | Fred Moulton |
| | Benjamin C. Smith | 1868 | A. S. Bartholomew | 1882 | Fred Moulton |
| 1855 | None | | Jacob Beal | | William C. True |
| 1856-57 | Samuel C. Moulton | 1869 | Fred Moulton | 1883 | Fred Moulton |
| | William B. Ward | | Joel F. Raynsford | | Wallace P. Thrasher |
| 1858 | Arvin S. | 1870 | Benjamin C. Daniels | 1884 | Fred Moulton |
| | Bartholomew | | William C. True | | Stephen D. Stone |
| | William B. Ward | 1871 | Moses M. Chellis | | Wallace P. Thrasher |
| 1859 | John P. Chellis | | Frank H. Goin | 1885 | Fred Moulton |
| | Ai Read | 1872 | Fred Moulton | | Wallace P. Thrasher |
| | | | William C. True | 1886 | Fred Moulton |



Selectmen's meeting, upstairs in the Plainfield Town Hall. L-R Harold "Buster" Wilder, Creighton Churchill, Francis Atwood. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

1887-92 William C. True
 William C. Hall
 Arthur F. Spaulding
 1893 John T. Duncan
 Henry C. Farnum
 1894 Carlos D. Colby
 John T. Duncan
 William Hall
 1895 John T. Duncan
 William Hall
 1896 John T. Duncan
 Benjamin Ward
 1897 John T. Duncan
 William Hall
 1898 Selectmen to
 appoint
 1899 John T. Duncan
 Edward G. Kenyon
 1900 Alvah B. Chellis
 Robert R. Penniman
 1901 Frank Whitaker
 1902 Alvah B. Chellis
 Benjamin F. Ward
 1903 Fred Moulton
 1904 Alvah B. Chellis
 Fred Moulton
 Albert K. Read
 1905 Ernest R. Woodbury
 1906 Robert R. Penniman
 George S. Ruggles
 Frank W. True
 1907 Robert R. Penniman
 Frank W. True
 1908 Wesley W. Jordan
 Robert R. Penniman
 1909 Wesley W. Jordan
 Frank W. True
 1910 Frank W. True
 John H. Whitaker
 1911 Fred Moulton
 Daniel C. Westgate
 John H. Whitaker
 1912 John F. Cann
 Henry R.
 McCartney
 Fred Moulton
 Daniel C. Westgate
 1913 John F. Cann
 Henry R.
 McCartney
 Robert R. Penniman
 Frank W. True
 1914 Robert R. Penniman
 Frank W. True
 1915-16 Robert R. Penniman
 Albert K. Read
 1917 Robert R. Penniman
 Daniel C. Westgate
 1918-19 Fred A. Rogers
 Frank W. True
 1920 Harold W. Chellis
 Fred A. Rogers
 1921 Harold W. Chellis
 Frank W. True

1922-24 Harold W. Chellis
 Fred A. Rogers
 1925 Fred A. Rogers
 Frank W. True
 1926-30 George C. Barton
 Frank W. True
 1931-34 George C. Barton
 Charles A. Tracy
 1935 George C. Barton
 Palmer E. Read
 1936-37 George C. Barton
 Blancha L. Daniels
 1938-42 Howard W. Chellis
 Blancha L. Daniels
 1943 Howard W. Chellis
 Blancha L. Daniels
 Edward C. Daniels
 1944 Howard W. Chellis
 Edward E. Daniels
 1945-46 Howard W. Chellis
 John W. Whitney
 1947 Floyd Jarvis
 John W. Whitney
 1948 Floyd Jarvis
 Albert K. Read
 1949 B. David Benson, Jr.
 Albert K. Read
 1950-52 David Benson
 Herman D. Rogers
 1953 William Franklin, Jr.
 Herman D. Rogers
 1954-55 William Franklin
 Gordon Leland
 1956-57 Edna DuBois
 Gordon Leland
 1958 T. Paul Amidon
 Gordon Leland
 1959-60 John F. McNamara
 Helen J. White
 1961-63 Dorothy McNamara
 (resigned)
 John F. McNamara
 1964-75 Herman D. Rogers
 John F. McNamara
 1976-77 Herman D. Rogers
 Kathryn MacLeay
 1978 Judith A. Belyea
 John Varnese
 1979 William Franklin
 Louise Sawyer
 1980 William F. Franklin,
 Jr. (resigned)
 Louise Sawyer
 Pamela Wilson
 1981 William Fletcher
 Louise Sawyer
 (resigned)
 Pamela Wilson
 1982 William Fletcher
 Pamela Wilson
 1983 William Fletcher
 Kathryn MacLeay
 1984-90 Kathryn MacLeay
 Ira P. Townsend

Bicentennial Committee

1959-61 Clare S. Boyd
 William F. Jenney
 Kathryn MacLeay
 Fred Sweet
 Howard Zea

Brander of Horses

1781 Josiah Russell

Building Inspector

1981-84 Alex Cherington
 1985-87 D. Boone Rondeau
 1987-90 David McBride

Civil Defense Officer

1949 Aubrey P. Janion
 1950-51 John Cowles
 Aubrey P. Janion
 1952 David Benson
 Aubrey P. Janion

Constable

1766 Joseph Kimball
 1767 Reuben Jerold
 1768-69 Benjamin Chapman
 1770 Josiah Russell, Jr.
 1771 Abel Gates
 1772 Joseph Smith
 1773 Isaac Main
 1774 Abel Stafford
 1775 Duthan Kingsbury
 1776 Thomas Gallup
 1777 Benjamin Cutler
 1778 John Stevens
 1779 Lemuel Smith
 1780 Asa Gallup
 1781 Perley Roberts
 1782 Robert Miller
 Charles Spaulding
 1783 Simeon Cory
 Nathan Gates
 1784 Unknown
 1785 Thomas Gates
 Moses Nixon

Both voted out of office and
 replaced by:
 Eliphalet Adams
 Samuel Fairfield
 Robert Miller
 1786 Asa Gallup
 1787 Thomas Gates
 1788 Daniel Cole
 1789 Sample Gilkey
 Isaac Wilson

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------------------|------|--------------------|
| Replaced Cole: Lt. Able Stone | 1840 | Caleb Kingsbury | | Enos R. Spalding |
| 1790 Lt. Jesse Roberts | 1841 | Henry Chapman | | Buswell Benway |
| Ruluf Spalding | | Daniel Stickney | 1865 | Lincoln Chapman |
| 1791 Joshua Bailey | 1842 | Ephraim Converse | | John Daniels |
| Daniel Cole | 1843-44 | Ephraim Converse | | Joseph K. Foss |
| 1792 George Avery | | Daniel G. Stickney | | Ebenezer E. Hadley |
| Benjamin Kimball, | 1845 | Ephraim Converse | | Orra C. Pierce |
| Jr. | 1846 | Ephraim Converse | | Levi Sanderson |
| 1793-94 Philip Spalding | | Bradbury Dyer | | Enos R. Spalding |
| 1795 Unknown | 1847 | Bradbury Dyer | | Samuel C. Spalding |
| 1796 Unknown | | James D. Fifield | | William Wilder |
| 1801 Timothy Cory | 1848 | Bradbury Dyer | 1866 | Samuel Bean, Jr. |
| 1802 Abel Stone | | Alonzo Winkley | | Charles P. Fifield |
| 1803 Lt. Abel Stone | 1849 | Bradbury Dyer | | Joseph K. Foss |
| 1804 Capt. Daniel | 1850 | Bradbury Dyer | | Junius A. Spencer |
| Kingsbury | | James D. Fifield | | Benjamin C. Smith |
| 1805 Unknown | 1851 | Bradbury Dyer | 1867 | Andrew J. Chellis |
| 1806 Isaac Chapman | | S. R. Moulton | | Joseph K. Foss |
| 1807 Capt. Isaac | 1852 | A. D. Manchester | | John H. French |
| Chapman | | E. M. Sargent | | Ralston Penniman |
| Lt. Abel Stone | 1853-56 | Converse Cole | | Samuel Sanborn |
| 1808 Levi Sargeant | | Bradbury Dyer | | Levi Sanderson |
| Abel Stone, Jr. | 1857 | Bradbury Dyer | | Enos R. Spalding |
| 1809 Lt. Abel Stone | | Isaac W. Westgate | | Isaac W. Westgate |
| Benjamin Westgate | 1858 | Converse Cole | 1868 | A. S. Bartholomew |
| 1810 Abel Stone | | Ephraim Kinsman | | Alonzo J. Chapman |
| Benjamin Westgate | 1859-60 | Converse Cole | | Elias Farnum |
| 1811-12 Lt. Abel Stone | | Bradbury Dyer | | Harrison H. Jordan |
| Benjamin Westgate | 1861 | Bradbury Dyer | | John W. Peterson |
| 1813 Lt. Abel Stone | | Joseph K. Foss | | Junius A. Spencer |
| Capt. David Stone | 1862 | Arvin S. | | Frank B. Westgate |
| 1814-15 Abel Stone | | Bartholomew | 1869 | Elias Farnum |
| Benjamin Westgate | | Alvah B. Chellis | | Harrison H. Jordan |
| 1816-17 Lt. Abel Stone | | Joseph K. Foss | | Jarvis J. Jordan |
| Benjamin Westgate | | Edward Freeman, Jr. | | John W. Peterson |
| 1818 Lt. Abel Stone | | Frederick B. | 1870 | Joseph Bean |
| Thomas Penniman | | Hanchett | | John W. Peterson |
| 1819 Sylvanus Bryant | | Cheever Knight | | Frank B. Westgate |
| 1820 Enos Roberts | | Ralston Penniman | | George H. Williams |
| 1821 Samuel Read | | Arthur F. Spalding | 1871 | John H. French |
| 1822 Sylvanus Raymond, | | Isaac W. Westgate | | Charles Harrington |
| Jr. | | Joseph P. Westgate | | Francis W. Smith |
| Ishmael Tuxbury | 1863 | Arvin S. | | Charles Stickney |
| 1823 Samuel Tuxbury | | Bartholomew | 1872 | Fred B. Hanchett |
| 1824-25 Jeremiah Dow | | Converse Cole | | Charles Harrington |
| 1826 Abel Stone | | John H. French | | Byron Sanborn |
| 1827 Moses Chellis | | George S. Hanchett | | Farnum J. Spencer |
| 1828 Moses Chellis | | William Hadley | 1873 | Converse Cole |
| Thomas Chellis | | Orin Morgan | | Arthur Spalding |
| 1829 Jabez Porter | | Stephen R. Moulton | | Elias S. Stickney |
| 1830 Thomas Johnson | | Samuel Sanborn | | William H. Wheeler |
| Joseph Parker | | A. F. Spalding | 1874 | A. S. Bartholomew |
| 1831 Jabez Porter | | Isaac W. Westgate | | Andrew J. Chellis |
| Joseph Parker | | Joseph P. Westgate | | John H. French |
| 1832 Joseph Parker | | James S. Wood | | Hamden Gilson |
| Erastus Ticknor | | Otis H. Chellis | | Darwin Jordan |
| 1833-34 Joseph Parker | 1864 | Converse Cole | | Turner Peterson |
| 1835 Joseph Parker | | Samuel Davis | | Insley Spalding |
| Ai Read | | Charles French | 1875 | Andrew J. Chellis |
| Robert Scott | | William Hadley | | Dennis Cross |
| 1836-37 Joseph Parker | | George Huggins | | John H. French |
| 1838 Harry Chapman | | Stephen R. Moulton | | Levi H. Sanderson |
| Elias T. Smith | | Levi Sanderson | 1876 | Alvah Chellis |
| 1839 Thomas Johnson | | Aquilla Spalding | | Jerome French |

| | | | | | |
|------|----------------------|------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1976 | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | 1985 | Stephen Beaupré | Corder of Wood | |
| | James H. Longacre | | Mary Cassedy | | |
| | Margaret E. Meyette | | Tom Jekanowski | 1816 | John Bryant |
| | Barbara Soper | | Basil McNamara | 1821 | John Bryant |
| | Lockwood Sprague | | Margaret E. Meyette | | Charles Eggleston |
| 1977 | Peter Stettenheim | 1986 | (resigned) | 1822 | Charles Eggleston |
| | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | | Carlton Strong | | Duty Stickney |
| | William Franklin III | | Ruthann Wheeler | 1824 | Levi Bryant |
| | James H. Longacre | | Stephen Beaupré | | Charles Eggleston |
| | Edward McGee | | Mary Cassedy | 1825 | Calvin Spalding |
| 1978 | Robert Sodemann | 1987 | (resigned) | | John Spalding |
| | Barbara Soper | | Tom Jekanowski | 1826-31 | Ai Read |
| | Lockwood Sprague | | (resigned) | | John Spalding |
| | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | | Basil McNamara | 1832 | Calvin Spalding |
| | William Franklin III | | (resigned) | | John Spalding |
| 1979 | James H. Longacre | 1988 | Nancy Mogielnicki | 1833 | Ai Read |
| | Edward McGee | | Carlton Strong | | John Spalding |
| | Robert Sodemann | | Maryellen Sullivan | 1834 | George Bryant |
| | Barbara Soper | | Ruthann Wheeler | | Calvin Spalding |
| | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | | John Zimmer | 1835 | Ai Read |
| 1980 | Ruthann Wheeler | 1989 | Stephen Beaupré | | Duty Stickney |
| | Ernest Barrett | | Nancy Mogielnicki | 1836 | Calvin Spalding |
| | Lorraine Kelly | | Armand Rondeau | | John Spalding |
| | James H. Longacre | | Carlton Strong | 1837 | Ai Read |
| | Robert Sodemann | | (resigned) | | John Spalding |
| 1981 | Barbara Soper | 1990 | Maryellen Sullivan | 1838-39 | John Spalding |
| | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | | Ruthann Wheeler | 1840-41 | Ai Read |
| | Ruthann Wheeler | | John Zimmer | | John Spalding |
| | Ernest Barrett | | Stephen Beaupré | 1842 | George Bryant |
| | Lorraine Kelly | | (resigned) | | Asa D. Kingsbury |
| 1982 | James H. Longacre | 1989 | Karen Dowcett | 1843 | Daniel Morrill |
| | Margaret E. Meyette | | Nancy Mogielnicki | | Ai Read |
| | Barbara Soper | | Armand Rondeau | 1844 | George Bryant |
| | (resigned) | | Maryellen Sullivan | | Ai Read |
| | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | | Michael Taupier | 1845 | Asa D. Kingsbury |
| 1983 | Ruthann Wheeler | 1990 | Ruthann Wheeler | | David Morrill |
| | Ernest Barrett | | Ruth Whybrow | 1846 | Bradbury Dyer |
| | Peter Haubrich | | John Zimmer | | John Spalding |
| | Lorraine Kelly | | Lou Ann Cutler | 1847 | Levi Bryant |
| | James H. Longacre | | Karen Dowcett | | Charles Flanders |
| 1984 | Margaret E. Meyette | 1990 | Shelley Hadfield | 1848 | James D. Fifield |
| | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | | Jeff Marsh | | Calvin Spalding |
| | Ernest Barrett | | Nancy Mogielnicki | | John Spalding |
| | Sherman Fox | | Armand Rondeau | 1849 | Charles Flanders, Jr. |
| | Lorraine Kelly | | Maryellen Sullivan | | Daniel Morrill |
| 1985 | (resigned) | 1990 | Mike Taupier | | John Spalding |
| | James H. Longacre | | (resigned) | 1850 | Bradbury Dyer |
| | Margaret E. Meyette | | Ruthann Wheeler | | Daniel Morrill |
| | Robert Sodemann | | Ruth Whybrow | | John Spalding |
| | Jean Strong | | John Zimmer | 1851 | Daniel Morrill |
| 1986 | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | 1990 | Lou Ann Cutler | | Benjamin C. Smith |
| | Mary Cassedy | | Karen Dowcett | 1852 | Daniel Morrill |
| | Tom Jekanowski | | (resigned) | | Benjamin C. Smith |
| | James H. Longacre | | Jeff Marsh | | Alonzo Winkley |
| | Basil McNamara | | Nancy Mogielnicki | 1853 | Converse Cole |
| 1987 | Margaret E. Meyette | 1990 | Armand Rondeau | | Daniel Morrill |
| | Robert Sodemann | | Maryellen Sullivan | | Calvin Spalding |
| | Jean Strong | | Ruthann Wheeler | 1854 | George Bryant |
| | Stephen Beaupré | | Ruth Whybrow | | Stephen R. Moulton |
| | Mary Cassedy | | John Zimmer | | Joseph B. Westgate |
| 1988 | Basil McNamara | 1990 | | 1855 | George Bryant |
| | Margaret E. Meyette | | | | Duty Stickney |
| | Robert Sodemann | | | | Stephen D. Stone |
| | Jean Strong | | | | Franklin Ward |
| | | | | | |

[illegible]

Dog Constable

1902-04 Hamden A. Gilson
 1905-06 Nathan R. Andrews
 Henry C. Daniels
 1907-09 Henry C. Daniels
 Edwin R. Miller
 1910 George E. Read
 1911 Nathan R. Andrews
 George E. Read
 1913-14 Parker C. Jordan
 1915 Nathan R. Andrews
 Parker C. Jordan
 1916 Nathan R. Andrews
 1917 Leon D. Clark
 1918 Raymond Cutts
 E. C. Milner
 1921 Charles Hill
 1922 Raymond Cutts
 Charles Hill
 1925 Raymond Cutts
 1928 D. E. Goulotte
 1941-47 Edward M. Pierce
 1948 Everett King
 1949 Joseph C. Meyette
 1950 Adelard Brouillard
 1951 Adelard Brouillard
 Frank Sullivan
 1952 Frank Sullivan
 1953-54 Floyd Stevens
 1955-59 Ralph O. Woodward
 1960-61 None
 1962-65 Ralph O. Woodward
 1966 Lloyd Stevens
 1969 Clayton Morse
 Philip G. Smith
 1970 Philip G. Smith
 1971-82 Robert J. Orr
 1983 None
 1984-87 D. Boone Rondeau
 1988 Stanley Milo
 1989-90 Gordon Gillens

Fence Viewer

1769-70 Abel Gates
 Rueben Jerold
 1774 Joseph Kimball
 Lt. Charles Spalding
 1775 Adam Clark
 Abel Steven
 1785 John Westgate
 1787 Lt. Abel Stone
 1788-92 John Westgate
 1795 Joshua Bailey
 1797 Job Cory
 1799 Col. Joseph Kimball
 Francis Smith, Esq.
 John Westgate
 1801 Stephen Cole
 Champeon Spalding
 Lemuel Williams
 1802 Ruluf Spalding

1803 Maj. Joseph Smith
 Nathan Andrews
 Gideon Woodward
 1804 Eliphalet Adams
 Stephen Cole
 1805 Nathan Andrews
 Stephen Cole
 1806 Daniel Spalding
 Daniel True
 1807 Barna Tisdale
 Nathaniel Wheeler
 1808 Thomas Chellis
 Barna Tisdale
 1809 Duty Stickney
 Benjamin Westgate
 1810 Thomas Chellis
 Barna Tisdale
 1811 John Harris
 Daniel Kingsbury
 1812 Capt. Joseph
 Kimball
 Benjamin Westgate
 1813 Asa Kingsbury
 Lt. Reuben True
 1814 Major Isaac
 Chapman
 Capt. Benjamin
 Dow
 1815 Isaac Chapman
 Nathaniel Morgan
 1816 Benjamin Freeman
 Thomas Penniman
 1817 Simeon Adams
 Amos Farnum
 Benjamin Freeman
 1818 Thomas Chellis, Jr.
 Benjamin Freeman
 1819 Simeon Adams
 Benjamin Freeman
 1820 John Beal
 Benjamin Freeman
 John Ticknor
 1821 Thomas Chellis, Jr.
 Leonard Daniels
 1822 Thomas Chellis, Jr.
 Capt. P. Smith
 1823 Thomas Chellis, Jr.
 Capt. J. Wood
 1824 Jacob Smith
 Calvin Spalding
 1825 Dimick Baker
 Edward Freeman
 1826 Asa Kingsbury
 Thomas Penniman
 1827 Thomas Chellis, Jr.
 Edward Freeman
 1828 James Gilkey
 Thomas Penniman
 1829 Jonathan Cram
 James Gilkey
 1830 John Ticknor
 Joseph Wood
 1831 Thomas Chellis, Jr.
 Joseph Wood

1832 Thomas Chellis, Jr.
 Edward Freeman
 Sylvanus Martin
 1833 Thomas Penniman
 Gideon Woodward
 1834 Thomas Chellis, Jr.
 Joseph Wood
 1835 Joseph Parker
 John Ticknor
 1836 Thomas Chellis
 Asa D. Kingsbury
 1837 Unknown
 1838 Thomas Penniman
 Benjamin Stevens
 1839 Thomas Chellis
 Calvin Spalding
 1840 Thomas Chellis
 Benjamin Stevens
 1841 Thomas Chellis
 Thomas Penniman
 Ai Read
 1842 Thomas Chellis
 Benjamin Stevens
 1843 Thomas Chellis
 James Gilkey
 1844 Thomas Chellis
 Benjamin Stevens
 1845 Thomas Chellis
 James Gilkey
 1846 Asa D. Kingsbury
 Thomas Penniman
 1847 John Gates
 Enos Roberts
 1848 Bradbury Dyer
 Enos Roberts
 1849 James Gilkey
 Jacob Rowell
 1850 Jacob Rowell
 William Ward
 1851 Ai Read
 Jacob Rowell
 1852 Samuel B. Duncan
 Earl Westgate
 1853 Stephen R. Moulton
 Charles H. Read
 1854 Eben Clough
 George F. Souther
 1855 Eben Elviegh
 James Gilkey
 1856 Rufus M. Cole
 James Gilkey
 1857 Thomas J. Pillsbury
 Stephen D. Stone
 Earl Westgate
 1858 Arvin S.
 Bartholomew
 Eben Clough
 Enos R. Spalding
 1859 John P. Chellis
 Converse Cole
 William B. Ward
 1860 Arvin S.
 Bartholomew
 Bradbury Dyer

| | | | | | |
|---------|--|---------|--|--|---|
| 1861 | Darius N. Moulton Andrew J. Chellis Elias Farnum Junius A. Sleeper | 1886 | William P. Wood Benjamin F. Manchester | 1961 | None |
| 1862 | Arvin S. Bartholomew Albert S. Eaton Ira P. Thatcher Isaac W. Westgate | 1887 | Ephraim Whitaker | 1962 | Nelson Green |
| 1863 | Sanborn Davis Charles H. Read Nathaniel M. Wheeler | 1888 | Arvin S. Bartholomew Lemuel Morse William C. True | 1963-72 | Nelson Green Stephen F. Kimball |
| 1864 | Charles H. Read Samuel Sanborn Enos R. Spalding | 1889 | Selectmen to appoint | 1973-77 | Nelson Green Stephen F. Kimball William C. Quimby |
| 1865 | George W. Austin Arvin S. Bartholomew Fred Moulton | 1890 | Willis Jordan Benjamin F. Manchester Charles Woodward | 1978-85 | Nelson Green William C. Quimby |
| 1866 | Cheever Knight Enos R. Spalding | 1891 | Benjamin F. Manchester | 1986-90 | William C. Quimby |
| 1867 | James Freeman Junius A. Spencer | 1892 | Benjamin F. Manchester John Porter Insley W. Spalding | Fish and Game Warden | |
| 1868 | Newell C. Chapman Harrison H. Jordan Sidney Sanborn | 1893 | Benjamin F. Manchester Insley W. Spalding | 1881 | Nathan Andrews Chiever Knight Hiram Phillips |
| 1869 | John Gilkey William O. Kenyon John B. Rowell | 1894 | Benjamin F. Manchester | 1886 | Fred Moulton |
| 1870 | Jesse French Charles H. Knight Horace B. Stickney | 1895 | Henry C. Daniels Benjamin F. Manchester John Porter | 1888 | Charles H. Hill Fred Moulton |
| 1871 | Alvah B. Chellis Elias Farnum Darius N. Moulton | 1896 | Benjamin F. Manchester Insley Spalding | 1889-92 | Selectmen to appoint |
| 1872 | Hiram Phillips Insley Spalding | 1897 | Charles E. Eggleston John Porter Samuel R. Sanborn | 1893 | Joseph B. Stickney William P. Wood |
| 1873 | Horace B. Stickney William C. True | 1903 | Giles S. Hastings John Porter Insley Spalding | 1896 | Edward C. Daniels Alfred Hadley Fred Moulton |
| 1874 | Selectmen | 1904 | Ralph L. Morgan Insley W. Spalding | 1899 | Hamden A. Gilson |
| 1875 | Charles Daniels George French Darius N. Moulton | 1908 | Henry C. Daniels H. R. McCartney Charles T. Root | Grand Juryman | |
| 1876 | Harrison Jordan Sidney Sanborn | 1914 | George C. Barton Ira W. Heywood Charles T. Root | 1767 | Amos Stafford |
| 1877 | Frank Daniels Irving A. Hurd | 1915 | Arling B. Cutts | 1768 | Atwood Williams |
| 1878 | Insley W. Spalding Alban P. Wood | 1916 | Albert K. Read | 1781 | Benjamin Kimball |
| 1879-80 | Selectmen to appoint | 1917 | Brainard W. Penniman Elmer E. Wheeler Herbert H. Williams | Health Officer (Also called Board of Health and Hospital Agent) | |
| 1881 | Benjamin F. Manchester Alban P. Wood | 1922 | Charles Meyette Robert R. Penniman Edwin Porter | 1884 | C. C. Beckley, M.D. Elbridge G. Beers, M.D. Herman Cooper, M.D. |
| 1882 | None | 1923 | J. Charles Meyette Thomas Penniman | 1885 | C. C. Beckley, M.D. Herman Cooper, M.D. |
| 1883 | Hamden A. Gilson William L. Martin Lemuel Morse | 1927 | Robert R. Penniman | 1886 | Herman Cooper, M.D. Hubert Sleeper, M.D. |
| 1884 | George J. French Lewis S. Jordan John H. Moore | 1933 | John F. McNamara | 1887 | Elbridge G. Beers, M.D. Hubert Sleeper, M.D. |
| 1885 | Hamden H. Gilson John H. Moore | 1953 | Vernon A. Hood | 1890 | Elbridge G. Beers, M.D. Edwin R. Miller Wallace P. Thrasher |
| | | 1954 | Vernon A. Hood Palmer C. Read, Jr. | 1891 | Charles Woodward |
| | | 1955-60 | Nelson Green Stephen F. Kimball | 1892 | Elbridge G. Beers, M.D. |

| | | | | |
|---------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|------|---------------------|
| | Charles H. Hill | Hearse Driver | | Dr. Elias Frost |
| | Edwin R. Miller | | | John Parsons, Jr. |
| 1893 | Elbridge G. Beers, M.D. | 1876-78 Jonathan B. Phillips | | Capt. Enos Reckard |
| | Charles H. Hill | 1879 Selectmen to appoint | 1817 | Benjamin Stevens |
| | Frederick Von Tobel | 1880 Jonathan B. Phillips | | Josiah Fifield |
| 1894-96 | Charles H. Hill | 1881-83 James Wait Jordan | | Samuel Fifield |
| | Samuel R. Sanborn | 1884-85 John S. Andrews | | Philip Hadley |
| | Frederick Von Tobel | 1886-91 Charles S. Burr | | Elisha Spalding |
| 1897 | Samuel W. Clark | 1892-96 Selectmen to appoint | | Stephen Tracy |
| | Samuel R. Sanborn | 1908 Charles S. Burr | 1818 | Joseph E. Westgate |
| | Isaac N. Fowler, M.D. | 1922 Carroll E. Kenyon | | Josiah Woodman |
| 1898 | Samuel W. Clark | | | Aaron Gage |
| 1899 | Samuel R. Sanborn | | 1819 | Joseph Swan |
| 1900 | Isaac N. Fowler, M.D. | Hog Reave or Constable | | Otis Hutching |
| 1901 | Nathan R. Andrews | 1794 Joseph Austin | 1820 | Jacob Roswell |
| | Ralph L. Morgan | | | Osgood True |
| | Wallace P. Thrasher | 1797 Daniel Spalding | | Perley Fifield |
| 1902 | Edwin G. Kenyon | | | Calvin Spalding |
| 1903 | Nathan R. Andrews | | | John Spalding |
| | L. H. Bugbee, M.D. | | | Josiah Spalding |
| 1904 | L. H. Bugbee, M.D. | 1799 Isaac Chapman | | Luther Stevens |
| | Edwin G. Kenyon | | | David Tamphier |
| 1906 | Nathan R. Andrews | | | Moses True, Jr. |
| | Winfred Brown, M.D. | 1801 Lemuel Adams | 1821 | Ishmael Tuxbury |
| 1908-14 | Nathan R. Andrews | | | Samuel Williams |
| | Ernest L. Huse, M.D. | | | Thomas Chellis, Jr. |
| | Edwin G. Kenyon | 1802 Parker Chase | | Asa Collins |
| 1915-16 | Ernest L. Huse, M.D. | | | Mansur Cory |
| | J. Daniel Porter | 1803 James Kenyon | 1822 | Bradbury Dyer |
| | Fred A. Rogers | | | Stephen Fifield |
| | Frank W. True | 1805 John Wilson | | George Robinson |
| 1917 | J. Daniel Porter | | | Samuel Winkley |
| | Albert K. Read | 1806 Adam Clark | 1823 | Samuel Brown |
| | Fred A. Rogers | | | Silas Read, Jr. |
| 1918 | Harold W. Chellis | 1807 Squire Wilson | | Joseph Taylor |
| | Albert K. Read | | 1824 | D. Emerson |
| | Herbert H. Williams | 1808 Peter Abbot | | J. B. Kingsbury |
| 1919-33 | Ernest L. Huse, M.D. | | | Henry Wells |
| 1934-35 | Ernest L. Huse, M.D. | 1809 Benjamin Gallup | 1824 | L. Bryant |
| | Henry N. Penniman | | | Luther Parker |
| 1936-40 | Ernest L. Huse, M.D. | 1810 Doctor Martin | | Chester Taylor |
| 1948-49 | Robert W. Gibson | | 1825 | James Hall, 2nd |
| 1950-53 | Burton E. Renchan, M.D. | 1811 Heseekiah Sillaway | | Salmon Hildreth |
| 1954 | Carroll Putnam | | | Samuel Rowell |
| 1956 | Burton E. Renchan, M.D. | 1812 Timothy Swan | 1826 | Archibald Spencer |
| 1959-61 | Burton E. Renchan, M.D. | | | Rufus Wheeler, Jr. |
| 1961-62 | Rebecca Crosier | 1813 Benjamin Kimball | | Lester Emerson |
| 1963-67 | Wallace Pickering | | | John Gates |
| 1968-79 | Douglas C. Grearson | 1814 Roswell Stevens | 1827 | Robert Kimball |
| 1980-85 | Alex Cherington | | | Thomas Pool |
| 1986-87 | D. Boone Rondeau | 1815 Levi Chapman | | James Gilkey |
| 1988- | David McBride | | 1828 | Thomas Johnson |
| | | 1816 Thomas Chellis, Jr. | | Philester Joy |
| | | | | John Bryant |
| | | 1817 Levi Clemons | | Ira Bugbee |
| | | | | Philester Joy |
| | | 1818 Timothy Cory | 1829 | Samuel Spalding |
| | | | | J. C. Colby |
| | | 1819 Benjamin Dow | | Riley Jordan |
| | | | | Elisha Strong, Jr. |
| | | 1820 Charles Eggleston | | Orville Williams |
| | | | | Joseph Wood |
| | | 1821 Caleb Plusteridge | 1830 | Benjamin F. Dow |
| | | | | John Johnson |
| | | 1822 Silus Pool | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1823 Abel Stone | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1824 Benjamin Westgate | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1825 Capt. Reuben True | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1826 Thomas Penniman | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1827 Austin Tyler | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1828 Daniel Cole, Jr. | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1829 Russel Green | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1830 Daniel Kingsbury | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1831 Samuel Brocklebank | | |
| | | | | |
| | | 1832 Charles Flanders, Esq. | | |

| | | | | | |
|------|---------------------|------|---------------------|------|---------------------|
| | Cyrus Strong | 1848 | William Hadley | | James Douse |
| | John Westgate | | Jabez Porter | | William Moore |
| 1831 | Benjamin Cutler | | Frank Spalding | | Ira P. Thatcher |
| | ____ Davison | | Elisha Ticknor | | William E. Westgate |
| | John Evans | | David G. Westgate | 1863 | (Name changed to |
| | John Johnson | 1849 | Jacob Beal | | Hog Constables) |
| 1832 | Moses Chellis | | Elijah W. Burnap | | Charles French |
| | Jesse French | | Converse Cole | | Merrit F. Penniman |
| | Richard Nelson | | Elisha Ticknor | 1864 | George Hanchett |
| | Jacob Read | | David Westgate | | Sumner T. Pierce |
| 1833 | ____ Pingree | 1850 | E. Cutler | | Warren Westgate |
| | Calvin Spalding | | Simon Heath | | Charles H. Williams |
| | Moses Stickney | | B. Manchester | | Leonard Williams |
| | Reuben True | | Abraham Spencer | 1865 | Elbridge G. Beers |
| 1834 | Ai Read | | Benjamin Spencer | | William H. Pierce |
| | Zebulon Stickney | | George Westgate | | Benjamin F. Ward |
| | John Westgate | | Alonzo Winkley | | Baxter Williams |
| 1835 | Ira Hayward | 1851 | Sylvester Bugbee | 1866 | Charles P. Fifield |
| | Reuben Moore | | John Morgan | | Edwin Hadley |
| 1836 | Asa Kingsbury | | Joseph B. Westgate | | Joseph Kenyon |
| | Kimball Ticknor | | Joseph P. Westgate | | Marcus Lane |
| 1837 | Alvin Manchester | 1852 | Otis H. Chellis | | John Peterson |
| | Elias Smith | | David L. M. | 1867 | Merrit Colby |
| | George Westgate | | Comings | | Francis S. French |
| 1838 | Amos Bugbee | | Charles Gilkey | | William Hall |
| | Oscar Gilman | 1853 | George P. Haven | | Jason F. Johnston |
| | Raymond Jordan | | Henry J. Rowell | | Henry Mace |
| | Joseph Parker | | Waterman Spalding | 1868 | George Austin |
| 1839 | John Newton | | William A. Talbert | | Jonathan Barber |
| | Earl Westgate | 1854 | Dexter Bell | | Moses M. Chellis |
| 1840 | Francis S. Clark | | Walter Foss | 1869 | Henry Fuller |
| 1841 | Benjamin Smith | | Dana N. Morgan | | Sidney Sanborn |
| | Daniel Stickney | | F. J. Stevens | | Arthur F. Spalding |
| 1842 | Norman P. Bush | | Nathaniel M. True | 1870 | C. C. Beckley |
| | Cyrus Baldwin | | William B. Ward | | L. W. Cole |
| | Samuel Sanborn | 1855 | Amos Bugbee | | Jesse French |
| | Isaac Sargeant | | George Fifield | 1871 | Alvah B. Chellis |
| | Enos Spalding | 1856 | Orville W. Burnap | | Frank S. French |
| 1843 | William Andrews | | Benjamin C. Daniels | | Irving A. Hurd |
| | Thomas R. Crosby | | John H. French | 1872 | Arvin S. |
| | William Daniels | | Ai R. Short | | Bartholomew |
| | Silvanus Eastman | | Waterman Spalding | | Fred B. Hanchett |
| | John Gates | 1857 | James Farnum | | Irving B. Hurd |
| | Erastus Lewin | | Almon W. French | | Farnum J. Spencer |
| | Alphonso Wood | | John H. French | 1873 | Joshua B. Allen |
| 1844 | Albert Daniels | | Enos R. Spalding | | Frank Baker |
| | Benjamin Daniels | 1858 | Samuel Bean, Jr. | | Alfred P. Jenney |
| | Calvin F. Duncklee | | Moses M. Chellis | | John Moore |
| | William L. Martin | | Ephraim Kinsman | 1874 | Orzo Carr |
| | Philo G. C. Merrill | | John H. Westgate | | Hosea W. Hadley |
| | Ariel Spalding | 1859 | Joseph Bean | | James W. Jordan |
| 1845 | John W. H. Baker | | Martin Chapman | | M. W. Rowell |
| | Charles Colby | | Jethro Hadley | 1875 | Dennis Cross |
| | George C. Freeman | | Turner Peterson | | Charles Daniels |
| | Philo G. C. Merrill | 1860 | Dimick Baker | | Willis K. Daniels |
| 1846 | E. P. Jenney | | Elbridge G. Beers | | Frank Jenney |
| | Baxter Morrell | | Otis H. Chellis | 1876 | Curtis F. Lewin |
| | Samuel Pain | | Benjamin F. Ward | | Frank W. True |
| 1847 | Charles Colby | 1861 | Joseph B. Cutler | | William C. True |
| | George L. Cole | | Charles H. Morse | 1877 | Elmer Jacobs |
| | Parker Cole | | Arthur Spalding | | Darwin F. Jordan |
| | Ransom Dutton | | Edgar Spalding | 1878 | Charles H. Andrews |
| | William Kinsman | 1862 | William H. Chase | | Edward Hadley |
| | Oliver Strobridge | | Orvis Dodge | | George F. Doty |

- 1879 Frank P. Daniels
Insley W. Spalding
Daniel C. Westgate
Earl Westgate
Edward J. Westgate
1880 Selectmen to
appoint
1881 Frank L. Stearns
1882-83 None
1884-86 Selectmen to
appoint
1887 None
1888-96 Selectmen to
appoint

Inspector of Schools

- 1811 Rev. Mr. Dickerson
Dr. Elias Frost
Rev. Mr. Porter

Library Trustee

(Until 1932, there was one board governing both libraries.)

- 1893 Electa A. Chellis
Mrs. Benjamin F. Ward
James S. Wood
1894 Mary L. Chellis
1895 Mary F. Wood
1896 Electa Chellis
Clara J. Westgate
1897 Marion Eastman
1898 Mary F. Wood
1899 Clara Westgate
1900 Lettie S. Kenyon
1901 Marion Eastman
1902 Julia A. Burr
1903 Lettie S. Kenyon
1904 Marion Eastman
1905 Julia A. Burr
1906 Lettie S. Kenyon
1907 Marion Eastman
1908 Marion Eastman
Lettie S. Kenyon
Delia S. Morgan
1909-10 Marion Eastman
Rosamond S. Jordan
Lettie S. Kenyon
1911 Marion Eastman
Rosamond S. Jordan
Sarah Whitaker
1912 Stella Harlow
Rosamond S. Jordan
Sarah Whitaker
1913 Marion Eastman
Stella E. Harlow
Sarah C. Whitaker
1914 Marion Eastman
Stella E. Harlow

- Chloe S. Miller
1915-20 Marion Eastman
Lettie S. Kenyon
Chloe S. Miller
1921-22 Marion Eastman
Lettie S. Kenyon
Milicent M. Miller
1923 Marion Eastman
Mary Freeman
Lettie S. Kenyon
1924 Lettie S. Kenyon
1925 Marion Eastman
Lettie S. Kenyon
1926 Marion Eastman
Lettie S. Kenyon
Thomas J. Ingram
1927 Marion Eastman
Mary Freeman
Thomas J. Ingram
1928-30 Mary A. Freeman
Thomas J. Ingram
Lucy E. Penniman
1931 Mary A. Freeman
Thomas J. Ingram

Separate boards began administering the libraries.

Philip Read Memorial Library trustees:

- 1932-42 Lucy F. Bishop
Thomas J. Ingram
Sarah C. Whitaker
1943 Lucy F. Bishop
Harriet M. Jenney
Sarah C. Whitaker
1944-45 Lucy F. Bishop
Lena A. Read
Sarah C. Whitaker
1946 Sylvia Gray
Lena A. Read
Sarah C. Whitaker
1947 Sylvia Gray
Lena A. Read
Herbert Taylor
1948-50 Sylvia Gray
Lena A. Read
Marjorie Spalding
1951 Anita Barrett
Sylvia Gray
Marjorie Spalding
1952-54 Anita Barrett
Vera MacLeay
Hope Nicolaisen
1955 Anita Barrett
Kate Wilder
Gauthier
Vera MacLeay
1956 Anita Barrett
Kate Wilder
Gauthier
M. Louise Jenney
1957-59 Ernestine Crary
Kate Wilder
Gauthier
M. Louise Jenney

- 1960-64 M. Louise Jenney
Kate Wilder
Gauthier
Celia A. Wilder
1965 Anita Barrett
Kate Wilder
Gauthier
Celia A. Wilder
1966 Anita Barrett
Lucia R. Bryant
Kate Wilder
Gauthier
1967 Anita Barrett
Lucia R. Bryant
Marion V. Cuthburt
1968-69 Lucia R. Bryant
Marion V. Cuthburt
Sylvia Gray
1970 Lucia R. Bryant
Kate Wilder
Gauthier
Sylvia Gray
1971 Lucia R. Bryant
Sally Dinan
Kate Wilder
Gauthier
1972 Sally Dinan
Kate Wilder
Gauthier
E. Mary Stone
1973-74 Sally Dinan
E. Mary Stone
Ruthann Wheeler
1975-76 Sally Dinan
Margaret E. Meyette
Ruthann Wheeler
1977-78 Hazel Amidon
Ruth Stalker
Ruthann Wheeler
1979 Hazel Amidon
Sarah Longacre
Ruth Stalker
1980 Gayla Gardner
(resigned)
Sarah Longacre
Ruth Stalker
Susan Woodward
1981 Sarah Longacre
Ruth Stalker
Susan Woodward
1982-83 Alice Hendrick
Ruth Stalker
Susan Woodward
1984-87 Kathleen M.
Garrison
Alice Hendrick
Susan Woodward
1988 Alice Hendrick
Sarah Longacre
Susan Woodward
1989 Alice Hendrick
Sarah Longacre
Linda Norton
1990 Alice Hendrick

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Linda Norton | Martha Ruelke | 1788 | Abel Stone |
| Roberta Stormann | Margaret Soper | 1789 | Daniel Kimball |
| <i>Meriden Library Trustees:</i> | Martha Ruelke | 1790 | Abel Stone |
| 1932-34 Mary A. Freeman | Margaret Soper | 1791 | Amos Stafford |
| Morris G. Penniman | Susan Timmons | 1792-94 | Abel Stone |
| Edith M. Whitney | Mary E. Cushing | 1795-1805 | Daniel Kimball |
| 1935-41 Ethel P. Duncklee | Margaret Soper | 1806-08 | Benjamin Kimball |
| Mary A. Freeman | Susan Timmons | 1809 | Daniel Kimball |
| Edith M. Whitney | Mary E. Cushing | 1810 | Benjamin Kimball |
| 1942-45 Henrietta Davis | Laura L. Lichiello | 1811 | Merrill Colby |
| Ethel P. Duncklee | Susan Timmons | 1812 | Benjamin Kimball |
| Edith M. Whitney | Frederick G. Cushing | 1813-16 | Daniel Kimball |
| 1946-50 Henrietta Davis | Laura L. Lichiello | 1817-18 | Charles Flanders |
| Ethel P. Duncklee | Susan Timmons | 1819-21 | Elias Frost |
| Ruth L. Rogers | Laura L. Lichiello | 1822-23 | Charles Flanders |
| 1951-52 Winifred Barton | John Ragle | 1824 | William Cutler |
| Ethel P. Duncklee | Susan Timmons | 1825-31 | Charles Flanders |
| Edith M. Whitney | Elisabeth Beck | 1832 | Elias Frost |
| 1953-59 Winifred Barton | Laura L. Lichiello | 1833-35 | Charles Flanders |
| Henrietta Davis | John Ragle | 1836 | Jonathan W. Pearson |
| Edith M. Whitney | Elisabeth Beck | 1837-42 | Charles Flanders |
| 1960 Winifred Barton | John Ragle | 1843-44 | Charles Colby |
| Gladys R. Stevens | Sharry Keller | 1845 | Charles Flanders |
| Edith M. Whitney | | 1846 | Charles Colby |
| 1961 Winifred Barton | | 1847-48 | Elias P. Smith |
| Vera Chellis | | 1849 | Abel Merrill |
| Gladys R. Stevens | | 1850-52 | Charles Colby |
| 1962-63 Vera Chellis | 1858 Stephen Fifield | 1853 | Abel Merrill |
| Elizabeth Hulburd | 1859 Stephen Hersey | 1854-56 | Luther S. Morgan |
| Gladys R. Stevens | 1860 Stephen Fifield | 1857 | William C. True |
| 1964 Elizabeth Hulburd | 1861 William D. Colby | 1858 | Luther S. Morgan |
| Gladys R. Stevens | Stephen D. Stone | 1859-60 | William C. True |
| Myrtle Tandy | 1862-64 Report not signed | 1861 | John P. Chellis |
| 1965-66 Audrey A. Logan | 1865-66 Ethan Walker | 1862-70 | William C. True |
| Gladys R. Stevens | | 1871 | Arvin S. |
| Myrtle Tandy | | | Bartholomew |
| 1967-68 Catherine Jones | | 1872-87 | William C. True |
| Audrey A. Logan | | 1888-96 | Elbridge G. Beers |
| Gladys R. Stevens | | 1898-1908 | Daniel C. |
| 1969-70 Catherine Jones | 1781 Capt. Charles | | Westgate |
| Audrey A. Logan | Spalding | 1910 | Frank B. Whitaker |
| Gretchen S. Taylor | John Stevens | 1912-38 | Daniel C. Westgate |
| 1971-72 Mason E. Ellison | | 1940-44 | Converse A. Chellis |
| Catherine L. Jones | | 1946-50 | Palmer C. Read |
| Gretchen S. Taylor | | 1952-62 | Tracy M. Spalding |
| 1973 Mason E. Ellison | 1766 Thomas Gallup | 1964 | Marion J. Creger |
| Susan L. McGee | 1767 John Stevens | 1965-67 | David Cassidy |
| Gretchen S. Taylor | 1768 Thomas Gallup | 1968-74 | Marion J. Creger |
| 1974 Stephen B. Bishop | 1769 John Stevens | 1975-82 | Malcolm J. Grobe |
| Susan L. McGee | 1770-72 Amos Stafford | 1983-90 | Stephen H. Taylor |
| Gretchen S. Talor | 1773 John Stevens | | |
| 1975-76 Stephen B. Bishop | 1774 Amos Stafford | | |
| Doris A. LeVarn | 1775 Nathaniel Dean | | |
| Susan McGee | 1776 Thomas Gallup | | |
| 1977-78 Susan Carver | 1777 Amos Stafford | | |
| Susan McGee | 1778 Benjamin Kimball | | |
| Doris LeVarn | 1779 Benjamin Chapman | | |
| 1979 Susan Carver | 1780 Josiah Russell | | |
| John Donaldson | 1781 David Perry | | |
| Doris LeVarn | 1782 Benjamin Kimball | | |
| 1980 Susan Carver | 1783 Charles Spalding | | |
| Doris LeVarn | 1784 No record | | |
| Sara Townsend | 1785-86 Amos Stafford | | |
| 1981-82 Susan Carver | 1787 Robert Miller | | |

| | | | | | |
|---------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1853 | Daniel Cole | 1981-82 | Dorothy McNamara | S. Russell Stearns | |
| 1854 | Isaac W. Westgate | 1983- | Nancy Walker Baker | John T. Stephenson | |
| 1855-56 | Selectman to Appoint | | | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | |
| 1857 | None | Petit Jury | | 1975 | Kinsley H. Walker |
| 1858 | Arvin S. | | | Judith A. Belyea | |
| | Bartholomew | | | Adelord Benware | |
| 1859 | Benjamin C. Daniels | 1785 | William Cutler | Louis H. Houser | |
| 1860 | Unknown | | Capt. Benjamin Chapman | Edward G. Martin | |
| 1861 | Jacob Beal | | | John T. Stephenson | |
| 1862-63 | Albert S. Eaton | | | Sheila Stone | |
| 1864-65 | Farnum J. Morgan | Planning Board | | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | |
| 1866 | Stephen D. Stone | 1958-59 | Arthur Chivers | 1976 | Judith A. Belyea |
| 1890-92 | Samuel Davis | | Palmer C. Read, Sr. | Adelord Benware | |
| 1904 | Ozro V. Eastman | | Frank Stearns | Joseph Longacre | |
| 1917 | J. Daniel Porter | | Ira Townsend | Edward G. Martin | |
| | Fred A. Rogers | 1960 | Arthur Chivers | Sheila Stone | |
| 1918 | Harold W. Chellis | | Frank Stearns | Stephen H. Taylor | |
| | Albert K. Read | | Ira Townsend | 1977 | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. |
| 1919 | Harold W. Chellis | 1961 | Arthur Chivers | Judith A. Belyea | |
| | Herbert H. Williams | | John H. McNamara | Adelord Benware | |
| 1920 | Henry N. Penniman | | Ira Townsend | Mary Cassedy | |
| | Hall Peterson | | Norman Wilder | Paul Franklin | |
| 1921 | Henry N. Penniman | 1962-63 | David Cassedy | Joseph Longacre | |
| 1922 | Morris G. Penniman | | Carlton P. Jones | Sheila Stone | |
| | Hall Peterson | | John H. McNamara | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | |
| 1923-24 | Frank J. Chadbourne | | Norman Wilder | 1978-79 | T. Paul Amidon |
| | Morris G. Penniman | 1964 | David Cassedy | Judith Belyea | |
| 1925 | Morris G. Penniman | | Carlton P. Jones | Adelord Benware | |
| | Daniel C. Westgate | | Norman E. Wilder | Mary Cassedy | |
| 1926 | Morris G. Penniman | | Joseph Zea | Joseph Longacre | |
| | John W. Whitney | 1965 | Eva Bernard | Sheila Stone | |
| 1927 | Tracy M. Spalding | | Roy Garrand | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | |
| | John W. Whitney | | Carlton P. Jones | 1980 | T. Paul Amidon |
| 1928 | Fred A. Rogers | | Joseph Zea | Judith Belyea | |
| | Tracy M. Spalding | 1966-67 | Roy Garrand | Mary Cassedy | |
| 1929 | Palmer C. Read | | Carlton P. Jones | Beatrice Clark | |
| | Fred A. Rogers | | John L. Meyette | Louis Houser | |
| 1930 | William H. Jenney | | Joseph Zea | Joseph Longacre | |
| | Fred A. Rogers | 1968 | Roy Garrand | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | |
| 1931 | William H. Jenney | | Louis H. Houser | 1981 | T. Paul Amidon |
| | Henry N. Penniman | | Carlton P. Jones | Judith Belyea | |
| 1932 | Henry N. Penniman | | John L. Meyette | Mary Cassedy | |
| | Palmer C. Read | | Joseph Zea | Beatrice Clark | |
| 1933 | Henry N. Penniman | 1969-71 | T. Paul Amidon | Joseph Longacre | |
| | Hall Peterson | | Louis H. Houser | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | |
| 1934-35 | Morris G. Penniman | | John L. Meyette | 1982 | Judith Belyea |
| | Hall Peterson | | Wallace G. Pickering | Mary Cassedy | |
| 1936-38 | Morris G. | | Kinsley H. Walker | Beatrice Clark | |
| | Penniman | 1972 | Louis H. Houser | Louis Houser | |
| 1939 | None | | Carol H. Kenfield | Sherry Kelley | |
| 1940-41 | Fred A. Mark | | John L. Meyette | Joseph Longacre | |
| 1942-43 | None | | Wallace G. Pickering | Jay D. Waldner, Jr. | |
| 1949-54 | Harold S. Wilder, Sr. | | Kinsley H. Walker | 1983 | Judith Belyea |
| 1955-59 | Dorrance E. Hayes | | Louis H. Houser | Mary Cassedy | |
| 1961 | Palmer C. Read, Jr. | 1973 | Catherine L. Jones | Beatrice Clark | |
| 1962-63 | Vernon A. Hood | | Carol H. Kenfield | Louis Houser | |
| 1964-65 | Joseph C. Meyette, Jr. | | John L. Meyette | Sherry Kelley | |
| 1966 | Stephen H. Taylor | | Wallace G. Pickering | Joseph Longacre | |
| 1967 | Louis H. Houser | | S. Russell Stearns | Judith Belyea | |
| 1968-75 | David R. Stone | | Kinsley H. Walker | Mary Cassedy | |
| 1976-77 | Stephen H. Taylor | 1974 | Judith A. Belyea | Beatrice Clark | |
| 1978 | Paul Franklin | | Louis H. Houser | Louis Houser | |
| 1979-80 | David Stockwell | | Wallace G. Pickering | Joseph Longacre | |
| | | | | Michael McNamara | |

| | | | |
|--------------|---|--|--|
| 1985 | Judith Belyea Mary Cassedy Beatrice Clark Sherry Kelley Joseph Longacre Michael McNamara Marc Rosenbaum | 1820-23 Sample Gilkey 1824 David Souther 1825 Archibald Spencer 1826 David Souther 1827 Archibald Spencer 1828 Unknown 1829 David Souther 1830-36 Archibald Spencer 1837 Elijah Austin 1838 David Souther 1839 Elijah Austin 1840 Mumford H. Kenyon 1841 David Souther 1842-43 Elijah Austin 1844-48 David Souther 1849 George F. Souther 1850 Elijah Austin 1851-52 George Souther 1853 Dennis Austin 1854-60 Elijah D. Austin 1862-67 George Austin 1868 Orvis Dodge 1869 Frank French 1870 Levi L. Bailey 1871-72 Darius N. Moulton 1873 Josiah Davis 1874 Willis Jordan 1875 George J. French 1883-84 George W. Austin | 1841-42 Benjamin Cutler 1843 David Morgan 1844 None 1845-46 Ai Read 1847 Osgood True 1848-49 Ai Read 1850-51 Jacob Read 1852-53 James Gilkey 1854-55 Albert K. Read 1856-57 Alonzo Winkley 1858-58 William D. Colby 1859 William D. Colby Stephen R. Moulton 1860 Charles F. Gallup Stephen R. Moulton 1861 Charles F. Gallup Daniel G. Stickney 1862 Daniel G. Stickney Benjamin C. Daniels 1863 Benjamin C. Daniels 1864-65 John B. Rowell 1866-67 William C. True 1868-69 Farnum J. Morgan 1870 Jesse French 1871 Converse Cole 1872 Converse Cole Frank H. Coin 1873-74 Willis K. Daniels 1875-76 Cyrus Smith 1877 James Freeman 1878 Carlos D. Colby George W. Smith 1880 Samuel Bean 1882 William C. True 1884 Alfred P. Jenney 1886 Fred Moulton 1888 Henry C. Farnum 1890 Henry B. Fuller 1892 William A. Martin 1894 Daniel C. Westgate 1896 Elbridge G. Beers 1898 Benjamin F. Porter 1900 Orra S. Bugbee 1902 Frank W. True 1904 Edward J. Westgate 1906 Wesley W. Jordan 1908 Robert R. Penniman 1910 William H. Skinner 1912 J. Daniel Porter 1914 Albert K. Read 1916 Fred A. Rogers 1918 Charles H. Peterson 1920 Harold W. Chellis 1922 Earle W. Colby 1924 George C. Barton 1926 Blancha L. Daniels 1928 Charles A. Tracy 1930 Herbert E. Ward 1932 George C. Barton 1934 Palmer C. Read 1936 Fred A. Rogers 1938 John W. Whitney 1940 Fred A. Mark 1942-48 Lena A. Read |
| 1986 | Judith Belyea Mary Cassedy Beatrice Clark Paul Franklin Peter Haubrich Ray Morin Armand Rondeau Marc Rosenbaum (resigned) | | |
| 1987 | Mary Cassedy Beatrice Clark Paul Franklin Peter Haubrich Ray Morin Armand Rondeau Erich Witzel | | |
| 1988 | Bruce Baird Mary Cassedy Robert Chamberlin Paul Franklin Ray Morin Armand Rondeau Erich Witzel | | |
| 1989 | Bruce Baird Mary Cassedy Joyce Judy Scott MacLeay Michael McNamara Richard Menge Raymond Morin Diane Rogers Armand Rondeau Erich Witzel | | |
| 1990 | Jeff Allbright Julian Bellavance Mary Cassedy Marc Cousineau (resigned) Joyce Judy Scott MacLeay (resigned) Michael McNamara (resigned) Richard Menge Raymond Morin (resigned) Diane Rogers Armand Rondeau Jay Waldner | | |
| Pound Keeper | | Representatives | |
| 1787 | Lemuel Williams | 1781 Capt. Josiah Russell Lt. John Stevens | |
| 1790 | Lemuel Williams | 1782-84 None | |
| 1791-92 | Lt. Abel Stone | 1785-87 Joseph Kimball 1788-89 None | |
| 1798-1802 | Abram Carpenter | 1790-91 Joseph Kimball 1792-93 Daniel Kimball 1794 Ebenezer Wright 1795-1800 Daniel Kimball 1801-05 Albe Cady 1806-08 John Harris 1809 Daniel Kimball 1810-11 John Harris 1812 Daniel Kingsbury 1813 Isaac Chapman 1814 Daniel Kingsbury 1815 Amos Farnum 1816-17 Thomas Gates 1818-20 William Cutler 1821-22 Merrill Colby 1823-24 Robert Kimball 1825-26 Reuben True 1827-28 John Ticknor 1829-30 Charles Flanders 1831-32 Elias Frost 1833-34 Thomas Chellis, Jr. 1835 John Bryant 1836-37 Silas Read 1838 Charles Flanders 1839-40 John Bryant | |

1950 Edward M. Pierce
1952 Otis W. Jordan
1954 Edward M. Pierce
1956 Arthur H. Chivers
1958-60 Tracy M. Spalding
1962-64 Vernon A. Hood
1966-70 Harlan Logan
1971-88 Sara M. Townsend
1990 Peter Hoe Burling
(Cornish)
Merle Schotanus
(Grantham)

School Auditor

1922 Harold W. Chellis
Frank W. True
1923-24 Harold W. Chellis
Fred A. Rogers
1925 Fred A. Rogers
Frank W. True
1926-30 George C. Barton
Frank W. True
1931-33 George C. Barton
Charles A. Tracy
1934-35 Palmer C. Read
Charles A. Tracy
1936-38 George C. Barton
Blancha L. Daniels
1939-44 Howard W. Chellis
1945-46 Howard W. Chellis
John W. Whitney
1947 Floyd Jarvis
John W. Whitney
1948 Floyd Jarvis
Albert K. Read
1949-50 B. David Benson
1951-52 B. David Benson
Wallace Williams
1953 William F. Franklin,
Jr.
Herman D. Rogers
1954-55 William F. Franklin,
Jr.
Gordon Leland
1956-57 Edna DuBois
Gordon Leland
1958-59 T. Paul Amidon
Gordon Leland
1960 T. Paul Amidon
John McNamara
1961-62 Dorothy McNamara
John McNamara
1963 John McNamara
Ruth L. Rogers
1964-73 John McNamara
Herman Rogers
1974-75 Herman Rogers
Louise M. Sawyer
1976-77 Kathryn MacLeay
Herman Rogers
1978 Judith Belyea
Kathryn MacLeay

1979 Judith Belyea
William F. Franklin,
Jr.
1980 William F. Franklin,
Jr.
Louise M. Sawyer
1981 Rebecca Gosselin
Pamela Wilson
1982 William Fletcher
Rebecca Gosselin
1983 William Fletcher
Kathryn MacLeay
1984 Janet L. Duhaime
Kathryn MacLeay
1985 Janet L. Duhaime
Ira Townsend
1986-90 Kathryn MacLeay
Ira Townsend

School Board

1887 A. B. Chellis
Wallace P. Thrasher
William C. True
1888-90 Carlos D. Colby
Josiah Davis
Wallace P. Thrasher
1891 Arvin S.
Bartholomew
Edwin R. Miller
1892 Edwin R. Miller
Samuel R. Sanborn
Wallace P. Thrasher
1893 Samuel R. Sanborn
Wallace P. Thrasher
1894-95 Electa H. Chellis
Lucy M. Lewin
Samuel R. Sanborn
1896-98 Lucy M. Lewin
Robert R. Penniman
Samuel R. Sanborn
1899 Harold W. Chellis
Lucy M. Lewin
Samuel R. Sanborn
1900 Lucy M. Lewin
Samuel P. Sanborn
1901 Harold W. Chellis
Lucy M. Lewin
Lydia S. Penniman
1902 Lydia S. Penniman
Ernest Roleston
Woodbury
1903-04 Wesley W. Jordan
Lydia S. Penniman
Ernest Roliston
Woodbury
1905 Wesley W. Jordan
Lydia S. Penniman
Fred A. Rogers
1906-07 Lydia S. Penniman
Fred A. Rogers
Daniel C. Westgate

1908 Emma A. Moulton
Lydia S. Peniman
Daniel C. Westgate
1909 Mary A. Freeman
Wesley W. Jordan
Louis E. Shipman
1910 Henry C. Daniels
Mary A. Freeman
Wesley W. Jordan
1911 Mary A. Freeman
Addie M. Rogers
John H. Whitaker
1912 Mary A. Freeman
Mabel Jordan
Addie M. Rogers
1913 Mabel Jordan
Addie M. Rogers
Emma J. Williams
1914 Mary L. Chellis
Griswold S.
Hayward
Mabel Jordan
1915 Rev. Noble O.
Bowlby
Griswold S.
Hayward
Mabel Jordan
1916 Griswold S.
Hayward
Addie M. Rogers
Emma J. Williams
1917 Rev. O. R. Hunt
Addie M. Rogers
Emma J. Williams
1918 Rev. Noble O.
Bowlby
Blancha L. Daniels
Rev. O. R. Hunt
1919-23 Rev. Noble O.
Bowlby
Blancha L. Daniels
Emma A. Moulton
1924 Mary E. W. Chellis
Blancha L. Daniels
Lettie S. Kenyon
Emma A. Moulton
Florence Moulton
J. Willard Whitney
1925-28 Mary E. W. Chellis
Blancha L. Daniels
Florence E. Moulton
1929 Mary E. W. Chellis
Blancha L. Daniels
John F. McNamara
1930 Blancha L. Daniels
John F. McNamara
Harriet A. Williams
1931-36 Grace C. Jordan
John F. McNamara
Harriet A. Williams
1937 Blancha L. Daniels
John F. McNamara
Harriet A. Williams
1938-45 Blancha L. Daniels

Ethel P. Dunklee
 Harriet A. Williams
 1946 Blanche L. Daniels
 (resigned)
 Ethel P. Dunklee
 Robert Gibson
 Harriet A. Williams
 1947 Earl J. Barker
 Charles F. Rose
 Harriet A. Williams
 1948 Earl J. Barker
 Mary Gauthier
 (resigned)
 Robert Gibson
 Harriet A. Williams
 1949 Earl J. Barker
 Albert K. Read
 Harriet A. Williams
 1950 Albert K. Read
 Barbara Stone
 Harriet A. Williams
 1951 Albert K. Read
 Barbara Stone
 Lawrence Taylor
 1952-53 Hans Nicolaisen
 Barbara Stone
 Lawrence Taylor
 1954-55 Basil McNamara
 Hans Nicolaisen
 Barbara Stone
 1956-58 Basil McNamara
 Hans Nicolaisen
 Sara Townsend
 1959 Vera MacLeay
 Basil McNamara
 Hans Nicolaisen
 1960 Catherine Jones
 Vera MacLeay
 Hans Nicolaisen
 1961-62 Catherine Jones
 Vera MacLeay
 Murray Stevens
 1963-64 Vera MacLeay
 David Millar
 Murray Stevens
 1965 T. Paul Amidon
 David Millar
 Murray Stevens
 1966-67 T. Paul Amidon
 William C. Quimby
 Murray Stevens
 1968-69 Edward Martin
 William C. Quimby
 Murray Stevens
 1970 Edward Martin
 William C. Quimby
 William A. Smith
 1971 Sylvia Clark
 William C. Quimby
 William A. Smith
 1972 Sylvia Clark
 William T.
 McNamara
 William A. Smith

1973-74 Sylvia Clark
 William T.
 McNamara
 William Quimby
 1975 Sylvia Clark
 William T.
 McNamara
 (resigned)
 John Meyette
 William Quimby
 1976 Sylvia Clark
 Bruce Soper
 Sandra Stettenheim
 1977 Donald Garfield
 Joan Roeber
 Sandra Stettenheim
 1978 Donald Garfield
 Joan Roeber
 Ruth Whybrow
 1979-80 Donald Garfield
 James W. Griffiths
 Ruth Whybrow
 1981-85 Donald Garfield
 James Griffiths
 Peter Mogielnicki
 1986 James Griffiths
 Peter Mogielnicki
 Maryellen Sullivan
 1987 James Griffiths
 Robert Reeder
 Maryellen Sullivan
 1988 Jennie Dulac
 Robert Reeder
 Maryellen Sullivan
 1989 Jennie Dulac
 Greg Marshall
 Robert Reeder
 Maryellen Sullivan
 Michael Taupier
 1990 Robert Cushman
 Jennie Dulac
 Greg Marshall
 Robert Reeder
 Michael Taupier

School Clerk

1922-24 Robert R. Penniman
 1925-27 Hall Peterson
 1928-29 Addie M. Rogers
 1930-33 George C. Barton
 1934-37 Converse A. Chellis
 1938-49 J. Willard Whitney
 1950 John W. Whitney
 1951 Harriet A. Williams
 1952-55 John W. Whitney
 1956-59 Kathryn F. MacLeay
 1960-77 Ruth L. Rogers
 1978 Sylvia Clark
 1979-81 Sarah T. Longacre
 1982-90 Joyce E. Lundrigan

School Districts

1789 Fourth District:
 Eliphalet Adams
 Lt. Joseph Kimball
 Isaac Williams
 Seventh District:
 Isaac Wilson

School Moderator

1922 George C. Barton
 1923 Wesley W. Jordan
 1924 Frank J.
 Chadbourne
 1925-35 Harold W. Chellis
 1936-37 W. W. Jordan
 1938-41 Converse A. Chellis
 1942-52 John F. McNamara
 1953-63 Tracy M. Spalding
 1964-68 David S. Cassedy
 1969-73 Marion J. Creeger
 1974-78 Jerome B. Doolittle
 1979-90 Stephen H. Taylor

School Treasurer

1908 Daniel C. Westgate
 1909 Morris G. Penniman
 1910-12 Mary L. Chellis
 1913-23 Lettie S. Kenyon
 1924 Lettie S. Kenyon
 John W. Whitney
 1925-33 John W. Whitney
 1934-42 William H. Jenney
 1943-44 Howard Zea
 1945 Howard Zea
 (resigned)
 Nellie Zea
 1946-59 Nellie Zea
 1960-61 Winston Spencer, Sr.
 1962-87 Fred Sweet
 1988-90 James Griffiths

Sealer of Leather

1769-70 Thomas Gallup
 Reuben Jerold
 1771-72 Nathaniel Fairfield
 1773-74 Nathaniel Fairfield
 Reuben Jerold
 1775 Timothy Cory
 Nathaniel Fairfield
 1776-78 Nathaniel Fairfield
 1779 Lt. David Perry
 Josiah Russell
 1781 David Gitchel
 1785 Daniel Cole
 1786 Capt. David Perry
 1787-88 Lt. Abel Stone
 1789 Benjamin True

1790-94 Lt. Abel Stone
 1797 Lt. Abel Stone
 1809 Daniel Cole
 1814 Capt. Eliphalet Adams
 1815-18 Daniel Cole
 1819 William Washburn
 1820-21 Moses True
 1823 Moses True
 1824 Stephen Fifield
 Calvin Fullam
 1825 Calvin Fullam
 Joshua Spalding
 1826 Joshua Spalding
 Charles Williams
 1827 Stephen Fifield
 Charles Williams
 1828 Calvin Fullam
 William Washburn
 1829 Stephen Fifield
 Calvin Fullam
 1830 John Emerson
 1831 Peter Abbot
 Stephen Fifield
 1832 Ephraim Converse
 Samuel Fifield
 1833 Calvin Fullam
 Moses True
 1834 Samuel Fifield
 Calvin Fullam
 1835 Joseph W. Everest
 George Masey
 1836-37 Samuel Fifield
 Benjamin Parker
 1838 Unknown
 1839 Ai Read
 1841 Stephen Fifield
 1842 George Bryant
 Silas Read
 1843 Waldo C. Clark
 Stephen Fifield
 1845 Waldo C. Clark
 1846 Ephraim Converse
 1847 Benjamin Wingate
 1848-49 Stephen Fifield
 1850 Samuel Fifield
 1851 Stephen Fifield
 1852 Ephraim Converse
 1853-56 Stephen Fifield
 1857 George Marcy
 1858 Joseph W. Everest
 George Marcy
 1859 Stephen Fifield
 George Marcy
 Benjamin C. Smith
 1860 Samuel Fifield
 Stephen Fifield
 George Marcy
 1861 Stephen Fifield
 George Marcy
 1862 George Marcy
 1863 Converse Cole
 Albert G. Daniels
 1864 Newell C. Chapman

Jonathan Phillips
 1865 Newell C. Chapman
 John N. Short
 1866 John Daniels
 Lucius Stone
 1867 Jonathan Phillips
 John N. Short
 1868-69 Newell C. Chapman
 John N. Short
 1870-71 Newell Chapman
 Hiram C. Phillips
 1872 Newell Chapman
 John N. Short
 1873 Newell C. Chapman
 Samuel Davis
 1874-75 Newell Chapman
 Abel Spalding
 1876 Hiram Phillips
 Sylvanus Spalding
 1877 Newell C. Chapman
 Hiram Phillips
 1878 William Hall
 Hiram Phillips
 1879-81 Selectmen to
 appoint
 1882-83 None

Scaler of Weights and Measures

1773 Josiah Russell, Jr.
 1774 Nathaniel Dean
 1775 Josiah Russell, Jr.
 1776-80 Josiah Russell
 1781 David Gitchel
 1783 David Gitchel
 1785 Ammi Wilson
 1786 Reuben Dean
 1787 Lt. Abel Stone
 1789 Eliphalet Adams
 1790 Samuel Clark
 1791-92 Lt. Abel Stone
 1793 Lt. Samuel Clark
 1794-95 Eliphalet Adams
 1798-99 Daniel Kimball, Esq.
 1802 Capt. Adams
 1803 Daniel Kimball, Esq.
 1804-09 Daniel Kingsbury
 1810-11 Eliphalet Adams
 1812 Daniel Kingsbury
 1813 Eliphalet Adams
 1815 Eliphalet Adams
 1816-17 Daniel Kingsbury
 1818 Dea. Eliphalet
 Adams
 1819 Simeon Adams
 1820-22 Eliphalet Adams
 1823 Capt. Calvin
 Spalding
 1824-26 Levi Bryant
 1827 Calvin Spalding
 1828 Levi Bryant
 1829 Ai Read

1830-33 Levi Bryant
 1834 Ai Read
 1835 Levi Bryant
 1836 Joshua Spalding
 1837 Levi Bryant
 1838-39 Joshua Spalding
 1840 Levi Bryant
 1841 George Bryant
 1842 Silas Read
 Joshua Spalding
 1843 William L. Bragg
 William Ward
 1844-45 William Ward
 1846-47 Joshua Spalding
 1848 Calvin Spalding
 1849 Joshua Spalding
 1850 James Fifield
 Calvin Spalding
 1851 Calvin Spalding
 Joshua Spalding
 1852 William R. Jordan
 Richard Spalding
 1853 Daniel Morrill
 Calvin Spalding
 1854 Daniel Morrill
 William Ward
 1855 Stephen Fifield
 Joshua Spalding
 1856 Calvin Spalding
 Joshua Spalding
 1857 James Freeman
 George D. Frost
 1858 William R. Jordan
 Stephen W. Stone
 1859 Merrit F. Colby
 Benjamin C. Smith
 William B. Ward
 1860 Arvin S.
 Bartholomew
 Frederick Moulton
 Benjamin C. Smith
 1861 William R. Jordan
 Dana N. Morgan
 1862 George D. Frost
 Benjamin F. Ward
 1863 Benjamin F. Ward
 Enos R. Spalding
 1864 James W. Jordan
 Sidney Sanborn
 1865 Converse Cole
 Sidney Sanborn
 1866 Charles Fifield
 Junius A. Spencer
 1867 Israel D. Hall
 Sidney Sanborn
 1868 Elias Farnum
 Junius A. Spencer
 1869 Elias Farnum
 Harrison H. Jordan
 1870 William Hall
 Irving A. Hurd
 1871 Harrison H. Jordan
 William C. True
 1872 Solomon C. Dow

| | | | | | |
|-----------|--|------|---|---------|---|
| 1873 | Sidney Sanborn Irving A. Hurd Sidney Sanborn | 1775 | Josiah Russell Lemuel Williams Thomas Gallup Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Josiah Russell, Jr. Lemuel Williams | 1788 | Philip Spalding Simeon Cory Robert Miller John Wilson Oliver Baker Robert Miller Champeon Spalding |
| 1874 | Ozro Carr Walter A. Norris | 1776 | Thomas Gallup Benjamin Kimball Francis Smith Josiah Russell Lemuel Williams | 1789 | Daniel Kimball Joseph Kimball Ebenezer Wright Daniel Kimball Joseph Kimball Joseph Smith |
| 1875 | Asa P. Jenney Walter A. Norris | 1777 | Thomas Gallup Joseph Kimball Josiah Russell, Jr. Francis Smith Amos Stafford | 1790 | Asa Gallup Perley Roberts Champeon Spalding Stephen Cole Daniel Kingsbury Champion Spalding |
| 1876 | Andrew J. Chellis Harrison H. Jordan | 1778 | Samuel Bloss Benjamin Chapman Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Benjamin Chapman Daniel Kimball Joseph Kimball Robert Miller Francis Smith | 1791 | Nathan Andrews Thomas Gates Perley Roberts Zadock Bloss Chester Chapman Abiatha Crane |
| 1877 | Harrison Jordan Sidney Sanborn | 1779 | William Cutler Nathaniel Dean David Perry Lemuel Williams Ami Wilson Benoni Cutler William Cutler Daniel Kimball David Perry Josiah Russell | 1792 | Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1878 | Sidney Sanborn Insley Spalding | 1780 | Benjamin Cutler Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Duthan Kingsbury Abel Stafford Eliphalet Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1793 | Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1879-81 | Selectmen to appoint | 1781 | Lt. Joseph Kimball Joseph Kimball, Esq. Robert Miller Francis Smith Joseph Smith Zadock Bloss Daniel Freeman Simeon Hovey David Perry Champeon Spalding | 1794 | Asa Gallup Perley Roberts Champeon Spalding Stephen Cole Daniel Kingsbury Champion Spalding |
| 1882-83 | None | 1782 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1795 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1884 | Converse Cole | 1783 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1796 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1885 | William Hall | 1784 | Lt. Joseph Kimball Joseph Kimball, Esq. Robert Miller Francis Smith Joseph Smith Zadock Bloss Daniel Freeman Simeon Hovey David Perry Champeon Spalding | 1797 | Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| Selectmen | | 1785 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1798 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1765 | Thomas Gallup Francis Smith John Stevens Lemuel Williams | 1786 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1799 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1766 | Thomas Gallup Joseph Kimball Francis Smith John Stevens Lemuel Williams | 1787 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1800-01 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1767 | Benjamin Chapman Thomas Gallup Thomas Gates Amos Stafford John Stevens | 1788 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1801 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1768 | Thomas Gallup Thomas Gates Francis Smith Amos Stafford John Stevens | 1789 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1802 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1769 | Benjamin Chapman Thomas Gallup Thomas Gates Francis Smith John Stevens | 1790 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1803-04 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1770 | Thomas Gallup Benjamin Kimball Francis Smith Amos Stafford John Stevens | 1791 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1804 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1771 | Benjamin Chapman Thomas Gallup Benjamin Kimball Francis Smith John Stevens | 1792 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1805 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1772-73 | Benjamin Chapman Benjamin Kimball Francis Smith Amos Stafford John Stevens | 1793 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1806 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |
| 1774 | Benjamin Chapman Thomas Gallup Benjamin Kimball | 1794 | Benjamin Kimball Joseph Kimball Francis Smith Joseph Smith Abel Stafford | 1807 | Asa Gallup Daniel Kimball Elisha Williams Asa Gallup John Harris Champeon Spalding Daniel Brocklebank Nathan Gates Daniel Kimball Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball Gideon Woodward |

| | | | | | |
|---------|---|---------|---|---------|---|
| 1879 | Alvah B. Chellis Sidney Sanborn Wallace P. Thrasher | | Robert R. Penniman Benjamin F. Porter Ozro V. Eastman | | Tracy M. Spalding John W. Whitney Palmer C. Read |
| 1880 | George J. French Sidney Sanborn Wallace P. Thrasher | 1903 | Robert R. Penniman Frank W. True | 1927 | Tracy M. Spalding John W. Whitney Palmer C. Read |
| 1881 | Samuel Davis George J. French John B. Rowell | 1904 | Alfred P. Jenney Robert R. Penniman Frank W. True | 1928 | Fred A. Rogers Tracy M. Spalding William H. Jenney |
| 1882 | Samuel Davis George J. French Henry B. Fuller | 1905 | Wesley W. Jordan Frank W. True Edward J. Westgate | 1929-30 | Fred A. Rogers Palmer C. Read William H. Jenney |
| 1883 | Henry B. Fuller Edward J. Westgate John H. Whitaker | 1906 | Wesley W. Jordan Charles H. Peterson Edward J. Westgate | 1931 | Henry N. Penniman Palmer C. Read Henry N. Penniman |
| 1884 | John H. Whitaker Henry B. Fuller Darius N. Moulton | 1907 | Wesley W. Jordan Charles H. Peterson Fred A. Rogers | 1932 | Henry N. Penniman Hall Peterson Palmer C. Read |
| 1885 | John H. Whitaker Samuel Davis William A. Martin | 1908 | Exom O. Eaton Charles H. Peterson William H. Skinner | 1933 | Henry N. Penniman Morris G. Penniman Hall Peterson |
| 1886 | Darius N. Moulton John S. Andrews Samuel Davis | 1909 | Exom O. Eaton Robert R. Penniman William H. Skinner | 1934-36 | Fred A. Moulton Morris G. Penniman Hall Peterson |
| 1887 | Harrison H. Jordan Samuel Davis Benjamin F. Ward | 1910 | Robert R. Penniman William H. Skinner Daniel C. Westgate | 1937 | Fred A. Mark Morris G. Penniman Hall Peterson |
| 1888 | Edward J. Westgate John W. Peterson Benjamin F. Ward | 1911 | Henry B. Fuller William H. Skinner Frank Whitaker | 1938 | Earle W. Colby Fred A. Mark Morris G. Penniman |
| 1889 | Edward J. Westgate Stephen Hersey John W. Peterson | 1912 | William H. Jenney William H. Skinner Frank Whitaker | 1939-41 | Earle W. Colby Fred A. Mark John W. Whitney |
| 1890 | Edward J. Westgate Samuel Davis Stephen Hersey | 1913 | Carroll P. Camp J. Daniel Porter Fred A. Rogers | 1942-43 | Earle W. Colby Herman D. Rogers John W. Whitney |
| 1891 | Benjamin F. Porter Stephen Hersey Benjamin F. Porter | 1914-16 | J. Daniel Porter Fred A. Rogers Frank W. True | 1944 | Francis E. Atwood Herman D. Rogers John W. Whitney |
| 1892 | Daniel C. Westgate Ora C. Davis Benjamin F. Porter | 1917 | J. Daniel Porter Albert K. Read Fred A. Rogers | 1945-47 | Francis E. Atwood John F. McNamara Herman D. Rogers |
| 1893-94 | Daniel C. Westgate Ora C. Davis Francis W. Smith | 1918 | Harold W. Chellis Albert K. Read Herbert H. Williams | 1948 | Francis E. Atwood Creighton Churchill Herman D. Rogers |
| 1895-96 | Daniel C. Westgate Ora C. Davis Benjamin F. Porter | 1919 | Harold W. Chellis Charles H. Peterson Herbert H. Williams | 1949 | Francis E. Atwood Creighton Churchill Harold S. Wilder, Sr. |
| 1897 | Daniel C. Westgate Lewin S. Jordan Robert R. Penniman | 1920 | Henry N. Penniman Hall Peterson Frank W. True | 1950 | Creighton Churchill John F. McNamara Harold S. Wilder, Sr. |
| 1898 | Benjamin F. Porter Lewis S. Jordan Robert R. Penniman | 1921 | Henry N. Penniman Morris G. Penniman Hall Peterson | 1951 | Vernon A. Hood John F. McNamara Harold S. Wilder, Sr. |
| 1899 | William P. Wood Robert R. Penniman Albert K. Read | 1922 | Morris G. Penniman Hall Peterson Frank W. True | 1952 | Carl O. DuBois Vernon A. Hood Harold S. Wilder, Sr. |
| 1900 | William P. Wood L. Chandler Mason Albert K. Read | 1923-24 | Frank J. Chadbourne Morris G. Penniman | 1953 | Vernon A. Hood John C. Whitney Harold S. Wilder, Sr. |
| 1901 | Albert K. Read William P. Wood Orra Bugbee | 1925 | Daniel C. Westgate Morris G. Penniman Daniel C. Westgate | 1954 | Palmer C. Read, Jr. John C. Whitney Harold S. Wilder, Sr. |
| 1902 | Henry B. Fuller Robert R. Penniman Ozro V. Eastman | 1926 | John W. Whitney Morris G. Penniman | 1955 | Dorrance E. Hayes Palmer C. Read, Jr. |

John C. Whitney
1956-60 Dorrance E. Hayes
Vernon A. Hood
Palmer C. Read, Jr.
1961-62 Vernon A. Hood
Earl R. Mower
Palmer C. Read, Jr.
1963 Vernon A. Hood
Joseph C. Meyette,
Jr.
Earl R. Mowers
Palmer C. Read, Jr.
1964-65 Vernon A. Hood
Joseph C. Meyette,
Jr.
Palmer C. Read, Jr.
1866 Vernon A. Hood
Joseph C. Meyette,
Jr.
Stephen H. Taylor
1967 Louis H. Houser
Vernon A. Hood
Stephen H. Taylor
1968-76 Louis H. Houser
David R. Stone
Stephen H. Taylor
1977 Paul Franklin
Louis H. Houser
Stephen H. Taylor
1978 T. Paul Amidon
Paul Franklin
Louis Houser
1979 T. Paul Amidon
Paul B. Franklin
David W. Stockwell
1980 T. Paul Amidon
Don S. Burnett
Paul B. Franklin
(resigned)
David Stockwell
1981 T. Paul Amidon
Don S. Burnett
(resigned)
Benjamin R. Judy
David Stockwell
1982 T. Paul Amidon
(resigned)
Peter Haubrich
Sherry W. Kelley
David Stockwell
1983-84 Peter W. Haubrich
Sherry W. Kelley
David W. Stockwell
1985 Bruce W. Baird
Peter W. Haubrich
Sherry W. Kelley
David W. Stockwell
(resigned)
1986 Bruce W. Baird
Sherry W. Kelley
Peter W. Haubrich
1987-88 Bruce W. Baird
Judith Belyea
Peter Haubrich

1989 Bruce W. Baird
Judith Belyea
Peter Haubrich
(resigned)
Jay Waldner
1990 Bruce W. Baird
Judith Belyea
Jay Waldner

State Patrolman

1926-27 Tracy M. Spalding
1928-30 Ralph K. Jordan

Superintendent of Schools

1917-18 Catherine A. Dole
1919-32 Andrew P. Averill
1933-48 William J. English
1949-51 None listed
1954-60 Hammond Young
1961-68 Gordon R. Tate
1969-72 William E. Merrill
1973-87 Daniel J. Whitaker
1988-89 M. Ray Evans
1990 Paul Rice

Superintendent of Schools Committee

1824-25 Rev. Dana Clayes
Charles Flanders
Rev. Israel Newell
1826 Charles Flanders
Jabez Porter
John Singer
1827 Jesse Colby
Jesse French
Samuel Sargent
1829 John Bryant
Edward Freeman
John Ticknor
1847 Jesse Colby
Benjamin Daniels
Elias F. Smith
1848 Benjamin Daniels
Elias F. Smith
1849 Amos Blanchard
Abel Merrill
Jacob Scales
1850 Jesse Colby
Jacob Scales
1857 William C. True
1858 Samuel Bean, Jr.
A. J. Chellis
Benjamin C. Smith,
Esq.
1861-62 Fred Moulton
Elihu F. Rowe
1863 Charles H. Green
Elihu F. Rowe

C. H. Richards
1864 Stephen R. Moulton
1865 Benjamin C. Daniels
Stephen Moulton
1866-67 Andrew J. Chellis
1868 C. Colby
1869-70 Charles Colby
1871 Silas S. Booth
1872-73 Willis E. Daniels
1874-77 Josiah Davis
1878 Gaylord B. Smith
1879 Josiah Davis
1880 Willis K. Daniels
1881 Alvah B. Chellis
Rev. Charles M.
Palmer
1882 Alvah B. Chellis
1883 Josiah Davis
1884 Sarah J. Bugbee
Ora Davis
1885 Benjamin F.
Lawrence

Supervisor of the Check List

1878 Carlos D. Colby
Fred Moulton
William C. True
1880 Alfred P. Jenney
Fred Moulton
William C. True
1882-84 Alfred P. Jenney
Fred Moulton
Wallace P. Thrasher
1886 Benjamin F.
Manchester
Fred Moulton
Wallace P. Thrasher
1888 Henry C. Farnum
Arthur F. Spaulding
Wallace P. Thrasher
1890 Josiah Davis
Henry C. Farnum
William P. Thrasher
1892-96 Henry C. Farnum
William Hall
Frank W. True
1898 Henry C. Farnum
Frank L. French
Frank W. True
1899 Henry C. Farnum
1900 Henry C. Farnum
Frank L. French
Frank W. True
1902 Henry C. Farnum
Frank L. French
Albert K. Read
1904 Henry C. Daniels
Frank L. French
Albert K. Read
1906-08 Frank K. French
Albert K. Read
George S. Ruggles

| | | | | | |
|---------|--|---------|--|------|---|
| 1909 | Frank L. French Wesley W. Jordan Albert K. Read | 1974-76 | David W. Stockwell Sylvia J. Clark David W. Stockwell | 1778 | Timothy Cory Duthan Kingsbury Lemuel Smith William Spalding Abel Stafford Ammi Wilson |
| 1910-11 | Nathan R. Andrews Arling B. Cutts Charles D. Morse | 1977-78 | Ruthann Wheeler Basil McNamara David Stockwell | 1779 | Hezekiah French Duthan Kingsbury Charles Spalding John Stevens, Jr. Isasi Vin |
| 1912-13 | Harold W. Chellis Arling B. Cutts Charles D. Morse | 1979-87 | Arlynn Grearson Basil McNamara Ruthann Wheeler | | John Westgate |
| 1914-16 | Harold W. Chellis Louis E. Shipman Herbert H. Williams | 1988-89 | Arlynn Grearson Basil McNamara Roberta Stormann Ruthann Wheeler (resigned) | 1780 | Timothy Cory Nathan Gates David Gitchel Perley Roberts Berzillair Spalding Ruluf Spalding Lemuel Williams |
| 1917 | Harold W. Chellis Palmer C. Read Herbert H. Williams | 1990 | Arlynn Grearson Basil McNamara Roberta Stormann | 1781 | Adam Clark Benjamin Cutler Nathan Dean Samuel Pool Joseph Spalding Lt. Amos Stafford Zadock Bloss |
| 1918-21 | Leon D. Clark Palmer C. Read Brainard W. Penniman | | Surveyor of Highways | | 1782 |
| 1922-23 | Leon D. Clark Otis W. Jordan Brainard W. Penniman | 1766-67 | Josiah Russell, Jr. Lt. John Stevens | 1783 | |
| 1924-26 | Otis W. Jordan Edwin Porter Palmer C. Read | 1768 | Abel Gates Joseph Smith Josiah Russell | | 1784 1785 |
| 1927-41 | Otis W. Jordan J. Charles Meyette Edwin M. Porter | 1769 | Charles Spalding Benjamin Cutler Robert Miller Josiah Russell | 1786 | |
| 1942-49 | Otis W. Jordan Edwin M. Porter Palmer C. Read, Jr. | 1770 | Benjamin Cutler Robert Miller Josiah Russell Lemuel Williams | | 1787 |
| 1950-53 | Edwin M. Porter Palmer C. Read, Jr. Wallace Williams | 1771 | William Cutler Joseph Kimball Francis Smith John Stevens | | |
| 1954-55 | Carl O. Dubois Vernon A. Hood Edwin M. Porter | 1772 | Benjamin Chapman Benjamin Kimball Charles Spalding Joseph Spalding | | |
| 1956-57 | Carl O. Dubois Donald M. MacLeay Edwin M. Porter | 1773 | Simeon Cory Reuben Jerold Amos Strafford | | |
| 1958 | Donald M. MacLeay Edwin M. Porter Albert K. Read | 1774 | Beach Cutler Robert Miller Charles Spalding Abel Strafford | | |
| 1959 | Frank Chellis Donald M. MacLeay Albert K. Read | 1775 | Micaiah Adams Adam Clark Josiah Colton Timothy Cory John Stevens Lemuel Williams | | |
| 1960-61 | Alden Berry Frank Chellis Bernard Thielen | 1776 | Duthan Kingsbury Este Russell Lemuel Smith Ruluf Spalding Ammi Wilson | | |
| 1962-66 | Alden Berry Frank Chellis Gordon Leland | 1777 | Nathaniel Fairfield Eliphalet Kimball Charles Spalding Nathaniel Walker Ammi Wilson John Wilson | | |
| 1967 | Alden Berry Earle W. Colby Gordon Leland | | | | |
| 1968-69 | Alden L. Berry Sylvia J. Clark George S. LeVarn | | | | |
| 1970-71 | Alden L. Berry Sylvia J. Clark David W. Stockwell | | | | |
| 1972-73 | Alden L. Berry Sylvia J. Clark | | | | |

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|------|-------------------------|------|------------------------|------|------------------------|
| 1788 | Lt. Nathan Gates | 1792 | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | 1797 | Lt. Joseph Kimball |
| | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | | Willis Kimball | | Oliver Kingsbury |
| | Lt. Joseph Kimball | | Richard Purmet | | Simon Smith |
| | Capt. David Perry | | Lt. Philip Spalding | | Lt. Barzillai Spalding |
| | Lt. Philip Spalding | | Amos Stafford | | Daniel Spalding |
| | Amos Strafford | | Lt. Abel Stone | | Ruluf Spalding |
| | Ebenezer Thomas | | Ebenezer Thomas | | Lt. Benjamin True |
| | Benjamin True | | Joshua Baley | | Amos Vernham |
| | Simeon Adams | | Benjamin Chapman | | Lemuel Williams |
| | _____Ballard | | William Cutler | | Daniel Brocklebank |
| 1789 | Simon Blanchard | 1793 | Gideon Dow | 1798 | Peter Bugbee |
| | Timothy Cory | | Nathan Gates | | Abram Carpenter |
| | Benjamin Cutler | | David Joy | | Chester Chapman |
| | Benjamin Kimball, Jr. | | Joseph Kimball | | Amos Farnum |
| | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | | Lt. Joseph Kimball | | Nathan Gates |
| | Oliver Kingsbury | | David Perry | | Thomas Gates |
| | Capt. David Perry | | Samuel Pool | | Sample Gilkey |
| | Capt. Charles Spalding | | Walter Smith | | John Harris |
| | Lt. Philip Spalding | | Champeon Spalding | | Charles Horton |
| | Joseph Westgate | | Daniel Stickney | | Daniel Kimball, Esq. |
| 1790 | Isaac Wilson | 1794 | Abel Stone | 1799 | Jesy. Roberts |
| | John _____ | | Nathan Andrews | | Lemuel Smith |
| | Nathan Andrews | | Zadock Bloss | | Capt. Philip Spalding |
| | Joshua Baley | | Daniel Brocklebank | | Nathan Andrews |
| | Joseph Blanchard | | Daniel Cole | | Merrit Colby |
| | Simon Blanchard | | Benjamin Cutler | | Timothy Cory |
| | Simeon Cory | | Thomas Gates | | Benjamin Cutler |
| | Lt. William Cutler | | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | | Asa Gallup |
| | David Joy | | Benjamin Spalding | | Elijah Johnson |
| | Lt. Joseph Kenyon | | Lt. Amos Stafford | | Daniel Kimball, Esq. |
| 1791 | Roswell Minor | 1795 | Capt. John Stevens | 1800 | Oliver Kingsbury |
| | Aaron Palmer | | James Stickney | | Francis Smith, Esq. |
| | Lt. Jesse Roberts | | Lt. Abel Stone | | Phineas Spalding |
| | Francis Smith, Esq. | | Ebenezer Thomas | | Daniel Brocklebank |
| | Lt. Philip Spalding | | Lt. Eliphalet Adams | | Benjamin Cutler |
| | John Steven, 3rd | | Phinihas Bachelor | | Daniel Freeman |
| | Ebenezer Thomas | | Peter Bugbee | | Elijah Johnson |
| | Joshua Baley | | Lt. Daniel Freeman | | Mumford Kenyon |
| | Chester Chapman | | Thomas Gates | | Daniel Kimball, Esq. |
| | Benjamin Cutler | | Sample Gilkey | | Nathan Morgan |
| 1791 | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | 1796 | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | 1801 | Jonathan Nash |
| | Willis Kimball | | Joseph Kenyon, Jr. | | Levi Smith |
| | John Pool | | Nathaniel Morgan | | Benjamin Spalding |
| | Deac. Champeon Spalding | | Nathaniel Penniman | | Daniel Spalding |
| | Capt. Charles Spalding | | Capt. Charles Spalding | | Rufus Spalding |
| | Ruluf Spalding | | Joseph Spalding | | Ebenezer Thomas |
| | David Stevens | | David Stone | | Earl Westgate |
| | Ebenezer Thomas | | Chester Chapman | | Isaac Chapman |
| | Ensg. Benjamin True | | Simeon Cory | | Benjamin Cutler |
| | Lemuel Williams | | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | | Amos Farnum |
| 1791 | Isaac Wilson | 1796 | Laban Hall | 1801 | David Joy |
| | Joshua Baley | | Ziba Roberts | | Joseph Kimball, Jr. |
| | Joseph Blanchard | | Amos Stafford, Jr. | | Col. Joseph Kimball |
| | Simon Blanchard | | Job Stevens | | Perley Roberts |
| | Capt. Benjamin Chapman | | Abel Stone, Jr. | | Philip Spalding |
| | Simeon Cory | | Ebenezer Thomas | | Abel Stone, Jr. |
| | Benjamin Cutler | | William True | | Timothy Swan |
| | Asa Gallup | | Joseph Westgate | | William True |
| | | | Elisha Williams | | George Westgate |
| | | | Joseph Blanchard | | John Westgate, Jr. |
| | | | Capt. William Cutler | | Eliphalet Adams |
| | | | Nathan Gates | | Abram Carpenter |
| | | | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | | Daniel Cole |

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|------|----------------------|------|---------------------|------|----------------------|
| | Benjamin Cutler | | Amos Farnum | | Leonard Daniels |
| | Francis Dean | | Thomas Gallup, Jr. | | Richard Evans |
| | Nathan Gates | | Daniel Kingsbury | | Amos Farnum |
| | Thomas Gates | | Joseph Kingsbury, | | Edward Fifield |
| | Willis Kimball | | Jr. | | Abel Gates |
| | Oliver Lathrop | | Philip Spalding | | Zebadiah Gates |
| | Maj. Joseph Smith | | Phineas Spalding | | Isaac Hall |
| | Benjamin Spalding | | Benjamin True | | Daniel Spalding |
| | Eben Stebins | 1807 | Simeon Adams | | Abel Stone, Jr. |
| 1802 | Daniel True | | John Alexander | 1812 | John Alexander |
| | Eliphalet Adams | | John Austin | | Freeman Chase |
| | Amos Farnum | | Peter Carr | | Benjamin Dow |
| | Bazalart Gale | | Levi Chapman | | John Daniels, Jr. |
| | Sample Gilkey | | Moody Dustin | | Charles Eggleston |
| | Asel Hough | | Amos Farnum | | Jeremiah Gates |
| | James Kenyon | | Joseph Kimball, Jr. | | Zebadiah Gates |
| | Daniel Kimball | | Asa Kingsbury | | Isaac Hall |
| | Daniel Kingsbury | | Simon Smith | | Daniel Kimball, Esq. |
| | Oliver Kingsbury | | Thomas Stevens | | Capt. Joseph |
| | Abel Slack | | Barna Tisdale | | Kimball |
| | Charles Smith | | Benjamin True | | John Pool |
| | Maj. Joseph Smith | 1808 | Levi Chapman | | Simon Smith |
| | Benjamin True | | William Cutler | | Joseph Spencer |
| 1803 | Gideon Woodward | | John Daniels | 1813 | Lemuel Adams |
| | Eliphalet Adams | | Benjamin Dow | | Peter Bugbee |
| | Benjamin Cutler | | Amos Farnum | | Jonathan Cram |
| | John Daniels | | Edward Fifield | | Cyrill Drown |
| | Amos Farnum | | Thomas Gallup, Jr. | | Isaac Hall |
| | Joseph Kenyon, Jr. | | Jeremiah Gates | | Capt. Joseph |
| | Benjamin Kimball | | John Harris | | Kimball, Jr. |
| | Daniel Kingsbury | | Joseph Kimball, Jr. | | Asa Kingsbury |
| | Oliver Kingsbury | | Silas Read | | Oliver Kingsbury |
| | Daniel Spalding | | Daniel Spalding | | Lt. Jesse Roberts |
| | Simon Spalding | | Philip Spalding | | Capt. Daniel |
| | David Stevens, Jr. | 1809 | Eliphalet Adams | | Spalding |
| | Thomas Stevens | | Peter Bugbee | | Simon Spalding |
| | John Ticknor | | Samuel Clark | | Capt. John Ticknor |
| 1804 | Moses True | | Benjamin Cutler | 1814 | Benjamin Westgate |
| | Eliphalet Adams | | Amos Farnum | | John Alexander |
| | Isaac Chapman | | Edward Fifield | | Josiah Fifield |
| | Samuel Clark | | Benjamin Freeman | | Benjamin Gallup |
| | Amos Farnum | | Jeremiah Gates | | Sample Gilkey |
| | Joseph Fifield | | David Read | | Isaac Hall |
| | Nathan Gates | | Enos Rickerd | | Capt. Joseph |
| | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | | William C. Smith | | Kenyon |
| | Oliver Kingsbury | | John Ticknor | | Capt. Joseph |
| 1805 | Leonard Pulsifer | 1810 | Reuben True | | Kimball |
| | Parker Carr | | Nathan Andrews | | John Palmer |
| | William Cutler | | Daniel Cole | | John Pool |
| | Amos Farnum | | William Cutler | | Champeon Spalding, |
| | Ruswell Green | | Leonard Daniels | | Jr. |
| | Jesse Roberts | | Moody Dustin | | Joseph Spencer |
| | Perley Roberts | | Benjamin Gallup | | Ebenezer Thomas |
| | Simon Smith | | Joseph Kimball, Jr. | | Reuben True |
| | John Spalding | | Oliver Kingsbury | 1815 | Freeman Chase |
| | Phineas Spalding | | Silas Read, 2nd | | Daniel Cole, Jr. |
| | Newell Stevens | | Jesse Roberts | | William Cutler |
| | Abel Stone, Jr. | | Perley Roberts | | Leonard Daniels |
| 1806 | Benjamin Thatcher | 1811 | Jesse Spalding | | Richard Evans |
| | John Colburn | | Capt. John Ticknor | | Amos Farnum |
| | Robert Cory | | Eliphalet Adams | | Daniel Kimball |
| | William Cutler | | Isaac Chapman | | Joseph Kimball |
| | Leonard Daniels | | Levi Cram | | Oliver Kingsbury |
| | Richard Evans | | William Cutler | | Thomas Penniman |

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|------|---|------|---|------|--|
| 1816 | Daniel Spalding Benjamin True Benjamin Westgate John Alexander Samuel Currier Amos Farnum Daniel Kimball, Esq. Capt. Joseph Kimball, Jr. Capt. Richard Kimball John Morgan Lt. Richard Purmet Silas Read David Souther Simon Spalding Benjamin Stone James Willard | 1821 | Thomas Penniman Jabez Porter Silas Read, 2nd Benjamin Smith Joseph Spencer Reuben True John Westgate, 3rd Eliphalet Adams Calvin Cutler Perley Fifield Edward Freeman Jesse French Joseph Parker Benjamin Smith Josiah Spalding Benjamin Stevens John Ticknor Christopher Tone David Westgate David Wheeler | 1826 | Benjamin H. Persons Jacob Rowell Josiah Spalding Abram Spencer Archibald Spencer Benjamin Stevens Henry Woodward Moses Bryant Thomas Cheeney Thomas Chellis, Jr. Calvin Cutler Edward Freeman Jesse French John Hadley David Morgan Jacob Read Abel Slack Abraham Spencer Elias Thomas Christopher Tone |
| | 1817 Simeon Adams John Beal Peter Bugbee Benjamin Cutler Elias French Asa Kingsbury Thomas Penniman Abel Stone, Jr. Reuben True Jonathan Underhill Benjamin Westgate Joseph Westgate, Jr. James Willard Benjamin Cutler, Jr. Leonard Daniels Amos Farnum Benjamin Freeman Thomas Gallup Sample Gilkey John Harris, Esq. Joseph Kimball, Jr. Asa Kingsbury Enos Roberts Jesse Roberts Simon Spalding Moses True, Jr. | | 1822 Eliphalet Adams Hodges Alexander Moses Chellis Thomas Chellis, Jr. Merrit Farnum Benjamin Freeman John Howe Capt. Benjamin Smith Benjamin Stevens Samuel Spalding John Stone Reuben True Job Williams Peter Abbot John Beal Leonard Daniels John Evans Perley Fifield William Howard Ephraim Kinsman Thomas Penniman Jabez Porter Arch Spencer Benjamin Stevens Joab Young | | 1827 Samuel Avery Hewit Cram Merrit Farnum Perley Fifield Simon French Asa Kingsbury Abel Merrill Harvey Miller Jabez Porter Josiah Spalding Abram Spencer Erastus Ticknor John Westgate Calvin |
| 1818 | 1819 Col. Edmond Freeman Capt. Thomas Gallup Leonard Johnson Joseph Kimball Asa Kingsbury John Kingsbury Thomas Penniman Jabez Porter Jacob Roswell Joseph Spencer Osgood True Eliphalet Adams Samuel Avery Thomas Chellis, Jr. George W. Clement Benjamin Fuller Abel Merrill | 1823 | 1824 Eliphalet Adams John Andrews John Daniels Benjamin Freeman Thomas Gallup Ephraim Kinsman Benjamin Neal Jabez Porter Simon Spalding Abel Stone, Jr. Erastus Ticknor Ishmael Tuxbury Joseph Wood Jonathan Cram, Jr. Benjamin Cutler, Jr. Jesse French John Gates Rufus Joy | 1828 | Jacob C. Colby Leonard Daniels Samuel Fifield Philester Joy Benjamin Neal Perley Roberts Waterman Spalding Abel Stone, Jr. George Westgate Ephraim Whitaker James Willard Henry Woodward Thomas Chellis, Jr. Leonard Daniels Sanborn Davis Jesse Dow Richard Evans Merrit Farnum James Gilkey John Hadley Horace Haywood Timothy Nutting Jabez Porter Enos Roberts Joab Young Samuel Avery Jesse Colby William Daniels Charles Eggleston Perley Fifield |
| | 1820 | | 1825 | | 1830 |

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|------|---------------------|------|-----------------------|------|---------------------|
| 1831 | Simon French | 1836 | Fields Fuller | 1841 | Merrit Farnum |
| | Fields Fuller | | Hayes Kenyon | | Benjamin S. Fuller |
| | Thomas Gallup | | Caleb Kingsbury | | Reuben Moore |
| | Robert Kimball | | Benjamin H. | | Alpheus Roberts |
| | Ephraim Kinsman | | Pearson | | Samuel Sanborn |
| | Silvanus Martin | | Benjamin Smith, Jr. | | Waterman Spalding |
| | Cyrus Stong | | Abram Spencer | | Earl Westgate |
| | George Westgate | | Benjamin Stevens | | Peter Abbot |
| | Dimick Baker | | Thomas Chellis | | James Brocklebank |
| | Moses Chellis | | Parker Cole | | John Bryant |
| 1832 | William Daniels | 1837 | Albert Daniels | 1842 | Daniel Cole |
| | Benjamin Dorr | | Leonard Daniels | | Albert Daniels |
| | Samuel Fifield | | Simon French | | Benjamin Daniels |
| | Raymond Kenyon | | John Gates | | Calvin Fifield |
| | Abram H. Knight | | Raymond Kenyon | | James Freeman |
| | Charles Spalding | | Charles Spalding | | Hayes Kenyon |
| | Archibald Spencer | | Abraham Spencer | | Ephraim Kinsman |
| | William Ward | | Erastus Ticknor | | Joseph Lambertson |
| | Emery Whitaker | | Joseph B. Westgate | | Erastus Ticknor |
| | Henry Woodward | | William Daniels | | Ephraim Whitaker |
| 1833 | Peter Abbot | 1838 | Merrit Farnum | 1843 | Peter Abbot |
| | Levi Bryant | | James Freeman | | William Andrews |
| | Calvin Cutler | | Joseph Kingsbury | | John Bryant |
| | Leonard Daniels | | Dr. S. Martin | | Amos Bugbee |
| | Benjamin F. Dorr | | Thomas Penniman | | William D. Colby |
| | Jeremiah Dow | | Jabez Porter | | Albert Daniels |
| | William Silliway | | Philip Read | | Perley Fifield |
| | Jacob Smith | | Joseph Sanberton | | Edward Freeman |
| | David Souther | | William Shattuck | | William R. Jordan |
| | Charles Spalding | | Emery Whitaker | | Ephraim Kinsman |
| 1834 | Elisha Spalding | 1839 | Joseph Wood | 1844 | William L. Martin |
| | Erastus Ticknor | | Amos Bugbee | | David Souther |
| | John Westgate | | George Bryant | | Abram Spencer |
| | Peter Abbot | | Lorenzo C. Clark | | Amos Bugbee |
| | Hodges Alexander | | Daniel Cole, Jr. | | Thomas Chellis |
| | Samuel Avery | | Sim. Cram | | Calvin Cutler |
| | John Bryant | | Albert G. Daniels | | Merrit Farnum |
| | James Clark | | Thomas Gallup | | Perley Fifield |
| | Leonard Daniels | | Thomas Johnson | | James Gilkey |
| | Nathaniel French | | Joseph Parker | | Ezekiah O. Jenney |
| 1835 | E. Ripley | 1840 | David Souther | 1845 | Joseph Kingsbury |
| | Enos Spalding | | Abraham Spencer | | Alvan D. Manchester |
| | Abram Spencer | | Joseph B. Westgate | | Philo G. C. Merrill |
| | Osgood True | | Ephraim Whitaker | | Osgood True |
| | John Westgate | | Samuel Avery | | George Westgate |
| | Peter Abbot | | Ebenezer Burbank, Jr. | | Joseph B. Westgate |
| | Thomas Chellis, Jr. | | Leonard Daniels | | Peter Abbot |
| | Francis Clark | | Merrit Farnum | | Samuel Avery |
| | Daniel Cole | | Joseph Lambertson | | Albert G. Daniels |
| | Calvin Cutler | | Jabez Porter | | Benjamin Daniels |
| | William Daniels | | Ai Read | | Samuel B. Duncan |
| | Merrit Farnum | | Jacob Rowell | | Merit Farnum |
| | Robert Kimball | | Samuel Sanborn | | James Freeman |
| | David Morgan | | Archibald Spencer | | Jesse French |
| | Jacob Rowell | | Reuben True | | Charles F. Gallup |
| | Jesse Spalding | | David Westgate | | Alvin D. Manchester |
| | Archibald Spencer | | John Westgate | | Merrit Penniman |
| | John Westgate | | Peter Abbot | | Duty Stickney |
| | Hodges Alexander | | Elijah Austin | | Erastus Ticknor |
| | Wilber Andrews | | Dimick Baker | | Earl Westgate |
| | Samuel Avery | | Amos Bugbee | | Benjamin Daniels |
| | James Brocklebank | | S. Clark | | George C. Freeman |
| | George Dow | | Calvin Cutler | | Jesse French |
| | Samuel Fifield | | | | John French |

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|------|---------------------|------|-----------------------|------|---------------------|
| 1846 | Simon French | 1850 | Charles F. Smith | 1854 | George Rowell |
| | John Gates | | Reuben True | | Edmund H. Shattuck |
| | John Hadley | | David Westgate | | Hiram L. Sleeper |
| | William L. Martin | | Elijah Burnap | | William B. Ward |
| | Jabez Porter | | Calvin Cutler | | David B. Westgate |
| | Alpheus Roberts | | William Daniels | | George Westgate |
| | Enos Roberts | | Merrit Farnum | | Levi Bryant |
| | Elias F. Smith | | Simon French | | Parker Carr |
| | Earl Westgate | | Harvey Gibbs | | Benjamin Daniels |
| | George Bryant | | Arla Jordan | | Sanborn Davis |
| 1847 | Norman Bush | 1851 | William Kinsman | 1855 | Edward Freeman, Jr. |
| | Albert G. Daniels | | Merrit Penniman | | Simon French |
| | Harmon Dow | | Jacob Rowell | | Benjamin L. Fuller |
| | Jesse French | | Abraham Spencer | | Charles F. Gallup |
| | Edwin Frost | | Frederick Souther | | William R. Jordan |
| | Chancy P. Jenney | | John Westgate | | Ephraim Kinsman |
| | Hayes Kenyon | | Joab Williams | | Abram H. Knight |
| | Enos P. Spalding | | Jacob Beal | | Ralston Penniman |
| | David Westgate | | Joseph Bean | | Ai Read |
| | John Westgate | | Eben Clough | | Abram Spencer |
| 1848 | Emery Whitaker | 1852 | Benjamin Cole | 1856 | Archibald Spencer |
| | Orville Williams | | Samuel B. Duncan | | David Westgate |
| | Frederick Woodward | | John Freeman | | Sumner Wheeler |
| | Erastus _____ | | George Hubbard | | Andrew J. Chellis |
| | Peter Abbot | | Caleb T. Kingsbury | | Charles Colby |
| | Arvin Bartholomew | | Alvin Manchester | | Martin Cole |
| | Levi Bryant | | Asa A. Sargent | | J. W. Everest |
| | Eben Clough | | George F. Souther | | Moses Fifield |
| | Calvin Cutler | | Waterman Spalding | | Thomas F. Gallup |
| | Merrit Farnum | | Oliver B. Strobbridge | | James Gilkey |
| 1849 | William R. Jordan | 1853 | Elisha Ticknor | 1857 | Philip Hadley |
| | William Kinsman | | George Westgate | | George Hubbard |
| | Lysander Knight | | Joseph B. Westgate | | Abel Merrill |
| | Stephen R. Moulton | | Joseph Bean | | Dana N. Morgan |
| | John Newton | | Benjamin F. Daniels | | Ralston Penniman |
| | Frances S. Trow | | George Freeman | | Enos R. Spalding |
| | David Westgate | | Simon French | | Solomon Stone |
| | Samuel Avery | | George D. Frost | | David G. Westgate |
| | Moses M. Chellis | | Denison Hadley | | John Westgate |
| | Charles Colby | | Philip Hadley | | Sumner Wheeler |
| | Daniel Cole | | Ezekiel O. Jenney | | Joseph Bean |
| | Albert G. Daniels | | Joseph Kenyon | | Elijah Burnap |
| | Edward Freeman, Jr. | | Mumford H. Kenyon | | Eben Clough |
| | Erastus Lewin | | Ephraim Kinsman | | Joseph B. Cutler |
| | John Morgan | | William Ladieu | | Sanborn Davis |
| | Albert K. Read | | Alvin W. Manchester | | Lewis C. Farnum |
| | Jacob Rowell | | Francis F. Smith | | George C. Freeman |
| | Siloam L. Slack | | Solomon Stone | | James Freeman |
| | Horace B. Stickney | | David Westgate | | Moses Haven |
| | William Ward | | Ephraim Whitaker, Jr. | | Ezekiel O. Jenney |
| | Ephraim Whitaker | | Dennis Austin | | Erastus Lewin |
| | Elijah Austin | | Arvin S. | | Alvin D. Manchester |
| | Dimick Baker | | Bartholomew | | George W. Morgan |
| | James Brocklebank | | George Bryant | | Samuel C. Moulton |
| | Henry Chapman | | Eben Clough | | Francis F. Smith |
| | Eben Clough | | Jesse Colby | | George F. Souther |
| | Benjamin C. Daniels | | Albert G. Daniels | | Aquilla Spalding |
| | Samuel Fifield | | Frederick B. Hanchett | | Hiram Stone |
| | Harvey Gibbs | | George P. Haven | | Nathan Andrews |
| | James Hall | | George Morgan | | Arvin L. |
| | Jarvis J. Jordan | | Albert K. Read | | Bartholomew |
| | Abel Merrill | | | | Alvin Bean |
| | Jabez Porter | | | | Jesse Colby |
| | Silas Read | | | | |

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|------|--|------|---|------|--|
| 1858 | <p>William D. Colby Albert G. Daniels Benjamin C. Daniels James F. Eaton Orville T. Eaton Henry C. Farnum Moses Fifield Alfred Hadley Bryant Jenney Ezekiel O. Jenney Orin Johnson William R. Jordan Jonathan Leavitt Jonathan Miller Charles H. Read Samuel Sanborn John Sargent Hiram S. Sleeper Benjamin C. Smith Stephen D. Stone Nathaniel M. Wheeler George Avery Alvin Bean John Bell John A. Brocklebank Frances Brown Amos Bugbee John P. Chellis Joseph Fisher John Freeman John French Aaron Kidder William Lediou William H. Pierce Thomas J. Pillsbury Joel F. Raynsford Charles Read George W. Rowell James Sargent Enos R. Spalding Hiram Stone Frances Trow Nathaniel True Isaac Westgate Job Williams Alva P. Wood Frederick Woodward</p> | 1860 | <p>Jonathan Leavitt John Morgan Orra C. Pierce David A. Poland James Sargent Junius Spencer Ira P. Thatcher Earl Westgate Ephraim Whitaker, Jr. Orville B. Williams E. D. Austin John P. Chellis Calvin Fifield Charles Fifield Edward Freeman, Jr. Jerome French George N. Greely Charles Harrington Simon Heath Thaddeus Hubbard E. O. Jenney William S. Ladiou Jonathan Leavitt Harry Morgan S. W. Packard A. K. Read D. G. Stickney John Vinton William B. Ward J. W. Westgate Sumner Wheeler Orville Williams Jeremiah Wood George W. Austin</p> | 1863 | <p>Orville T. Eaton Joseph K. Foss John Freeman Jerome French John French Thomas F. Gallup Stephen D. Harris Thaddeus Hubbard George Huggins Ezekiel O. Jenney Lewis S. Jordan William S. Ladiou Benjamin F. McColister Harvey Morgan Stephen R. Moulton Rufus G. Newton Thomas Penniman Jonathan Phillips Cyrus Smith John Vinton David S. Wheeler Nathaniel M. Wheeler John H. Calif Merrit F. Colby John L. Cole Rufus M. Cole Albert G. Daniels John Daniels Charles H. Duncklee Samuel W. Emerson Daniel Fifield Joseph K. Fisher John French Orin Johnson William O. Kenyon William G. Martin Lawson Newton Ralston H. Penniman Albert K. Read Sidney Sanborn Hiram L. Sleeper Francis F. Smith N. M. True Asa A. Walker Joseph B. Westgate Nathaniel W. Wheeler</p> |
| 1859 | <p>Edward P. Ashley Samuel Bean, 2nd George Bryant George L. Cole Joseph B. Cutler James F. Eaton Orville T. Eaton Samuel Emerson James Freeman Joseph Fisher Charles F. Gallup John Gilkey James Hanchett Ezekiel Jenney Orin Johnson William O. Kenyon</p> | 1861 | <p>Arvin S. Bartholomew Joseph Bean George Bryant Rufus M. Cole Albert G. Daniels Benjamin C. Daniels John Eaton Joseph K. Fisher John French Denison Hadley Stephen Hersey Ephraim Kinsman John Lane Jonathan Leavitt Alvin D. Manchester William L. Martin Farnum J. Morgan Stephen R. Moulton Cyrus Smith George W. Smith Solomon Stone Earl Westgate James S. Wood John P. Chellis George L. Cole Rufus M. Cole Samuel Davis Sanborn Davis</p> | 1864 | <p>Elijah D. Austin Samuel Bean, 2nd John P. Chellis Hall Culp James F. Eaton George C. Farnum Jesse French John French Charles F. Gallup Denison Hadley E. O. Jenney William R. Jordan William O. Kenyon Harvey Knight</p> |
| | | 1862 | | | |

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|------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|------|----------------------|
| 1865 | John Lane | 1867 | Nathaniel M. Wheeler | 1870 | John Freeman |
| | Jonathan Leavitt | | Sumner Wheeler | | George French |
| | Orin Morgan | | George T. Avery | | Calvin Fifield |
| | Fred Moulton | | Silas S. Booth | | George C. Goss |
| | Lawson Newton | | John A. Brocklebank | | Julius H. Huntly |
| | Harvey F. J. Scribner | | Henry Bryant | | Harrison H. Jordan |
| | Stephen D. Stone | | Martin Chapman | | Lewis S. Jordan |
| | Charles H. Strong | | Newell C. Chapman | | Jonathan Leavitt |
| | Ira P. Thatcher | | Alvah B. Chellis | | Alvin D. Manchester |
| | William C. True | | Henry P. Calif | | John H. Mercer |
| 1866 | Earl Westgate | 1868 | Addison Cutts | | George H. Miller |
| | Joseph P. Westgate | | Benjamin C. Daniels | | Henry Morgan |
| | Elijah D. Austin | | Ozro V. Eastman | | Fred Moulton |
| | Alvin Bean | | Henry Farnum | | Albert K. Read |
| | Henry E. Bean | | Edward Freeman, Jr. | | Aquilla Spalding |
| | William H. Chase | | Jerome French | | Stephen D. Stone |
| | Charles Colby | | Alfred Hadley | | William C. True |
| | Rufus M. Cole | | Henry Hanchett | | I. W. Westgate |
| | Albert G. Daniels | | Alfred P. Jenney | | Orville B. Williams |
| | Samuel Davis | | Asa Jenney | 1871 | Nathan Andrews |
| 1866 | S. W. Emerson | 1869 | Jonathan Leavitt | | Alvia Barney |
| | Elias Farnum | | William G. Martin | | Frank Bradford |
| | James Freeman | | Reuben Moore | | William H. Case |
| | Thomas F. Gallup | | Leonard Morse | | John P. Chellis |
| | Stephen Hersey | | Darius N. Moulton | | Martin V. B. Chapman |
| | Asa Jenney | | Nathan F. Trow | | Carlos D. Colby |
| | Harrison H. Jordan | | William B. Ward | | Charles Colby |
| | Lewis Jordan | | Earl Westgate | | Rufus M. Cole |
| | William M. Kinsman | | George Williams | | Benjamin C. Daniels |
| | Harry Morgan | | Nathan Andrews | | John Daniels |
| 1866 | Rufus G. Newton | 1869 | Elijah D. Austin | | Samuel Davis |
| | George W. Rowell | | Joseph Bean | | Elias Farnum |
| | Harvey F. J. Scribner | | Frank Bradford | | Moses Fifield |
| | Farnum J. Spencer | | James Brocklebank | | William W. Freeman |
| | Stephen D. Stone | | Alonzo J. Chapman | | Russel B. French |
| | Frances Trow | | John P. Chellis | | Charles F. Gallup |
| | Asa Walker | | Seth Cole | | Henry C. Green |
| | I. W. Westgate | | Norman Cory | | Eben Hadley |
| | George Austin | | Hiram Dow | | Asa Jenney |
| | Jacob Beal | | Elias Farnum | | Harrison H. Jordan |
| 1866 | Amos Bugbee | 1869 | Moses Fifield | | Jonathan Leavitt |
| | Marlin V. B. Chapman | | George C. Freeman | | John H. Mercer |
| | Samuel W. H. Clark | | E. O. Jenney | | Farnum J. Morgan |
| | Rufus M. Cole | | Harrison H. Jordan | | Byron Sanborn |
| | Benjamin C. Daniels | | Alvin D. Manchester | | Siloam S. Slack |
| | James F. Eaton | | Arthur Martin | | George W. Smith |
| | Orville G. Eaton | | John H. Mercer | | Aquilla Spalding |
| | George C. Freeman | | Charles Morse | | Jacob Beal |
| | Joseph K. Foss | | William H. Pierce | | John H. Calif |
| | Simeon Hastings | | Albert K. Read | | Rufus M. Cole |
| 1866 | Newell Huggings | 1869 | George W. Smith | | Reuben C. Cross |
| | Tyler Huggins | | Aquilla Spalding | | Benjamin C. Daniels |
| | Orin Johnson | | Daniel G. Stickney | | Henry C. Farnum |
| | Jonathan Leavitt | | Asa A. Walker | | Almon French |
| | William Ladieu | | Ephraim Whitaker | | Giles Hastings |
| | Harry Morgan | | Hollis Bernard | | Simeon Hastings |
| | Orin Morgan | | Amos Bugbee | | Stephen Hersey |
| | Fred Moulton | | Henry Bryant | | Darwin Jordan |
| | John W. Peterson | | Alvah B. Chellis | | James W. Jordan |
| | Marlin G. Rise | | Merrit F. Colby | | Jonathan Leavitt |
| 1866 | Byron Sanborn | 1869 | Elias F. Cutler | | Alvin D. Manchester |
| | Enos Spalding | | Benjamin C. Daniels | | Fred Moulton |
| | Hiram Stone | | Orville T. Eaton | | Elbridge G. Newton |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| | Ralston Penniman Hiram Phillips Orra C. Pierce Alonzo Spaulding Stephen D. Stone Freeman Trow Frank B. Westgate Isaac W. Westgate Nathaniel W. Wheeler Ephraim Whitaker Norman Williams Alban P. Wood 1872 Samuel Bean Martin V. B. Chapman Alvah B. Chellis Merrit F. Colby Charles Cross Benjamin C. Daniels John Daniels Moses Fifield Henry Fuller Alfred Hadley Giles Hastings Newell Huggins John Lane Jonathan Leavitt Jonathan Miller Henry Morgan John W. Peterson Harvey D. Picknell Jabez Porter Byron W. Sanborn Sidney Sanborn Aquila Spalding Arthur F. Spalding Frank Stickney Charles Strong William C. True Ethan Walker David S. Wheeler 1873 Chauncey Bean Dennis Bryant Merrit F. Colby Benjamin Cole John Cole Reuben Cross Benjamin C. Daniels Henry C. Farnum Moses Fifield George C. Freeman George French Russell B. French Giles Hastings William Heyward Alfred P. Jenney Jarvis J. Jordan C. H. Morgan Lemuel Morse Charles Newton Orra C. Pierce John Pool Jabez Porter | | Frank E. Stickney James L. Stickney Seymore Strong Edward Westgate Norman C. Williams 1874 John Barker Joseph Bean Merrit F. Colby Benjamin Cole John Cole Homer Cole Benjamin C. Daniels Charles H. Daniels O. C. Davis Charles Dean Francis French John Gilkey Willard Heywood Stephen Hersey Alfred P. Jenney William L. Martin Reuben Moore David A. Morgan R. H. Penniman John W. Peterson Orra C. Pierce Jabez Porter Sylvanus Powell Byron W. Sanborn Elias F. Stickney Freeman Trow George S. Trow Abel P. Williams 1875 Nathan Andrews George T. Avery Frank D. Baker Chauncey Bean Merrit F. Colby Charles Cross Benjamin C. Daniels Charles Dean George Freeman Francis S. French George J. French Stephen Hersey Lewis Jordan A. P. Jenney William A. Kenyon B. F. Manchester Elbridge Newton Sumner F. Pierce Benjamin Porter William C. True Albert K. Read Sidney Sanborn Farnum J. Spencer George Smith N. M. True Asa Walker C. J. Westgate Nathaniel Wheeler Chauncey Bean Darvin C. Boydan Elijah W. Burnap | | Alvah B. Chellis Edmond Colby Benjamin Cole Reuben C. Cross Frank Daniels Willis K. Daniels Ora C. Davis Charles Dean John F. Duncan Jesse French Denison Hadley Willard Heywood A. P. Jenney E. O. Jenney Darwin F. Jordan Charles H. Morgan David A. Morgan Fred Moulton Charles G. Newton Sumner T. Pierce John W. Peterson Benjamin Porter Levi H. Sanderson Benjamin C. Small Frank Stickney Ephraim Whitaker Charles Williams 1877 Nathan Andrews Warren Brooks Henry A. Bugbee Newell C. Chapman John P. Chellis Harrison Cisco Benjamin Cole John Cole John H. Cutting Charles Daniels Willis K. Daniels Josiah Davis Orville T. Eaton Moses Fifield William W. Freeman Giles Hastings Alfred P. Jenney Erastus Lewin Farnum J. Morgan Fred Read Jabez P. Read Byron W. Sanborn Francis F. Smith George W. Smith Frank Stickney Sylvester C. Strong Earl Westgate Edward Westgate David S. Wheeler 1880 Nathan Andrews George W. Austin George F. Avery Joseph Bean Laban Chapman Carlos D. Colby Charles Colby John M. Cole |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|

| | | | | | |
|------|--------------------|------|----------------------|------|--------------------|
| | Samuel Davis | | Harry Morgan | | Levi H. Sanderson |
| | Solomon C. Dow | | Darius Moulton | | Harrison M. Sisco |
| | Fred B. Hanchett | | Fred Moulton | | Stephen D. Stone |
| | Darius N. Moulton | | John Poole | | George S. Trow |
| | Albert K. Read | | Benjamin Porter | | William C. True |
| | Charles M. Read | | Fred Read | | Daniel E. Westgate |
| | Levi Sanderson | | George E. Read | | Alban P. Wood |
| | Edward P. Skinner | | Edward P. Skinner, | | George W. |
| | Frank K. Stickney | | Jr. | | Woodbury |
| | Charles T. Torrey | | Francis W. Smith | 1885 | Nathan Andrews |
| | David S. Wheeler | | George W. Smith | | George W. Austin |
| 1881 | George W. Austin | | Benjamin S. Stickney | | Alvah B. Chellis |
| | Warren Barker | | Stephen D. Stone | | R. J. Cross |
| | Joseph Bean | | John H. Whittaker | | George W. Doyle |
| | Samuel Bean, 2nd | 1883 | Nathan Andrews | | James F. Eaton |
| | Newell C. Chapman | | George W. Austin | | Henry C. Farnum |
| | Merrit F. Colby | | George T. Avery | | Charles French |
| | Norman L. Coty | | Samuel Bean, 2nd | | Henry B. Fuller |
| | Charles A. Cross | | James Brocklebank | | Alfred P. Jenney |
| | Josiah Davis | | William D. Burr | | F. E. Jenney |
| | Solomon Dow | | Edmund C. Cobb | | H. W. Jordan |
| | J. H. Fellows | | Benjamin C. Cole | | Willis Jordan |
| | George W. French | | Samuel Davis | | Erastus F. Lewin |
| | Stephen Hersey | | Charles H. Daniels | | John H. Mercer |
| | Willard Heywood | | Eber M. Dean | | Lemuel Morse |
| | Alfred P. Jenney | | George F. Doty | | Fred Moulton |
| | Harrison H. Jordan | | Joseph H. Fellows | | Charles G. Newton |
| | Lewis S. Jordan | | Moses Fifield | | John Porter |
| | Charles M. Kenyon | | George J. French | | George W. Smith |
| | William Kenyon | | Hamden A. Gilson | | William C. True |
| | John H. Mercer | | Alfred Hadley | | Asa A. Walker |
| | John B. Moore | | Edward Hall | | Daniel C. Westgate |
| | John W. Peterson | | George S. Hanchett | | John H. Whitaker |
| | John Porter | | Stephen Hersey | | William P. Wood |
| | George W. Rowell | | Willard Heywood | | George W. |
| | Byron Sanborn | | Walter C. Howard | 1886 | Woodbury |
| | Sidney Sanborn | | Lucius B. Jackson | | George W. Austin |
| | George S. Trow | | Alfred P. Jenney | | John Barker |
| | William C. True | | Frank E. Jenney | | James Brocklebank |
| | Melvin A. Walker | | Harrison H. Jordan | | Carlos D. Colby |
| | Edward J. Westgate | | John H. Mercer | | Edward C. Daniels |
| 1882 | John Andrews | | John W. Peterson | | Benjamin E. Davis |
| | George W. Austin | | John Porter | | Henry C. Farnum |
| | John Barker | | Nathan F. Trow | | George J. French |
| | James Brocklebank | 1884 | Nathan Andrews | | J. H. Fellows |
| | George S. Cole | | A. S. Bartholomew | | Arthur L. Hadley |
| | Reuben Cross | | James Brocklebank | | Stephen Hersey |
| | Ora C. Davis | | Wesley L. Cobb | | James B. Hildreth |
| | George W. Doyle | | Merrit F. Colby | | Willis Jordan |
| | James F. Eaton | | Dennis W. Cross | | Ira W. Kimball |
| | Francis S. French | | Reuben F. Cross | | William A. Martin |
| | George J. French | | Edward C. Daniels | | Lemuel Morse |
| | George W. French | | Henry C. Farnum | | Darius N. Moulton |
| | William W. Freeman | | Joseph W. Fellows | | Charles H. Nevell |
| | Henry B. Fuller | | George W. French | | Ralston H. |
| | Fred B. Hanchett | | Alfred Hadley | | Penniman |
| | Stephen Hersey | | Edward Hall | | John W. Peterson |
| | James B. Hildreth | | Alfred P. Jenney | | John Porter |
| | Frank E. Jenney | | Lewis S. Jordan | | Gilman M. |
| | Darwin F. Jordan | | Willis Jordan | | Saltmarsh |
| | Harrison Jordan | | John L. Mercer | | Levi Sanderson |
| | Cheever Knight | | Lemuel Morse | | Zenas B. Small |
| | William A. Martin | | John W. Peterson | | Francis W. Smith |
| | John H. Mercer | | Benjamin Porter | | Lucius Stone |

| | | | |
|------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| | Nathan F. Trow | Fred P. Kenyon | Benjamin F. Porter |
| | William C. True | Ralston H. | Bradley T. Talbert |
| | David S. Wheeler | Penniman | Frank W. True |
| | George W. | John Porter | Frank Whitaker |
| | Woodbury | Albert K. Read | Alban A. Wood |
| 1887 | John S. Andrews | Charles E. St. Clair | Eugene E. Beers |
| | Reuben T. Cross | Byron W. Sanborn | William R. |
| | Charles B. Dean | Levi H. Sanderson | Brocklebank |
| | George W. Doyle | Bradley T. Talbert | Lucian E. Cobb |
| | Henry C. Farnum | Wallace P. Thrasher | Carlos D. Colby |
| | Almon W. French | Nathan F. Trow | Exom O. Eaton |
| | Russell B. French | Frank W. True | Arthur Hadley |
| | John Porter | William C. True | Willis Jordan |
| | William C. True | Asa Walker | C. N. Peterson |
| | Asa Walker | Daniel C. Westgate | George E. Read |
| | Frank Whitaker | Carlos H. Williams | Orren A. Stearns |
| | John H. Whitaker | Charles A. Williams | F. W. True |
| 1890 | John S. Andrews | William R. | Frank Whitaker |
| | George W. Beers | Brocklebank | Alban A. Wood |
| | Clarence C. Cobb | Elijah W. Burnap | Edwin R. Miller |
| | Merrit F. Colby | Alvah B. Chellis | Charles H. Peterson |
| | Norman L. Cory | Clarence C. Cobb | Orra S. Bugbee |
| | Dennis W. Cross | George G. Cole | David Emery |
| | Edward C. Daniels | Edward C. Daniels | James M. Gibson |
| | Orren M. Currier | Samuel Davis | Eugene E. Beers |
| | Henry C. Daniels | Charles E. Eggleston | James M. Gibson |
| | Willis K. Daniels | George J. French | Arthur L. Hadley |
| | George W. Doyle | George E. Goss | Leon C. Kenyon |
| | Orville F. Eaton | Arthur L. Hadley | Charles N. Peterson |
| | Henry C. Farnum | Charles S. Hersey | B. F. Porter |
| | George W. French | Christopher C. | Arthur L. Hadley |
| | Stephen Hersey | Jordan | Charles S. Hersey |
| | Alfred P. Jenney | Charles W. Peterson | Leon E. Kenyon |
| | Lewis S. Jordan | John Porter | C. H. Peterson |
| | John Porter | Albert K. Read | Orren A. Stearns |
| | Albert K. Read | George E. Read | 1905 Nathan R. Andrews |
| | Eugene D. Rice | Byron W. Sanborn | Carroll Camp |
| | Orren A. Stearns | Samuel R. Sanborn | James P. Cuddy |
| | Charles Stone | Orren A. Stearns | Henry Goodwin |
| | Lucius E. Stone | Bradley T. Talbert | Arthur L. Hadley |
| | Green Bush Strong | William C. True | Charles S. Hersey |
| | Frank W. True | Charles H. Williams | D. F. Jordan |
| | William C. True | Alban P. Wood | Henry N. Penniman |
| | Daniel C. Westgate | William P. Wood | Fred A. Rogers |
| | Frank Whitaker | | M. N. Sheffard |
| | George W. | <i>Changed to Highway or Road</i> | 1906 Nathan R. Andrews |
| | Woodbury | <i>Agent:</i> | C. P. Camp |
| | Phinias Woodward | 1893 Benjamin F. Porter | James P. Cuddy |
| 1891 | George T. Avery | Orren A. Stearns | John H. Cutting |
| | Frank D. F. Baker | 1894 Orren A. Stearns | Eber M. Dean |
| | Elbridge G. Beers | 1895 Ozro V. Eastman | Henry Goodwin |
| | Charles S. Burr | Albert K. Read | Arthur L. Hadley |
| | Carlos D. Colby | Albert K. Read | Charles Hersey |
| | Norman L. Cory | Orren A. Stearns | Darwin F. Jordan |
| | Samuel Davis | 1897-98 Ozro V. Eastman | Henry N. Penniman |
| | Exom O. Eaton | Albert K. Read | M. N. Sheffard |
| | James Fadden | <i>Changed to Surveyor of</i> | 1907 Nathan R. Andrews |
| | Joseph H. Fellows | <i>Highways:</i> | Carroll Camp |
| | George C. Freeman | 1899 Eugene E. Beers | C. C. Cobb |
| | George J. French | W. A. Brocklebank | Charles E. Curtis |
| | Charles S. Hersey | Carlos D. Colby | Eber M. Dean |
| | Stephen Hersey | Exom O. Eaton | Exom O. Eaton |
| | Alfred P. Jenney | Arthur L. Hadley | Arthur L. Hadley |
| | Harrison H. Jordan | Giles S. Hastings | Charles S. Hersey |
| | | Willis Jordan | |

| | | | | | |
|------|-------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|
| 1908 | Frank Jenney | 1913 | John C. Whitney | 1930 | Thomas A. Penniman |
| | Darwin F. Jordan | | Stephen Woodward | | Edwin M. Porter |
| 1909 | Nathan R. Andrews | 1914 | Eugene E. Beers | | J. Daniel Porter |
| | Carroll P. Camp | | Arling B. Cutts | 1931-32 | Fred W. Talbert |
| | H. C. Daniels | | Arthur Hadley | | Eugene E. Beers |
| | Arthur L. Hadley | | Edwin Porter | 1933-34 | Thomas A. Penniman |
| | Charles S. Hersey | | Scott West | | Edwin M. Porter |
| | Darwin F. Jordan | | Arling B. Cutts | 1935 | J. Daniel Porter |
| | Chandler L. Mason | | Arthur L. Hadley | | Fred W. Talbert |
| | Elmer J. Moulton | 1915 | Thomas Penniman | 1936 | Arthur T. Whitney |
| | Fred A. Rogers | | Edwin M. Porter | | Charles Edward King |
| | Elihu H. Slack | 1917 | Fred W. Talbert | 1937-41 | John Willard Whitney |
| 1910 | Nathan R. Andrews | | Scott J. West | | Arthur T. Whitney |
| | Carroll P. Camp | 1918 | Arthur L. Hadley | 1942-44 | John W. Whitney |
| | Clarence C. Cobb | | Edwin M. Porter | | William Annal |
| | Henry C. Daniels | 1919 | Fred Talbert | 1945 | Arthur Whitney |
| | Arthur L. Hadley | | Scott J. West | | William Annal |
| | Charles S. Hersey | 1920 | Changed to Road Agent: | 1946-49 | John Demers |
| | L. C. Mason | | 1917 Eugene E. Beers | | Frank Hussey |
| | Elmer J. Moulton | 1921 | Arthur L. Hadley | 1947 | Herbert King |
| | George E. Read | | Fred W. Talbert | | Herbert King |
| | Fred A. Rogers | 1922 | Arthur L. Hadley | 1948-82 | William F. Jenney |
| 1911 | F. W. True | | Thomas Penniman | | Herbert King |
| | J. W. Westgate | 1923 | Fred W. Talbert | 1949-50 | Maurice D. King |
| | Nathan R. Andrews | | Orren A. Stearns | | Unknown |
| | Clarence N. Bean | 1924 | Exom O. Eaton | 1951 | Maurice D. King |
| | Carroll P. Camp | | Arthur L. Hadley | | Francis W. Sullivan |
| | James P. Cuddy | 1925 | Leon L. Cobb | 1952-71 | Arthur W. Thompson |
| | John H. Cutting | | William E. French | | Thomas Bircher |
| | Henry C. Daniels | 1926-27 | Matthew H. Watson | 1977-82 | Clayton Hutchins |
| | Exom O. Eaton | | Leon L. Cobb | | John H. McNamara, Jr. |
| | Arthur L. Hadley | 1928 | Arthur L. Hadley | 1983-86 | John H. McNamara, Jr. (resigned) |
| 1912 | E. R. Miller | | Charles S. Hersey | | Paul E. Rondos |
| | Elmer J. Moulton | 1929 | Eugene E. Beers | 1987 | Arthur W. Thompson |
| | George E. Read | | Arthur L. Hadley | | Albert Earle |
| | Frank W. True | 1930 | Fred Moulton | 1988-89 | Surveyor of Lumber |
| | Asa A. Walker | | Henry N. Penniman | | 1795 Eliphalet Adams |
| | J. W. Westgate | 1931-32 | William E. Westgate | 1796 | Francis Smith, Esq. |
| | Eugene E. Beers | | William Annal | | Francis Smith |
| | Charles Curtis | 1933-34 | Eugene E. Beers | 1797 | John Austin |
| | John H. Cutting | | Frank A. Hussey | | Lt. Nathan Gates |
| | H. C. Daniels | 1935 | Thomas A. Penniman | 1798-03 | John Austin |
| | Arthur L. Hadley | | Fred A. Rogers | | Leonard Pulsifer |
| 1913 | Charles Hersey | 1936 | William Annal | 1805 | Leonard Pulsifer |
| | Frank E. Jenney | | Eugene E. Beers | | Benjamin Freeman |
| | George E. Read | 1937-41 | Frank A. Hussey | 1817-18 | Duty Stickney |
| | O. A. Stearns | | Thomas A. Penniman | | Moses Bryant |
| | N. F. Susor | 1938-41 | Edwin M. Porter | 1819 | Duty Stickney |
| | Frank W. True | | Fred W. Talbert | | Charles Eggleston |
| | J. W. Westgate | 1939 | Eugene E. Beers | 1820 | Duty Stickney |
| | Eugene E. Beers | | Frank A. Hussey | | Duty Stickney |
| | Charles Curtis | 1940 | Thomas A. Penniman | 1821 | Duty Stickney |
| | John H. Cutting | | Edwin M. Porter | | Duty Stickney |

| | | | | | |
|---------|---------------------|------|---------------------|---------|---------------------|
| 1822 | Charles Eggleston | | Bradbury Dyer | | William H. Moore |
| | Duty Stickney | 1859 | Bradbury Dyer | | Fred Moulton |
| 1823 | Duty Stickney | | Moses Fifield | | Benjamin Small |
| 1824-25 | Charles Eggleston | 1860 | Stephen R. Moulton | 1877 | George J. French |
| | Duty Stickney | | Enos R. Spalding | | Hamden A. Gilson |
| 1826 | Calvin Spalding | 1861 | Stephen R. Moulton | | Benjamin F. |
| | Duty Stickney | | Junius A. Spencer | | Manchester |
| 1827 | Daniel Morrill | | Horace B. Stickney | | Fred Moulton |
| | Calvin Spalding | 1862 | Philip M. Carr | 1879-80 | Selectmen to |
| 1828 | John Bryant | | Junius A. Spencer | | appoint |
| | Calvin Spalding | 1863 | Philip M. Carr | 1881 | William Moore |
| 1829 | Calvin Spalding | | Stephen R. Moulton | | Zenas B. Small |
| | Duty Stickney | | Junius A. Spencer | 1882 | None elected |
| 1830 | Duty Stickney | 1864 | Fred B. Hanchett | 1883 | George F. Doty |
| 1831 | Calvin Spalding | | Sumner F. Pierce | 1884-66 | Selectmen to |
| | Duty Stickney | | Obediah G. Smith | | appoint |
| 1832 | Daniel Merrill | 1865 | Philip M. Carr | 1887 | None elected |
| | Calvin Spalding | | John Peterson | 1888-96 | Selectmen to |
| 1833-34 | Calvin Spalding | | Junius A. Spencer | | appoint |
| | Duty Stickney | 1866 | Charles P. Fifield | | |
| 1835 | Calvin Spalding | | Benjamin C. Smith | | |
| | John Spalding | | Junius A. Spencer | | Tax Collector |
| 1836 | Smith | 1867 | Frederick B. | | |
| 1837 | Duty Stickney | | Hanchett | 1766 | Amos Stafford |
| 1838 | Unknown | | Benjamin F. | 1767 | Reuben Jerold |
| 1839 | Duty Stickney | | Manchester | 1768-69 | Benjamin Chapman |
| 1841 | Charles Eggleston | | John W. Peterson | 1770 | Josiah Russell, Jr. |
| | Duty Stickney | 1868 | Elias Farnum | 1771 | Abel Gates |
| 1842 | Bradbury Dyer | | George S. Hanchett | | Joseph Smith |
| | Duty Stickney | | Harrison H. Jordan | 1772 | Joseph Smith |
| 1843 | Ai Read | | Sidney Sanborn | 1773 | Isaac Main |
| | Duty Stickney | 1869 | Alvin D. Manchester | 1774 | Abel Stafford |
| 1844 | Ai Read | | Benjamin F. | 1775 | Duthan Kingsbury |
| | Erastus Ticknor | | Manchester | 1776 | Thomas Gallup |
| 1845 | Calvin Spalding | | John W. Peterson | 1777 | Benjamin Cutler |
| | John Spalding | 1870 | Eben Hadley | 1778 | John Stevens, Jr. |
| 1846 | A. D. Kingsbury | | Frederick B. | 1779 | Lemuel Smith |
| | Duty Stickney | | Hanchett | 1780 | Asa Gallup |
| 1847 | Calvin Spalding | | William Moore | 1781 | Perley Roberts |
| | Duty Stickney | 1871 | George Moore | 1782 | Charles Spalding |
| 1848 | Charles Eggleston | | Fred Moulton | | Robert Miller |
| | Daniel Morrill | | Junius A. Spencer | 1783 | Nathan Gates |
| 1849 | Bradbury Dyer | 1872 | John Freeman | | Simeon Cory |
| | James Freeman | | Benjamin F. | 1784 | No record |
| | Duty Stickney | | Manchester | 1785 | Thomas Gates |
| 1851 | Charles Eggleston | | Harvey D. Picknell | | Moses Vinson |
| | Duty Stickney | | Junius A. Spencer | 1786 | Robert Miller |
| 1852 | Daniel Morrill | 1873 | Edward Hall | 1787 | Asa Gallup |
| | Enos R. Spalding | | John Freeman | 1788 | Thomas Gates |
| 1853 | Calvin Spalding | | William S. Moore | 1789 | Abel Stone |
| | Duty Stickney | | Fred Moulton | | Sample Gilkey |
| 1854 | Charles Eggleston | 1874 | John Baldwin | 1790 | Ruluf Spalding |
| | Simon French | | John Freeman | | Jesse Roberts |
| 1855 | Moses Fifield | | George J. French | 1791 | Daniel Cole |
| | Alvin D. Manchester | | Benjamin F. | | Joshua Baley |
| | Enos R. Spalding | | Manchester | 1792 | George Avery |
| 1856 | Moses Fifield | | William Moore | | Benjamin Kimball, |
| | James Gilkey | 1875 | George J. French | | Jr. |
| | Benjamin C. Smith | | William Hall | 1793 | Benjamin True |
| 1857 | Parker Carr | | Benjamin F. | 1794 | Elisha Williams |
| | Simon French | | Manchester | 1795 | Thomas Stevens |
| | Calvin Spalding | | William Moore | | Nouel Stevens |
| 1858 | Parker Carr | | Fred Moulton | 1796 | Bezaleel Gates |
| | Eben Clough | 1876 | George J. French | | Timothy Cory |

1797 Nathaniel Wheeler
Timothy Cory
1798-99 Nathaniel Penniman
1800 Isaac Chapman
1801 Timothy Cory
1802 Joseph Fifield
1803 Abel Stone
1804 Daniel Kingsbury
1805-07 Abel Stone
1808 Abel Stone, Jr.
1809-12 Benjamin Westgate
1813 David Stone
1814-17 Benjamin Westgate
1818 Thomas Penniman
1819 Sylvanus Bryant
1820 Enos Roberts
1821 Samuel Read
1822 Ishmael Tuxbury
Luther French
1823 Jeremiah Dow
1824 Jeremiah Dow
C. Taylor
1825 John Bryant
L. Smith
1826 Abel Stone, Jr.
1827 Moses Chellis
1828 Thomas Penniman
1829 Jabez Porter
1830 Charles Eggleston
1831 Jabez Porter
1832 Joseph Parker
Erastus Ticknor
1833-34 Joseph Parker
1835 George Bryant
1836 Raymond Kenyon
1837 Raymond Kenyon
Joseph Parker
1838 George Bryant
1839 Raymond Kenyon
1840 Jabez Porter
1841-42 Asa D. Kingsbury
1843 Asa D. Kingsbury
George Bryant
1844-45 George Bryant
1846 Benjamin C. Smith
Elias F. Smith
1847 Benjamin C. Smith
Elias F. Smith
1848 Darwin Bryant
1849 Darwin Bryant
Philo G. C. Merrill
1850 R. M. Sargent
Charles Gilkey
1851 Benjamin C. Smith
Alonzo Winkley
1852 Converse Cole
Benjamin C. Smith
1853 Converse Cole
Frederick J. Stevens
1854 Frederick J. Stevens
George Westgate
1855-56 Benjamin C. Smith
Stephen D. Stone
1857 Alpheus Roberts

1859 George F. Souther
1859 George F. Souther
Alpheus Roberts
1860 Benjamin C. Smith
Stephen D. Stone
Samuel Bean, Jr.
1861 Alonzo Winkley
1862-69 Stephen D. Stone
1870 William H. Pierce
1871 William H. Pierce
Samuel Davis
18872 Stephen D. Stone
1873 Orra C. Pierce
1874 Orra C. Pierce
Stephen D. Stone
1875-81 Stephen D. Stone
1882-83 Josiah Davis
1884-86 Stephen D. Stone
1887-94 Ozro V. Eastman
1895 Joel Raynsford
1896-1909 Samuel W. Clark
1910 Insley W. Spalding
1911-12 Charles Woodward
1913-19 Edwin C. Kenyon
1820 Edwin C. Kenyon
Charles Hill
1821 Nathan R. Andrews
1922 Leon D. Clark
1923 Leon D. Clark
George E. Read
1924 George E. Read
1925 George E. Read
Henry N. Penniman
1926-27 Henry N. Penniman
1928 Morris C. Penniman
1929 Blanche M. Barton
1930 Susie H. Jordan
1931 Frank J.
Chadbourne
1932-36 Fred A. Rogers
1937 Fred A. Rogers
Addie M. Rogers
1938 Herman D. Rogers
1939 Clarence N. Bean
1940-50 Vernon A. Hood
1951-58 Richard H.
DeGoosh
1958-60 Kathryn MacLeay
1961-63 Helen J. White
1963-66 John C. Morse
1967-69 William A. Smith
1970-81 Dorothy T.
McNamara
1982 Dorothy T.
McNamara
(resigned)
Beverly Dore
1983-85 Beverly Dore
1986- Ruthann Wheeler

Town Clerk

1766-74 Francis Smith
1775 Josiah Russell, Jr.
1776 Thomas Gallup
1777 Thomas Gallup
Lemuel Williams
1778-83 Lemuel Williams
1784 No record
1785-87 Joseph Kimball
1788-92 Joseph Kimball
1793-96 Champeon Spalding
1797-08 Thomas Stevens
1809 Isaac Chapman
1810-14 Daniel Kingsbury
1815 Isaac Chapman
1816-17 Daniel Kingsbury
1818 William Cutler
1819-21 Moses Bryant
1822-23 Robert Kimball
1824-35 Levi Bryant
1836-37 Luther Parker
1838 George Bryant
1839-41 Henry Chapman
1842 Henry Chapman
William F. Flanders
1843-45 George Bryant
1846 Asa D. Kingsbury
1847 Benjamin C. Smith
1848-49 George Bryant
1850-51 E. M. Sargent
1852-43 George D. Frost
1854-55 Benjamin F. Ward
1856-57 Stephen D. Stone
1858-59 Charles F. Gallup
1860-61 Charles P. Fifield
1862-63 Charles F. Gallup
1864-65 Charles P. Fifield
1866-67 Charles F. Gallup
1868-69 Charles P. Fifield
1870 Henry M. Scales
Darius Steward
1871 Frank H. Coin
1872-73 Charles H. Hill
1874-75 Walter A. Norris
1876-77 Charles H. Hill
1878-80 Benjamin F.
Manchester
1881 Wallace P. Thrasher
1882 Solomon C. Dow
1883-84 Perley Roberts
1885-86 Benjamin F. Ward
1887-88 Perley Roberts
1889-90 Daniel C. Westgate
1891-92 Perley Roberts
1893-94 William Hall
1895-96 Perley Roberts
1897-98 Daniel C. Westgate
1899-1901 Perley Roberts
1902 Edwin G. Kenyon
1903 Perley Roberts
Fred Moulton
1904 Morris G. Penniman
1905-06 Edwin G. Kenyon

1907-08 Morris G. Penniman
 1909-10 Edwin G. Kenyon
 1911-12 Charles D. Morse
 1913-14 Leon D. Clark
 1915-16 Morris G. Penniman
 1917-18 Frank J.
 Chadbourne
 1919-20 George C. Barton
 1921-22 Frank J.
 Chadbourne
 1923-24 George C. Barton
 1925-26 Wesley W. Jordan
 1927-28 A. Hayes Jones
 1929-30 Frank J.
 Chadbourne
 1931-32 A. Hayes Jones
 1933-41 William H. Jenney
 1942 William H. Jenney
 Susie F. Jenney
 1943-44 Howard Zea
 1945 Howard Zea
 Nellie Zea
 1946 Nellie Zea
 1947- Howard Zea

Town Treasurer

1765-70 John Stevens
 1771 No record
 1772 Benjamin Kimball
 1773 John Stevens
 1774-83 Benjamin Kimball
 1784 No Record
 1785-87 Benjamin Kimball
 1788-93 Daniel Kimball
 1794-98 Francis Smith
 1799-1809 Daniel Kimball
 1810-12 Benjamin True
 1813 Gideon Woodward
 1814-15 Benjamin True
 1816 Daniel Kimball
 1817-26 William Cutler
 1827 No record
 1828 Levi Bryant
 1829-40 John Bryant
 1841 John Bryant
 Levi Bryant
 1842-44 Reuben True
 1845 Merrit Farnum
 1846-47 James Gilkey
 1848 William D. Colby
 1849 Ai Read
 1850 Albert K. Read
 1851 Jonathan S.
 Blanchard
 1852 William D. Colby
 1853 Frederick J. Stevens
 1854 Isaac W. Westgate
 1855 Unknown
 1856 Albert C. Daniels
 1857 Unknown
 1858 Samuel C. Moulton
 1859-60 John B. Rowell

1861-62 George Bryant
 1863 Benjamin C. Smith
 1864-65 Stephen D. Stone
 1866 John Lane
 1867 Henry C. Farnum
 1868-69 Samuel Bean
 1870 Andrew J. Chellis
 1871 Samuel Davis
 1872-73 Stephen D. Stone
 1874-77 Charles F. Gallup
 1878-79 John B. Rowell
 1880-81 Farnum J. Spencer
 1882 Samuel Bean
 1883 Lemuel Morse
 1884 Benjamin F. Ward
 1885 Willis K. Daniels
 1886-87 Perley Roberts
 1888-89 Daniel C. Westgate
 1890-91 Perley Roberts
 1892-93 Benjamin F. Ward
 1894-95 Perley Roberts
 1896 William Hall
 1897 Daniel C. Westgate
 1898-99 Perley Roberts
 1900 Edwin G. Kenyon
 1901-02 Perley Roberts
 1903-04 Edwin G. Kenyon
 1905-06 Morris G. Penniman
 1907-08 Edwin G. Kenyon
 1909 Morris G. Penniman
 1910 Ora C. Davis
 1911-12 John H. Whitaker
 1913-14 John F. Cann
 1915-16 Frank J.
 Chadbourne
 1917-18 John F. Cann
 1919-20 Frank J. Chadbourne
 1921-22 George C. Barton
 1923-24 Wesley W. Jordan
 1925-26 Harold W. Chellis
 1927-34 Wesley W. Jordan
 1935-36 Susie M. Jenney
 1937 Wesley W. Jordan
 Bessie W. Hill
 1938-39 Bessie W. Hill
 1940 Bessie W. Hill
 John W. Whitney
 1941-46 Susie Jordan
 1947 Susie Jordan
 John W. Whitney
 1948-50 John W. Whitney
 1951 John W. Whitney
 Robert W. Gibson
 1952-57 Robert W. Gibson
 1958 Robert W. Gibson
 Fred Sweet
 1959-90 Fred Sweet

Tree Warden

1908 Louis E. Shipman
 1972-76 Arthur W.
 Thompson
 1977 Thomas Bircher

1978-80 Clayton Hutchins
 1980-84 None
 1985-86 John H. McNamara,
 Jr.
 1987-90 Armand Rondeau

Truant Officer

1887 Edwin R. Miller
 Wallace P. Thrasher
 Alban P. Wood
 1904 Ozro V. Eastman
 1915-16 Nathan R. Andrews
 1923 Ernest R. Bridgford
 (Plainfield)
 William E. Westgate
 (Meriden)
 1924-37 William E. Westgate
 1938 None
 1940-46 John F. McNamara
 1947-48 Earl J. Barker
 1949-50 Adelard Brouillard
 1951-57 Frank Sullivan
 1958 None
 1959-61 Harold Hoisington

Trustee of Trust Funds

1917 Nathan R. Andrews
 J. Daniel Porter
 1918-26 Nathan R. Andrews
 J. Daniel Porter
 Daniel C. Westgate
 1927 J. Daniel Porter
 Daniel C. Westgate
 1928-29 Nathan R. Andrews
 J. Daniel Porter
 Daniel C. Westgate
 1930 J. Daniel Porter
 Daniel C. Westgate
 1931-34 Morris G. Penniman
 Daniel C. Westgate
 John W. Whitney
 1935-38 Henry N. Penniman
 Morris G. Penniman
 John W. Whitney
 1939 Morris G. Penniman
 John W. Whitney
 Howard Zea
 1940-47 Palmer C. Read
 John W. Whitney
 Howard Zea
 1948-51 Palmer C. Read
 Ruth Williams
 Howard Zea
 1952-53 Palmer C. Read, Sr.
 Ruth Williams
 Howard Zea
 1954 Arthur Chivers
 Palmer C. Read, Sr.
 Howard Zea
 1955-66 Arthur Chivers

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------|------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|
| | Vernon A. Hood | | Simeon Cory | 1806 | Eliphalet Adams |
| | Howard Zea | 1780 | Eliphalet Kimball | | Stephen Cole |
| 1967 | Arthur Chivers | | Joseph Spalding | 1807 | Isaac Chapman |
| | Basil McNamara | 1781 | Eliphalet Kimball | | Philip Spalding |
| | Howard Zea | | Joseph Kimball | 1808 | Eliphalet Adams |
| 1968-75 | Basil D. McNamara | 1782 | Zadock Bloss | | Capt. Isaac |
| | Arthur W. Quimby | | Eliphalet Kimball | | Chapman |
| | Howard Zea | 1783 | Joseph Kimball, Esq. | 1809-10 | Champeon Spalding |
| 1976-77 | Ray Pardo | | Abel Stafford | | Gideon Woodward |
| | Arthur W. Quimby | | Samuel Wilk | 1811 | Merrit Colby |
| | Howard Zea | 1784 | Unknown | | Jeremiah Gates |
| 1978 | Ray Pardo | 1785 | Daniel Kimball | 1812-13 | Capt. Eliphalet |
| | Stephen Taylor | | Jonathan Stevens | | Adams |
| | Howard Zea | 1786 | Zadock Bloss | | Stephen Cole |
| 1979 | Stephen Taylor | | Jonathan Stevens | 1814 | Freeman Chase |
| | Lucia Willis | 1787 | Robert Miller | | Deac. Champeon |
| | Howard Zea | | Lt. Abel Stone | | Spalding |
| 1980-81 | Joseph Salsbury | 1788 | Timothy Cory | 1815 | Eliphalet Adams |
| | Stephen Taylor | | Joseph Smith | | Oliver Kingsbury |
| | Lucia B. Willis | 1789 | Eliphalet Adams | | Stephen Tracy |
| 1982 | Joseph Salsbury | | Dr. Oliver Baker | | James Washburn |
| | Stephen Taylor | | Lemuel Smith | 1816 | Lt. Richard Purmet, |
| | Susan Timmons | | Amos Strafford | | 2nd |
| 1983 | Joseph Salsbury | | Lt. Amos Strafford | | Stephen Tracy |
| | Jesse R. Stalker | | (excused) | 1817 | Deac. Eliphalet |
| | Susan Timmons | 1790 | Joshua Baley | | Adams |
| 1984 | Bruce Baird | | Lemuel Smith | | Deac. Stephen Tracy |
| | Jesse R. Stalker | 1791 | Benjamin Cutler | 1818 | Champlin Spalding |
| | Susan Timmons | | Lt. Thomas Gallup | | Deac. Stephen Tracy |
| 1985 | Bruce Baird | | Capt. Charles | 1819 | Deac. Daniel Morrill |
| | (resigned) | | Spalding | | Deac. Stephen Tracy |
| | Jesse R. Stalker | 1792 | Joshua Baley | 1820 | Thomas Chellis, Jr. |
| | Bruce Schaffer | | Stephen Cole | | (East Parish) |
| 1986-87 | James Barnicle | 1793 | Joshua Baley | | Bradbury Dyer |
| | Bruce Schaffer | | Ebenezer Cole | | (West Parish) |
| | Jesse R. Stalker | 1794 | Joshua Baley | 1821 | Jacob Smith |
| 1988-90 | James Barnicle | | Gideon Woodward | | Joseph Wood |
| | Donald Garfield | 1795 | Stephen Cole | 1822 | Edmond Freeman |
| | Jesse R. Stalker | | Francis Dean | | Timothy W. Hall |
| | | | Nathaniel Penniman | 1823 | Timothy W. Hall |
| | | 1796 | Stephen Cole | | Capt. J. Wood |
| | | | Lt. Abel Stone | 1824 | Daniel Cole, Jr. |
| | | 1797 | Capt. Eliphalet | | Benjamin H. |
| | | | Adams | | Persons |
| | | | Asa Gallup | 1825 | Edward Freeman |
| | | 1798 | Stephen Cole | | Benjamin Neal |
| | | | Joseph Spalding | 1826 | Edward Freeman |
| | | 1799 | Stephen Cole | | James Washburn |
| | | | Capt. Philip | 1827 | Simeon Adams |
| | | | Spalding | | Edward Freeman |
| | | 1800 | Stephen Cole | 1828 | Edward Freeman |
| | | | Daniel Kimball, Esq. | | Daniel Morrill |
| | | 1801 | Eliphalet Adams | 1829 | Charles Flanders |
| | | | Stephen Cole | | Benjamin H. Person |
| | | 1802 | Asa Gallup | 1830 | Ephraim Kinsman |
| | | | Philip Spalding | | Daniel Morrill |
| | | 1803 | Isaac Chapman | | Andrew Pingree |
| | | | Philip Spalding | 1831 | Unknown |
| | | 1804 | Capt. Isaac | 1832 | Moses Bryant |
| | | | Chapman | | Daniel Morrill |
| | | | Deac. Champeon | 1833 | Samuel B. Duncan |
| | | | Spalding | | David Stone |
| | | 1805 | Champeon Spalding | 1834 | Dimick Baker |
| | | | Gideon Woodward | | George Marcy |
| Tything Man | | | | | |
| 1769 | Thomas Gates | | | | |
| | Josiah Russell | | | | |
| 1770 | Josiah Colton | | | | |
| | Lemuel Williams | | | | |
| 1771-72 | Benjamin Chapman | | | | |
| | Charles Spalding | | | | |
| 1773 | Reuben Jerold | | | | |
| | Joseph Kimball | | | | |
| 1774 | William Cutler | | | | |
| | Eliphalet Kimball | | | | |
| | Josiah Russell, Jr. | | | | |
| | John Stevens, Jr. | | | | |
| 1775 | Adam Clark | | | | |
| | John Stevens | | | | |
| 1776 | Benjamin Kimball | | | | |
| | Joseph Kimball | | | | |
| | Charles Spalding | | | | |
| 1777 | Adam Clark | | | | |
| | Timothy Vinson | | | | |
| 1778 | Unknown | | | | |
| 1779 | Adam Clark | | | | |

| | |
|---------|-------------------|
| 1835 | Bradbury Dyer |
| | Samuel B. Duncan |
| 1836 | Samuel Duncan |
| | Edward Freeman |
| 1837 | Dimick Baker |
| | George Marcy |
| 1838 | Jesse R. Bartlett |
| | Bradbury Dyer |
| 1839 | None |
| 1840 | Edward Freeman |
| | Daniel Morrill |
| 1841 | Dimick Baker |
| | Edward Freeman |
| 1842 | Dimick Baker |
| | Silas Read |
| 1843 | William L. Bragg |
| | Bradbury Dyer |
| | Edward Freeman |
| | Edwin Dorr Frost |
| 1844 | George Marcy |
| | Thomas Pool |
| 1845-47 | Unknown |
| 1848 | Salmon Hildreth |
| 1849 | Reuben Moore, Jr. |
| 1850 | George Johnson |
| | Samuel Sanborn |

Zoning Administrator

| | |
|---------|--------------------|
| 1974-75 | Joseph M. Longacre |
| 1976-77 | Douglas Smith |
| 1978-80 | Alex Cherington |
| 1981-83 | Donald Jordan |
| 1984-87 | D. Boone Rondeau |
| 1988-89 | David McBride |
| 1990- | Steve Halleran |

Zoning Board of Adjustment

| | |
|---------|---------------------|
| 1968 | Stephen A. Beaupré |
| | Theodore H. Burgess |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| 1969-70 | Stephen A. Beaupré |
| | Theodore H. Burgess |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | David W. Stockwell |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| 1971 | Theodore H. Burgess |
| | John L. Meyette |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | David W. Stockwell |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| 1972 | Hazel H. McNamara |
| | Joseph C. Meyette |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | David W. Stockwell |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| 1973 | David A. Gaskin |

| | |
|---------|--------------------------|
| | Joseph C. Meyette |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | David W. Stockwell |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| 1974-76 | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | David A. Gaskin |
| | Joseph C. Meyette |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| 1977 | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Denis Reisch |
| | Steve Roland |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| | Katherine Vaughn |
| 1978 | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Denis Reisch |
| | Steve Roland |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Anne Sprague |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| | Katherine Vaughn |
| 1979-80 | Jeffrey Allbright |
| | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Denis Reisch |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Jesse Stalker |
| | Ira Townsend |
| | John Woodward-Poor |
| 1981 | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Denis Reisch |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Jesse Stalker |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| 1982 | Jeffrey Allbright |
| | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Denis Reisch |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Jesse Stalker |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| | John Woodward-Poor |
| 1983 | Jeffrey Allbright |
| | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Denis Reisch |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Jesse Stalker |
| | Jay Waldner, Jr. |
| | John Woodward-Poor |
| 1984-85 | Jeffrey Allbright |
| | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Denis Reisch |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Jesse Stalker |

| | |
|------|---------------------------|
| | Ira Townsend |
| | Jay Waldner, Jr. |
| | John Woodward-Poor |
| 1986 | Jeffrey Allbright |
| | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Carol-Lynn Marrazzo |
| | Denis Reisch |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| | Jay Waldner, Jr. |
| | John Woodward-Poor |
| 1987 | Jeffrey Allbright |
| | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Arlynne Grearson |
| | Carol-Lynn Marrazzo |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Ira P. Townsend |
| | Jay Waldner, Jr. |
| | John Woodward-Poor |
| 1988 | Robert Calvert |
| | William F. Franklin, Jr. |
| | Arlynne Grearson |
| | Carol-Lynn Marrazzo |
| | Patricia Palmiotto |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| | Jay Waldner, Jr. |
| 1989 | Robert Calvert (resigned) |
| | Arlynne Grearson |
| | William Franklin |
| | Carol-Lynn Marrazzo |
| | Patricia Palmiotto |
| | Marc Rosenbaum |
| | H. Fenton Smith |
| 1990 | Arlynne Grearson |
| | William Franklin |
| | Carol-Lynn Marrazzo |
| | Edward Moynihan |
| | Patricia Palmiotto |
| | Marc Rosenbaum |
| | H. Fenton Smith |

Appendix C

Plainfield Soldiers

Authors:

Reverend Harold L. Jones, Jr.

Kathryn F. MacLeay

Howard W. Zea

The Revolution¹

Eliphalet Adams

Oliver Adams

Simeon Adams

John Andrews

John Alsworth

George Avery

Asa Bates

Samuel Bloss

Walter Bloss

Zadock Bloss

Asa Briggs

Ebenezer Brown

Benjamin Bugbee

Peter Bugbee

Ebenezer Burr

Jesse Carpenter

Benjamin Chapman (drummer)

Adam Clark

Ebenezer Clough

Benjamin Cory

Corp. Simeon Cory

Corp. Timothy Cory

Caleb Cotton

Job Cotton

Lemuel Cotton

Corp. Benjamin Cutler



Yankee Doodlers Band with Edmund Wright as "Uncle Sam," July 4, 1990.
Photo by Pat Palmiotto. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Hodges Cutler
Knights Cutler
William Cutler
Darock (a negro)
Lemuel Dean
Nathaniel Delano
Nathan Draper
Ephraim Dunlap
Robert Dunlap
Samuel Eggleston
Eiry Evans
Samuel Fairfield (fifer)
Edward Fifield
Hezekiah French
Asa Gallup
Benjamin Gallup
Thomas Gallup
Thomas Gallup, Jr.
Sergt. Elias Gates
Corp. Nathan Gates
Corp. Silas Gates
Thomas Gates
Sample Gilkey
Corp. David Gitchel
Elijah Gleason
Christopher Hall
Laban Hall
Philip Hopkins
Daniel Hovey
Theophilus Howard
Thomas Howard
Jonathan Howe
Steward Howe
Parley Hughes
William Huntington
Sergt. Ebenezer Jenney
Isaac Jenney
James Jenney
Stephen Jennings
Lieut. Reuben Jerold
Elijah Johnson
Benjamin Jordan
Philip Jordan
Ebenezer Joy

Ephraim Joy
James Kelsey
Ephraim Kile
John Kile
William Kile
Benjamin Kimball
Sergt. Daniel Kimball
Joseph Kimball
Wills Kimball
Peter King
Duthan Kingsbury
Joseph Kingsbury
Ens. Isaac Main
Eliphalet Minor
Stiles Muncel
Corp. Littlefield Nash
John Packard
Jon Parker
Jon Parker, Jr.
Jonathan Parkhurst
Nathan Parkhurst
Elexandrew Pettecrew
Stephen Pettecrew
Simeon Pool
Samuel Pool, Jr.
Ebenezer Re_____
Isaac Rice
Abraham Roberts
Jesse Roberts
Perley Roberts
Ziba Roberts
Alexander Runalds
Capt. Josiah Russell
Josiah Russell, Jr.
Josiah Russell 3rd
Charles Scott
Robert Scott
Timothy Scott
David Shapley
Jabez Shapley
Lathrop Shurtleff
Daniel Short
Simeon Short
Major Francis Smith

Lt. Joseph Smith
Lemuel Smith
Willard Smith
Champeon Spalding
Charles Spalding
Joseph Spalding
Philip Spalding
Ruluf Spalding
Abel Stafford
Corp. Nathaniel Stafford
Stutley Stafford
Thomas Stafford
Capt. Abel Stevens
Sarg. Maj. John Stevens
John Stevens, Jr.
John Stevens 3rd
Job Stevens

Abel Stone
Nathaniel Taylor
John Tone²
Timothy Vinson
James Walker
Phillips Warren
Sergt. Thomas West
Nathaniel Wheatley
Wilder Willard
Isaac Williams
Job Williams
Samuel Williams
Ami Wilson
Isaac Wilson
John Wilson
James Wilson
William Wilson



Gravestones of Edward Fifield and his wife
Dorothy. Photo by Erich Witzel.

Meriden Parish Train Band

The Meriden Parish Train Band was a militia group separate from the Plainfield militia. The men lived in Meriden and the western part of New Grantham and formed the earliest known organization in Plainfield's history. Nothing is known about the militia group on the west side of town. On April 30, 1781, the Meriden members were:

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Eliphalet Adams | James Jenney | Alexander Runalds |
| Oliver Adams | Ebenezer Jenney | Charles Scott |
| Simeon Adams | Isaac Jenney | Timothy Scott |
| John Andrews | Philip Jordan | David Shapley |
| Asa Bates | Ephraim Kile | Jabez Shapley |
| Samuel Bloss | John Kile | Lathrop Shurtleff |
| Walter Bloss | William Kile | Champeon Spalding |
| Zadock Bloss | Benjamin Kimball | Joseph Spalding |
| Ebenezer Brown | Daniel Kimball | Philip Spaulding |
| Ben Cory | Joseph Kimball | Ruluf Spalding |
| Caleb Cotton | Wills Kimball | Abel Stafford |
| Lemuel Cotton | Peter King | Nathaniel Stafford |
| Hodges Cutler | John Packard | Abel Stevens |
| Nathan Draper | Jonathan Parkhurst | John Stevens |
| Thomas Gallup, Jr. | Nathan Parkhurst | Job Stevens |
| Sample Gilkey | Samuel Pool | Isaac Williams |
| Elijah Gleason | Samuel Pool, Jr. | Ami Wilson |
| Benjamin Gordon | Isaac Rice | Squire Wilson |
| Philip Hopkins | Abraham Roberts | Nathan Young |
| Thomas Howard | Jesse Roberts | |
| Parley Hughes | Perley Roberts | |
| William Huntington | Ziba Roberts | |

Additional members on June 25, 1781, were:

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Benjamin Bugbee | Theophilus Howard | Robert Scott |
| Peter Bugbee | Stephen Jennings | Simeon Short |
| Ebenezer Burr | Elijah Johnson | Joh Stevens, Jr. |
| Ebenezer Clough | Ben Jordan | Nat Taylor |
| Nat Delano | Eliphalet Minor | Thomas West |
| Samuel Eggleston | Stiles Muncel | |
| Samuel Fairfield | Steven Sq. Pettecrew | |

Fifth Company, First Battalion, Fifteenth Regiment, Third Division of the New Hampshire Militia

On December 28, 1792, the legislature passed an act to create a militia:

Every free able bodied white male citizen of the state, who is, or shall be of the age of eighteen years, and under the age of forty years, except as hereinafter exempted, shall be enrolled in the militia. All national and state officers, post officers, stage drivers, ministers, elders and deacons of the Church, grammar school masters, selectmen while in office, doctors and surgeons, one miller for each corn mill, one ferryman for each ferry, and mans other were exempt.

According to the New Hampshire laws of 1808, the companies in Plainfield joined the north company and the light infantry of Cornish and the west company in New Grantham, to form the first battalion.

Each company, by law, was to muster at least twice a year and to have inspection of arms and instruction in military discipline. The law stated "that companys were to stand muster in June and September or at such time as the Commander should see fit. Each commanding officer of a battalion should call his battalion together once a year."

The first entry in the orderly books was a notice from Herman C. Commings, colonel of the Fifteenth Regiment. "To William P. Austin, captain of the Fifth Company of Infantry in the Fifteenth Regiment. By order of Ezekiel P. Pierce, brigadier general of the Fifth Brigade, you are hereby commanded and directed to appear near E. Smart's Tavern on Cornish Flat, in Cornish, with the company under your command, on Monday, the second day of September next, precisely at six o'clock a.m., armed and equipped as law requires for military inspection and review and there to wait further orders."³ On Friday, August 13, 1844, notice was given to meet near Silas Read's in Plainfield (Christine Dow, 1991) to drill and to make ready for the review at Cornish Flat. Another place of assembly was at Bradbury Dyer's across the road from the Plainfield Plain Cemetery in 1845.

The inspection returns of May 1845 show that the company consisted of one captain, one lieutenant, one ensign, one sergeant, no corporals, two musicians, thirty-four privates, and ten conditioned exemptions. The company had 34 muskets, 34 bayonets, 34 iron ramrods, 34 bayonet scabbards and belts, 34 priming wires and brushes, 68 spare flints, 34 knapsacks, 34 canteens, 1 drum, 1 fife, 1 infantry regulations, 1 militia laws, 2 roll books, and 2 orderly books. Charles F. Gallup, (Home Hill Country Inn, 1991) was the regiment's musician.

Other places of assembly were Asa Kingsbury's in 1845 and the Town House in 1847.

On September 2nd, 1848, the Fifth Company boundaries were enlarged to include "the boundaries of the town of Plainfield and so much of the town of Grantham, west of the top of Grantham Mountain, as was formerly included in the Third Company of Infnts [Infantry] in said 15th Regiment." This resolution increased the size of the Fifth Company to sixty-six men.

Failure to appear at muster carried fines of two dollars, plus the expense of travel.

When a militiaman refused to appear for training and did not give sufficient reason, drastic action was levied. When Joseph W. Roberts failed to appear, Philander M. Kenyon, first sergeant, was directed "in the name of the state of New Hampshire, [that] you are hereby required by distress and sale of the goods and chattels of the said, Joseph W. Roberts, [to] commit [him] unto the gaol in Newport." The warrant for his arrest and confinement was dated October 13, 1845. On the 14th day of October, 1845, Mr. Roberts paid the fine of \$3 plus 83 cents in costs.

The reasons for being excused from training were many and varied. "Deafness of one ear...a defect in his right eye and he cannot see to shoot... exempt for three years on account of asthma...incurable deafness in left ear... complaint is of the lung and confined to my room and bed all winter...business in Peterborough...a lame back and caught a very bad cold...a felon upon my right hand."

When the muster day was announced and the day set, the selectmen of the town were required to furnish "meats and drinks for the refreshment of all non-commissioned officers and soldiers, or pay thirty-four cents for each man on regimental or battalion muster. Also, the town was required to furnish one-quarter of a pound of powder for each man.

Muster day was also a great social day. Families and "sweethearts" turned out to the training grounds to see "their men" drill and shoot their muskets. One of the favorites for the noon lunch was "Muster Gingerbread."

In a bowl, mix 6 tablespoons of boiling water with one gill (1/2 cup) of butter, 1 cup of molasses, a pinch of salt and 1 teaspoon of ginger. Stir in 1 1/2 pints (3 cups) of flour; add 1 beaten egg, after that 1 teaspoon of baking soda. Roll to 1/4" in thickness and cut into strips or squares. Wet tops lightly with milk. Mark with lines with the tines of a fork. Bake in moderate oven for 25 to 30 minutes.

The town was billed for the care of equipment. There were a number of entries in the treasurer's accounts for the care of guns. In 1858, George Morey received \$4.50 for cleaning guns.

The following men served as captain and non-commissioned officers in the period from 1847-1849.



Meriden Fire Department members with the old hand pumper, Plainfield, July 4, 1985. Photo by Carl Woodward. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Captains

William P. Austin
Orville W. Burnap
Waldo C. Clark
Alfred W. Jordan
Alamson Morey
Ethan Walker

First Sergeants

Dan W. Cole
Philander M. Kenyon
John W. Peterson
Aquilla R. Spalding
Benjamin F. Ward
Derick B. Worley

Company Clerks

Orville W. Burnap
Alfred Jordan
Philander M. Kenyon
John W. Peterson
Aquilla R. Spalding
Benjamin F. Ward

Lieutenants

Orville W. Burnap
George Kenyon
Benjamin F. Ward

Ensigns

Charles Gilkey
Aquilla R. Spalding
Benjamin F. Ward

Members enrolled in the Fifteenth Regiment, April 28, 1854:

Nathan Andrews
E. D. Austin
Elisha Austin
George Austin
Jacob Beal
Eastman H. Bean
Joseph M. Bean
Charles Brocklebank
George Bugbee
A. Burnap
Elijah Burnap
B. W. Chapman
Jarvis Chapman
Laban Chapman
Samuel Chapman
Andrew J. Chellis
Moses M. Chellis
Otis H. Chellis
William H. Clark
George Cole
John Cole
Azro Dodge
Calvin Dunklee
Charles Dunklee
Ransom Dutton
Ai Eggleston
Henry E. Farnum
Lewis Farnum
Walter Foss, Jr.
Elihu F. Foster
Edward Freeman, Jr.
John Freeman
Russell French
Edwin D. Frost
George D. Frost
James Gilkey, Jr.
Alanson Hadley
Alfred Hadley
Philip Hadley
William Hadley
James Hanchett

George P. Haven
Lewis Jordan
W. Kenyon
Lorenzo Knight
Benjamin F. Manchester
Nelson Manchester
S. Manchester
William L. Martin
Henry Morey
Dana N. Morgan
John Morgan
Smith L. Morgan
B. W. H. Morrill
Merrit F. Penniman
Ralston Penniman
Thomas Penniman, Jr.
John W. Peterson
Turner M. Peterson
Owen Pierce
William W. Pierce
William H. Pierce
Almond Price
Alvin Rand
Charles Read
John L. Robinson
George Rowell
Henry M. Scales
Ai R. L. Short
Ephraim Short
Charles Smith
Francis Smith
Abel Spalding
Enos R. Spalding
Henry A. Spalding
James Spalding
Justin Spalding
Nathan Spalding
Junius Spencer
F. Stevens
Horace B. Stickney
Stephen D. Stone

O. B. Strobbridge
 George Sweet
 Ozro W. Titus
 Sumner Titus
 Alfred Ward
 B. F. Ward
 Cyrus Ward
 Andrew Watson

John Westgate, Jr.
 Joseph P. Westgate
 Sylvester Wilder
 A. B. Williams
 O. B. Williams
 John Westgate, Sr.
 Alonzo Winkley

According to Uncle Jesse French [1795–1892], the oldest and most prominent living representative of this family in Plainfield, “I tell you, Sir, the old Fifteenth Regiment was a noble one, Sir! a noble one!” He is now 91 years old, having been born in town, in 1795. He was Captain of Artillery from 1825, till about 1835, and “I tell you sir,” said he, “t’would er done you good to see my men load and fire in them days; he! he! he! Yes Sir!...And the old gun-house used to stand right up there Sir, near the corner of the Orthodox Church [Meriden Congregational Church, 1991]...The old soldiers that began to train when I did, Sir, are all gone...just one left and that’s me, Sir...There was Johnson, Eggleston, Hamblet, Cummings and several others, all captains of Artillery, and Porter, Newton, Colby, Merrill, Jackson and Gove, all colonels, and all dead. I believe, except Colby, who lives on the hill just beyond my place [William Fletcher, 1991]. Yes, Sir, muster days was great days and everybody turned out, women and all, to see the regiment parade! And I tell you, Sir, there wasn’t many boys of the old 15th that couldn’t pass muster!”⁴



Statue of Liberty float, July 4, 1924. L–R Tracy Spalding, Harold Smith, Arlene Jenney, Beulah Jenney. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

The captain of each company of artillery was entitled to receive, from the state treasury, the sum of \$50 to "erect a gun house for the safe keeping of the ordinance, carriage, harness and apparatus belonging to his company." If any part of the sum was not spent, the remaining sum was to be used for the purpose of instructing the military musicians of the regiment. Gun houses were built in both villages. At Plainfield Plain, the gun house was near the Town House. In Meriden, it stood behind the Congregational Church.

Like the men who fought in the Revolution, the militia officers took great pride in their titles. Today, some of the gravestones are inscribed:

Col. Charles Eggleston, d. June 25, 1858 ac 70 yr 11 mo

Col. Charles Colby d. Mar. 4, 1902 ac 88 yrs

Col. Jabez Porter d. Aug. 30, 1886 ac 89 yrs 8 m. 8 d.⁵

Plainfield Men Who Served in the American Civil War 1861-65

• *First Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

1. Alonzo Chapman, Co. G—Born: Plainfield; age: 27; mustered in: May 2, 1861, as private; mustered out: August 9, 1861.

• *Second Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

2. John B. Buntin, Co. H—Born: Kilmarnock, Scotland; age: 21.
3. Charles F. Howard, Co. I—Born: Grantham; age: 21; resident: Plainfield; enlisted for three years: May 21, 1861; mustered in: June 7, 1861, as a private; wounded: July 2, 1863; died of wounds: July 18, 1863, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.
4. Willard C. Kempton, Field and Staff—Born: Croydon; age: 24; resident: Plainfield; appointed as Assistant Surgeon: August 16, 1865; mustered in: August 26, 1865; mustered out: December 19, 1865; also a member of the Fifteenth New Hampshire Volunteers.

• *Third Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

5. William H. Durgin, Co. K—Born: Plainfield; age: 18; enlisted: August 12, 1861; mustered in: August 24, 1861; mustered out disabled: September 28, 1862, Hilton Head, South Carolina.
6. George Everington, Co. A, substitute—Born: England; age: 23; resident: New York City, credited to Plainfield; deserted: November 7, 1864.
7. Jared Smith, Co. K—Born: Waterbury, Vermont; age: 36; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: August 17, 1861; mustered in: August 24, 1861; mustered out: August 23, 1864.

• *Fourth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

8. Charles C. Beckley, Field and Staff—Born: Weathersfield, Vermont;

resident: Plainfield; age: 34; appointed First Surgeon October 1, 1863; mustered: December 11, 1863; resigned: March 26, 1864.

9. Eli Sturgeon, Co. E—Born: St. John, New Brunswick; age: 21; credited to Plainfield; enlisted: November 14, 1863; mustered in: November 14, 1863; wounded: January 16, 1865, explosion of magazine, Ft. Fisher, North Carolina; appointed Corporal; discharged: August 23, 1865.

• *Fifth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

10. Ira J. Beers, Co. F—Born: Plainfield; age: 21; enlisted: October 23, 1861; mustered in: October 23, 1861; discharged disabled: September 25, 1862.

11. Charles H. Corey, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 24; enlisted: September 16, 1861; mustered in: October 12, 1861; discharged disabled: June 6, 1862, Washington, D.C.

12. Leonard Hadley, Co. I—Born: Columbia, New Hampshire; age: 36; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: August 26, 1861; mustered in: October 15, 1861; wounded: December 13, 1862, Fredericksburg, Virginia; discharged for wounds: April 11, 1863. (See First New Hampshire Cavalry.)

13. Albert C. Jordan, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 18; enlisted: March 22, 1864; discharged: June 14, 1865, Philadelphia; died: January 1872, Plainfield.

14. Christopher C. Jordan, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 21; enlisted: September 18, 1861; mustered: October 12, 1861, transferred to Co. 5, Second Battalion Invalid Corps (Veteran Reserve Corps); discharged: May 12, 1864, New York City; died: August 21, 1865, Plainfield.

15. Edwin C. Jordan, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 18; enlisted: March 22, 1864; wounded: June 17, 1864, near Petersburg, Virginia; transferred to Co. B, Eighteenth Regiment Veteran Reserve Corps: January 28, 1865; discharged; July 21, 1865, Washington; died: December 23, 1867.

16. James F. Jordan, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 20; enlisted: March 22, 1864; discharged disabled June 21, 1864, near Petersburg, Virginia.

17. James W. Jordan, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 21; enlisted: September 3, 1861; discharged disabled: May 1, 1862, Alexandria, Virginia; died: July 30, 1887, Plainfield.

18. Jarvis J. Jordan, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 42; enlisted: August 31, 1861; mustered: October 12, 1861, as Sergeant; discharged disabled: April 2, 1863; died: May 20, 1886, Plainfield.

19. Ephraim Short, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 45; enlisted: September 20, 1861; mustered: October 12, 1861; discharged disabled: January 20, 1862, near Alexandria, Virginia.

20. John S. Short, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 18; enlisted: September 18, 1861; mustered: October 12, 1861; re-enlisted and mustered: January 1, 1864, credited to Lebanon; wounded: June 3, 1864, Cold Harbor, Virginia; mustered out: June 28, 1865; address: Unity, New Hampshire.

21. Alfred Spaulding, Co. C—Born: Plainfield; age: 22; enlisted: September

18, 1861; mustered: October 12, 1861, appointed Corporal; mustered out: October 29, 1864; died: September 4, 1869, Plainfield.

• *Sixth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

22. Ralph Brown, Co. G—Born: Berlin, Vermont; age: 42; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: October 25, 1861; mustered: November 28, 1861; died of disease: June 27, 1863, Milldale, Mississippi.

23. Hiram H. Buck, Co. G—Born: Claremont; age: 36; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: October 4, 1861; mustered: November 28, 1861; discharged: November 25, 1863, Portsmouth Grove Hospital, Rhode Island.

24. Hillard D. Buckman, Co. B—Born: Unity; age: 35; resident: Enfield, New Hampshire; enlisted: November 7, 1861; re-enlisted: December 20, 1863, credited to Plainfield; discharged: July 17, 1865.

25. Alonzo Chapman, Co. G—Born: Plainfield; age: 27; enlisted: October 1, 1861; mustered: November 28, 1861, as private; appointed Corporal, re-enlisted, and mustered: December 22, 1863; wounded: June 25, 1864, and April 2, 1865, Petersburg; appointed Sergeant: July 1, 1865; discharged: July 17, 1865. (See First New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry.)

26. John C. Crossman, Co. G—Born: Unity; age: 27; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: September 28, 1861; wounded: December 13, 1862, Fredericksburg, Virginia; mustered out: November 28, 1864.

27. Hiram Dow, Co. G—Born: Milton, Vermont; age: 44; enlisted: September 30, 1861; discharged: New Berne, North Carolina, June 18, 1862; died: October 24, 1873, Plainfield.

28. Horace Jordan, Co. G—Born: Columbia; age: 31; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: October 2, 1861; deserted: April 8, 1863, Lexington, Kentucky.

29. William R. Jordan, 2d, Co. G—Born: Plainfield; age: 33; enlisted: October 1, 1861; mustered: November 28, 1861; discharged: October 2, 1862, Antietam, Maryland; died: July 3, 1881, Plainfield.

30. William A. Morgan, Co. G—Born: Weathersfield, Vermont; age: 25; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: October 21, 1861; mustered: November 28, 1861; died of disease: August 11, 1863, near Louisville, Kentucky.

31. James G. Powers, Co. B—Born: St. Johnsbury, Vermont; age: 25; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: October 10, 1861; mustered: November 27, 1861; captured: August 29, 1862, Second Bull Run; released: December 1862; re-enlisted: January 3, 1864; wounded: May 18, 1864, Spottsylvania, Virginia; appointed Corporal: July 1, 1865; mustered out: July 17, 1865.

32. Alonzo C. Watson, Co. B—Born: Winchendon, Massachusetts; age: 33; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: August 8, 1862; died of disease: December 18, 1862, Falmouth, Virginia.

• *Seventh Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

33. Lewis B. Jordan, Co. C—Born: St. Albans, Vermont; resident: Lebanon;

age: 19; enlisted: October 12, 1861; re-enlisted: February 27, 1864; deserted: May 1, 1864.

• *Ninth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

34. George W. Barber, Co. E—Born: Warwick, Massachusetts; age: 24; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: July 25, 1862; mustered: August 6, 1862; wounded: Fredericksburg; discharged disabled: March 18, 1863; died: September 26, 1886, National Soldiers Home, Wisconsin.

35. Henry A. Bingham, Co. E—Born: Brooklyn; age: 18; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: July 25, 1862; mustered: August 13, 1862; discharged disabled: January 4, 1863, Alexandria, Virginia.

36. Elmer Bragg, Co. E—Born: Plainfield; age: 19; resident: Quechee, Vermont, credited to Plainfield; enlisted: July 25, 1862; mustered: August 8, 1862, Corporal; captured: Spottsylvania, May 12, 1864; released. Died of wounds: August 20, 1864, Annapolis, Maryland.

37. Lewis Brocklebank, Co. E—Born: Plainfield; age: 18; enlisted: August 8, 1862; appointed Corporal: February 1, 1865; mustered out: June 10, 1865; died: October 28, 1889, Newport, New Hampshire.

38. Henry Bugbee, Co. E—Born: Plainfield; age: 21; enlisted: July 25, 1862; mustered: August 6, 1862; wounded: December 13, 1862, Fredericksburg; discharged: August 14, 1865.

39. Franklin Burnham, Co. E—Born: Norwich, Vermont; resident: Plainfield; age: 19; enlisted: July 25, 1862; mustered: August 8, 1862; appointed First Sergeant, Second Lieutenant: November 1, 1864; not mustered, appointed First Lieutenant Co. K: February 1, 1865; mustered out: June 10, 1865, address Moorhead, Minnesota.

40. Phylester J. Chapman, Co. E—Born: Plainfield; age: 22; enlisted: August 8, 1862; mustered: same; mustered out: June 10, 1865.

41. Nathan Cushing, Co. E—Born: Woodstock, Vermont; resident: Plainfield; age: 20; enlisted: July 30, 1862; mustered: August 8, 1862; discharged disabled: December 29, 1862.

42. Charles H. Duncan, Co. E—Born: Au Sable, New York, credited to Plainfield; age: 21; enlisted: August 20, 1862; mustered: September 2, 1862; died of disease: February 6, 1864, Camp Burnside, Kentucky.

43. Edmund W. Gallup, Co. E—Born: Plainfield; age: 19; enlisted: August 4, 1862; mustered: August 8, 1862; captured: September 30, 1864, Poplar Springs Church, Virginia; died of disease: January 15, 1865, Petersburg, Virginia.

44. Carlos George, Co. E—Born: Canaan, New Hampshire; age: 23; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: July 25, 1862; mustered: August 6, 1862; died of disease: September 24, 1863, Camp Nelson, Kentucky.

45. Daniel G. Hadley, Co. E—Born: Hanover; resident: Plainfield; age: 28; enlisted: August 8, 1862; mustered: August 13, 1862; wounded: December 13, 1862, Fredericksburg; died of disease: January 26, 1863, Washington.

46. Joseph C. Halliday, Co. E—Born: Pictou, Nova Scotia; resident: Plainfield; age: 29; enlisted: July 25, 1862; discharged disabled: August 25 1863, Columbus, Ohio.

47. Ebenezer Hoisington, Co. E—Born: Windsor; resident: Plainfield; age: 33; enlisted: August 8, 1862; discharged disabled: December 24, 1862, Philadelphia; address: Denver.

48. John H. Humphrey, Co. E—Born: Benson, Vermont; resident: Plainfield; age: 25; enlisted: August 1, 1862; discharged disabled: November 21, 1862, Washington.

49. Willard W. Humphrey, Co. E—Born: Benson; resident: Plainfield; age: 20; enlisted: July 30, 1862; mustered: August 8, 1862; wounded: September 7, 1862, Antietam; discharged disabled: November 21, 1862.

50. Charles B. Powers, Co. E—Born: Plainfield; age: 24; enlisted: July 30, 1862; died of disease: July 7, 1865, Manchester, New Hampshire.

51. N. Warren Pulsifer, Co. E—Born: Newton, Massachusetts; resident: Plainfield; age: 25; enlisted: July 25, 1862; appointed First Sergeant, transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps Co. 87, Second Battalion: October 30, 1863; discharged: October 27, 1864.

52. Oscar D. Robinson, Co. E—Born: Cornish; resident: Plainfield; age: 23; enlisted: July 25, 1862; mustered: as Sergeant, August 6, 1862, as Second Lieutenant, January 1, 1864, as First Lieutenant, November 1, 1864, as Captain Co. E, May 1, 1865; address: Albany.

• *Eleventh Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

53. John French, Co. H—Born: Plainfield; resident: Enfield, credited to Enfield; wounded: December 13, 1862, Fredericksburg; discharged disabled: January 13, 1864; address: Edna, Kansas.

54. Russell French, Co. E—Born: Plainfield; age: 25; enlisted: August 15, 1862; mustered: September 10, 1862; captured: July 30, 1864, mine explosion, Petersburg, Virginia; exchanged, discharged: May 27, 1865.

• *Fourteenth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

55. Benjamin D. Alexander, Co. H—Born: Plainfield; age: 30; enlisted: August 29, 1864, for one year; mustered: August 29, 1864; mustered out: July 8, 1865.

56. John L. Barrett, Co. H—Born: New Hampshire; age: 21; enlisted: August 22, 1864, credited to Plainfield; mustered: August 22, 1864; wounded: September 19, 1864, Opequan, Virginia; died of disease: November 9, 1864, Philadelphia.

57. Reuben T. Benway, Co. I—Born: Plainfield; resident: Cornish, credited to Cornish; age: 19; enlisted: August 20, 1862; mustered: September 24, 1862; died of disease: November 12, 1863, Washington.

58. William H. Bryant, Non-commissioned staff—Born: Plainfield; age: 22; enlisted: September 23, 1862; mustered: same, Sergeant Major; appointed Second Lieutenant, Co. D: September 20, 1863; First Lieutenant Co. H: February 19,

1864; discharged: May 20, 1864; died: January 31, 1883, Rutland, Vermont.

59. Samuel A. Duncan, Field and Staff—Born: Plainfield; age: 26; appointed Major: September 22, 1862; mustered: same; discharged to date: September 15, 1863, to accept promotion; mustered in as Colonel of Fourth United States Colored Infantry: September 16, 1863; mustered out: May 4, 1866; brevetted Brigadier General: October 28, 1864, for gallant and meritorious services rendered in the attack upon the works of the enemy at Spring Hill, Virginia; brevetted Major General of United States Volunteers to date: March 13, 1865, for gallant and meritorious services during the war; address: Englewood, New Jersey.

60. Marcus M. Lane, Co. I—Born: Claremont; resident: Plainfield; age: 22; enlisted: August 22, 1862; mustered: September 24, 1862; appointed Corporal: June 17, 1864; wounded: September 19, 1864, Opequan; discharged disabled: June 3, 1865.

61. Henry C. Mace, Co. I—Born: Hartland, Vermont; resident: Meriden; age: 19; enlisted: August 23, 1862; mustered: September 24, 1862; appointed Corporal: June 8, 1865; mustered out: July 8, 1865; address: San Dimas, California.

62. Jonathon Miller, Jr., Co. I—Born: Hartland; age: 21; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: August 14, 1862; mustered: September 24, 1862; mustered out: July 8, 1865; address: Thompsonville, Connecticut.

63. John N. Short, Co. I—Born: Plainfield; age: 44; enlisted: August 24, 1862; mustered: September 24, 1862; discharged disabled: February 22, 1863, Washington.

64. Elihu T. Rowe, Field and Staff—Born: Kingston, New Hampshire; resident: Plainfield; age: 48; appointed Chaplain: October 3, 1862; mustered: October 11, 1862; resigned: July 20, 1863.

65. Charles Woodward, Co. I—Born: Plainfield; age: 20; enlisted: August 25, 1862; mustered: September 23–24, 1862; discharged: July 8, 1865.

• *Fifteenth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

66. Willard C. Kempton, Field and Staff—Born: Croydon, New Hampshire; resident: Plainfield; age: 21; enlisted as hospital steward: September 11, 1862; mustered out: August 13, 1863; appointed Assistant Surgeon: October 24, 1864, Seventh United States Heavy Artillery Colored Troops; discharged: February 27, 1865; also Assistant Surgeon Second New Hampshire Volunteers; address: Sanford, Maine.

• *Sixteenth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

67. Oscar W. Baldwin, Co. A—Born: Jamaica, Vermont; resident: Plainfield; age: 22; enlisted: September 10, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862, as Sergeant; discharged to date: August 20, 1863.

68. Elbridge G. Beers, Co. A—Born: Hartland; resident: Plainfield; age: 34; enlisted: September 9, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; mustered out: August 20, 1863.

69. Samuel E. Bernard, Co. A—Born: Barnard, Vermont; resident: Plainfield; age: 23; enlisted: September 10, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; mustered out: August 20, 1863; also First New Hampshire Heavy Artillery Co. E—enlisted: August 25, 1864; mustered out: June 15, 1865.

70. Ransom Brocklebank, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 43; enlisted: September 13, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862, as Corporal; died: June 14, 1863, New Orleans.

71. Benjamin W. Chapman, Co. A—Born: Plainfield, age: 41; enlisted: September 11, 1862; mustered: October 25, 1862, as musician; died of disease: August 5, 1863, near Vicksburg, Mississippi.

72. Byron O. Cheney, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 19; enlisted: September 11, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; mustered out: August 20, 1863.

73. Joseph B. Cutler, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 39; enlisted: September 13, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; died: June 21, 1863, New Orleans.

74. Charles Daniels, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 18; enlisted: September 12, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; mustered out: August 20, 1863.

75. Spencer Dowse, Co. E—Born: Thetford, Vermont; resident: Plainfield; age: 37; enlisted: September 2, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; died: June 7, 1863, New Orleans.

76. George W. French, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 23; enlisted: September 13, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862 as Corporal; mustered out: August 20, 1863; died: July 10, 1864, Wilton, New Hampshire.

77. Alanson Hadley, Co. K—Born: Columbia; resident: Plainfield; age: 38; enlisted: September 13, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; transferred to Co. A: January 1, 1863; mustered out: August 20, 1863.

78. Charles Harrington, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 35; enlisted: September 9, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; discharged: August 20, 1863.

79. Ira A. Johnson, Co. A—Born: Grantham; age: 39; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: September 9, 1862; mustered: November 5, 1862; died of disease: August 4, 1863, Vicksburg.

80. Jason F. Johnston, Co. A—Born: Lebanon; resident: Plainfield; age: 18; enlisted: September 10, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; discharged: August 20, 1863; died: September 12, 1863, Warner, New Hampshire.

81. John S. Jordan, Co. A—Born: Manchester, New Hampshire; resident: Plainfield; age: 18; enlisted: September 9, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; mustered out: August 20, 1863.

82. Carlos H. Miller, Co. A—Born: Sharon, Vermont; age: 22; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: September 12, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; mustered out: August 16, 1863; also member of First New Hampshire Heavy Artillery—enlisted for one year: February 15, 1865, credited to Lebanon; mustered out: June 9, 1865.

83. Elias S. Moores, Co. K—Born: Plainfield; age: 27; enlisted: September 10, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; transferred to Co. A: January 1, 1863; mustered out: August 20, 1863.



Plainfield Historical Society marchers, July 4, 1981. L–R unknown, Nancy Franklin, Amy Franklin (baby), Sara Townsend, Stephen Beaupré, Donna Beaupré, Darrell Beaupré, Dan Beaupré, Hazel Chellis. Photo by Louise Howard. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

84. Sumner T. Pierce, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 29; enlisted: September 9, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; mustered out: August 20, 1863; address: Hartland.

85. John Poole, Co. K—Born: Plainfield; age: 35; enlisted: September 10, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; transferred to Co. A: January 1, 1863; discharged to date: August 20, 1863.

86. Duty Stickney, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 24, enlisted: September 13, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; mustered out: August 20, 1863.

87. Lucius C. Stone, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 21; enlisted: September 13, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; mustered out: August 20, 1863.

88. Luther S. Stone, Co. A—Born: Plainfield; age: 18; enlisted: September 13, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; died: July 7, 1863, New Orleans.

89. George Sweet, Co. K—Born: Columbia; age: 32; resident: Plainfield; enlisted: September 9, 1862; mustered: October 16, 1862; transferred to Co. A: January 1, 1863; mustered out: August 20, 1863; address, Cornish Flat.

• *Eighteenth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry*

90. Daniel F. Blood, Co. G—Born: Plainfield; age: 24; enlisted: January 30, 1865, for one year; mustered in: January 1, 1865; mustered out: July 29, 1865; also in the Fourteenth United States Infantry—enlisted into Co. A: August

27, 1861, for three years; age: 21; discharged disabled: February 4, 1863, Philadelphia.

91. George W. Blood, Co. G—Born: Plainfield; age: 31; enlisted: January 16, 1865; mustered: January 16, 1865; mustered out: July 29, 1865.

• *First Regiment New Hampshire Cavalry*

92. John Durgin, unassigned—Born: New Hampshire; resident: Wilmot, credited to Plainfield; enlisted: April 5, 1864; deserted enroute to regiment.

93. Leonard Hadley, Co. A—Born: Columbia; resident: Plainfield; age: 38; enlisted: March 23, 1864; mustered: same; appointed wagoner: May 1, 1864; mustered out: July 15, 1865 (see Fifth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry).

• *First Regiment Heavy Artillery*

94. Samuel Bernard, Co. E—Born: Barnard, Vernard, credited to Plainfield; age: 25; enlisted: August 25, 1864, for one year; mustered: September 5, 1864; out: June 15, 1865.

95. Benjamin Jordan, Co. H—Born: Columbia, credited to Plainfield; age: 29; enlisted: September 1, 1864, for one year; mustered out: June 15, 1865.

96. Harvey D. Plummer, alias Harvey D. Picknell, Co. H—Born: Plainfield; age: 22; enlisted and mustered: September 1, 1864; mustered out: June 15, 1865.

97. George M. Smith, Co. H—Born: New Hampshire, credited to Plainfield; age: 20; enlisted and mustered: September 1, 1864; mustered out: June 15, 1865.

• *Company E, First Regiment United States Sharpshooters*

98. Edward F. Chapman—Born: Cornish; resident: Plainfield; age: 21; enlisted: August 22, 1861; mustered: September 9, 1861; discharged disabled: February 2, 1862; died: October 16, 1863, Plainfield.

99. Levi L. Chapman—Born: Cornish; resident: Plainfield; age: 26; enlisted: August 22, 1861; mustered: September 9, 1861; discharged: September 8, 1864.

100. John W. Peterson—Born: Plainfield; age: 28; enlisted: August 24, 1861; mustered: September 9, 1861; discharged disabled: March 12, 1863, Portsmouth Grove Hospital, Rhode Island.

101. Samuel D. Rutherford—Born: Columbia; resident: Plainfield; age: 21; enlisted: August 12, 1861; mustered: September 9, 1861; died of disease: December 30, 1861, Washington.

• *Company F, Second Regiment United States Sharpshooters*

102. Joseph W. Everest—Born: Peru, New York; resident: Plainfield; age: 44; enlisted: October 12, 1861; mustered: November 20, 1861; wounded: September 17, 1862, Antietam; died of wounds received: October 13, 1862, Washington.

• *State Service*

103. Francis Stickney, Claremont Volunteers—Born: Plainfield; age: 21;



July 4, about 1924. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

enlisted: April 23, 1861; discharged: May 13, 1861. The number of men being in excess of what was needed for the first volunteer regiment, the governor ordered these men to fulfill their enlistment by serving at Portsmouth and along the coast.

• *Other Organizations*

104. George W. Doyle, Co. A, Fifth Vermont Volunteer Infantry—Born: Plainfield, credited to Vermont; age: 22; enlisted: August 24, 1861, for three years; mustered: September 16, 1861; discharged disabled: November 2, 1862, Berlin, Maryland.

105. Thomas J. Estes, Co. E, Seventeenth United States Infantry—Born: Dorchester, New Hampshire; resident: Plainfield; age: 26; enlisted: November 23, 1861, for three years; transferred to Co. H; discharged: November 22, 1864, Ft. Preble, Maine.

106. Philander S. Fifield, United States Navy—Born: Plainfield; age: 32; enlisted: May 17, 1864, at Boston for one year as a landsman; served on: U. S. S. Ohio, Circassian; Bat. discharged: May 14, 1865, from the Bat.

107. Charles H. Lewis, Co. I, Nineteenth Massachusetts Infantry—Born: Plainfield, credited to Northampton, Massachusetts; age: 21; enlisted: March 30, 1864, for three years; mustered: March 30, 1864; captured and died: August 28, 1864, Andersonville.

108. James E. Lewis, Co. C, Twelveth Massachusetts Infantry—Born: Plainfield; age: 31; enlisted: June 26, 1861; mustered: June 26, 1861; deserted: June 27, 1862, Manassas.

109. John Morse, Co. E, First Vermont Cavalry—Born: Sharon, Vermont;

resident: Plainfield, credited to Pomfret, Vermont; age: 18; enlisted: September 26, 1861, for three years; mustered: November 19, 1861; re-enlisted: December 28, 1863; appointed Corporal: May 3, 1865; transferred to Co. A: June 21, 1865; mustered out: August 9, 1865; address: Meriden.

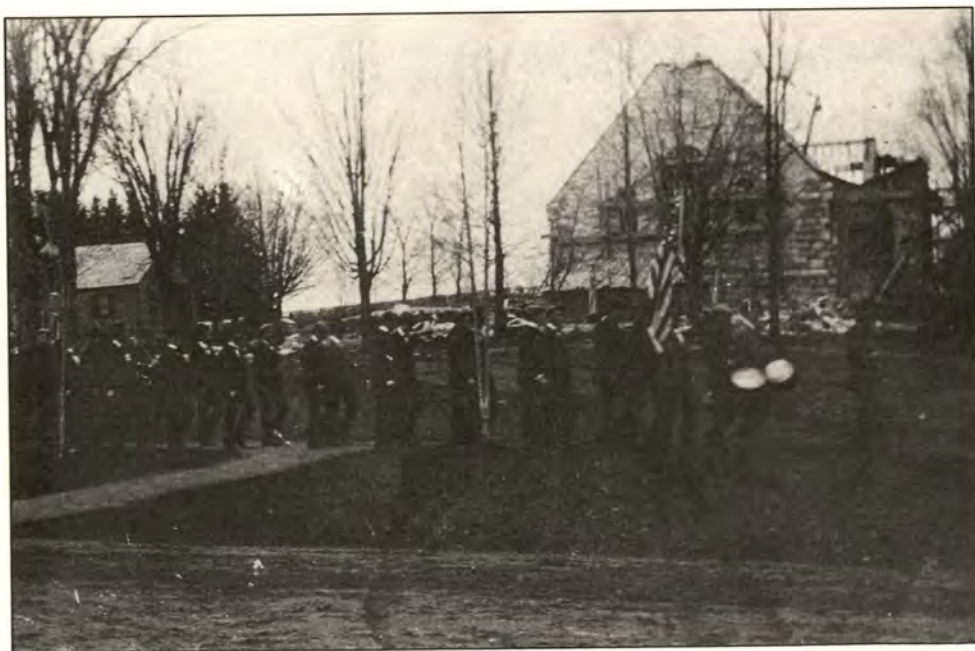
110. Norman B. Read, Co. H, Tenth Vermont Volunteer—Born: Plainfield; resident: Windsor; enlisted: December 22, 1863; mustered: December 25, 1863; taken prisoner: October 19, 1864; sent to Salisbury, North Carolina: November 4, 1864; no further return.

111. George W. Spaulding, Co. D, Ninth Vermont Infantry—Born: Meriden; resident: Claremont, credited to Vermont; age: 19; enlisted: June 29, 1862, for three years; captured: September 2, 1862; paroled: September 15, 1862; mustered out: June 13, 1865.

112. John Spalding, Co. H, Fourth Vermont Infantry—Born: Plainfield, credited to Vermont; age: 28; enlisted: August 29, 1861, for three years; discharged disabled: November 1, 1862, Point Lookout, Maryland; address: Weirs, New Hampshire.

Spanish-American War

Enos Spaulding



Co. G, Third New Hampshire Regiment, in front of the Meriden Congregational Church, April 26, 1898. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.



World War I Honor Roll at the Meriden Town Hall, before 1950. It was identical to the present monument in front of the Philip Read Memorial Library. Courtesy Meriden Library.

World War I Honor Roll (Plainfield 1914–1918)

A large iron monument stands on the front lawn of the Philip Read Memorial Library at Plainfield Village. The names of those persons who served in World War I from the town of Plainfield are cast into the metal. It was made by the Lebanon Machine Company and once stood across the road near the junction of Route 12A and Daniels Road on land that formerly served as a town green.

The Town Report for 1954 reveals that an identical monument was mounted on the front lawn of the Meriden Town Hall. An article on the warrant for 1954 was passed giving permission to the community club to remove and dispose of the monument on the Meriden site. The monument had rusted beyond repair. In its stead, a scroll and plaque drawn by the late Guido Rosa bears the names of the honored veterans. This framed document executed in calligraphy hangs on the wall of the Meriden Town Hall to the east side of the stage.

Emma (Towne) Mosher of Plainfield and Dorothy (Towne) McNamara of Meriden, daughters of veteran Elmer C. Towne, donated to the Plainfield Historical Society some of their father's personal effects, including parts of his uniform and his condiment container.

Following is a list of the names on the Honor Roll:

Costas Anagnostopoulos
Fred L. Bailey
Wayne E. Bailey
Ralph P. Chadbourne
Clarence H. Clark
Homer Crossman
Andrew Dana

William E. Eggleston
Leon Hadley
Griswold S. Hayward
Albert E. Hill
Hugh Hunt
Ernest L. Huse
Chester E. Jenney

Ray F. Jenney
Byron G. Jordan
Howard P. Kelsey
Joseph C. Meyette
Roy V. Morse
T. Kenneth Penniman
Hall Peterson
Norman N. Pierson
Charles O. Raines

Harry Rice
Fred A. Rogers
Harold L. Ruggles
Harry D. Thrasher
Elmer C. Towne
Leonard Watson
Hazen F. West
Robert A. Wilder
Paul B. Wildey

Other World War I veterans are:

Robert Bartlett
Edward G. Bernard
Raymond Claflin
Leslie W. Dodge
Ralph Fecteau, Jr.
Clifford D. Griswold
Bernie John Kimball
Arthur J. Kinley

Leonard L. LaFlam
George L. Leib
Bert L. Potwin
John D. Roeber
Carlton Strong, Sr.
Merrill N. Thompson
Paul A. Webster

World War II Honor Roll⁶

William I. Audette*
Walter Backofen
Alton Barnes
Ernest Barrett
Clifford Bean
Herbert Bean
Nelson Bean
Raymond Bean
Robert Bean
Louis A. Beliveau
John A. Belkovicz
Julian Bellavance
Vernon Benoit
David Binger
Camille Blair
Robert Blair
Joseph Bosley
Stanley Bragg
William Brewster, Jr.
Henry Buck, Jr.
George H. Burbank*

David S. Cassedy
Raburn Cate
James R. Chandler, Jr.
Forrest Chase
Converse Chellis
Frank D. Chellis
Creighton Churchill
Daniel Coutermarsh
Gerald Coutermarsh
Rudolphe Coutermarsh
Rebecca Crosier
Frederick Cushing, Jr.
Robert Cutts
Stanley Cutts
John Demers
Robert Dion
Ralph Dodge
Francis Donley*
John Duncklee
Richard Duncklee
Ralph Fecteau



Plainfield Historical Society float, July 4, 1986. L-R Gardiner MacLeay, Annamay Chapman, Basil McNamara, Jane Witzel, Abigail Fielder, (not visible-Eric Morin). Photo by Ira Townsend. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Robert Foster
William Franklin, Jr.
James Gallagher
Lawrence Gillen
Walter Gobin
Robert Gray
Richard A. Hadley
Milton Hamilton
Dorrance E. Hayes
Griswold S. Hayward, Jr.
Richard Hendrick
Shirley Hendrick
Victor Hewes
Louis Houser
Kenneth L. Hooker, Sr.
George Hynes, Sr.
Cary Jackson
Edward P. Jones
Wallace D. Jones, Jr.
Stephen Kimball

Harold King
Henry King
Maurice King
Stephen King
Gordon Lambert
Nelson Lapan
Philip LaRoe
Chester Lull
G. Gardiner MacLeay, Jr.
Clarence W. Magoon
David Mark
Robert McCarthy
John H. McNamara
William McNamara
John McNellis
Carleton Morse
Constance Moulton
Thomas Mulherrin
Clarence Ted Norcross*
Robert Orr

Walter Owen
Norma Pardo
Ray Pardo
Thomas G. Penniman
Orville Perkins
Austin Phelps
Lloyd Pringle
Conrad Quimby
William Quimby
Robert Raymond
Eleanor Rich
Leslie Scott
Guy S. Scruton
Theron Scruton
Hayden Slayton
Dorothy Smead
Benjamin Smith
H. Fenton Smith
Harold E. Smith
Harry B. Smith
Winston Spencer, Sr.
Clenton Stanley
Raymond A. Stearns
George Stebbins
Bernard Stone
Harold Stone

Hiram Stone†
Carlton Strong, Jr.
Frank Strong
Donald Stuart
Arthur Sullivan
Fred Sweet
Kenneth Tashro
Edward H. Taylor
Floriand Therrien
Henry Thibeault
James Thompson
Merrill Thompson
Leonard Timmons
Ira Townsend
Francis Tremblay
Roscoe A. Tyler
Rudolph J. Vigneault, Jr.
James Walker
George West
Dana E. Whitney
John C. Whitney
George Wilder
Allan Wilson
Joseph Woodward
Ralph Woodward
Howard Zea



July 4, 1987. L-R Amanda Daigle, Robert Umberger, Marc Gattie, Eric Gattie, Reverend Gordon Umberger. Photo by Richard Rogers. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Korean War Era⁷

Lawrence Aldrich
Joseph Bourget
Donald Bradley
Charles Christiansen
James Crary
J. Edward Descoteau
Willis Downing, Jr.
Wayne Dupree
David Eastman
Bernard Fleming
William Fletcher
Robert Freeland
Douglas C. Grearson, Jr.
Clifford Griswold
William Hanlon
Eugene Hector
Russell Hoisington
Stanley Jenks
Earl Kenyon

George Kimball
Stanley Milo
Clayton E. Morse
John Morse
Thomas G. Penniman
George Pringle
Elwin S. Rogers
Armand Rondeau
Ephrem Rondeau
Anthony Sadoques
Ellsworth Sawyer
Charles Schelewa
Carlton Strong, Jr.
Wendell Swett
William Ware
Eugene Wheeler
Howard Wilder
Erich Witzel



Jessie Carver English,
Plainfield Bicentennial Parade,
1961. Courtesy Plainfield
Historical Society.

Vietnam Era⁸

Gordon Ashey
J. Kendrick Avent
Bruce Baird
David Best
Roger Bonnier
Don S. Burnett
Jerry Burt
Curtis Cash
Sebastian M. Cordima
James Cragin
Frederick G. Cushing III
Lawrence Dore
Stanley Dole
William Dow
Gregory Estey
Ralph Fecteau, Jr.
Kenneth Forseth
Norman Fredette
Donald Garfield
Kevin Garrison
Maurice Gilbert
Walter Gobin
Earle Gray
Larry W. Greenwood
Howard Hazelton
John Hendrick
Gene Hewes
Gordon Hewes
Francis Isabelle
Andrew Johnson

Paul Lambert
David Lillie
Robert Lindsay
Edward T. Lyster
Paul Marsh
Daniel Martin
Edward Mayotte
Bruce Meeker
Gerald Mills
R. Peter Mogielnicki
Edward Moodie
Albert Norwalk
Mark Overman
Maurice Perron
Bruce Schaffer
Jesse Stalker
Charles Stone
Rosanne Stoops
Roy Stoops
William Tibbitts
Wayne Wheeler
Gerald R. Wilder
Thomas Williams
James Woodbury
G. Travis Worth

Persian Gulf War

Wade Hector[†]

*Killed in Action

[†]Killed in Camp



Ten-month-old Matthew Mills of Meriden, July 4, 1986. Photo by Larry Crowe. Courtesy Plainfield Historical Society.

Appendix D

Cast Members— Masque of “Ours:” The Gods and the Golden Bowl

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Jupiter | John Blair | Eurydice | Mrs. Grace Whiting |
| Hermes | Percy MacKaye | Thetis | Mrs. Louise Cox |
| Pluto | Kenyon Cox | Calypso | Miss Grace Lawrence |
| Pan | Herbert Adams | Europa | Miss Grace Arnold |
| Mars | Michael Stillman | Pomona | Mrs. Maude Howe Elliot |
| Chiron | Maxfield Parrish | Flora | Miss Frances Arnold |
| Chronos | Charles Platt | Circe | _____ |
| Apollo | Henry B. Fuller | Fame | Miss Kennedy |
| Charon | Norman Hapgood | Cupid | Miss Elsie Ward |
| Orpheus | Arthur Whiting | Hero | Mrs. Mary Hyde |
| Silenus | William Howard Hart | Clotho | Mrs. Annette Saint-Gaudens |
| Leander | William Henry Hyde | Lachesis | Miss Wood |
| Nestor | Stephen Parrish | Atropos | Mrs. Laura Walker |
| Priam | Henry O. Walker | Clio | Miss C. Arnold |
| Phidias | Louis Saint-Gaudens | Melpomene | Miss Marian C. Nichols |
| Momus | John Elliott | Terpsichore | Mrs. Juliette Rublee |
| Juno | Mrs. Marion MacKaye | Thalia | Miss Grace Isham |
| Neptune | Miss F. J. Slade | Euterpe | Mrs. Lydia Parrish |
| Diana | Mrs. Mabel Churchill | Erato | Mrs. Mann |
| Iris | Miss Frances Grimes | Urania | Miss Emily Slade |
| Venus | Miss Arine Parrish | Polyhymnia | Mrs. Rose Standish Nichols |
| Minerva | Mrs. Ellen Shipman | Calliope | Mrs. Clara Davidge Taylor |
| Proserpina | Mrs. Lucia Fairchild Fuller | Psyche | Mrs. Adeline Adams |
| Ceres | Mrs. Frances Houston | Atlanta | _____ |

Appendix E

Cast Members—Sanctuary,

A Bird Masque

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Quercus, Faun | Joseph Lindon Smith | Goldfinch | Mrs. Conger Goodyear |
| Alwyn, Poet | Percy MacKaye | Ruby-crowned Kinglet | Miss Lena Hardy |
| Shy, Naturalist | Ernest Harold Baynes | Wood Thrush | Miss Ruth Hall |
| Tacita, Dryad | Juliette Barrett Rublee | Evening Grosbeak | William Howard Hart |
| Ornis, Bird Spirit | Eleanor Wilson | Hawk | Griswold Hayward |
| Stark, Plume Hunter | Witter Bynner | Kingbird | Miss King |
| Attendant | Leonard Cox | Kingbird | Miss Clara King |
| | | Bluebird | Mrs. Herbert Lakin |
| <i>In the Epilogue:</i> | | Yellow Warbler | Miss Eleanor Lakin |
| The Cardinal Bird | Herbert Adams | Yellow Warbler | Miss Hetty Lakin |
| First Acolyte | Robin MacKaye | Bluebird | Miss Laverack |
| Second Acolyte | Paul Saint-Gaudens | Snow Bunting | Marion MacKaye |
| | | Swallow | Miss Hazel MacKaye |
| <i>In the Pantomime:</i> | | Hummingbird | Miss Arvia MacKaye |
| Cardinal Bird | Stephen Parrish | Scarlet Tanager | Robin MacKaye |
| Love Bird | Mrs. Annette | Goldfinch | Miss Alice McClary |
| | Saint-Gaudens | Bluebird | Miss Anne Parrish |
| Kingbird | Mrs. Louise Cox | Red-winged Blackbird | Miss Marie Parker |
| Crow | Kenyon Cox | Hermit Thrush | Mrs. Maxwell Perkins |
| Cardinal Grosbeak | Herbert Adams | Goldfinch | Roger Platt |
| Bluebird | Mrs. Adeline Adams | Scarlet Tanager | William Platt |
| Owl | Miss Charlotte Arnold | Red-winged Blackbird | Miss Edna Rapallo |
| Baltimore Oriole | Miss Frances Arnold | Goldfinch | Miss Hadley Richardson |
| Owl | Miss Grace Arnold | Blue Heron | George Rublee |
| Love Bird | Mrs. Helen Foster Barnett | Scarlet Tanager | Paul Saint-Gaudens |
| Red-winged Blackbird | LeRoy Barnett | Wood Thrush | Miss Scudder |
| Goldfinch | Miss Bigelow | Bluebird | Miss Ellen Shipman |
| Downy Woodpecker | Mrs. Ernest Harold Baynes | Indigo Bunting | Master Evan Shipman |
| Downy Woodpecker | Mrs. Edson Bemis | Woodpecker | Miss Frances Smith |
| Downy Woodpecker | Edson Bemis | Woodpecker | Miss Rebecca Smith |
| Goldfinch | John Farnum Cann | Baltimore Oriole | Miss Cordelia Townsend |
| Blue Jay | Miss Louise Converse | | |
| Blue Jay | Miss Virginia Converse | <i>Play Committee:</i> | |
| Flicker | Miss Caroline Cox | Mrs. Adeline Adams | Charles A. Platt |
| Scarlet Tanager | Allyn Cox | Mrs. C. C. Beaman | Mrs. George Rublee |
| Bluebird | Miss Annie H. Duncan | Ernest Harold Baynes | Mrs. Augusta Saint-Gaudens |
| House Wren | Miss Elizabeth Evarts | Kenyon Cox | Louis Evan Shipman |
| Ruby-crowned Kinglet | Prescott Evarts | Percy MacKaye | Joseph Lindon Smith |
| Owl | Elwin Fey | Maxfield Parrish | |
| Scarlet Tanager | Charles Fuller | | |

Appendix F

Census Data

In 1767, under the supervision of the selectmen of the town, the first census was taken.⁹

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Unmarried men, 16 to 60 | 10 |
| Married men, 16 to 60 | 20 |
| Boys, 16 years and under | 36 |
| Men, 60 years and over | 0 |
| Unmarried females | 26 |
| Married females | 20 |
| Slaves | 0 |
| Widows | <u>0</u> |
| | 112 |

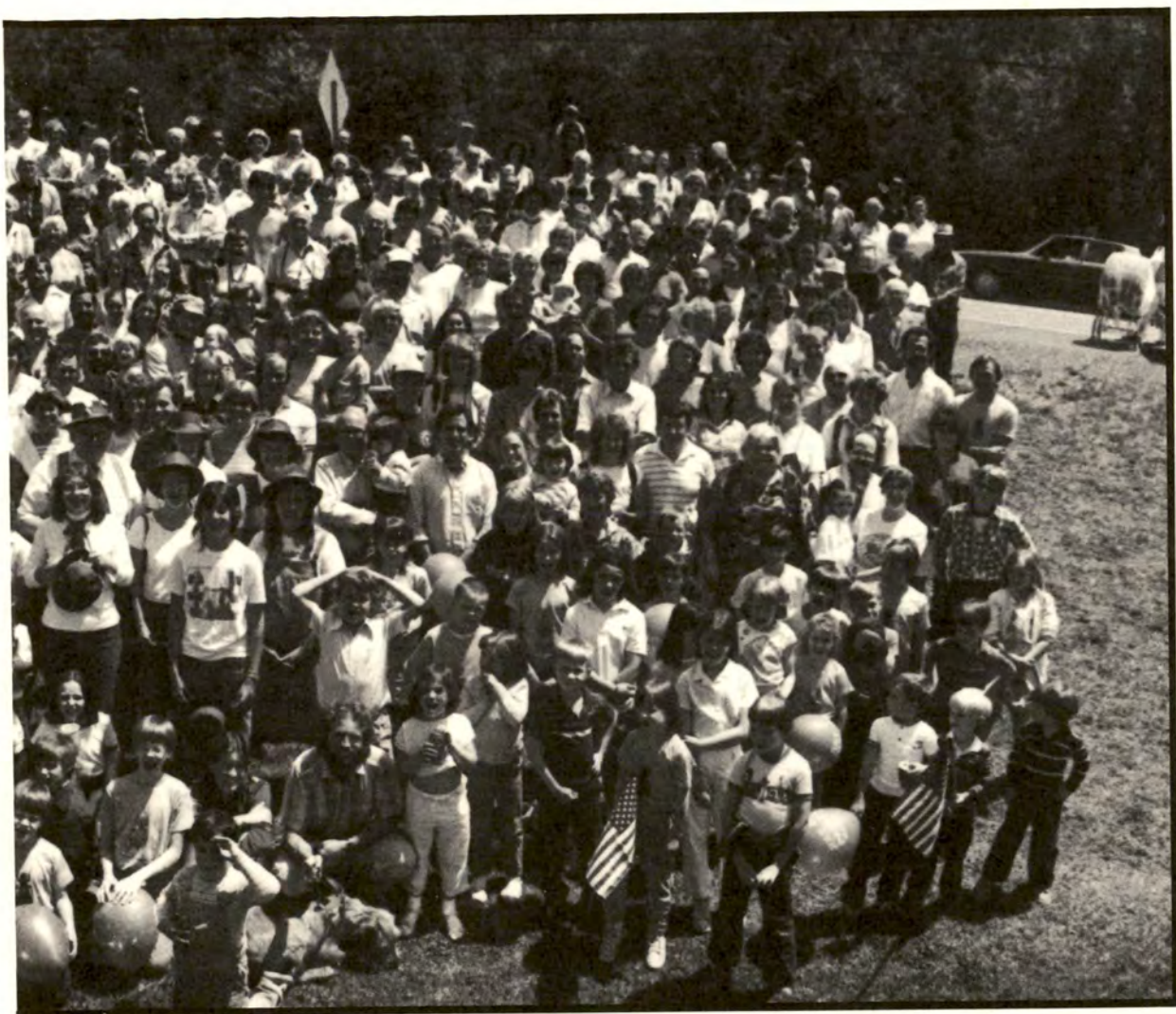
The second census of the province of New Hampshire taken by order of Governor John Wentworth follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Unmarried men, 16 to 60 | 32 |
| Married men, 16 to 60 | 40 |
| Boys, 16 years and under | 65 |
| Men, 60 years and over | 6 |
| Unmarried females | 85 |
| Married females | 43 |
| Widows | 4 |
| Slaves | <u>0</u> |
| | 275 |

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1775 | 308 | 1890 | 1,173 |
| 1786 | 580 | 1900 | 1,114 |
| 1790 | 1,024 | 1910 | 987 |
| 1800 | 1,435 | 1920 | 853 |
| 1810 | 1,463 | 1930 | 858 |
| 1820 | 1,460 | 1940 | 970 |
| 1830 | 1,581 | 1950 | 1,011 |
| 1840 | 1,552 | 1960 | 1,071 |
| 1850 | 1,392 | 1970 | 1,323 |
| 1860 | 1,620 | 1980 | 1,749 |
| 1870 | 1,589 | 1990 | 2,056 |
| 1880 | 1,372 | | |



The townspeople, July 4, 1986. Current and former residents of Plainfield “sat” for their picture during the day’s celebration. Photo by Bob LaPree.



Endnotes

Introduction

- ¹ J. Kevin Graffagnino, *The Shaping of Vermont from the Wilderness to the Centennial, 1749-1877* (Rutland: Vermont Heritage Press), pp. 6-9.
- ² Jonathan Chase Papers, 1732-1800, Ledger I:1-50. New Hampshire Historical Society.

Chapter 1, The Landscape

- ¹ Vernon Hood, "History of Plainfield," Notebook 3, pp. 88-107, Dartmouth College Archives.
- ² Interview: Henry Beck with Philip Zea, 1988.
- ³ William Cronon, *Changes in the Land—Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), Chapter 2.
- ⁴ Daniel F. Cassedy, unpublished senior thesis, "The Plainfield Survey: An Archeological Investigation in the Upper Connecticut Valley," University of New Hampshire, 1980.
- ⁵ Hood, p. 209.
- ⁶ Cassedy, p. 5; *Reverend John Williams, The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion* (Boston: 1707; reprint edition 1989).
- ⁷ Kenneth Roberts, *Northwest Passage* (Reprint edition, New York: Fawcett World Library, 1966; New York: Doubleday and Company, 1937), pp. 246-51.
- ⁸ W.R. Waterman, "The Connecticut River Valley Steamboat Company," *Vermont History* (April 1957), pp. 83-102; W.R. Waterman, "Locks and Canals at the White River Falls," *Historical New Hampshire*, 22, No. 3 (Autumn 1967), pp. 22-54.
- ⁹ Cassedy, p. 9.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ *Soil Survey of Sullivan County*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service in Cooperation with New Hampshire Service Station, 1980, Sheets 1 and 4.
- ¹² Hood, p. 179.
- ¹³ Ibid., p. 192.
- ¹⁴ Camp Meriden brochure, 1930, property of Basil McNamara.
- ¹⁵ Hood, p. 169.
- ¹⁶ Blanche Daniels, "Old Time Industries," 1920.

¹⁷ Kathy Kadane, "Largest Tree is Cut Down," *Valley News*, January 13, 1988.

¹⁸ Hood, pp. 173-80.

Chapter 2, The Settlement of Plainfield "upon ye New Hampshire Grants"

¹ Jere R. Daniell, *Experiment in Republicanism: New Hampshire Politics and the American Revolution, 1741-1794* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), pp. 3-33; David E. Van Deventer, *The Emergence of Provincial New Hampshire: 1623-1741* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp. 12-15, 28-30, 75-77, 130-31, 159-78. New Hampshire was governed by Massachusetts between 1641 and 1680 and again between 1689 and 1692. Between 1698 and 1741, New Hampshire was governed as a separate royal province, but shared royal governors with Massachusetts.

² The hope of developing the hinterland for its timber began in the seventeenth century. See Charles F. Carroll, *The Timber Economy of Puritan New England* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1973), *passim*, and William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), pp. 108-26.

³ Bryant F. Tolles, Jr., with Carolyn K. Tolles, *New Hampshire Architecture: An Illustrated Guide* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1979), pp. 33-34.

⁴ Charles E. Clark, *The Eastern Frontier: The Settlement of Northern New England, 1610-1763* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), p. 38.

⁵ Bernard Bailyn, *The Origins of American Politics* (New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, 1968), pp. 123-25.

⁶ Clark, p. 112.

⁷ Charles A. Downs, *History of Lebanon, N.H., 1761-1887* (Concord, NH: Rumford Printing Company, 1908), p. 1.

⁸ Today the house is known as the Wentworth-Gardner House and is open seasonally to the public.

⁹ The charter of the town of Plainfield, along with all of the public records, is on file with the town clerk.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* See also Philip Zea, "A New Hampshire Grant Town, 1760-1815: (unpublished senior thesis, Wesleyan University, 1974).

¹¹ Charles S. Grant, *Democracy in the Connecticut Frontier Town of Kent* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1972), pp. 1-12.

¹² Daniell, pp. 15-16; Matt B. Jones, *Vermont in the Making, 1750-1777* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939), p. 53; Isaac W. Hammond, editor, *Miscellaneous*

Provincial and State Paper of New Hampshire, 1725-1800 (Manchester: John B. Clarke, 1890), 18:560.

¹³ William H. Child, *History of the Town of Cornish, New Hampshire, 1763-1910*, 2 vols. (Concord: The Rumford Press, 1910), 1:4.

¹⁴ The charter of the town of Plainfield.

¹⁵ These figures are drawn from Plainfield tax records on file with the town clerk and from an analysis of Vernon Hood's genealogies of Plainfield families on file in the Dartmouth College Archives. Copies of Hood's genealogies are also available in the town's libraries and in the town clerk's office.

¹⁶ *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* (Boston: Samuel G. Drake for the New England Historic-Genealogical Society, 1861), 15:53.

¹⁷ For comparison, see Philip J. Greven, *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1970).

¹⁸ Proprietors' Book, 1761-1802, on file with the town clerk, Plainfield, NH, September 8, 1761.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., February 1, 1763.

²¹ Ibid., December 12, 1763.

²² John Farmer and Jacob Bailey Moore, *A Gazetteer of the State of New Hampshire* (Concord: J.B. Moore Printing, 1823), p. 215.

²³ Proprietors' Book, March 12, 1765.

²⁴ Grant Powers, *Historical Sketches of the Discovery and Settlement of Coos County and Vicinity* (Haverhill, NH: Henry Merrill Printing, 1880), p. 132. Despite her initial reservations, Eunice (Spalding) Smith lived out her life in Plainfield and died on August 20, 1808.

²⁵ Clark, pp. 337-38.

²⁶ Minutes of Town Meeting, Volume I, on file with the town clerk, Plainfield, NH, March 13, 1770.

²⁷ It is unlikely, however, that a proprietary would consider the creation of new shares which would reduce the influence of individual members and the amount of acreage awarded to proprietors at each division of the common land.

²⁸ Proprietors' Book, September 29, 1770.

²⁹ Child, 2:246.

³⁰ Proprietors' Book, March 8, 1768.

³¹ Minutes of Town Meeting, October 29, 1768.

³² Ibid., March 14, 1769.

³³ Zca, pp. 129-40.

Chapter 3, Plainfield's American Revolution

- ¹ Letter, Samuel Cutts to the selectmen of Plainfield, June 24, 1774, in Book of Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II, 1770-1792; Minutes of Town Meeting, Volume I, July 28, 1774. The Boycott Covenant, the selectmen of Plainfield to the Portsmouth Committee of Correspondence, July 28, 1774, in Book of Miscellaneous Papers, Volume I, 1768-1799, on file with the town clerk, Plainfield, NH. See also, Ronald Lettieri and Charles Wetherell, "The New Hampshire Committees of Safety and Revolutionary Republicanism, 1775-1784," *Historical New Hampshire* 35, No. 3 (Fall 1980): 241-283.
- ² For one of many surveys of events leading to the American Revolution, see Lawrence H. Gipson, *The Coming of the Revolution, 1763-1775* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954).
- ³ Jeremy Belknap, *The History of New Hampshire* (Dover, NH: S.C. Stevens and Ela & Wadleigh, 1831), p. 353; Theodore Crackel and Martin Andresen, "Fort William and Mary: A Case Study in Crowd Behavior," *Historical New Hampshire* 29, No. 4 (Winter 1974): 203-227.
- ⁴ Request for a Delegate, John Wentworth [a cousin of the last royal governor] to the selectmen of Plainfield, November 30, 1774, in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume I.
- ⁵ Minutes of Town Meeting, January 17, 1775.
- ⁶ Ibid., March 14, 1775.
- ⁷ Warning for Town Meeting, April 28, 1775.
- ⁸ Minutes of Town Meeting, May 8, 1775.
- ⁹ Ibid., July 22, 1775.
- ¹⁰ Report of the Committee of Safety in Town Meeting, August 1, 1775.
- ¹¹ Minutes of Town Meeting, July 17, 1776.
- ¹² M.L. Brown, *Firearms in Colonial America: The Impact on History and Technology, 1492-1792* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980), pp. 241-60, 274-80.
- ¹³ Isaac W. Hammond, editor, *State Papers of New Hampshire* (Concord: Parson B. Cogswell, 1885), Volume 14 [The Revolutionary War Rolls], 1:395.
- ¹⁴ Belknap, pp. 369-70.
- ¹⁵ William H. Child, *History of the Town of Cornish, New Hampshire, 1763-1910*, 2 volumes (Concord: The Rumford Press, 1910), 1:64; Hammond, *State Papers*, Volume 17 [The Revolutionary War Rolls], 4:88.; Diary of Daniel Kimball, 1776, on file at the Pension Office, Washington, D.C. A second journal kept by Kimball at the same time is in the collection of Kimball Union Academy.
- ¹⁶ Minutes of Town Meeting, April 14, 1777.
- ¹⁷ *General Jonathan Chase (1732-1800) of Cornish, New Hampshire: His Papers* [in the New Hampshire Historical Society] (Cornish: Cornish Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 56.

- ¹⁸ Child, 1:66.
- ¹⁹ Letter: Jonathan Chase to Sarah Chase, near Lake Champlain, June 8, 1777, in Chase, p. 159.
- ²⁰ Zadock Thompson, *History of Vermont, Natural, Civil, and Statistical, in Three Parts* (Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich, 1842), 2:41; J. Kevin Graffagnino, *The Shaping of Vermont from Wilderness to the Centennial, 1749-1877* (Rutland: Vermont Heritage Press, 1983), p. 51; Child, 1:69.
- ²¹ Willard M. Wallace, *Appeal to Arms* (1964, Quadrangle edition; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 151.
- ²² The Plainfield men were paid on July 30. Hammond, State Papers, Volume 17, 4:143.
- ²³ June Barrows, "Seth Warner and the Battle of Bennington: Solving a Historical Puzzle," *Vermont History* 39, No. 2 (Spring 1971), pp. 101-06; "Action in Vermont During the Revolutionary War: Dan Kent's Narrative," *Vermont History* 39, No. 2 (Spring 1971), pp. 107-12; David L. Mann, "Bennington: A Clash between Patriot and Loyalist," *Historical New Hampshire* 32, No. 4 (Winter 1977), pp. 171-97; Karl J.R. Arndt, "New Hampshire and the Battle of Bennington: Colonel Baum's Mission and Bennington Defeat as Reported by a German Officer under General Burgoyne's Command," *Historical New Hampshire* 32, No. 4 (Winter 1977), pp. 198-227.; Wallace, pp. 156-57; Belknap, p. 372.
- ²⁴ Child, Vol. 1 p. 70.
- ²⁵ Chase, p. 59.
- ²⁶ Hammond, *New Hampshire Town Papers*, 13:201; Chase, p. 136.
- ²⁷ General Assembly of New Hampshire to the selectmen of Plainfield, January 2, 1778, in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II.
- ²⁸ Minutes of Town Meeting, January 15, 1778.
- ²⁹ Ibid., January 26, 1778.
- ³⁰ Ibid., April 15, 1778.
- ³¹ Chase, p. 226; Hammond, *New Hampshire Town Papers*. 13:201.
- ³² Chase, p. 131; Child, 1:75-76; Zadock Steele, *The Indian Captive; or a Narrative of the Captivity and Sufferings of Zadock Steele...To Which Is Prefixed An Account Of The Burning Of Royalton* (Montpelier: E.P. Walton, 1818), passim.
- ³³ Minutes of Town Meeting, January 9, 1781.
- ³⁴ Ibid., February 27, 1781.
- ³⁵ Chase, pp. 167, 172-73.

Chapter 4, Plainfield and the New Hampshire Grants Controversy

- ¹ For one detailed interpretation of the dispute, see Matt Bushnell Jones, *Vermont in the Making, 1750–1777* (1968 reprint; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939), pp. 20–75; Allan R. Raymond, “Benning Wentworth’s Claims in the New Hampshire–New York Border Controversy: A Case of Twenty-Two Hindsight?,” *Vermont History* 43, No. 1 (Winter 1975): 20–32.
- ² Jones, p. 87; Charles E. Clark, *The Eastern Frontier: The Settlement of Northern New England, 1610–1763* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), p. 354.
- ³ Jones, pp. 74–75, 397–403.
- ⁴ Ibid., pp. 326–27. See also, William Doyle, *The Vermont Political Tradition and Those Who Helped Make It* (Barre, VT: Northlight Studio Press, 1984), pp. 1–17; A. Theodore Steegman, Jr., “New York Rangers in the New Hampshire Grants, 1776–1777,” *Vermont History* 51, No. 4 (Fall 1983): 238–48.
- ⁵ Association Test, state Committee of Safety to the selectmen of Plainfield, April 12, 1776, in Book of Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II, 1770–1792, on file with the town clerk of Plainfield, NH. Thirty-one Plainfield men signed the Association Test. The tax roll for the same year has thirty-six more names on it.
- ⁶ Jere R. Daniell, *Experiment in Republicanism: New Hampshire Politics and the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), pp. 104–12; Karen E. Andresen, “A Return to Legitimacy: New Hampshire’s Constitution of 1776,” *Historical New Hampshire* 31, No. 4 (Winter 1976): 155–63; Deborah Downs, “The New Hampshire Constitution of 1776: Weathervane of Conservatism,” *Historical New Hampshire* 31, No. 4 (Winter 1976): 164–75.
- ⁷ Minutes of Town Meeting, Volume I, February 27, 1776, on file with the town clerk of Plainfield, NH.
- ⁸ Charles A. Downs, *History of Lebanon, N.H., 1761–1887* (Concord: Rumford Printing Company, 1908), pp. 112–13. For the full text of the pamphlet, see Nathaniel Bouton, editor, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire* (Concord: Edward A. Jenks, State Printer, 1877), 10:229–235.
- ⁹ Minutes of Town Meeting, December 9, 1776.
- ¹⁰ Daniell, pp. 128–30; Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 7:638.
- ¹¹ Nathaniel Bouton, editor, *Documents and Records Relating to the State of New Hampshire* (Concord: Edward A. Jenks, 1874): 8:450–51, 463. The letter sent to Plainfield is in the Book of Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II.
- ¹² Minutes of Town Meeting, March 11, 1777.
- ¹³ Gary J. Aichele, “Making the Vermont Constitution: 1777–1824,” *Vermont History* 56, No. 3 (Summer 1988): 166–90; Jones, pp. 375–89; Doyle, pp. 18–32. See also, Zadock Thompson, *History of Vermont, Natural, Civil and Statistical, in Three Parts* (Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich, 1842), Part II, p. 50.
- ¹⁴ Sarah V. Kalinoski, “Sequestration, Confiscation, and the ‘Tory’ in the Vermont Revolution,” *Vermont History* 45, No. 4 (Fall 1977): 236–46; Daniell, pp. 131–34.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 152–53.

¹⁶ Minutes of Town Meeting, December 4, 1777.

¹⁷ Ibid., January 15, 1778.

¹⁸ Ibid., March 10, 1778.

¹⁹ See Book of Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II, 1768–1799, on file with the town clerk of Plainfield, NH.; The Petition to the General Assembly of the State of Vermont, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:272–274. “Ye Patent Line” was the western boundary of the Mason family’s Patent granted to John Mason on November 7, 1629. His grant reached “sixty miles west of the sea.” Since the territory west of this line had been annexed by the Royal Province of New Hampshire and since New Hampshire had thrown off royal authority, the voters in the eastern New Hampshire Grants preferred to think that the state’s right to rule beyond its original western boundary had been forfeited. Further disagreement developed over whether Mason’s Line was an arc or a straight line sixty miles inland from New Hampshire’s concave coastline. If Mason’s Line was an arc, it ran roughly through the present towns of Fitzwilliam, Marlborough, and Stoddard on the south; northeasterly through Goshen, New London, and Danbury; through Plymouth, Holderness, and Sandwich; to the present Maine border just south of Conway, New Hampshire. See Richard R. Johnson, “Robert Mason and the Coming of Royal Government to New England,” *Historical New Hampshire* 35, No. 4 (Winter 1980): 361–90; See also, Clark, pp. 36–51.

²⁰ The following towns in Cheshire County supported the March petition: Acworth, Cornish, Lempster, Marlow, Newgranham (Grantham), Plainfield, and Surry. (The northern towns of Cheshire County were formed into Sullivan County in 1827.) The following towns in Grafton County supported the petition: Bath, Canaan, Cardigan (Orange), Enfield, Gunthwaite (Lisbon), Hanover, Haverhill, Lebanon, Lyman, Lyme, Orford, Piermont, and Plymouth. The town of Croydon in Cheshire County gave the petition its unofficial support. The following Grafton County towns also gave the petition their unofficial support: Campton, Cockermouth (Groton), Dorchester, Dresden (part of Hanover), Landaff, Morristown (Franconia), Rumney, Trecothick (Ellsworth), Warren, Wentworth. See also, Elmer M. Hunt, *New Hampshire Town Names and Whence They Came* (Peterborough, NH: Noone House, 1970).

²¹ Letter, the United Committee to the selectmen of Plainfield, Cornish, March 18, 1778, in Town Papers, Volume I, on file with the town clerk.

²² Sullivan County was created from the northern towns of Cheshire County in 1827.

²³ Daniell, pp. 152–54. Bezaleel Woodward (1745–1804) was the son-in-law of Reverend Eleazar Wheelock, the founder of Dartmouth College.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 154–55.

²⁵ Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:276–77.

²⁶ Letter: Nehemiah Estabrook to Meshech Weare, Orford, NH, June 25, 1778, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:277–78.

- ²⁷ Daniell, pp. 167-70.
- ²⁸ Minutes of Town Meeting, June 5, 1778.
- ²⁹ Deposition of Francis Smith, Plainfield, NH, no date, transcribed in Vernon Hood, "Plainfield History and Genealogy," 4 volumes, unpublished manuscript on file at the Dartmouth College Archives, Hanover, NH, 3:394.
- ³⁰ Daniell, p. 155; Letter: Ethan Allen to the General Assembly of Vermont, October 10, 1778, and Letter: Ethan Allen to Meshech Weare, October 23, 1778, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:282-284, 287-88.
- ³¹ Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:284. The motion was defeated 33 to 28 on October 21, 1778.
- ³² Bezaleel Woodward, Elisha Payne and Jacob Bayley, *A Public Defence of the Right of the New Hampshire Grants...to Associate Together, and Form Themselves into An Independent State* (Dresden [Hanover], NH: Alden Spooner, 1779), reprinted in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:296-324.
- ³³ Announcement of pamphlet per order of Joseph Marsh, chairman, 23 October 1778, in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II; Protest to the General Assembly of Vermont, October 22, 1778, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:285-86.
- ³⁴ Declaration of the General Assembly of Vermont to the New Hampshire Grants, October A.D. 1778, in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II; Letter: Meshech Weare to Ethan Allen, November 5, 1778, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:295. See also, The Congressional Record for June 1-2, 1779.
- ³⁵ Ira Allen, "To The Inhabitants of the State of Vermont" (Dresden [Hanover], NH, November 27, 1778), in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II; Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:329-32.
- ³⁶ "Resolves of the Convention Held on the New Hampshire Grants by Delegates from Twenty-two Towns...from Both Sides of the River, December 9, 1778," in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II.
- ³⁷ Minutes of Town Meeting, November 18, 1778.
- ³⁸ Ibid., December 2, 1778.
- ³⁹ Daniell, pp. 130-31.
- ⁴⁰ Letter: Benjamin Bellows and Samuel Ashley to the New Hampshire Grant Towns, January 14, 1779, in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II.
- ⁴¹ Minutes of Town Meeting, May 20, 1779.
- ⁴² Ibid., April 20, 1779. The Constitutional Convention at Rumford (Concord) had convened in June of 1778. The primary issues were the establishment of an independent executive and the discouragement of plural officeholding. No records from either session of the convention are known to survive. See, Daniell, 168-70.
- ⁴³ Minutes of Town Meeting, May 20, 1779.

- ⁴⁴ Letter: Joseph Marsh, Peter Olcott and Bezaleel Woodward to the President of the Congress, July 20, 1780, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:263-65; Daniell, p. 158.
- ⁴⁵ Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:351-54. See also The Congressional Record for September 23, 1779.
- ⁴⁶ Peter S. Onuf, "State-Making in Revolutionary America: Independent Vermont as a Case Study," *Journal of American History* 67, No. 4 (March 1981): 797-815; Ian C. Pemberton, "The British Secret Service in the Champlain Valley during the Haldimand Negotiations, 1780-1783," *Vermont History* 44, No. 3 (Summer 1976): 129-40; J. Robert McGuire, "The British Secret Service and the Attempt to Kidnap General Jacob Bayley of Newbury, Vermont, 1782," *Vermont History* 44, No. 3 (Summer 1976): 141-67,
- ⁴⁷ Letter: Meshech Weare to the constables and collectors of the state tax, August 5, 1780, in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II; Bouton, *Documents and Records Relating to the State of New Hampshire*, 8:858; Daniell, pp. 132-34.
- ⁴⁸ Minutes of Town Meeting, September 5, 1780.
- ⁴⁹ Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:371-80, 407-08.
- ⁵⁰ *General Jonathan Chase (1732-1800) of Cornish, New Hampshire: His Papers* [in the collection of the New Hampshire Historical Society] (Cornish: Cornish Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 131; William H. Child, *History of the Town of Cornish, New Hampshire, 1763-1910*, 2 volumes (Concord, NH: The Rumford Press, 1910), 1:75-76.
- ⁵¹ Letter: the Walpole convention to the New Hampshire Grant towns, November 15, 1780, in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II; Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:381-83, 393-94.
- ⁵² Downs, pp. 127-28; Daniell, p. 160; Ira Allen, "The Secret History of the Charlestown Convention," transcribed in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:393-96; Resolves of the Charlestown Convention, January 16, 1781, in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II.
- ⁵³ Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:394-96.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 10:398-400.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 10:288.
- ⁵⁶ Minutes of Town Meeting, March 13, 1781. See also, "Articles of Union...Between...the Legislature of the State of Vermont, and the Committee of the Convention of the New Hampshire Grants, at Windsor, in February, 1781," in Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, May 10, 1781.
- ⁵⁸ Letter: Meshech Weare to John Sullivan and Silas Livermore, June 20, 1781, in Bouton, 10:401-02.
- ⁵⁹ Letter: Silas Livermore to Meshech Weare and A Report of A Committee of

- Congress, October 27, 1781, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:407, 418–22.
- ⁶⁰ Resolves of the General Assembly of Vermont at Charlestown, N.H., October 18, 1781, in Bouton, 10:423–26.
- ⁶¹ Letter: Meshech Weare and the state Committee of Safety to Benjamin Bellows and Moses Nichols, December 5, 1781, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:447–48.
- ⁶² Letter: Thomas Chittenden to Elisha Payne, December 14, 1781, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:450–51.
- ⁶³ Letter: George Washington to Thomas Chittenden, January 1, 1782, in John C. Fitzpatrick, editor, *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1937), 23:419–22.
- ⁶⁴ Resolves of the General Assembly of Vermont at Bennington, February 19, 1782, in Bouton, *Provincial and State Papers of New Hampshire*, 10:484–85.
- ⁶⁵ Letter: Elisha Payne to the selectmen of Cornish, NH, February 22, 1782, in *Miscellaneous Papers, Volume II*.
- ⁶⁶ Minutes of Town Meetings, March 12 to May 21, 1782.
- ⁶⁷ Daniell, p. 170.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 133.
- ⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 134–35.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 164, 174–78; Bouton, *Documents and Records Relating to the State of New Hampshire*, 8:969. See also, Charles G. Douglas, III, “Judicial Review and the Separation of Powers under the New Hampshire Constitutions of 1776 and 1784,” *Historical New Hampshire* 31, No. 4 (Winter 1976), pp. 176–91.
- ⁷¹ Minutes of Town Meeting, May 2, 1785.
- ⁷² Plainfield and Cornish Petition to the General Court, 1785, in Isaac W. Hammond, editor, *State Papers of New Hampshire* (Concord: Parson B. Cogswell, 1884), 13:204–05.
- ⁷³ Petition, Samuel Reed of Cornish to the General Court, circa 1782. Private Collection.
- ⁷⁴ Minutes of Town Meeting, January 23, 1786.
- ⁷⁵ Daniell, pp. 184–89.
- ⁷⁶ Warrant for Town Meeting, February 26, 1786.

Chapter 5, Religion in Plainfield

- ¹ Many of these issues are also addressed in Philip Zeca, *Order and Dissent: A History of Meriden Parish in Plainfield and the Separation of Church and State in New Hampshire, 1760–1820* (Lebanon: The Whitman Press, 1980).
- ² For a discussion of Jonathan Edwards and the New Lights, see Patricia Tracy, *Jonathan Edwards, Pastor: Religion and Society in Eighteenth Century Northampton* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980), and Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee: Character and Social Order in Connecticut, 1690–1765* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1967).
- ³ Isaac Backus, *A History of New England with Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians Called Baptists*, edited by David Weston, 2 volumes (Newton, MA: 1871), 2:74, 77–78; Ellen Larned, *History of Windham County, Connecticut*, 2 volumes (Worcester: Charles Hamilton, 1874–1880), 1:451–457, 536–40; William G. McLoughlin, *New England Dissent, 1630–1833: The Baptists and the Separation of Church and State*, 2 volumes (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 1:364–65; *Connecticut Archives*, 12:227, 251–54, 260, 268, 275.
- ⁴ McLoughlin, 2:835–38; Albert S. Batchellor et al, editor, *Laws of New Hampshire*, 3 volumes (Manchester and Concord: 1904–1915), 2:64–65, 143–44, 560–61; Charles B. Kinney, Jr., *Church and State: The Struggle for Separation in New Hampshire* (New York: Columbia University, 1955), pp. 13–30.
- ⁵ Minutes of Town Meeting, Volume I, August 8, 1771, on file with the town clerk of Plainfield, NH. The Proprietors' Book of the town of Plainfield, NH, 1761–1802, August 18, 1769, on file with the town clerk of Plainfield.
- ⁶ Minutes of Town Meeting, March 10, 1772; Robert F. Lawrence, *The New Hampshire Churches: Comprising Histories of the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches in the State, with Notices of Other Denominations* (Claremont, NH: N.W. Goddard, 1856), pp. 491–92.
- ⁷ Minutes of Town Meeting, March 14, 1775.
- ⁸ Amos B. Carpenter, *Carpenter Memorial: Our Family* (Amherst, MA: Press of Carpenter & Morehouse, 1898), pp. 144–45.
- ⁹ Uncirculated petition to Abraham Carpenter, December 8, 1775, in Book of Miscellaneous Papers, Volume I, 1768–1799, on file with the town clerk of Plainfield, NH.
- ¹⁰ Minutes of Town Meeting, November 18, 1778.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, March 9, 1779.
- ¹² Protest against the appointment of Abraham Carpenter as the first settled minister, in Book of Miscellaneous Papers, Volume I, March 9, 1779.
- ¹³ The original town line between Plainfield and Grantham paralleled the northeast to southwest course of Blood's Brook and Route 120 by the Baptist Church in Meriden and ran just to the east of the intersection of Camp Road and Bean Road.
- ¹⁴ Minutes of Town Meeting, July 25, 1779, Grantham, NH, Town Records. Microfilm

Collection, New Hampshire Historical Society.

¹⁵ Warrant for Town Meeting, February 17, 1780.

¹⁶ The Covenant of the Meriden Congregational Society, in Record Book of Meriden Parish, 1779–1794, Volume I, p. 1, on file with the clerk of the Meriden Congregational Church; L.A. Austin, *One Hundredth Anniversary of the Congregational Church at Meriden, N.H., May 2d, 1880* (Lebanon: Free Press Job Office, 1880), p. 9.

¹⁷ Minutes of Town Meeting, February 17, 1780.

¹⁸ Ibid., March 14, 1780.

¹⁹ Notification to the General Court of New Hampshire of the partition of Plainfield, May 12, 1780, in Book of Miscellaneous Papers, Volume I.

²⁰ Nathaniel Bouton, editor, *Documents and Records Relating to the State of New Hampshire* (Concord: Edward A. Jenks, 1874) 8:959–960.

²¹ Samuel Wood was born in Mansfield, Connecticut, on May 11, 1752, and died in Boscawen, New Hampshire, on December 24, 1836. See William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, 9 volumes (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1857–1869), 2:169–172; *History and Catalogue of the Members of the Congregational Church at Meriden, N.H. from May 2, 1780 to Jan. 1, 1858* (Hanover, NH: 1858), p. 8; Lawrence, p. 461; Minutes of parish meeting, Record Book of Meriden Parish, I:3.

²² Record Book of Meriden Parish, I:3, 8.

²³ Ibid., I:9–10.

²⁴ Peter Benes and Philip D. Zimmerman, *New England Meeting House and Church: 1630–1850* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1979), pp. 55–56.

²⁵ Record Book of Meriden Parish, I:7, 12. For a reproduction of the drawing of the floor plan of the first meeting house in Meriden as found in the Parish Records, see also Charles H. Richards and Charles F. Robinson, "Sermons Preached at the Dedication of the Meriden Congregational Church, Meriden, NH, May 21–23, 1899" (Lebanon, NH: 1900), p. 40.

²⁶ Ibid., I:17, 19, 28, 31–32; Sprague, 2:346; Louise Coleman Johnson, *The Congregational Heritage: 1770–1961 in Norwich, Vermont* (Norwich: Norwich Bicentennial Committee, 1961), p. 24. Peter Powers was a minister in Norwich, Connecticut, between 1756 and 1766 when he moved to Newbury, Vermont. He was dismissed in 1784 and moved to Deer Isle, Maine.

²⁷ Records of the Meriden Congregational Church, Volume I, 1780–1792, p. 30, on file with the clerk of the Meriden Congregational Church; Record Book of Meriden Parish, I:34–35, 37; *History and Catalogue*, pp. 8–9; Sprague, 8:192; Richards and Robinson, p. 49. Reverend Experience Estabrook was born in Rehoboth, Massachusetts, the hometown of Abraham Carpenter, and graduated from Dartmouth College in 1776. He was installed as the minister in Thornton, New Hampshire, in 1780. Estabrook died in Bath, New Hampshire, in February 1799.

²⁸ Record Book of Meriden Parish, I:37.

- ²⁹ William H. Child, *History of the Town of Cornish, New Hampshire, 1763–1910*, 2 volumes (Concord: The Rumford Press, 1910), 1:108–09, 111–13, 118; Isaac W. Hammond, editor, *New Hampshire Town Papers* (Concord: Parsons B. Cogswell, 1884), 13:206. A Baptist Society was founded in Cornish in 1789.
- ³⁰ Account Book of John Austin, Plainfield, NH, p. 57, on file at the Joseph Downs Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, H.F. duPont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, DE.
- ³¹ Minutes of Town Meeting, December 18, 1788.
- ³² Eden Burroughs and Experience Estabrook, *A Faithful Narrative of the Wonderful Dealings of God Towards Polly Davis, of New-Grantham...Taken from Her Own Mouth, and the Testimony of Several Witnesses of Established and Approved Veracity, Who Were Present with Her through the Scenes of Distress, and That Sudden and Surprising Recovery...Taken...on the 12th Day of September in the Year of Our Lord Jesus Christ, 1792*. (Exeter, NH: Henry Ranlet, 1793). Private Collection.
- ³³ Minutes of meeting, eastern society, Cornish, NH, circa 1790. Private Collection.
- ³⁴ Carpenter, pp. 144–45; Lawrence, p. 471.
- ³⁵ Minutes of Town Meeting, February 17, 1780.
- ³⁶ Warrant for Town Meeting, November 8, 1794.
- ³⁷ Minutes of Town Meeting, October 7, 1799.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, December 11, 1794.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, March 31, 1795; Petition of the selectmen of Plainfield to the General Court of New Hampshire, November 25, 1795, in Hammond, 13:209.
- ⁴⁰ Minutes of Town Meeting, April 16, 1799.
- ⁴¹ The meeting house was moved to the location of the present cemetery at Plainfield Plain. It was later moved to the center of the village and survives today with many original details as the Plainfield Town Hall.
- ⁴² Lawrence, p. 471.
- ⁴³ Minutes of Town Meeting, December 24, 1804.
- ⁴⁴ Records of the Meriden Congregational Church, pp. 2–5, 8–9.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 18.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- ⁴⁷ Record Book of Meriden Parish, I:47; Records of the Meriden Congregational Church, pp. 19, 22.
- ⁴⁸ Record Book of Meriden Parish, I:51.
- ⁴⁹ Records of the Meriden Baptist Church, Volume I, 1792–1863, pp. 4, 12, on file with the clerk of the Meriden Baptist Church; Reverend O. Wilson Kimball, *Historical Address and Other Exercises on the One Hundreth Anniversary of the First Baptist Church*,

of Plainfield (Meriden), New Hampshire, September 6, 1892 (Lebanon, NH: 1892), pp. 3-5.

⁵⁰ "Articles of the Chh [church]," records of the Meriden Baptist Church, found in the rear of the volume.

⁵¹ Letter, Elihu Hyde to Reverend Isaac Backus, Lebanon, NH, November 15, 1783, in Backus Papers, Andover-Newton Theological Seminary, Newton, MA.

⁵² Records of the Meriden Baptist Church, pp. 7-8, 11.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 17.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 28-29, 39.

⁵⁵ Record Book of Meriden Parish, 1796-1818, Volume II, pp. 3, 5, on file with the clerk of the Meriden Congregational Church.

⁵⁶ Paul Franklin and Philip Zea measured the foundations of the outbuildings at the old Penniman farm, built for John Stevens, on Whitaker Road in 1974. The foundation of the barn lost in 1938 matches the dimensions of the first meeting house outlined in the Parish records.

⁵⁷ Ibid., II:6, 43-44; Richards and Robinson, p. 44. See Dr. Elias Frost, "Chronicles of the Frost Family," Meriden, NH, 1852. Unpublished manuscript, Dartmouth College Library. See also, Peter Benes, *New England Prospect: A Loan Exhibition of Maps at the Currier Gallery of Art* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1981), pp. 71-73.

⁵⁸ Draft of minutes of parish meeting, January 26, 1797. Private Collection.

⁵⁹ Early building contracts are rare. Although the master builder left this document unsigned, it warrants a complete transcription. The contract is found on the reverse of the original draft of the minutes of the Parish meeting held in Meriden on January 26, 1797. The seventh article of the meeting further resolved that: "The Belfra Deck to be Coverd with Lead."

The Conditions of the above that the DAB[?] Shall Build and Compleat a Meeting house in the Parish of Meriden near the Old Meeting house when the Committe Shall Direct and the Time hereafter mentioned and in the following manner (Viz) Said house to be Sixty fut in length and 47 in width with 28 fut Posts the fraim to be well timberd [with] Six posts on a Side and as many Beams neither of which to be les than 12 Inches Square in any part the roof to [be] Double Rafterd with King Posts on Each Beam [and] also a Steple at one End which is to be 13 fut Square the Sqa[re] of which is to go 6 fut above the ridge of sd house and be Double braind [braced?] and to be well fraimed to Said fraim by Iron Bolts and timbers also a Porch at the Other End 13 fut Square the whole of Said fraim to be made of good Sound Timber well hewed and to be well raised & Studed in Every part The Studs not to Stand more than two fut apart the Wals of Said house to be Covered with half Inch Boards and then with good Clap boards not to lay more than four Inches to the weather Except the Back [north] Side and Gable Ends and to lap not

les than one & a half Inch in no place and Naild with good tin penny Nails in Every Stud[?] with three Double Doors and to mak 42 Windows in the body of Said house with forty Squares of Glas Each 7 by 9 and 4 windows in the Steple 24 Sqaers Each and one in the Porch [and] one round window in the End Also a Stair Case to go into the Gallery in the Steple and Porch the Insid to be Seald [wain-scoated] from the floor to the windows and the rest to be plasturd with good Lyme the flouer Double and well Spiked and the Lower flouer to be Dived [divvied] into fifty Pews according to a plan & a vote of Said Parish the wall pews to be raised 14 Inches & the Body[?] Pews Six [inches] the Galery to be fifteen fut in width and to be Dived [divvied] into 21 pews agreable to Said plan with three Seats in front and the Galery to have a good Double flour to be Anchid [anchored?] above and below in the Same maner as Lebanon meeting house the whole of Said house[,] Except the Steple above the Square to be Done after the mode of Salisbury South meeting house the Steple above the Square to be Done after the mode and in the Same manner and to be of the Same highth as Lebanon meeting house Except the Conducting [lightning] rod which is to be on the outside all the way and is to be four feet above the weather Cock [vane] which rod is to be 7/8 of an Inch Diameter the forks of which is to be pointed with Silver also to furnish a good Bel which Shall Weigh 750 weight and to be hung fit for me and Said hous to be underpined all round with hewn Stone the foreside [south] to be 20 Inches & the backsid 9 [inches] the Ends in proportion with Sutable Steps at Each Dore of hewn Stone the out Side of Said house to be Coulerd White the roof read [red] and the Breastwork [front] of the Galleries mahogany [colored] The Desk [pulpit], pillars and posts [all supporting the gal-leries on the east, south, and west sides of the interior] all to [be] painted the pews all to be Numberd on the Dores with figures on paint and the whole to be completed in Every part According to Strict rules of Good workmanship.

⁶⁰ Record Book of Meriden Parish, II:9, 13.

⁶¹ For a broader discussion of the failure of the church-state in the upper Connecticut River Valley, see Randolph A. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma: Religion, Reform, and the Social Order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791-1850* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 26-79.

⁶² "Constitution, Records, &c of the Meriden Female Cent Society Instituted at Plainfield, Wednesday March 1 AD 1815," pp. 1, 14, 17, 22-23. Private Collection.

⁶³ Record Book of Meriden Parish, 2:38-41. The following men sold their pew rights in the Meriden meeting house in 1816: Benjamin True, Stephen Gage, Francis Dean, Tristram Hardy, Philip Spaulding, Josiah Fifield, Ebenezer Burbank, James Brown, Joseph Kimball, Jr., William Silloway, Thomas Stevens, James Smith, and John Gove. The following members of the Meriden Congregational Church agreed to purchase the pew rights of the Separatists in 1816: Amos Farnum, Dr. Elias Frost, David Joy, John Tichnor, Abram Malavory, Elijah Gleason, John Bryant, Eliphalet Adams,

Jesse Roberts, Simeon Adams, Jacob Smith, Champeon Spaulding, Amassa Bixby, Daniel Dickinson, and Abner Johnson.

⁶⁴ *New-Hampshire Patriot* (Concord), 1816 February 13; William G. McLoughlin, "The Bench, the Church and the Republican Party in New Hampshire," *Historical New Hampshire* 20 (1965): 3-31.

⁶⁵ Henry H. Metcalf, editor, *Laws of the State of New Hampshire*, Volumes IV-IX (Bristol and Concord: 1916-1922), 8:820; *Journal of the Honorable Senate of the State of New Hampshire*, June Session 1817 (Concord: 1818), pp. 54, 157; McLoughlin, 2:894-902; Kinney, pp. 97-102. For comparison, see Walter A. Ryan, "The Separation of Church and State in Acworth, New Hampshire," *Historical New Hampshire* 34, No. 2 (Summer 1979): 143-53.

⁶⁶ Interview: Nancy Norwalk with Anita Barrett, 1988.

⁶⁷ Steve Taylor, "Sharing of Plainfield Church 'New Type of Thing for N.H.,'" *Valley News*, April 26, 1979.

⁶⁸ *Inventory of the Church Archives of New Hampshire, Protestant Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire*, June 1942.

⁶⁹ John Willis, "At Home with Lucy Poulin," *Yankee Magazine*, December 1983, pp. 79-85, 186-90; Interview: Norwalk/Barrett.

⁷⁰ Several booklets, pamphlets, and unpublished documents record the histories of the Congregational and Baptist Societies in Meriden. Both groups retain original records in their archives. Publications include: Philip Zea, *Order and Dissent: A History of Meriden Parish in Plainfield and the Separation of Church and State in New Hampshire, 1760-1820* (Lebanon, NH: The Whitman Press, 1980); Annie Holbrook Duncan, *Meriden Congregational Church, Meriden, New Hampshire: A Brief History, 1780-1955*, Private Printing, 1955; Charles H. Richards and Charles F. Robinson, *Sermons Preached at the Dedication of the Meriden Congregational Church, Meriden, N.H., May 21-23, 1899*, Lebanon, NH: 1900; *One Hundreth Anniversary of the Congregational Church at Meriden, N.H., May 2d, 1880* (Lebanon, NH: Free Press Job Office, 1880); *History and Catalogue of the Members of the Congregational Church at Meriden, N.H., From May 2, 1780 to January 1, 1858* (Hanover, NH: The Dartmouth Press, 1858). See also, *Historical Address and Other Exercises on the One Hundreth Anniversary of the First Baptist Church of Plainfield (Meriden), New Hampshire, September 6, 1892* (Lebanon, NH: Press of A.B. Freeman, 1892); Reverend Stephen Abbott, "History of the First Baptist Church in Plainfield, NH," Unpublished manuscript read at the meeting of the Newport Association at Cornish, N.H., on August 25-26, 1869. On file in the Town Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society. The New Hampshire Historical Society also holds the manuscript church records of the First Baptist Society in Plainfield, 1829-1904.

⁷¹ Records of Meriden Parish (1779-1794). Volume 1, p. 1. On file with the clerk of the Meriden Congregational Church; *History and Catalogue*, p. 8. The original members of the Meriden Congregational Church were Benjamin Kimball, Abraham and Mary Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Bloss, Hannah Kimball, Ruth Pool, Micaiah and Elizabeth Adams, Mr. and Mrs. Israel Ballard, Mr. and Mrs. Josiah Colton, and Keziah Short.

- ⁷² For a comparative study and for two broader discussions, see Walter A. Ryan, "The Separation of Church and State in Acworth, New Hampshire," *Historical New Hampshire* 34, No. 2 (Summer 1979): 143–53; Charles B. Kinney, Jr., *Church and State: The Struggle for Separation in New Hampshire* (New York: Columbia University, 1955); Randolph A. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma: Religion, Reform, and the Social Order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791–1850* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 15–80.
- ⁷³ See the chapter on architecture for a detailed discussion of the church building. See also, Zea, pp. 31–34.
- ⁷⁴ Duncan, p. 29.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid.
- ⁷⁶ Records of Meriden Parish. Volume 2, pp. 38–41; Zea, pp. 26–28.
- ⁷⁷ Records of the Meriden Congregational Church (1820–1907). Volume 3, pp. 2–3; Records of the Meriden Baptist Church (1792–1863). Volume 1, pp. 50–51. No entries were made in the record book of the Baptist Church between September 8, 1816, and October 27, 1819.
- ⁷⁸ *The Charter of the Union Academy, with a Concise Account of Its Origins, &c.* Hanover: 1813.
- ⁷⁹ Will of Daniel Kimball, March 6, 1817. Docket 59k. Cheshire County Probate Records, Cheshire County Courthouse, Keene, NH.
- ⁸⁰ Promisory note of Hannah Kimball for the support of the Meriden Congregational Society, October 25, 1837. On file in the Town Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society.
- ⁸¹ Child, pp. 75–76; Will of Hannah Kimball, 1846. Sullivan County Probate Records, Sullivan County Courthouse, Newport, NH.
- ⁸² Rufus William Bailey, *A Sermon Delivered July 4, 1821, at the Ordination of Rev. Dana Clayes...in Meriden Parish, Plainfield, N.H.* (Hanover, NH: Ridley Bannister, 1821). Twenty-five individuals subscribed the cost of the publication.
- ⁸³ Resolution, Annual Meeting of the Meriden Congregational Society, March 28, 1842. On file in the Town Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society; Order for \$755.35 with interest payable to the Meriden Congregational Society by the town of Plainfield [pursuant to the resolution of the annual Town Meeting on March 11, 1846], selectmen of Plainfield, March 27, 1848. Town records on file with the town clerk of Plainfield.
- ⁸⁴ Zea, p. 33.
- ⁸⁵ See, for example, subscription list [forty-seven signatures] "for the purpose of making repairs upon the Meriden Congregational Church," June 1887. Records of the Meriden Congregational Church.
- ⁸⁶ See, for example, receipt for \$9.15 from the American Missionary Association, New York, to the Meriden Congregational Church, August 25, 1893, and receipt for \$10

from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Boston, to the Meriden Congregational Church and Society, October 19, 1893. Records of the Meriden Congregational Church.

⁸⁷ *The Kimball Union* (December 898: 350.

⁸⁸ Duncan, pp. 34–36.

⁸⁹ Child, 2:236.

⁹⁰ Records, Plainfield Community Baptist Church.

Chapter 6, Plainfield in the Nineteenth Century

¹ Vernon Hood, "History of Plainfield," unpublished manuscript, pp. 402–04.

² Philip Zea, "An Architectural Catalogue of Pre-1830 Buildings in Plainfield, NH," unpublished semester paper, Wesleyan University, 1974.

³ Plainfield School District Tax Invoice Lists, 1828, 1835. Plainfield Town Office.

⁴ Hood, pp. 411–14.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 414–17.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 97a.

⁸ *United States Census of Agriculture, New Hampshire, 1860.*

⁹ Plainfield Tax Invoice Lists, 1829–47.

¹⁰ *United States Census of Agriculture, New Hampshire, 1850.*

¹¹ *United States Census of Agriculture, New Hampshire, 1870.*

¹² Plainfield Tax Invoice Lists, 1860.

¹³ Plainfield Tax Invoice Lists, 1884–1906.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Plainfield Town Reports: 1870, 1896.

¹⁷ *United States Census of Agriculture, New Hampshire, 1870 and 1880.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Diaries of Jason T. Johnston, 1864–1910. Plainfield Historical Society.

Chapter 7, Plainfield and the American Civil War

- ¹ Charles Woodward, "My Personal History," unpublished manuscript in the collection of the Plainfield Historical Society, undated, p. 2.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Ibid., p. 3.
- ⁴ Eugene C. Murdoch, *One Million Men: The Civil War Draft in the North* (Madison, WI: Historical Society of Wisconsin), p. 6.
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 8.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 6.
- ⁸ William Marvel, "Initiation on a Mountaintop," *Blue and Gray Magazine*, January 1987.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² E. D. Redington, *Military Record of the Sons of Dartmouth in the Union Army and Navy* (Boston: Trustees of Dartmouth, 1907), p. 61.
- ¹³ Ibid., p. 45.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., p. 5.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., p. 128.
- ¹⁶ Ibid., p. 12.

Chapter 8, Transportation

- ¹ Lyman S. Hayes, *The Connecticut River Valley* (Rutland: 1929 through April 28, 1988), 21:22:00.
- ² Vernon Hood, "History of Plainfield," unpublished manuscript; Virginia Colby, "The Connecticut River," *The Windsor Chronicle*, March 13, 1987–April 28, 1988; Plainfield Oral History Tape, Lena Kovalski.
- ³ Jerold Wikoff, *The Upper Valley: an Illustrated Tour Along the Connecticut River before the Twentieth Century* (Chelsea, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing Co., 1985), p. 33.
- ⁴ Hood, p. 35.
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 184.
- ⁶ Ibid., p. 260.
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 177.
- ⁸ Ibid., pp. 170–84.

Chapter 9, Old Time Industries

- ¹ This chapter is an unedited paper written by Blancha Daniels in 1920.
- ² While the people on the American frontier had to be self-reliant, complete self-sufficiency is a myth. Settlers were interdependent and relied heavily on imported goods. In New England, they also did not live in permanent log cabins which were introduced to America by Scandanavian colonists in Delaware during the eighteenth century.

Chapter 10, Business and Commerce

- ¹ Constance Kousman, "Harold Hoisington, A Shoe for Every Foot," *New Hampshire Profiles*, September 1974, pp. 46-47.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Plainfield Town Records.
- ⁴ William Craig, Jr., "The Fine Craftsmanship of Plainfield's James Gilkey," *Valley News*, May 17, 1988.
- ⁵ Clare and Fiske Boyd, "History of Plainfield, New Hampshire," unpublished manuscript; Oral History Tapes, Eunice Waite interview; Jane C. Giffen, "New Hampshire Cabinetmakers and Allied Craftsmen, 1790-1850," *The Magazine Antiques*, July 1968, Vol. XCIV, No. 1, pp. 78-87.
- ⁶ Plainfield Oral History Tapes, Eunice Waite.
- ⁷ Boyd, Vol. 2, p. 945.
- ⁸ Samuel W. Cole, "Old Meriden," *Granite State Free Press*, Lebanon, NH, May 13, 1921.
- ⁹ Plainfield Death Records.
- ¹⁰ Boyd, Vol. 2, p. 985.
- ¹¹ Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 1717.
- ¹² Cole.
- ¹³ Blancha Daniels, "Old Time Industries," 1920.
- ¹⁴ Boyd, Vol. 2, p. 887.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., p. 829.
- ¹⁶ Ibid., p. 1001.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., p. 929.
- ¹⁸ Vernon Hood, "Plainfield Genealogy," unpublished manuscript, see Elijah Austin.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., Peter Abbot.
- ²⁰ Daniels.

- ²¹ Boyd, Vol. 4, p. 1929.
- ²² Ibid., Vol. 5, Jordan family section.
- ²³ Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 964.
- ²⁴ Ibid, p. 969.
- ²⁵ Ibid., Jordan family section.
- ²⁶ Vernon Hood, "History of Plainfield," unpublished manuscript, p. 187.
- ²⁷ Boyd, Vol. 2, p. 972.
- ²⁸ Plainfield Oral History, Doris Williams, Tape 13, p. 43.
- ²⁹ Walter R. Nelson, *History of Goshen, New Hampshire* (Concord: Evans Printing Company, 1957), pp. 173-74.
- ³⁰ F. A. Briggs, "Rambles in Plainfield," *Claremont National Eagle* (1886).
- ³¹ Boyd, Vol. 2, p. 808.
- ³² Ibid., Vol. 4, pp. 1912-33.
- ³³ Cole.
- ³⁴ Boyd, Vol. 2, p. 587.
- ³⁵ Plainfield Oral History, Herman Rogers, Tape 35, p. 12.
- ³⁶ Boyd, Vol. 4, p. 1600
- ³⁷ Ibid., pp. 1912-33.
- ³⁸ Hood, "History of Plainfield," Notebook 3, p. 36.
- ³⁹ Ibid., p. 37.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 41.
- ⁴¹ Sullivan County deeds; Cheshire County deeds; Interview: Howard Zea with Alice (Moore) Cuddy.
- ⁴² Blancha Daniels, "Old-Time Industries," see Chapter 9.
- ⁴³ Boyd.
- ⁴⁴ Some interesting personal reminiscences are found on the Plainfield Oral History Tapes about this extensive lumbering business.
- ⁴⁵ News clipping, July 11, 1957, Plainfield Historical Society files.
- ⁴⁶ Steve Taylor, "The Case for Portable Sawmills," *Blair & Ketchum's Country Journal*, October 1983, pp. 90-99.
- ⁴⁷ Boyd, Volumes I, II, IV, V; Plainfield Oral History Tapes, Numbers 2, 3, 6, 24, 28; Interview: Mary Cassedy with Howard Zea, 1988; *Maps of Sullivan County* (Boston: D. H. Hurd & Co., 1892), reprinted as *The Old Maps of Sullivan County, N.H. in 1892* (Fryeburg, ME: Saco Valley Printing, 1984); Plainfield Bicentennial Committee,

A Brief History of Early Plainfield (Hanover, NH: Roger Burt Printing, 1976); Personal knowledge of Mary Cassedy gained from nearly sixty-five years of living in town as a direct descendant of several early settlers.

⁴⁸ *Valley News*, September 16, 1970.

⁴⁹ Plainfield Town Records.

⁵⁰ Cole, December 1920.

⁵¹ Advertisement, *Weekly Enterprise*, August 31, 1911; information from Daniel Westgate.

⁵² Hood, "History of Plainfield"; Boyd; Plainfield Historical Society Collection.

⁵³ Interviews: Paul Franklin with Barbara LeClair, Lockwood "Pooh" Sprague, and William McNamara, May 1990.

⁵⁴ Interview: Kathryn MacLeay with Gordon Wilder, March 7, 1990.

⁵⁵ *New Hampshire Sunday News*, September 12, 1948.

⁵⁶ Interviews: Kathryn MacLeay with Basil McNamara, Bertha Woodward, Frank Currier.

⁵⁷ News clipping, September 23, 1967, Plainfield Historical Society files.

⁵⁸ "The Snath Factory," *Country Journal*, April 1981, p. 91.

⁵⁹ Interview: MacLeay/Wilder.

⁶⁰ Bird Village Inn brochure. Collection of Erich Witzel.

⁶¹ Plainfield Oral History, Gladys (Richards) Stevens, Tape 26, pp. 4, 21.

⁶² Plainfield Oral History, Stephen Tracy, Tape 23, p. 33.

⁶³ Plainfield Oral History, Stevens.

⁶⁴ Hood, "History of Plainfield," p. 471.

⁶⁵ Plainfield Oral History, Tracy.

⁶⁶ Alonzo J. Fogg, Editor, *Statistics and Gazetteer of New Hampshire* (Concord, 1874).

⁶⁷ Cloverland Farm brochure. Collection of Erich Witzel.

⁶⁸ Plainfield Oral History, Lucy (Ruggles) Bishop, Tape 17, pp. 5, 8.

⁶⁹ Camp Meriden brochure, 1930. Collection of Basil McNamara.

⁷⁰ Boyd, Vol. 2, p. 591.

⁷¹ Briggs.

⁷² Plainfield Historical Society files.

⁷³ Hood, "History of Plainfield," p. 471.

⁷⁴ Hood Papers, Box 1, Scrapbook 1, Dartmouth College.

- ⁷⁵ Briggs.
- ⁷⁶ New Hampshire Business Directory, Briggs and Co., Publishers, and A. Mudge and Son, Printers, 1868. Collection of Jessie English; New Hampshire Register and Business Directory, 1879.
- ⁷⁷ New Hampshire Business Directory.
- ⁷⁸ New Hampshire Register and Business Directory.
- ⁷⁹ Briggs.
- ⁸⁰ Kate Colby paper, Hood Papers, Box 1, Notebook 2, Dartmouth College.
- ⁸¹ Ibid.
- ⁸² Interview: Paul Franklin with Roger Nicolas and William McNamara, May 1990.
- ⁸³ Hood, "History of Plainfield," pp. 464–72.
- ⁸⁴ Boyd, Vol. 2, p. 741; D. B. Garvin, *New Hampshire Taverns and Tavernkeepers*.
- ⁸⁵ Boyd, Vol. 4, Daniel Kingsbury section.
- ⁸⁶ Letter from Elizabeth S. Jones to Mrs. Robert Barbour, owner of Fifield Tavern in 1961, dated August 13, 1961. Collection of Dr. Erich Witzel.
- ⁸⁷ Plainfield Oral History, Doris Williams, Tape 13, p. 42.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid.
- ⁸⁹ Cole.
- ⁹⁰ Briggs.
- ⁹¹ Boyd, Vol. 2, p. 681.
- ⁹² Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 1079.
- ⁹³ Frank Chellis, "Meriden Telephone Company, Inc.," *Independent Telephony in New England* (Burlington, VT: George Little Press, 1976), pp. 223–34.
- ⁹⁴ *PlainFacts*, February 1977.
- ⁹⁵ Oral History Tape 31, Gertrude (Woodward) Mark with Hazel Chellis, p. 6.
- ⁹⁶ Meriden Telephone Company records, 1917–1918, stated that "the entire set [telephone] was destroyed."

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- ¹ Samuel B. Pettengill, *The Yankee Pioneers, A Saga of Courage* (Hanover, NH: Regional Center for Educational Training, abridged paperback edition, 1977). (Original publisher: Charles E. Tuttle Co., Rutland, VT).
- ² Ibid, p. 30.
- ³ Strawberry Banke, Portsmouth, NH; William H. Child, *History of the Town of Cornish*,

New Hampshire, with Genealogical Record, 1763-1910 (Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Company, reprinted 1975).

- ⁴ Ibid., p. 60.
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 65.
- ⁶ Ibid., p. 11.
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 42.
- ⁸ Plainfield tax records.
- ⁹ *Echoes*, January 26, 1988, p. 3.
- ¹⁰ Robert E. Pike, *Spiked Boots*, (Dublin, NH: Yankee Publishing, Inc., 1987), p. 57.
- ¹¹ *New England Farm Bulletin*, issue 290.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Newspaper clippings, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Charles Morrow Wilson, *The Great Turkey Drive* (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1964), Forward.
- ¹⁷ *Boston Sunday Globe*, November 22, 1908.
- ¹⁸ Wilson, p. 56.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., p. 27.
- ²⁰ Lumber, in old English, meant unused or left over.
- ²¹ *Globe*.
- ²² Ibid.

Chapter 12, Mothers' and Daughters' Club and Mothers' and Daughters' Rug Industry

- ¹ Histories of the Mothers' and Daughters' Club were written at the Silver Anniversary by Laura Walker, at the Golden Anniversary by Lillian (Hildreth) Tyrell, at the seventieth birthday party by Ruth (Lewin) Foster, and at the seventy-fifth birthday by Lucy (Ruggles) Bishop. The following is a plagiarism compiled from the above and from eighty years of secretarial minutes meticulously preserved.
- ² Articles of Incorporation, Mothers' and Daughters' Club.
- ³ Plainfield Historical Society files.
- ⁴ Marion L. Ruggles, *Mothers' and Daughters' Industry* (Plainfield, 1904).
- ⁵ Secretary Minutes, Mothers' and Daughters' Club, May 7, 1919.

Chapter 13, Societies and Organizations

- ¹ Vernon Hood, "History of Blow-Me-Down Grange."
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ *Weekly Enterprise*, September 29, 1910, Vol. 2 No. 46, p. 4; December 8, 1910, Vol. 3 No. 4, p. 8; April 6, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 21, p. 8.
- ⁵ "Boston Post Cane," *Boston Herald*, September 5, 1973.
- ⁶ *Weekly Enterprise*, February 23, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 15, p. 4.
- ⁷ News Clippings, 1930–31, Plainfield Historical Society Archives.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ *Weekly Enterprise*, August 11, 1909, Vol. 1 No. 39, p. 8.
- ¹⁰ Town of Plainfield files; William H. Child, *History of the Town of Cornish, New Hampshire, 1763–1910*, 2 vols. (Concord: The Rumford Press, 1910), Vol. 1.
- ¹¹ 1911–12 Membership Book, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ¹² Plainfield Oral History, Stephen Plummer, Tape 30, p. 6.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ The Second Report of the Meriden Bird Club, 1912, pp. 60–62.
- ¹⁵ News Clippings, February 13 and 27, 1931, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ¹⁶ News Clippings, 1930–31.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., January 23, 1931.
- ¹⁸ *Weekly Enterprise*, August 29, 1912, Vol. 4 No. 42, p. 4.
- ¹⁹ Clifton Porter, "Meriden Grange History," May 4, 1975.
- ²⁰ News Clippings, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ²¹ Ibid., April 10, 1931.
- ²² Notes from Anita Barrett, September 1990.
- ²³ News Clipping, December 19, 1930, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ²⁴ Letter, January 9, 1986, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ²⁵ Program, August 11, 1916, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ²⁶ *Weekly Enterprise*, June 1, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 29, p. 1; and June 8, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 30, p. 1.
- ²⁷ *Vermont Republican and American Yeoman*, Windsor, VT, July 13, 1818.
- ²⁸ *Weekly Enterprise*, October 21, 1909, Vol. 1 No. 49, p. 4; and April 16, 1914, Vol. 5 No. 23, p. 4.

- ²⁹ Ibid., April 17, 1913, Vol. 5, No. 23, p. 4.
- ³⁰ Ibid., August 11, 1909, Vol. 1 No. 39, p. 8.
- ³¹ Ibid., January 27, 1910, Vol. 2 No. 11, p. 8; Ibid., February 9, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 13, p. 1; Ibid., August 21, 1913, Vol. 5 No. 41, p. 1; *The Granite State Free Press*, July 31, 1914, Vol. 71 No. 5, p. 5; Ibid., August 7, 1914, Vol. 71 No. 6, p. 7; Ibid., October 23, 1914, Vol. 71 No. 17, p. 7.
- ³² *The Granite State Free Press*, December 18, 1914, Vol. 71 No. 25, p. 6; *Weekly Enterprise*, October 21, 1909, Vol. 1 No. 49, p. 4; August 18, 1910, Vol. 2, p. 4; July 4, 1912, Vol. 4 No. 34, p. 4.
- ³³ *Weekly Enterprise*, June 2, 1910, Vol. 2 No. 29, p. 4; April 30, 1914, Vol. 6 No. 25, p. 4; News Clippings 1930–31.
- ³⁴ *Weekly Enterprise*, June 2, 1910, Vol. 2 No. 29, p. 4.
- ³⁵ Ibid., April 17, 1913, Vol. 5 No. 23, p. 4.
- ³⁶ Ibid., December 9, 1908, Vol. 1 No. 4, p. 2.
- ³⁷ Ibid., February 27, 1913, Vol. 5 No. 16, p. 4.
- ³⁸ News Clippings, January 16, 1931, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ³⁹ Tony Quimby, "How Did It All Get Started?," *The Meriden Playwrite*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1988.
- ⁴⁰ Red Cross Records, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁴¹ Plainfield Oral History Tape, John McNamara; Interviews: Kathryn MacLeay with Fred Sweet, Ira Townsend, Howard Zea, and Gardiner MacLeay; Secretary's Report, March 25, 1943. Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁴² News Clippings, 1930–31.
- ⁴³ *Weekly Enterprise*, January 27, 1910, Vol. 2 No. 11.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., May 18, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 27, p. 8.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., December 9, 1908, Vol. 1 No. 4, p. 4; *The Granite State Free Press*, February and September 1914.
- ⁴⁶ Minutes and scrapbook of the North Plainfield Ladies Club, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁴⁷ *Weekly Enterprise*, July 4, 1912, Vol. 4 No. 34, p. 4.
- ⁴⁸ Club Scrapbooks, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁴⁹ *Weekly Enterprise*, February 23, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 15, p. 4; April 17, 1913, Vol. 5 No. 23, p. 4.
- ⁵⁰ News Clippings, 1930–31.
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² *PlainFacts*, September 1989, pp. 4–5, reprint of 1924 newspaper clipping.

- ⁵³ News Clippings, 1930–31.
- ⁵⁴ Photograph, 1926–27, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁵⁵ Plainfield Historical Society archives.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ⁵⁷ KUA Bulletin, 1937.
- ⁵⁸ Plainfield Historical Society archives.
- ⁵⁹ News Clippings, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁶⁰ Plainfield Fishing Association records. Property of Doris Plummer.
- ⁶¹ Ibid.
- ⁶² *Weekly Enterprise*, August 18, 1910, Vol. 2 No. 2, p. 4.
- ⁶³ *The Granite State Free Press*, August 7, 1914, Vol. 71 No. 6, p. 8.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid., March 6, 1913, Vol. 5 No. 17, p. 4.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid., August 31, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 42, p. 4; and August 29, 1912, Vol. 4, No. 42, p. 8.
- ⁶⁶ Secretary-Treasurer's Report, 1909, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁶⁷ Record Book, 1948–1970, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁶⁸ *Biographical Review Vol. XXII (Containing Life Sketches of Leading Citizens of Sullivan and Merrimack Counties, N.H., (Boston: Biographical Review Publishing Company, 1897), p. 488.*
- ⁶⁹ Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁷⁰ Association By-laws, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁷¹ *PlainFacts*.
- ⁷² Ibid.
- ⁷³ News Clippings, 1930–31.
- ⁷⁴ *Valley News*, April 1954.
- ⁷⁵ Plainfield Master Plan, pp. V3–4.
- ⁷⁶ Andrew P. Nelson, "The Plainfield Wild Flower Sanctuary," *New Hampshire Audubon Quarterly*, October 1967.
- ⁷⁷ Caroline M. Lord, "Geologically Speaking in a Wild Flower Sanctuary," *New Hampshire Audubon Quarterly* (no date).
- ⁷⁸ *Weekly Enterprise*, January 6, 1909, Vol. 1 No. 8, p. 2; February 3, 1909, Vol. 1 No. 12, p. 4; February 10, 1909, Vol. 1 No. 13, p. 2.
- ⁷⁹ News Clippings: September 5, 1930; September 12, 1930; July 3, 1931; August 7, 1931; Plainfield Historical Society.

- ⁸⁰ Program and photographs, Plainfield Historical Society.
- ⁸¹ *The Granite State Free Press*, December 11, 1914, Vol. 71 No. 24, p. 5.
- ⁸² *Weekly Enterprise*, January 6, 1909, Vol. 1 No. 8, p. 5; February 13, 1909, Vol 1 No. 12, p. 1.
- ⁸³ *The Granite State Free Press*, September 4, 1914, Vol. 71 No. 10, p. 7.
- ⁸⁴ Red Cross Records.
- ⁸⁵ *Weekly Enterprise*, December 9, 1908, Vol. 1 No. 4, p. 2.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, July 27, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 7, p. 4.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, September 29, 1910, Vol. 2 No. 46, p. 4.
- ⁸⁸ News Clippings 1930–31.
- ⁸⁹ *Weekly Enterprise*, February 23, 1911, Vol. 3 No. 15, p. 4.
- ⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, April 4, 1912, Vol. 4 No. 21, p. 4.

Chapter 14, The Meriden Bird Club

- ¹ Report of the Meriden Bird Club, Inc. 1911–1951, January 1, 1952; Report of the Meriden Bird Club, Inc. 1910–1930, July 1, 1930; First Report of the Meriden Bird Club, 1911; Second Report of the Meriden Bird Club, 1912; Third Report of the Meriden Bird Club, 1916; Virginia Colby, "Sanctuary—A Bird Masque," *Windsor Chronicle*, June 6, 1986; Meriden Bird Club Records, 1918–1986; Meriden Bird Club Minutes 1911–1957; Annie Duncan, "Why So Many Birds in Meriden?," *Kimball Union Alumni Bulletin*, May 1941.

Chapter 15, Graveyards, Deaths, and Ghosts

- ¹ Interview: Laura Ward with Mary Cassedy, 1987.
- ² Interview: Laura Ward with Gary Ward, 1988.
- ³ Vernon Hood, "History of Plainfield," unpublished manuscript, p. 461.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 458.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 457.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 454.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 462–63.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 457.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 454–55.
- ¹⁰ "Tree with a History," *Forest Notes*, Fall 1964, p. 16.

- ¹¹ Hood, p. 455.
- ¹² Hood, p. 453.; Daniel F. Cassedy, *The Plainfield Survey: An Archaeological Field Investigation in the Upper Connecticut River Valley*, Senior Thesis, spring 1980, pp. 12-13.
- ¹³ Hood, p. 461.
- ¹⁴ F.A. Briggs, "Rambles in Plainfield," *Claremont National Eagle* (1886).
- ¹⁵ Hood, p. 82.
- ¹⁶ *Weekly Enterprise*, December 12, 1912.
- ¹⁷ Interview: Kathryn MacLeay with Patricia "Pat" Rondeau, October 27, 1988.
- ¹⁸ William Craig, Jr., *Valley News*, May 17, 1988, p. 16S; Plainfield Oral History Tapes, Marguerite Quimby, Tape 22, p. 24; Interview: Kathryn MacLeay with Vera MacLeay, February 4, 1990.
- ¹⁹ Letter: Doris LeVarn to Kathryn MacLeay, February 2, 1990.
- ²⁰ Mary Cassedy and Donald Jordan, "Indian History and Lore," *A Bried History of Early Plainfield* (Plainfield Bicentennial Committee, 1976), p. 34.
- ²¹ Hood, p. 457.

Chapter 16, Going to School

- ¹ Vernon Hood, "History of Plainfield," unpublished manuscript, Chapter: "Early Schools."
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid.
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- ⁵⁰ *Plain and Elegant, Rich and Common: Documented New Hampshire Furniture, 1750-1850* (Concord: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1979), pp. 134-35.

Appendices

- ¹ *Revolutionary War Rolls of New Hampshire*, Vol. I-IV; Plainfield town records.
- ² John Tone was a Hessian soldier who deserted and joined the Revolutionary forces in Connecticut. He later moved to Plainfield, New Hampshire, and lived on Batchelder's Hill (site of Michael Alafat's house, 1991).
- ³ The Company Orderly Book of the Fifth Company still exists in the town records. It covers the period of August 19, 1844, to October 6, 1849. Most of the entries consist of the company clerk's notices as to when and where the men were to appear for duty. The clerk would notify a non-commissioned officer, who in turn notified the men in the company and made a sworn return that the men had been served due notice and that they had four days to appear for muster. It would take three or four

men to duly notify the company.

⁴ F. A. Briggs, "Rambles in Plainfield," Article 9, *Claremont Eagle*, November 13, 1886.

⁵ Laws of New Hampshire, 1805; Plainfield Town Records; Helen Lyon Adamson, *Grandmother in the Kitchen*.

⁶ Town Report 1945; Memorial Day Program, May 28, 1984, Plainfield Historical Society collection.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ New Hampshire Provincial papers, Vol. VII, p. 169; New Hampshire Manual for the General Court.

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