



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

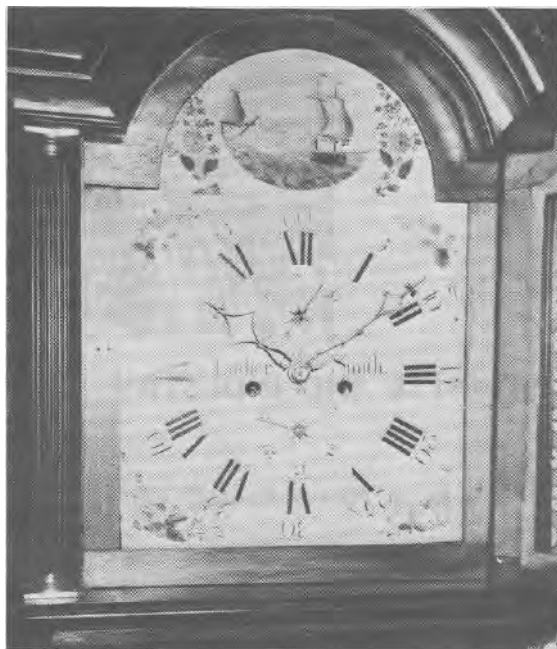
by A. Harold Kendall

Early settlers, because of necessity, were mostly self-sufficient, making their own wooden dishes, pounding out their iron nails, making candles, spinning and weaving fabrics for their clothing, dyeing the same with vegetable dyes from the trees and flowers.

Rivers and brooks supplied the water power for mills which were the early factories, and the 60 proprietors of Upper Ashuelot (Keene) in September of 1735 voted to give 100 acres of "middling good land" and 25 pounds to any party who would build a sawmill. In 1736 such a mill was constructed by John Corbet and Jesse Root on Beaver Brook, near what is now Giffin Street, and in this same year it was voted to build a gristmill. These were the first industries in Upper Ashuelot.

In 1738 the proprietors named a committee of Joseph Ellis, Nathan Blake, and Isaac Clark to procure tools for the establishment of a blacksmith shop. In 1760 a sawmill was built by Amos Partridge off the Old Surry Road on Mill Brook near the outlet of Goose Pond. In the next year Jesse Clark built the first saw and gristmills on Willson's Pond in West Keene.

The first merchant in Keene was Ichabod Fisher, who in 1764 used to ride to Wrentham, Mass., once a year and bring back saddlebags filled with calico, ribbons, pins, and needles, which he sold from a store in his house on the southerly side of Poverty Lane (now West Street) in a location nearly opposite what is now School Street.



Dial of tall case clock

In 1775 Elisha Briggs built a sawmill and a gristmill (on what later became the Faulkner & Colony site), which he sold in 1778 to Nathan Blake, and for some time they were known as Blake's Mills. These were the first mills on what is now West Street, and were later purchased from Blake by Luther Smith. After two other changes in ownership Josiah Colony and Francis Faulkner bought them in 1815. Briggs also operated the mills on Beaver Brook, which were later known as Giffin's mills. When they were destroyed by fire on July 12, 1902, the loss was valued at \$15,000.

In 1776 the Dwinell mill (later known as Willson's mill) was erected on Willson's Pond.

In May of 1787 young William Lamson arrived in Keene on foot with his belongings slung over his shoulder on a cane, bought a quarter-of-an-acre of land, and established a tannery in the rear of what is now the Lamson Block. At this same time Adin Holbrook built a gristmill on the Old Surry Road, and later a mill to crush oil from flaxseed was established nearby. Within the original boundaries of Keene there are sites of over 25 mills, mostly sawmills, established from the 1730's on.

In 1788 Samuel Cook erected a building for stores on Main Street near the present Eagle Hotel, and the area from this location to Water Street was known as Federal Row, containing several shops and other places of business.

In 1789 Benjamin Balch was operating a fulling mill and clothiers' works on White Brook. Captain John Warner ran similar mills near where Ellis Bros. & Co. is now located at 203 Winchester Street. These mills finished the cloth handwoven at home.

In the 1790's Dr. Jonas Dix kept a medicinal store on a site somewhere between the present Eagle Hotel and Water Street. He died in 1799.

Also in 1790 Thomas Smith Webb became the first bookbinder in town, plying his trade in a shop in Federal Row until 1796. Homer & Goodale ran a store and concurrently operated a potash establishment. William Briggs operated a shoemaker shop, and Moses Johnson manufactured shoe buckles.

Luther Smith designed clocks in a shop in Federal Row. Born at Colrain, Mass., around 1767, Smith had come to Keene by 1793,



Tall case clock by Luther Smith



Banjo clock by Luther Smith

where he bought land on Main Street from Alexander Ralston. Although interested in a number of business enterprises, he is remembered today for his work as a clockmaker. He built grandfather, banjo, and shelf (or "New Hampshire mirror") clocks. Few specimens of his work are extant, but those that are reveal excellent workmanship and are highly prized as examples of early craftsmanship. Smith made a town clock to put on the Meetinghouse at a cost of 36 pounds sterling and warranted for 10 years. The subscription to purchase this first town clock was started in February 1794. Unfortunately the clock was lost when the Meetinghouse was moved to a new location in 1828. Smith married Sarah Eveleth at Bolton, Mass., in 1798, at which time he was living in Keene. He died in 1839 at the age of 73 and is buried in the Washington Street Cemetery.

The first barber of whom there is a record was Michael Bird, who opened a shop in 1793. He sold false hair for both ladies and gentlemen, and powder, powder-bags, puffs, etc. He also bought human hair.

In 1794 Abijah Wilder, Luther Ames, and associates formed a company to build aqueducts, and two years later water was brought from Beaver Brook to the village. Their company a little later erected the first Jamaica Pond aqueduct in Massachusetts, thus bringing fresh water to the town of Boston. In January 1800 Abijah Wilder informed readers of *The New Hampshire Sentinel* that he had invented "a new and useful improvement in making sleighs and sleigh runners and has a patent from the President of the United States for it." His patent was secured for the invention of bending sleigh runners by steaming the wood.

During this period Allen & Dorr (Joseph Dorr, son-in-law of Captain Josiah Richardson, and Amasa Allen) ran a general merchandise store, advertising groceries, hardware, crockery, and "fall and winter goods," competing with Moses Johnson (Johnson & Mann), their next-door neighbor. Peter Wilder, on Federal Row, made rakes, scythe snaths (handles), chairs, and wheels. In the same general location Josiah Willard and his son Josiah Jr. ran a saddler's shop, and on Pleasant Street (now West Street) John Draper operated a bakery.

Abijah Wilder was a cabinetmaker, who also made screw cheese presses. Later he and his son Abijah Jr. made sleighs, cabinet ware, spinning wheels, and wheelheads in a shop on what is now Court Street.

Dr. Thaddeus Maccarty kept an apothecary store on Prison

Street (now Washington Street) and was the first to advertise and sell patent medicines.

Around 1800 Elisha Briggs was making cider mills and other machinery at his place on the North Branch (Beech Hill), since known as "Peg Factory." In 1797 his saw and gristmill burned but was soon rebuilt. After his death in 1803, the "factory" went to Stephen Griswold. Over the years the site changed hands, as did the products. By 1858 Abijah Woodward was making shoe pegs and shingles, and continuing operation of the gristmill. After his death his widow sold the mills in 1885 to Fred W. Davis, who used them until 1913, when the dam was carried away.

All grocers at this time sold spirituous liquors, among which was cherry rum.

In 1800 in the town there were several variety shops, three taverns, a distillery, a tannery, two sawmills, two gristmills, a potash mill, a fulling mill, a bakery, a cabinetmaker, a jewelry store, a blacksmith shop, and a printing office, which also contained a bookstore. The latter advertised "a handsome assortment of books" to be sold "as



Old Holbrook gristmill—built 1787

cheap as can be purchased in Boston." Among the novels on sale were *Torn Jones*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Evelina*.

In the early 1800's Moses Johnson and Aaron Seamans advertised to buy rye and barley for malt and the manufacture of "ginn." They were partners in a "ginn distillery." Seamans, one of early Keene's active businessmen, who also had a partnership with Moses Johnson in a pot and pearlash works, joined Ebenezer Daniels in running a tannery in the rear of the present Eagle Hotel, and owned with Daniels a large shoe manufactory on Main Street. Moses H. Hale and Zebadiah Kise (Keyes) came from Chelmsford, Mass., and about 1806 bought Luther Smith's mills (later the Faulkner & Colony mills) on the Ashuelot River, adding machinery for the picking and carding of wool.

In 1806 Dr. James Bradford, physician and surgeon, kept an apothecary shop on the corner of Main and West Streets. He married a daughter of Alexander Ralston, owner of the Ralston Tavern.

Daniel Webster, a relative of the great Daniel, had a small foundry on Main Street near the Eagle Hotel, where he made sleigh bells, copper kettles, and other metallic utensils, and as the official sealer supplied the town with its sealed weights and measures.

Major Josiah Willard and Silas Ames conducted a saddlers' and carriage trimming business, and Samuel Evers established a business of coach and chaise making. In December of 1803, Keene's first bank, the Cheshire (National) Bank, received its charter and was estab-



Cheshire (National)—Keene's first bank

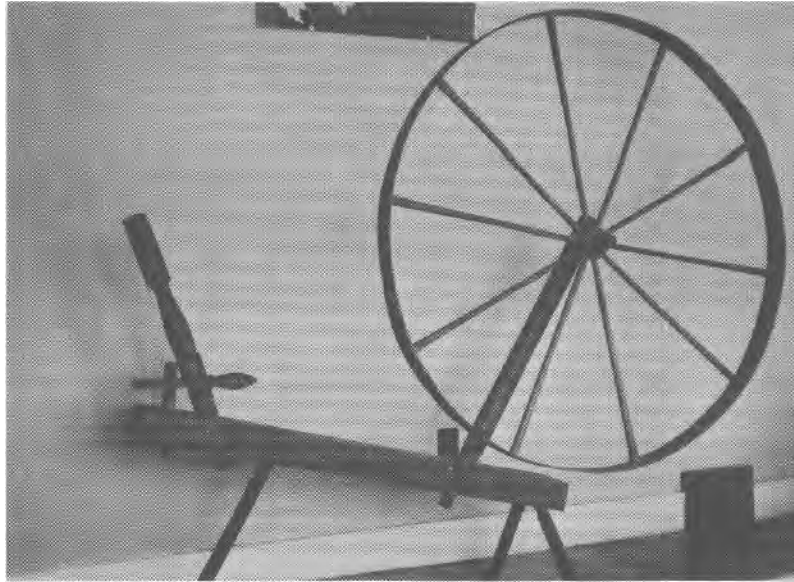


fished the next year in a 30 x 24 foot building, just south of the present Tilden's stationery store on the west side of Main Street, on a site now occupied by the railroad tracks. When the land and building were sold to the railroad in 1846, the bank moved into quarters at 15 Main Street, where, after a number of enlargements and alterations, it is still doing business. The first president was Daniel Newcomb, with Elijah Dunbar as cashier.

In 1847 the "New Bank," under a charter of 1844, took over the assets and business of the "Old Bank." During its long financial history the following men have followed Newcomb as president: Jonathan Robinson, Samuel Grant, Salma Hale, Levi Chamberlain, John Elliot, William Henry Elliot, Frederic Faulkner, Frank Huntress, John J. Colony, John O. Talbot, and the current president, J. Eugene Felch III. Two of the bank's cashiers, Royal H. Porter and his son, Walter R. Porter, served over a combined period of 90 years.

For a few years Abijah and Azel Wilder, half-brothers, worked in their father's cabinet shop, making chairs, looms, and cheese presses at a site on lower Court Street, but around 1814 dissolved their partnership. Abijah Jr. continued the cabinet and sleigh-making work at their old shop, while Azel moved the wheelhead and wheelwright business to new quarters. However, they combined their talents in the operation of a real estate business, gradually increasing their holdings. In 1828, to enlarge and improve the Common, they bought and removed the old horsesheds which had been built in 1789. They gave this lot to the town, though for many years afterward the Common remained an unimproved space, crossed by roads, and lacking trees.

Adolphus Wright, wig-maker and ornamental hair dresser, conducted a barber shop, and Henry and Thomas Lyman a hat store, which they established in 1811 on Main Street. Wright was in business



Spinning wheel marked "A&A Wilder"—circa 1812

many years and, as he also sold candies, toys, small wares, and home-made beer on the premises, his one-room shop knew many happy customers. Adolphus Wright became the first deacon of the Keene Congregational Society (Unitarian) and was known to have the best garden in town.

In 1814 Aaron Appleton, from Dublin, and John Elliot formed a partnership for the sale of hardware, dry goods, and grocery supplies, and for \$2,000 purchased the wooden building on the south corner of Main and West Streets, later replaced by a brick structure. The general mercantile business of Appleton & Elliot became John Elliot & Co. in 1826. By the middle of the century Elliot's son, John Henry, headed the business and took in as a partner, Barrett Ripley. In 1864, when Ripley left to head the Troy Blanket Mills, Isaac Spencer took his place. On Elliot's retirement around 1867 the hardware store became Spencer & Co. Later George Litchfield bought into the firm, his share later being purchased by Herbert Woodward. In 1893 William O. Hutchins became a partner. In 1901 the firm moved into the E. F. Lane Block, which it occupied for 55 years and was known as Spencer Hardware Co. In 1937 Walter Goodnow, an employee for many years, became general manager. The business was

purchased in 1952 by Churchill Stafford, who liquidated the firm in 1966.

In 1813 John Wood and Captain Aaron Hall took in Timothy Hall, a relative of the captain's from Connecticut, to form the firm of A. & T. Nall. This apothecary store was on the site of the present Cheshire National Bank on Main Street and sold English and West Indian goods, as well as druggists' supplies. Though the name of John Wood did not appear in the firm's nomenclature, he was "the financial and substantial member of the concern." The business was the first, in 1822, to sell flour in a store, as previously it had been sold, along with meal and grain, only at the gristmills. After nearly four decades this business landmark was forced to close in 1850, a combined result of expansion and business difficulties.

In 1815 Francis Faulkner and Josiah Colony purchased the fulling, saw, and gristmills on the Ashuelot River, which for several years Colony had been managing. This was the beginning of the business that was to continue for 139 years as Faulkner & Colony Manufacturing Co. **In** 1823 a brick mill was built after the wooden structure had burned. By 1830 they were finishing cloth and carding wool for families to spin and weave. In 1836, after another fire, a brick building was erected separate from the saw and gristmills. This is supposed to have been the first building heated by steam in Keene. The company produced red flannel cloth, some of which was made into shirts for the "Forty-Niners" going to California. In 1840 blue flannels were made for the navy. During the Civil War blankets were made for the Union Army, as well as many of the blue blouses worn by the soldiers.



Abijah Foster's store, West Keene—built before 1787



Faulkner & Colony mill built 1838

During the two World Wars cloth was made for both the army and the navy. The sawmill was in existence until 1900, though the gristmill had been discontinued earlier. The first dozen or so years of the company's existence it carded wool for the local farmers' wives, which they spun and wove themselves and then returned to the mill for fulling (shrinking) and finishing. From 1825 to 1895 the principal product was red, yellow, blue, and white flannel. Their product was known to the trade as F. & C. flannels. It has been said that at one time enough wool was spun in a single day to stretch from Keene to Buenos Aires, Argentina, and back again. In 1889 the business was incorporated under the name of Faulkner & Colony Manufacturing Co., the stock held by descendants of the original owners. During the Second World War the firm received war contracts, including one for wool facing cloth for the Quartermaster Corps. The business had sales offices in New York City for many years. When it closed its doors in 1954 it was the second oldest woolen mill in the country run by the same family at the same location and was widely known for its flannel coat and suit materials for men and women. During the latter years of its existence John Faulkner Jr., John Faulkner III, and Winthrop Faulkner were the active officers. In 1954 the buildings were purchased by the Barker Realty Co. Today the following firms are located there: Keene Electric & Plumbing Supply, a branch of Dalbolt, Inc., Tolman-Shea Laboratories, Mill End Store, Douglas Co., and Bergeron Machine Co.

In the year 1819 there were six stores in the town handling dry goods, groceries, drugs, or hardware.



Faulkner & Colony's Woolen Factory

The first mills in South Keene were established about 1820 by Aaron Davis, a blacksmith who built a forge and iron foundry and proceeded to manufacture agricultural implements. At that time the area was called Furnace Village. Jehiel Wilson built a shop to manufacture pails, the first turned pails in the vicinity. About 1837 both Davis and Wilson sold their plants and homes to Edward Joslin and Jemb A. Fay, who under the name of J. A. Fay & Co. began the manufacture of woodworking machinery and were among the first in the United States to make such machinery. In 1847 they opened branch factories at Norwich, Conn., and Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1851 the company was awarded a prize medal at the World's Fair in London. The owners erected a brick mill at South Keene in 1852. The branches grew, and the one at Cincinnati became the largest of its kind in the world at that time. In 1862 Fay closed the factory at South Keene (for many years called Branchville), and transferred all manufacturing to Norwich and Cincinnati. Stephen D. Osborne and Samuel W. Hale later purchased the idle plant from Fay and manufactured furniture there.

After Aaron Davis sold to Fay, he and his son established an iron foundry on Davis Street.

In 1817 George Tilden was apprenticed to publisher John Prentiss to learn the art of bookbinding until he reached the age of 21. At that age, in 1823, young Tilden and John Prentiss formed a partnership under the name of G. Tilden & Co. to do bookbinding and to sell books and stationery (in a building where the Cheshire National Bank

J. A. FAY & CO.

PATENTEES AND MANUFACTURERS OF

LABOR-SAVING MACHINES:



WHICH DREW THE PRIZE MEDAL AT THE
THE WORLD'S FAIR, AT LONDON, IN 1851,



AND FOR WHICH
THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF NEW-YORK,

The Maryland Institute of Baltimore, the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia, the Metropolitan Institute at Washington,
 and the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association of Boston,

HAVE AWARDED SILVER MEDALS AND DIPLOMAS.

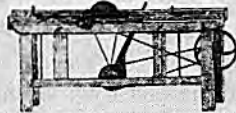
Manufactured at Keene, N. H., Norwich, Conn., Worcester, Mass., and Cincinnati, O.



MORTISING MACHINE.

Having received the First Premium
 From the American Institute, and from several State Fairs,
 and from all foreign exhibitions, needs no other recommendation
 than the fact that it performs more kinds of work, and does it
 better, than any other machine of the kind extant. And we
 hereby offer it to an enlightened public for their wants,
 and challenge competition with any other machine.
 The size was particularly designed for making heavy
 Mouldings, Lathes and other large work, but will do light
 work equally well.
 Persons in want of this Machine will please state the
 different kinds of work they wish to do with it, as one
 kind of business would require a different set of cutters
 from another kind. The Machine is available to House
 Carpenters, Nail, Nail and Door Makers, Cabinet Ma-
 kers, Car Builders, Moulding Manufacturers, and various
 other kinds of work.
 We would inform our patrons that we have the Improved
 Tenoning Machine, made by the old firm of Fay, Fisher & Co.,
 Machine complete for Tenoning, \$75 00
 1 pair with blades and tools pattern, for coping Nails, 60 00
 1 pair for coping Doors, 50 00
 1 pair with blades and tools for driving Mortises, 50 00
 The above Machine works admirably, and is highly approved.

The Sash, Molding & Slat Machine



This machine is the most extensive application of those
 kinds of the art, that it is above all price, and need only
 to be seen in operation by those in want, to create for it a
 ready sale. It performs more kinds of work, and does it
 better, than any other machine of the kind extant. And we
 hereby offer it to an enlightened public for their wants,
 and challenge competition with any other machine.
 The size was particularly designed for making heavy
 Mouldings, Lathes and other large work, but will do light
 work equally well.

Persons in want of this Machine will please state the
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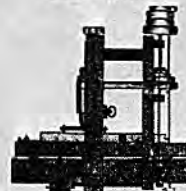
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 1 pair with blades and tools for driving Mortises, 50 00
 The above Machine works admirably, and is highly approved.



TENONING MACHINE.

Having received the First Premium
 From the American Institute, and from several State Fairs,
 and from all foreign exhibitions, needs no other recommendation
 than the fact that it performs more kinds of work, and does it
 better, than any other machine of the kind extant. And we
 hereby offer it to an enlightened public for their wants,
 and challenge competition with any other machine.
 The size was particularly designed for making heavy
 Mouldings, Lathes and other large work, but will do light
 work equally well.

DANIELS'S



IMPROVED PLANING MACHINE, WITH REED'S FEED MOTION.

This machine is well known throughout the country, where
 so many hundreds of them are in operation, and their merits
 have been so thoroughly tested, no further recommendation
 is needed. These Machines are used for planing up staff
 of all kinds for Machinery, Mill Work, Railroad Cars, Rail-
 roads, and Planing Plank, Boards, Curbs and Car Panels,
 &c. Different sizes are made to plane from 2 to 80 by
 long, 6 to 42 inches wide, and one-quarter to 3/4 inches
 thick. Having been recently much improved, we now offer
 it with full confidence of public approval.
 The recent improvements upon this Machine make it
 much more desirable, as it works with greater facility, and
 saves both ways, a lot of money.
 We also furnish a Machine for growing and Tonguing
 Plank and Boards rather with parallel edges, or without
 any both ends of equal width, thus saving the taper of the staff,
 which is often desirable.

FAY & CO.'S LARGE POWER Mortising & Boring Machine.

This Machine borers and mortises at the same time, and
 is constructed upon an entirely new arrangement of the
 principles involved. The Chuck is square, and made hollow
 to contain the Auger, both moving down together, and
 making a square mortise, which can be made of any desir-
 able length, by moving the index at each end of the
 chuck, by a hand wheel attached to a traverse rod. It
 works equally well in all kinds of timber, and does the
 work in the best and most expeditious manner. It is par-
 ticularly adapted to Car and Cabinet work, Agricultural
 Implements, Carriage work, &c. It is self-feeding, re-
 quiring but little more attention than to contain and move
 the end on the Machine, which may be easily done by any
 tolerable workman.

We now offer this Machine to the public with full con-
 fidence that it will meet their wants.

FAY & CO.'S POWER MORTISING MACHINES.

The public have long been
 in want of a Power Mortis-
 ing Machine that could be
 operated without the trouble
 of boring for the mortise,
 and without stopping the ma-
 chine at every operation.—
 We now offer them such a
 Machine, which, being so
 simple in its operation, may
 be used by apprentices, and
 does the work in the best
 and most expeditious man-
 ner.

It is also used for kind
 wood and heavy work in
 great advantage, such as
 Church and Car building, and
 moulding, Agricultural
 Implements, &c.

FAY & CO.'S SCROLL SAW.

The public have long felt the need of an article for this
 kind of work, without the use of a gate or frame to hold
 the saw, and which is very much in the way of turning the
 staff. That desideratum has been obtained in the one we
 now offer to the public, and which has given the most per-
 fect satisfaction.

WELLS'S PATENT SAW MILL.

This is now being very generally used for removing
 Plank and Boards of any length of width from the staff
 for Panels and other purposes.

Woodworth's Patent Planing Machine,
 which are acknowledged by all to be the best in use.

Patent Stretched, Riveted, and Cemented
 Leather Banding from the best Manufacturers, at the
 lowest cash prices.

FAY & CO.'S MACHINES are in use throughout the
 United States, and in various foreign countries.

J. A. FAY, Keene, N. H.
 D. JOSLIN, }
 C. B. ROGERS, Norwich, Conn.
 R. C. TAINTER, Worcester, Ms.
 JOHN OHENEY, Cincinnati, Ohio.

is now located). In 1824 they started a circulating library which merged with the Keene Book Society for a total of 1,000 volumes, and which continued in the store for many years. In 1827 Tilden purchased Prentiss' interest and changed the name to George Tilden. Three years later he began publishing school books, including *North American Spelling Book*, *Intellectual Arithmetic*, and *The Blackboard*, many of which were continued until 1868. The company also manufactured ruled and bound blank books until 1890. In 1835 Tilden moved into a new building at 42 Central Square. In 1848 the owner took his son, also named George, into partnership, the firm becoming G. & G. H. Tilden. This firm continued until 1867, when John W. Sturtevant, who had clerked in the store for a number of years, bought a third interest in the business, and the elder George Tilden retired. It now became G. H. Tilden & Co. Sturtevant died in 1892 and George H. Tilden became the sole owner. In 1893 Robert Tilden Kingsbury, grandson of the founder, started in the business as a clerk, later becoming proprietor. In 1905 the firm moved to 39 Central Square, where it remained for 61 years. In 1939 George Tilden Kingsbury entered his father's store following his graduation from Dartmouth. After service in World War II, in 1946 he returned to the store and, on the death of Robert T. Kingsbury, became the sole owner. In 1966 the firm moved into new quarters in the old *Sentinel* Building on the corner of Main Street and Railroad Square. Tilden's has the distinction of being Keene's oldest store directed by the same family for 144 years.

In 1825 a book and stationery store was started by John Prentiss. He was succeeded as proprietor in 1853 by John H. Spalter, who was followed in 1871 by Wilton H. Spalter. The business was located at the head of the Square. In 1920 Karl R. Beedle purchased the store, selling it in 1921 to Albert H. Chase. In 1931 the firm became Chase's Book Store and was located at 18 West Street and later at 22 West Street, on the corner of West and Federal Streets. In 1946 the "Book Store" part of the name was deleted. It became known as it is today as Chase's Inc. Albert H. Chase is president and his son, A. Richard Chase, is the treasurer.

In 1825 George Page made wooden pumps in a factory on the North Branch. In 1823 Abijah Wilder Jr. built a new shop on lower Court Street, where the Museum Block now stands, for the manufacturing of cabinets, chairs, and sleighs. In 1825 the Cheshire County Mutual Insurance Co. was chartered in Walpole for the area.

In 1828 the Wilders, Abijah and Azel, built a block on the corner of Central Square and Court Street, now the Ball Block.

Also in 1828 Elbridge Keyes and Joshua D. Colony started a grocery store at the head of Central Square. In 1832 they erected a three-story building at the corner of West Street and Central Square, where for the next 63 years the store flourished, though changing hands occasionally. But throughout its long history a Keyes was connected with the business. In 1895 it moved to the Cheshire House Block, at which time it took the name F. E. Keyes and Co.

In 1830 Luther Smith was still making tall clocks, Abijah Wilder was making chairs and sleighs, and Jennings & Perkins had a carriage factory on the corner of Washington and Mechanic Streets. Thomas F. Ames was a chaise, saddle, and harness maker, and Daniel Watson was also making saddles and harnesses. Both businesses were located on Main Street. George Page and Alvan Holman, at their factory on Beech Hill, were making pumps. Jeduthan Strickland had a distillery just beyond Sawyer Tavern's present Arch Street location. John C. Mason was a gunsmith on Winter Street.

Among the industries listed in the 1831 directory were a brick maker, two pail makers, a potash manufacturer, a shingle maker, a carding mill, two glass factories, two chaise and sleigh makers, and two tanners.

In 1833 the Cheshire Provident Institution for Savings was founded with George Tilden as treasurer. Located in the present Bank Block at the corner of Roxbury Street and Central Square, it was one of the early mutual savings banks in New Hampshire. The following served as presidents until the company's assets were taken over by the Cheshire County Savings Bank in 1898: Dr. Amos Twitchell, Salma Hale, Levi Chamberlain, Samuel Dinsmoor, William P. Wheeler, Francis Faulkner, George Tilden, Edward C. Thayer, George A. Wheelock, and Alfred T. Batchelder. The first meeting of the Cheshire County Savings Bank was held in early 1898, with Francis C. Faulkner as president and Herbert B. Vial' as treasurer. Succeeding presidents were George E. Holbrook, Daniel Cole, Orville E. Cain, Robert T. Kingsbury, Ray E. Tenney, and today's president Fred Hickock, with Paul E. Whitcomb as treasurer. In 1966 a new computer system went into effect whereby a deposit transaction is computed in less than a second. The bank was the first in New Hampshire to "go on live," using new equipment from the National Cash Register Co. with data-phone communication by New England Telephone.

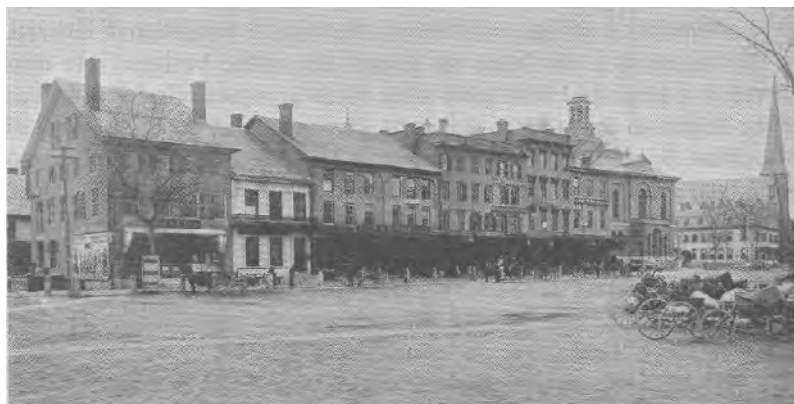
In 1833 the screw gimlet invented by Gideon Newcomb of Roxbury was being made by Everett Newcomb and George Page at the latter's mill. In 1835 Edward Poole's jewelry store was the first to ad-

vertise and sell "Loco Foco (friction) matches for families." As a term "Loco Foco" came into existence around 1834. It meant "friction," although "self-lighting" has been offered as a better definition. Poole's highly advertised matches were imported because the first American patent for friction matches was not issued until 1836.

In 1836 George W. Tilden represented several insurance companies. In 1853 he formed the Ashuelot Fire Insurance Co. In 1890 the firm was taken over by Daniel Sawyer and William Goodnow, with offices in the Bank Block. In 1892 Andrew Mason and his son, Wallace L. Mason, formed a partnership with Sawyer, under the name of Sawyer & Mason. In 1900 this became the Mason Insurance Agency, and in the following years Carl and Herbert Beverstock, Louis Pierre, and Alpheus White joined the firm. Today Robert F. Babcock is president, and Malcolm G. Beverstock is treasurer.

In 1840 there were 25 retail stores, 7 sawmills, and 3 gristmills in the town, and out of a population of 2,610, there were 267 in trade and manufacturing.

In 1840 Dr. John Bixby started a drug store (known then as an apothecary shop) and was succeeded by Dr. Dudley Smith. In 1875 Edward H. Bullard became identified with the firm, and for a time it was known as Hills & Bullard. Later the business became Bullard & Foster. In 1884, when Gale Shedd entered the firm, it became Bullard & Shedd, and on the death of Bullard, Shedd became the sole owner. He was active politically, becoming mayor of the city and a state senator. At his death his son Paul ran the store. Today the business is run by owners Helen Shedd and Orlando Dostilio. Once known



J. F. & F. H. Whitcomb—circa 1880

as "the old corner drug store," it is the oldest drug store in Keene and one of the oldest in the state.

In 1843 John D. Dunbar and Elbridge G. Whitcomb established a men's clothing store under the name Whitcomb & Dunbar at 45 Central Square in the building erected in 1825 and used by John Prentiss as his *Sentinel* office. Later known as J. F. & F. H. Whitcomb (Jonas Fred Whitcomb and his brother, Frank H. Whitcomb), Merchant Tailors and Dealers in Clothing and Dry Goods, it was also agent for Butterick's Patterns. Later Jonas Fred Whitcomb became sole owner. After his death in 1929 Fay M. Smith purchased the firm and changed the name to the Fay M. Smith Store. He had entered the retail business as a clerk in the summer of 1908 at the J. F. Whitcomb Men's Store. Smith bought the store block in 1945 and had it completely remodeled and redecorated. In 1947 his son, Robert M. Smith, joined him in business. The store (in 1967) has the distinction of operating continuously as a men's clothing store at the same location for 124 years.

In 1843 the sale of pianos was first introduced in Keene by Eliphalet Briggs. These were the product of Lemuel Gilbert of Boston.

In 1845 Charles Bridgman started his own wholesale and retail grocery store with Alfred Hebard. When Bridgman retired in 1890 he was the oldest merchant in the city, having been active in business since 1840. A native of Massachusetts, he had come to Keene from New York State at the age of 25, having been advised that Keene's climate would agree with his malarial fever. He entered the store of Joseph Willard and soon became the junior member of the firm of Freeman & Bridgman. A few years later he bought out the general store of Denney & Briggs, establishing the firm of Bridgman & Hebard. In the course of a few years he bought the entire business. He next moved to a large and handsome store fitted up especially for him, one of the largest in the state at that time. It was carried on by the firm of Bridgman, Sprague, & Mason, handling groceries, carpets, paints, paper hangings, and the like. Afterwards it was divided into two stores, and Bridgman pursued the grocery business in the south store until 1867. In 1866-67 he erected Bridgman's Block and moved into his new store in January of 1867. In 1890, upon completion of 50 years of business life in Keene, he sold the store to his son, Charles H. The firm went out of business at the latter's death in 1929.

Around 1848 two young men began operations in a small building on Mechanic Street. Their power was a twelve horsepower steam engine, something of a wonder in that day, and they sold, in 1850, to

Lanmon Nims, a contractor, miller, and wheelwright from Sullivan, who first took Nelson N. Sawyer and Sawyer Porter as partners, and then Daniel Buss. The plant was enlarged and manufactured sash, doors, and blinds. Cyrus Woodward replaced Lanmon Nims, who left for White River Junction to make shoe pegs, but was burned out and returned to Keene to manufacture shoe pegs at Chase & Fairbanks Mill on Ralston Street. After a short time he sold out, and in 1863 returned to Mechanic Street and, with Samuel B. Crossfield, as Nims & Crossfield, leased power and continued his power business.

In 1860 Stephen D. Osborne, long the proprietor of a furniture store in Keene, and Samuel Whitney Hale, newly arrived in Keene from Dublin, N.H., and with previous experience in the operation of mills, had formed a partnership and begun manufacturing cane-seat chairs on Mechanic Street. Lumber, labor, and transportation were all readily available, and the company prospered. Women and children were engaged to "seat" and "back" the chairs (with cane) at their homes. The partners also purchased the sash, door, and blind shop formerly owned by Daniel Buss and Cyrus Woodward. Later they leased this shop to Nims & Crossfield. On March 26, 1864, the explosion of a boiler at Osborne & Hale's steam mill caused heavy damage, personal injury, and the loss of two lives. The partners purchased the property of the J. A. Fay Co. in South Keene and began business there as the Keene Chair Co. (also referred to as the South Keene Chair Co.). Both production and profit increased at this larger plant, and the firm was soon valued at \$150,000.

During the recession that began in 1873 the Keene Chair Co. lost money but continued in business, and the upward swing came around 1880. In the 1870's Hale grew interested in a branch furniture factory in San Francisco, to which the Keene Chair Co. had been shipping its products. After he became a principal stockholder, the ties between the two businesses increased until Hale sold his stock in the California firm in 1876.

Hale was elected governor of New Hampshire in 1882, and at the end of his term of office in 1885 faced financial collapse in his personal fortune. Stock in the Keene Chair Co. was signed over to several individuals who had loaned him money. Business slumped, and by 1890 creditors had taken over, and the next year the Keene Chair Co. was sold to the Boston Furniture Co.

Mills were erected on Mechanic Street in 1848-49 for the manufacture of sashes and blinds and owned at one time by Lanmon Nims. Albert E. Fish later operated a section of these mills. Fish went into



Gerould's Block-1868

business for himself in 1881 and shipped his wares throughout New England, as well as to points south and west.

In 1854 two brothers, Jason and Francis French, formerly of Brattleboro and Walpole, moved their family carriage-making business to Keene and formed a partnership under the name of J. & F. French. They originated the Keene sleigh so popular throughout New England, and in 1860 produced over 400 of these. By the 1880's the company was turning out 100-200 carriages a year. After his brother's death in 1884, Francis continued the work until his own demise in 1888, when he was succeeded by his son-in-law, Charles A. Jones, who had been connected with the firm. The products of this company were sold throughout the United States and Canada. With its five buildings and a blacksmith shop, this firm continued until about 1910, when the popularity of the motor car changed transportation habits.

The first photography work in Keene is credited to Edward Poole, a jeweler and watchmaker by trade, who worked on daguerreotypes as a hobby. Among the early professionals in the field was Chester Allen, who established himself in Gerould's Block on Central Square as a daguerrean artist in the 1840's and continued in the photography business until about 1878. The jeweler, Norman Wilson, was the first local professional photographer, although his work was of short dura-

tion. There were other photographers in Keene and, perhaps because business was limited, one of them was also listed as the agent for first class sewing machines.

Joseph Foster, born in 1805, was a talented mechanic with a love of music. As a boy he pumped the bellows for his father, a blacksmith. His concentration on the workings of the bellows led to the construction of his first reed organ in 1829 (this is still in existence in Concord). Foster and his wife moved to Keene, where he set up shop in 1845, continuing it until his death in 1875. Perhaps 10-15 persons were at one time employed in the various departments of his musical instrument business. For a number of years he was in partnership with Charles Felt as Foster & Felt, until Felt's death in 1857. After 1866 Ephraim, brother of Joseph, entered the firm which then became J. & E. Foster. Ephraim Foster carried on the business on Roxbury Street after Joseph's death until he died in 1889. George W. Foster, a nephew of Joseph Foster, was long a music dealer in Keene, but not a builder, as far as is known. Joseph Foster invented a combination melodeon and piano that only he could keep in repair, and he enjoyed musical evenings with his friends at his home at 39 Elm Street. He built at least one pipe organ, an instrument eventually acquired by the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord. The pioneer pipe organ builder of Keene, however, was William Willson, who framed the spire of the First Congregational Church in 1829, and is reported to have constructed a pipe organ, the first in Keene, intended for Miss Catherine Fiske's private school, which had had the first piano in Keene a few years earlier.

By 1849 there were 3 apothecaries, a baker, a bonnet manufacturer and dealer, a bookbinder, a book jobber and printer, a bookseller and publisher, 2 boot and shoe manufacturers, a carriage maker, 2 daguerrean artists, a dentist, 2 chair manufacturers, 2 door, sash, and blind makers, a gunsmith, a hairdresser, 2 livery stables, 3 newspapers, an organ builder, a pail manufacturer, a sleigh manufacturer, 2 saddle, harness, and truck makers, 2 stove manufacturers, a woolen goods manufacturer, an insurance agent, 3 banks, a mortise and tenoning machine company, a tannery, 3 restaurants, 4 hotels, 2 tin plate and sheet iron workers, and a number of stores. Mechanical power then in use came from rivers, brooks, and horses.

In 1851 the American Telegraph Co. completed its line from Boston to Rutland, Vt., and an office was opened in Keene in December of that year. The first operator is believed to have been a man named Converse. The *New Hampshire Sentinel* printed on Christmas

Day 1851 its first telegraphic news which had been received earlier over the wires from the editor of the *Boston Journal*. The major portion of the message contained word of the activities of Louis Napoleon of France. Later the American Telegraph Co. merged with Western Union Telegraph, which was organized in 1856, and managed to regulate the many small companies that had emerged to speed news from place to place. Today the manager of the Western Union Telegraph Co. in Keene is Cecile M. Montagne.

In 1850 a drug store was started by Obed G. Dort, a captain and later a major in the Sixth Regiment of the New Hampshire Volunteers during the Civil War. In the 1870's Clark N. Chandler joined the firm, and from about 1879 to 1886 it was known as Dort & Chandler. Frank G. Dort was admitted to the business in 1879, and by 1888 it became Frank G. Dort & Co., the firm continuing for about another 10 years.

In the 1840's Gilman Woodward was making guns, one of four gunsmiths in all of New Hampshire at that time. In 1859 his business was taken over by George O. Leonard, formerly of A. Leonard & Son, rifle makers of Saxton's River, Vt., who purchased the building in 1861.

At one time Leonard occupied the south half of the lower story as a gun shop, with Sewall Rugg in the north half conducting a store and tinware business, and Joseph Foster upstairs in the organ business.

Leonard's rifles were of such quality that many were purchased



Central Square and Roxbury Street before 1865

during the Civil War by the Union Army for sharpshooters, Berdan's regiment in particular. Three Keene men, Albert H. Kingman, Reuel H. Kingsbury, and Charles H. Nye, joined this regiment, and undoubtedly they carried Leonard rifles. Leonard sold the gun shop to Dauphin W. Buckminster in 1869, and it eventually became part of a dwelling that was recently demolished to make way for a parking lot. George O. Leonard migrated to California, where he died, aged 59, in 1887.

In 1851 George H. Richards established a watch and jewelry business at the corner of Central Square and Roxbury Street.

In 1855 the Cheshire County Bank was organized with Zebina Newell as president and George W. Tilden as cashier. It was located on the west side of Main Street. In 1865 it was rechartered as the Keene National Bank. In 1895 the bank moved to the E.F.L. Block and in 1927 to its present location in the Keene National Bank Building at the head of Central Square. After Newell, the presidents in succession were Frederick Vose, Edward Joslin, Elisha Lane, George A. Litchfield, Clement J. Wood, Wallace L. Mason, associated with the bank for over 70 years, Harold I. Chandler and the current president, Robert G. Calef.

In the 1850's Warren H. Wilkinson began making harnesses and trunks. During the Civil War he made 84 sets of harness and furnished 2,000 equipments for the New Hampshire 5th and 7th Regiments, and for two years was the quartermaster general of the state under Governor Hale. He was joined in business by Leonard Wright, and the firm became Wright & Wilkinson before 1874. Under the guidance of Solon S. Wilkinson, it became S. S. Wilkinson & Co. Daniel McGregor, a native of Prince Edward Island, who had gone into the leather business in Boston, joined the firm in 1880. It eventually became Wilkinson & McGregor. The company made the well-known "Keene harness." McGregor went into business as a harness manufacturer and dealer on his own and was last listed in the 1913 city directory. Wilkinson Co. was last mentioned in the 1916 directory.

In 1856 Dauphin W. Buckminster, later register of probate from 1871 to 1880, ran a clothing store in Wilder's Building on the north side of Central Square (now the Ball Block), and he was succeeded by Parker & Beal. When Joseph R. Beal took over the business in 1860, it became J. R. Beal & Co., merchant tailors. In 1879 Beal was elected cashier of the Keene National Bank. After his death in 1895 the firm continued under the management of William Holt Beal and James W. Russell. In 1900 Henry E. Swan became sole proprie-

tor, and the store became H. E. Swan & Co. In 1914 it was taken over by Miller Brothers-Newton, with William Newton as manager. Later he became sole owner. In 1947 William J. Wichland purchased the business and still manages it today.

In 1857 Joseph Berry Knowlton established a hardware store which, at his death in 1866, was taken over by his brother, William H. Knowlton, and Charles H. Stone and given its present name. Over the years it changed ownership, and in 1930 John P. Wright purchased the business, selling it in 1944 to John W. Robb Jr. In 1957 C. Mitchell Wenigmann became owner. When the concern was enlarged in 1964, the new address became Dunbar Street.

In 1859 Norris G. Gurnsey, 33-year-old native of Whitefield, N. H., came to Keene from Winchester, N. H., where he had operated a gristmill. He purchased restaurant privileges in the depot, and before long was operating three eating establishments. By 1871 he had taken his sons, Edward, Charles, and Frank, into partnership. Charles died in 1876. In 1884 Gurnsey and his remaining sons branched out, purchasing a bakery that had been established by Samuel Wood Jr. in 1816 on the north corner of Main and Church Streets. In 1857 Wood sold the property to Asa Duren and Peter Baxter Hayward. Four years later Duren sold his share to his partner, and in 1882 the heirs of Peter Hayward conveyed the property to George O. Hayward, who sold it to N. G. Gurnsey & Sons. The bakery busi-



N. G. Gurnsey & Co. Restaurant—late 1890's

ness was called Gurnsey Bros. & Co. and became well-known as makers of the celebrated Keene (common) cracker. The company also made ginger snaps, soda crackers, tea biscuits, and graham crackers, and was a wholesale dealer in cigars and confectionery. After Edward died in 1892 and Frank in 1895, the firm of Gurnsey & Son, the restaurant establishment, became N. G. Gurnsey & Co. In 1895 Gurnsey built the brick Gurnsey Block (later called the Newberry Block), and a year later the restaurant business was moved into the new building. Hotel accommodations were also available, as rooms on the upper floors were reached by elevator and were available to guests. In 1900 Gurnsey, who had survived his three sons, built a four-story block at 16 Church Street, and the firm of Gurnsey Bros. moved into it. In 1901 Sidney A. Nims, who had married Annie G. Gurnsey, daughter of Norris, purchased a half interest in the company and became its manager for 58 years. The founder's grandson, Robert Frank Gurnsey, was also connected with the firm for nearly half a century. By the early 1880's N. G. Gurnsey & Co. (then N. G. Gurnsey & Sons) had started the bottling of soft drinks, along with the restaurant business. Eventually this included Coca-Cola. By 1910 the eating establishment had been abandoned in favor of the bottling business and wholesale and retail handling of tobacco and horse and carriage furnishings. In the 1930's the business was largely concerned with the distribution of beer, and in 1938 a new bottling plant was located on lower Main Street. Over the years three firms emerged, Gurnsey Bros. & Co., bakers; N. G. Gurnsey & Co., bottlers; and the Coca-Cola Bottling Works of Keene. In 1960 John E. Gurnsey, then owner of N. G. Gurnsey & Co., bought Gurnsey Bros. & Co., and four years later sold it to Perry Kiritsy. He also sold the Coca-Cola Bottling plant to Karl F. Goulet and Richard R. Allard. Today N. G. Gurnsey Co., Inc. is the wholesale distributor for beer and ale, Canada Dry products, tobacco, and candy.

In 1859 the Keene Soap Manufacturing Co. was established with an office on the corner of Armory and Spruce Streets. They manufactured and sold soap and candles, becoming noted for their "Triumph" and "Keene Laundry" soap. The firm was last mentioned in the Keene directory of 1874-75.

The Keene Gas Light Co. was organized, pipes laid, and the first gas lights of Keene were turned on December 19, 1859. In 1886 a Thompson-Houston electric generator was installed on Emerald Street for street and commercial lighting. That August electric lights of the open arc pattern were installed in Tilden & Co., Whitcomb's,

Mason & Wheeler's, Bullard & Foster's, C. N. Chandler & Co., Fisher & Jackson's, and the Cheshire House. The first electric street light was installed on Roxbury Street that same month. On August 2, 1898, the first commercial incandescent lights were installed in Nims Brothers Market on West Street. In 1905 the Citizens Electric Co. was formed with Leon Willard as manager. In 1908 the Keene Gas Light Co. bought out the Citizens Electric, changing the name to the Keene Gas and Electric Co. In the next few years the concern took over several companies in the surrounding towns. On August 16, 1926, the Public Service Co. of N. H. was formed by acquiring the Keene Gas and Electric Co., together with other companies in the state. George M. Rossman served as manager from 1889 until his death in 1917. After Rossman the following served as district managers: Ralph D. Smith, Edward L. Gay, Merton T. Carter, Elliot Priest, Roger Hunt and, currently, Trevor Price. In 1945 the Public Service Co. sold its gas business to Gas Service. Inc., whose office is at 40 Washington Street. Samuel C. McLaughlin is the present manager.

In 1861 Jotham A. French and Daniel W. Sawyer started a photography business in the old Richards Block. After a fire destroyed the gallery in 1865, they moved to the new Bridgman Block (1866), and in 1871 French bought out his partner, becoming, sole owner. By 1874 he was advertising for sale 2,000 stereoscopic views. In 1890 he published a souvenir booklet on Keene containing 60 scenes. His business was last listed in the 1897-98 Keene city directory.

In 1861 John Humphrey established a woodworking machinery firm; in 1873 he invented the IXL turbine waterwheel. The business became the Humphrey Machine Co. and was known for its manufacture of turbine waterwheels; shafting, boilers, and mill work of all kinds; steam engines and boilers, hydrants, and woodworking machinery. Humphrey also published a monthly paper called *The Investigator*, which dealt with mechanical matters. In 1907 J. C. Black & Co. became the proprietor, making and installing any power wheel. The company was last listed in the 1920 Keene city directory.

Also by the 1860's Chase and Madison Fairbanks had set up on Ralston Street their steam mills, which were used for saw and gristmills and the manufacture of sash, doors, blinds, pails, and other articles. On January 15, 1869, these mills were destroyed by fire, and the financial loss exceeded the insurance coverage by approximately \$28,000.

In this same decade the principal photographers of Keene were Chester Allen, Samuel C. Dustin, and Jotham A. French.

In 1865 Calvin Bryant, who had served in the Civil War as a musician and afterwards toured Massachusetts with Bryant's Band, began the manufacture of round hoops (for buckets) and small wood-ware. He also invented a cross-cutting band saw for cutting logs to facilitate work in his factory, known as the Keene Hoop Co., located on Mechanic Street in the 1880's. The company was reestablished in 1893, and Samuel B. Crossfield became a member of the firm. It was last listed in the 1918-19 city directory.

In 1738 the proprietors of Upper Ashuelot had designated Joseph Ellis, Nathan Blake, and Isaac Clark to procure tools for the establishment of a blacksmith shop. By the time the town directory of 1831 was published, there were six blacksmith shops listed. In 1910 the total had increased to 10, but from that time on, the number of such establishments decreased. The last regular listing of a blacksmith in the city directory was Frank J. Avery in 1949, although an occasional listing has occurred since that date.

In 1849 there were two livery stables. As Keene was noted for her excellent roads and beautiful drives, the number of livery stables continued to grow. Laton Martin's establishment, opened in 1853, was a landmark by the 1880's, one of the largest and best equipped of its kind in the state, with from 16 to 25 horses and a corresponding number of carriages and light wagons of every variety in regular service, and with hearses and hacks furnished for funerals. By 1874 there were four livery stables; in 1890, six; and in 1905, eight. With the advent of the automobile, their number began to decrease until in 1920 there were only two. The last operator of such a stable was William H. Gilpin, on Roxbury Street, who ceased business around 1930.



Eagle Hotel and livery stable

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Eagle Hotel and livery stable

In 1863 the first hack line was started by Edward Loiselle. Over the years the succeeding hack businesses gave service at any hour of the day or night and furnished carriages for parties, balls, and receptions. In time, when the motor car took over, the terminology changed from hack to taxicab. John H. Pender was the first to purchase the horseless hack (motor car) in 1908. In 1910 there were five establishments offering this transportation service and 10 years later, only three. Currently there are two companies offering taxicab service, Ideal Taxi Service, Inc. and Callahan's Taxi Service, both under the same ownership.

For almost a century the making of chairs was one of Keene's chief industries. Before 1800 Peter Wilder had set up shop as a chair maker, and his nephews, Abijah and Azel, carried on the chair making business in the early 19th century, first in their father's shop and then each in his own. *The New England Mercantile Union Directory* for 1849 listed two chair manufacturers in Keene, E. & W. S. Briggs, and Kidder & Winchester (which concern had succeeded Abijah Wilder in the business). By the latter half of that century the chair companies began to multiply. Stephen D. Osborne and Samuel Whitney Hale established the Keene Chair Co. in 1860, and in 1868 the Cheshire Chair Co. was organized in Keene by Edward Joslin, with George W. McDuffee as the firm's first manager. Oak and maple cane-seated chairs, as well as splint and reed-seated chairs and chestnut wood seats, found popular favor, and two warerooms were opened up in Philadelphia, Pa. Located in the Hope Steam Mill Co.'s building, in the 1880's the firm was turning out 6,000 to 10,000 chairs a month, mostly for Philadelphia and western markets. The company went out of business around 1912.

The Burdett Chair Manufacturing Co., manufacturers of basket-seat chairs filled in splint and rattan, was founded in 1850 at Nelson and sold to George L. Burden, who moved it to Keene in 1876. From that year until 1881, he operated a mill on the corner of George Street. Then he erected a plant of five large buildings and in 1888 incorporated the business under the name of the Burdett Chair Mfg. Co., which became well-known for its "basket seat" chairs. George Burdett originated the manufacture of rattan and splint filled chairs in New England. About 1905 Fred E. Lane bought the business and, after rebuilding the factory, continued the manufacture of porch chairs until 1933, when the machinery was sold to the Carey Chair Co. and the land to Earl Davis. Today the New England Explosives Corp., which handles blasting supplies, and the Franklin Chemical Co., Inc.,

chemical manufacturers, occupy the remaining one-story building.

In 1868 the Keene Furniture Co. had been organized, with Edward Joslin as principal owner and Frank L. Sprague as manager. In the 1880's the company was manufacturing about 200 ash and walnut chamber suites per month, but by 1897 or 1898 the business closed down.

Another new business institution in 1868 was the Keene Five Cents Savings Bank. Incorporated in that year, it. was ready to begin operations in January of 1869. Its first president was John H. Fuller, a noted wool buyer. For over 20 years the bank flourished, until the financial panic of 1893 compelled it to close its doors in 1895.

In 1870 Albert E. Fish began making screens and went into business for himself in 1881. He located in a factory on the corner of Vernon and Elm Streets, under the name of A. E. Fish & Co. His factory produced door and window screens of sycamore, white wood, pine, oak, cherry, and walnut, and he shipped these throughout New England and to the south and west. The founder was succeeded by his son, Frank A. Fish, and the company continued in operation until 1941.

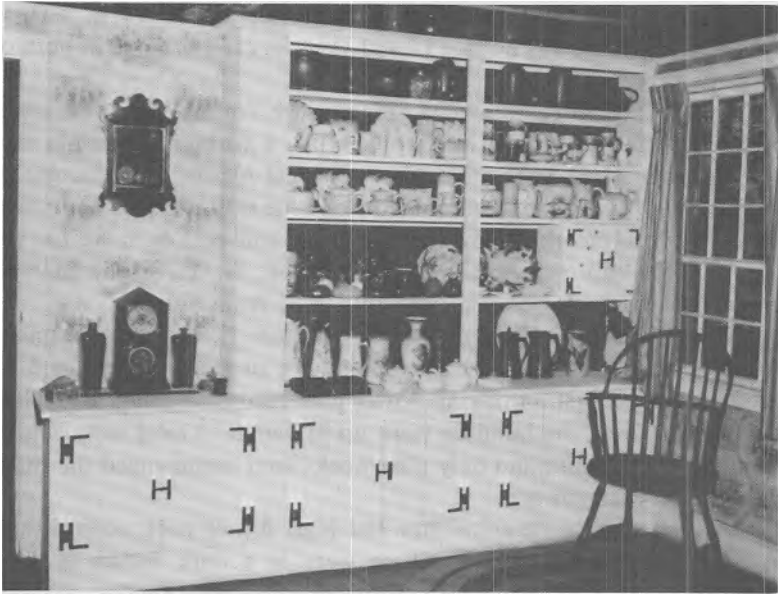
A contemplated manufacturing establishment, later to be called Beaver Mills Co. and incorporated as such in 1881, received a 10-year exemption from taxes at the town meeting in 1871. When the buildings had been completed the following year both the Cheshire Chair Co. and the Keene Furniture Co. moved in. In 1889 Beaver



Beaver Mills

Mills was the scene of a \$15,000 fire. In 1893 there was a boiler explosion which killed three, Lewis W. Starkey, John F. Drolette, and Herbert G. Holton. Five boilers were wrecked. Later that same year the Beaver Mills pail shop and sawmill burned, causing another \$15,-000 loss. In 1891 an incandescent lighting plant was installed there, and in 1899 the Diamond Match Shop also took occupancy. Other tenants of the Beaver Mills factory buildings over the years included the Humphrey Machine Co., manufacturers of the X-L-C-R water-wheel; J. Mason Reed, a manufacturer of locked-corner boxes, who brought his company from Westport, N. H., to Keene in 1881; Charles M. Norwood, also a maker of packing boxes; the Keene Hoop Co., and its successor, the Oscar D. Beverstock Co., also hoop manufacturers; Sprague & Carleton, chair makers; and Norwood Calef and Co., chair manufacturers.

In 1871 George W. Holbrook and his nephew, George E. Holbrook, started a grocery business on the corner of Main and Railroad Streets. After the retirement of the elder Holbrook, George E. bought into the firm of Pollard & Co. and moved the business to a location opposite the Cheshire House on Main Street in 1875. The company was now called Pollard & Holbrook. In 1879, when Dallas M. Pollard left to establish his own wholesale grocery, George E. Holbrook became sole owner, carrying on both a wholesale and retail business, known as George E. Holbrook and Co. In 1894 he took in a son, William F. Holbrook, who became treasurer. During this decade it had become the largest wholesale grocery establishment in New Hampshire. The wholesale branch had grown so steadily that in 1894 it was deemed advisable to separate the wholesale and retail branches, and the wholesale business was sold to a newly organized corporation, with George E. Holbrook as president and his son, William F., as treasurer. It was incorporated as the Holbrook Grocery Co., with a capital stock of \$40,000. The new company proceeded to erect a three-story warehouse on St. James Street, near Railroad Square. The goods carried included a full line of staple and fancy groceries, flour, produce, and fruit, with a specialty in coffee. Their roasting plant handled 5,000 pounds of coffee a day. Richard L. Holbrook, son of William, followed his father as president and manager, which position he holds today. In 1959 the firm moved to a new warehouse on Holbrook Street. It is currently the only wholesale grocery in the city. The old company, which continued as retail grocers under the name of George E. Holbrook & Co., was last mentioned in the 1934 Keene city directory.



Hampshire Pottery



Though tradition locates a pottery earlier than 1794 in what is now West Keene, it was not until 1871 that the craft became important business here.

James Scollay Taft founded "Hampshire Pottery" in 1871 starting its manufacture in the Milestone Mills, a former clothespin factory on lower Main Street. The site was ideal for the manufacture of pottery as the land around contained rich blue clay deposits and white silicas, while at nearby Troy were feldspar and clay suitable for ceramics. Later clay was obtained in Whitehall, N. Y., kaolin in New Jersey, and later special clay was imported from Europe.

The 27-year-old Taft, a native of Nelson, N. H., and his uncle, James Burnap of Marlow, N. H., bought the property in July and by October had the first lot of clay flower pots ready for firing. But when the kiln was fired, the building went up in flames, a total loss. Undiscouraged, they rebuilt and only nine weeks later commenced the manufacture of earthenware.

At first they made stone jars and jugs, flower pots, soap dishes, large pitchers, and milkpans. These were in a dark brown or grey color.

Taft had more trials and difficulties, including other disastrous fires. Despite these troubles he gradually began to enlarge the scope of the business, making many new products. The year 1871 marked the beginning of a second pottery business in Keene. This firm, under the proprietorship of John W. Starkey and Oscar J. Howard, actually predated Taft. The *New Hampshire Sentinel* of February 2, 1871, states that "Messrs. Starkey and Howard of this town have engaged in the manufacture of stone and earthenware, and propose to do a



The pottery factory in its later years

large business in both branches the coming season. They have erected a building, south of Water Street, 140 feet long by 36 feet wide, one-and-one-half and two-and-one-half stories high, where they will employ about 40 hands in making the common earthen and stoneware. At present they are manufacturing only earthenware, from clay procured in this town. The difficulty of procuring the kaolin from New Jersey will prevent their making the stoneware until spring. Then our farmers can have these jars and jugs made to any pattern they desire." They later advertised as manufacturers of all kinds of earthenware with Rockingham glaze, but it seems this venture was not too successful and was over by the following June. In 1874 Taft bought their plant at auction.

In 1878 he started a line of majolica ware, producing articles in green, brown, yellow, and blue, with raised figures and decorations. The ear of corn pattern was popular, with colors of green and yellow. The crackled effect was also used, as well as a tea set pattern called the "Nantucket" because Taft copied it from a piece he had obtained on that island. Marmalade dishes the color and shape of oranges sold well. Pottery in the Greek and Italian style also found favor with the customers.

In 1883 a new kiln for finishing decorative pottery was added, and Wallace L. King, a portrait and landscape painter originally from Windsor, Vt., but who had worked as a painter at J. & F. French Co. and was also listed in the city directory as a portrait and landscape painter, was hired to run this new department. The company now began to manufacture art specialties in new and graceful patterns, including fancy jars, pitchers, vases, rose bowls, trays, and tea sets. They all consisted of a white opaque body covered with flowers and other decorations, mostly painted by girls trained by King. Some pieces were marked with the initials of the decorator, such as E. A., the initials of Eliza Adams. The finish given these decorative pieces was known as Royal Worcester finish, and some required as many as five separate firings.

The pottery also had the services of an old British potter, Tom Stanley, who had brought from England a number of new ideas. He made many unusual pieces, shaping them by hand on a potter's wheel. At this time souvenir ware, decorated with local views of the vicinity in which they were to be sold, were ordered by resorts throughout many states.

A famous design was the "Witch Jug," a souvenir designed for sale by Daniel Low, a silversmith of Salem, Mass. The picture of a

witch, with broom in hand and chasing bats against a background of clouds plus the gold lettering "Salem 1692," brought to mind the colonial witchcraft delusion of 200 years ago. In 1907 the old Boston store of C. F. Hovey advertised Hampshire Pottery as excellent for Christmas gifts.

In the early 1900's Cadmon Robertson, brother-in-law of Taft, entered the business as superintendent, and soon developed original patterns, including the famous mat glaze for which the firm became so well known. Robertson took extreme pleasure in working out over 900 different formulae. He developed variously shaped bowls, vases, lamps, candle holders, and dozens of other articles in beautiful shades of brown, red, blue, and green. Although many of the earliest pieces of the pottery were unmarked, in later years several different trade marks were used. The most common were James S. Taft & Co., Keene, N.H.; J.S.T. & Co., Keene, N.H.; Hampshire Pottery; and in some cases just plain Hampshire. Also many of the pieces designed by Robertson were marked with an M inside an O, designating Emmo his wife. She assisted a great deal, especially in the local showroom where the pottery was sold at retail.

King retired in 1908 after 25 years in the art branch of the company, and went to Massachusetts to live with relatives.

In 1914 Robertson died suddenly, and his death was a great blow to the business. In 1916 Taft sold the business to George Morton of Boston, who had been employed for some time by the Grueby Co. of Boston, a concern famous in the world of decorative faience and wall and floor tiling. In May of that year Morton fired a kiln containing over 1,000 pieces, which included most of the former popular shapes and standard colors, with two or three new styles. The records Robertson left were complete, and Morton's firing was successful. The showroom was soon filled, and for two years Hampshire Pottery again found favor with gift shops. Then disaster, in the wake of World War I, hit the new owner. The demand for pottery reached an all-time low, and it was deemed advisable to close the factory. Morton returned to the Grueby Co., which had transferred to wartime production. With the approach of the war's end, Morton returned to Keene and began making pottery again, adding machinery for the manufacture of common white china, which was sold to hotels and restaurants. Later he added presses for mosaic floor tile, and from 1919 to 1922 the factory was busy on these new lines.

In 1923, because of the intense competition from pottery plants in New Jersey and Ohio and the cost of importing fuel and clay, the

Keene factory closed its doors forever. In that year the plaster molds were either destroyed or scattered. Hampshire pottery has now become a collector's item.

In 1871 the Keene Glue Co. was established by Edward E. Lyman. A few years later it was known as the Cheshire Glue Co., and the new president was Cyrus W. Sawyer, the office and factory being located on upper Court Street, about a mile from the Square. In 1883 the company was bought by Edwin Upham, a native of Massachusetts, and incorporated that year with its old name as the Keene Glue Co. The new owner enlarged and improved the concern, adding streamlined business methods. The plant now covered about four acres of ground and manufactured medium and high grade glues, which were sold directly to manufacturers and consumers. During the final phase of its existence, some 50 years later, Ernest F. Russ was president. Operations ceased about 1933.

Around 1871 William P. Chamberlain established a dry goods store on Roxbury Street. Over the years the business prospered and the owner branched out, setting up the Chamberlain Syndicate, composed of dry goods stores in Nashua, N. H., Fitchburg, Mass., and Vergennes and Rutland, Vt., as well as the local store. In 1894 the Keene business moved to the new Lane Block under the firm name of W. P. Chamberlain & Co., the company being Frank Huntress and Carl H. Adams. In 1904 the firm purchased the Gerould Block on the west side of Central Square, reconstructing it for a department store. Not long after Chamberlain's death in 1914 his son-in-law,



The railroad played a vital role in developing Keene's business and industry

Frank Huntress, who had been in the dry goods trade in Boston, became manager and treasurer. After he died in 1930 his son, Frank C. Huntress, became manager and treasurer. In 1933 the business was sold to Sears, Roebuck & Co., which continues to occupy the building to the present day.

Ellis Bros., florists and seedsmen, first opened for business on Winchester Street in 1873. In 1889 Marcus Ellis, born in Royalton, Vt., but who came to Keene in 1865 on the day of Lincoln's assassination, became sole proprietor, and when Frank Chapman joined him in 1906, the firm became Ellis Bros. & Co. Since 1956 this firm, the oldest florists in this section of the state, has been owned by Wright V. Carter and Bruce L. Borden.

Nearly a century ago (in 1873) John A. Wright, inventor, businessman, and co-proprietor of the Eagle Hotel, was driving his horse and buggy in Troy, when he came upon a cow stuck in a roadside bog. He stopped to pull the animal out, with the help of a farmer he called upon for help. As bits of mud dried on the cow, its body turned an extraordinary white. Deeply interested, Wright began experimenting with the mud. Noticing a cleansing effect on the silver spoon with which



Keene's' truckmen circa 1875—north of old bandstand was the headquarters of the truckmen and teamsters

he was mixing it, he realized the mud was a fine grade of diatomaceous earth, a substance famed since ancient times for its cleansing powers. With this discovery, he produced a silver cleaner which he first used in his own hotel. Word about the new polish spread to surrounding towns, and he soon found himself in business making Wright's Silver Cream. The first factory was in a remodeled house on Cypress Street. The business was incorporated as J. A. Wright & Co. in 1893. After the death of John A. Wright in 1896, Arthur L. and Frank A. Wright, sons of the founder, carried on the business. Once the company had found the materials suitable for its polish, the formula was never changed. However, deposits in New England are no longer used. Diatomaceous earth, mined in California, is purchased from Johns-Manville, Inc. John P. Wright, the founder's grandson, entered the firm in 1927, and after the death of his father in 1928 and his uncle in 1929, became chief executive officer. In 1940 the company built a factory on Dunbar Street, which it now occupies. John M. and Thomas P. Wright, sons of John P., came into the business in 1955. These three are the executive officers of the company today.

The 1831 Keene directory listed one brickmaker, Thomas M. Edwards, who was also listed as an attorney. Over 40 years later the 1871-72 directory still listed only one brick manufacturer; this time it was W. A. Barrett & Co. on Main Street. William A. Barrett formed a partnership with Luther P. Alden in 1882, but the business was dissolved by the end of the 1880's. Later in the 1870's other brickyards were owned by George W. Ball, on Main Street, and Cyrus H. Bemis and John R. Russell, whose yard was on Water Street. George F. and Emmons Ball succeeded their father, and the firm became George W. Ball's Sons. This was sold in 1909 to the Keene Brick Co., with George O'Donnell as president and Jerry E. Barry as treasurer and agent. At that time, and until its close in 1920, it was the sole brick manufacturer in the city.

In 1874 George Kelly opened a drug store which was taken over three years later by George J. Appleton. Situated at 4 Colony's Block, it was known as G. J. Appleton & Co., druggists and apothecaries, dealers in patent medicines, chemicals, and dye stuffs, choice brands of cigars, soda and mineral waters, and physicians' prescriptions carefully prepared. George G. Sawyer, who had been associated in the firm with Appleton, became proprietor by 1881, changing its name to G. G. Sawyer & Co. When Elmer M. Flint assumed ownership, the name was changed to Central Pharmacy. In 1910 Horatio W. Colony and George Colony took over the store, selling it in 1918 to Ernest A.

Johnson, who ran it until 1950 under his own name. After his death in 1950, the business was run for the estate by Carl W. Hopkins until 1963. Today Alfred Johnson is president of the firm.

Back in the 1860's Francis E. Allen established himself as a jeweler, later merging with Samuel Wadsworth to form Allen & Wadsworth, watchmakers, jewelers, and opticians. By 1874 Allen's name had disappeared from the firm, and it became S. Wadsworth & Co. When William Ellery Wright took an interest in the store the name was changed to Wadsworth & Wright. In 1888 William Ellery Wright became sole proprietor, selling jewelry, precious stones, watches, clocks, and solid and plated silver ware, as well as a full line of glasses and spectacles, for which eye examinations were given. Wright also was an assistant inspector of watches on the Boston & Maine Railroad. By 1929 he had dropped the jewelry and watchmaking part of the business, continuing as an optometrist until 1933. Wadsworth left the company, became a surveyor, city engineer of Keene, and eventually made the maps of the city which are reproduced elsewhere in this book. He also compiled a vast amount of historical data on Keene and Cheshire County.

In the 1870's Daniel H. Dickenson and Sidney D. Comstock were running the Keene Steam Laundry at 10 Washington Street. In 1887 it was taken over by James A. Toof, a native of Canada. and was then located at 56 Church Street. In 1911 Charles G. Putney purchased the business. In 1957 it was sold to the People's Laundry, Inc., which is now located on Giffin Street. Mrs. Grace M. Borden is the current president of the firm.

In the 1831 Keene directory the insurance business had several representatives. Elijah Parker was listed as an attorney and agent of the New Hampshire Mutual Fire Insurance Co. (Concord); Thomas M. Edwards was the agent for the Cheshire County Mutual (Walpole) and Aetna (Hartford); and Justus Perry represented Springfield. In the New England Mercantile Union Business Directory, 1849 the only insurance agent listed for Keene was George Tilden, representing the Aetna Insurance, although previous to this date he had been allied with other companies. By 1877, the year George H. Aldrich and his son, Herbert C. Aldrich. set up business, there were 5 insurance dealers in the city. By 1900 the number had grown to by 1914, there were 13; and in 1927, the year Robert M. Clark, a nephew of Eugene L. Aldrich (who had carried on the family business), purchased the firm, there was a total of 16. In 1950 the name of the firm was changed to the Clark Insurance Agency. At the death of Robert Clark in 1962,

his two sons, C. Wellington and Robert M., who had been with the agency since the end of World War II, became the president and vice-president respectively. Another family agency serving the insurance needs of the area is the Trask family. In 1914 George F. Trask established the Cheshire County Insurance Agency, which today is carried on by his son, Norman O., and his grandson, Paul S. The 1966 city directory listed 21 local insurance agencies.

When the Bodwell Granite Co. in Roxbury was abandoned, the site it owned in South Keene was taken over by James Bixby Elliot for the Clipper Mower and Reaper Co. This was about 1878. Elliot, a lifelong Keene resident, had been, in the earliest stages of his business career, active in the New Hampshire Glass Co. situated in what is now Fuller Park. In the 1860's he became a stockholder in the Clipper Mower and Reaper Co. when it was located in Yonkers, N. Y. Striving to salvage what he could from a failing business, he moved the firm to Keene and went into business for himself. The Keene plant covered two or three acres of ground, and orders came for machines from as far away as France and Germany at this time, and though it had many competitors, the Clipper was not excelled.

After Elliot's death in 1888, his executors carried on the business, though his business acumen was sorely missed. Unfortunately, around 10 P.M. on the evening of June 15, 1891, a spark from a passing locomotive ignited the roof of the foundry. Although it was discovered by the engineer of the night express, who blew his locomotive whistle all the way in to Keene to spread the alarm, nothing could stop the disaster. By 11:30 that night all was smouldering ruins. Harry T. Kingsbury purchased the parts that had been rescued from the fire, and his shop at 68 Myrtle Street (The Wilkins Toy Co.) became the only source for Clipper repairs from that time on. The Clipper Machine Works was last mentioned in the 1905-06 Keene city directory.

Herbert E. Fay, who had been a jeweler with Skinner, Day and Co., started a jewelry business of his own in 1879 and continued in operation until 1912.

The first subscribers of telephones in Keene were Chester L. Kingsbury and Charles H. Stone in 1879. The first central exchange was established in July 1881 on Main Street, where Goodnow's Store now stands. It was known as the Cheshire County Telephone Exchange, and the first operator was Frank Tenney. The first manager was Ainsworth M. Nims. In 1883 the New England Telephone & Telegraph Co. acquired the local interests, and the name was changed

to the New England Telephone Exchange. Among the first business concerns to install telephones were the Sentinel Printing Co., the Eagle Hotel, the Cheshire National Bank, and Hills & Bullard (later called Bullard & Shedd). In 1927 Wallace L. Mason made the first local transatlantic call to London, paying \$325 for a 13-minute conversation. After several moves, in 1956, the company erected a one-story building as a new central dial office at 64 Washington Street, which it continues to occupy today.

In 1879 Dallas M. Pollard founded a wholesale grocery business, D. M. Pollard & Co. After Charles C. Abbott entered the firm it became, in 1890, the Abbott Grocery Co. with Herbert W. Clark as president and Charles C. Abbott as treasurer. In the 1890's the company had a building with three floors, all of which were used for the business, plus two storage warehouses, and their salesmen covered territory 100 miles north of Keene and 50 miles east. When Charles Abbott retired in 1936, Walter Kirk became president and treasurer. The company ceased business in 1939.

The first Keene directory listing of an ice dealer was in 1871-72 under the names of Orlen D. Pratt and Benjamin H. Richardson. They lacked competitors until the early 1880's, when Amos Bancroft and Walter Roby, in business in the Cheshire House Block, added ice to the meat and vegetables they sold. In 1884 Charles W. Pierce and Fred Towns established the City Ice Co., and years later this firm was bought out by Fred E. Lane, who formed the Keene Ice Co. Ice was cut on Elm Street, in West Keene, and at the old reservoir(now Robin Hood Park). The property was divided when it was sold to two other ice dealers, Fred J. Cummings and James Howard Bent. An ice dealer for 52 years at the time of his death, Bent was called "Father Bent" by the children on his route. About 1901 Charles H. Fairfield built ice houses and a dam on Fisher Brook, establishing an ice business there. In 1908 the West Keene Ice Co. on Hastings Ave. cut and stored 3,500 tons of clear solid ice. Around 1931 electric refrigerators came to Keene, and the ice business began to wane. Ralph Follansbee was the last dealer, operating an ice company up to 1964.

In 1879 Henry Giffin started the Giffin & Son Coal Co. In 1887 his son, George Giffin, became a partner. At that time there were two other coal dealers in the city. In 1907 the Giffin Estate sold the business to Stephen Grant. who kept the company's old name. At this time there were four other coal dealers in Keene. By 1930, when the Giffin Coal Co. was last mentioned in the city directory, there were eight other coal dealers listed. By 1966 this number had shrunk to one listing.



Cleared for business after the Blizzard of '88

Around 1887 Robert Leveroni established a fruit and confectionery store on Main Street. A successful food merchant in the city for two decades. Leveroni was also the father of six children, one of whom, Nathaniel, became the pioneer in automatic merchandising when he formed the Automatic Canteen Co. of America in 1929. Continued growth of this company enabled Nathaniel Leverone (he changed the "l" to "e") to engage in civic and philanthropic activities, and in 1963 Dartmouth College named the Nathaniel Leverone Field House in honor of one of its distinguished alumni. In 1904 Robert Leveroni retired and his son, Lawrence P., took over the management until his own death in 1935.

For many years Cheshire County was noted in the manufacturing world for its wooden boxes, and here Keene came to the fore as a manufacturing center because of the economical and superior facilities it offered manufacturers. J. Mason Reed, one of the pioneers in the box industry, started his career in a business that had been a going concern in Westport for some years. He became owner in 1868 and moved the firm to Keene in 1881, where it occupied the third floor of one of the factory buildings of the Beaver Mills Co. A large variety of wooden boxes of different styles and sizes was made for manufacturers and jobbers in many sections of the country, and a special feature was made of printed boxes for particular trade uses. Reed died in 1883 and his two sons, J. Carlon and George M. Reed, carried on the business until it was discontinued about 1912.

The name Impervious Package Co. was taken from the copyrighted name of the patented article which this firm was organized

to manufacture. Incorporated in 1883, it made pails and buckets that were impervious to oils, varnishes, and like substances, and so these products largely took the place of tin, iron, or metal cans which kerosene and other oils corroded and rendered leaky and useless. They were adopted by the United States Government for all its lighthouses. The Impervious Package was made in pail or bucket form of fine-grained, thoroughly seasoned wood, each stave tongued and grooved and every joint coated. The company soon had a three-story brick factory on Mechanic Street. The first president was Alfred T. Batchelder, a well-known lawyer and financier, and the secretary-treasurer who took active management of its affairs was Lyman J. Brooks. Almost half a century later the company was still active, manufacturing wooden kits and kegs. They went out of business about 1928, at which time Orville Cain was president and Nathaniel Batchelder was treasurer.

Around 1886 the New Era Tea Co. opened for business in a grocery store on Roxbury Street. At that time it was run by Thomas F. Herbert and Thomas F. Hackett. After Edwin R. Gerould and Edwin E. Bissell became the proprietors, it was moved to Central Square in the early 1890's. To meet competition premiums of silverware, chinaware, and the like, were given to customers. In 1916 James Erwin bought into the business and the name was changed to James M. Erwin Co. In 1923 Erwin sold the firm to Daniel F. Houran, who gave it his own name. In 1939 Henry M. Shaw and his brother Chase formed a corporation with Houran, taking the name Keene Food Mart, Inc., and in 1941 the brothers bought out their partner. It is still under their management at the head of Central Square.

In 1883 the Guaranty Savings Bank was incorporated with James Burnap as president and Edward C. Thayer as vice-president. The treasurer was Obed G. Dort, who was also president of the Citizens National Bank (chartered in 1875) at the same address. Due to the financial panic of 1893 the Guaranty Savings Bank closed its doors.

John G. Lesure and Keene have the distinction of being the first to put out a line of veterinary medicines, according to a newspaper item of 1899. Previous to the start of Lesure's laboratory in Keene, there were on the market certain liniments and condition powders for horses, but no regular line of medicines. Lesure, a Civil War veteran, began as a blacksmith in Royalton, Vt., and then branched out into the livery business, which he pursued for 14 years. Having studied under an experienced veterinary surgeon, he soon became known for his success in helping the footsore or sick animal. In 1885, at the age of 40, he began

the manufacture of veterinary medicine in Keene under the name of *J. G. Lesure & Co.* He acquired the title of "doctor" through his work as a veterinarian, which he followed the greater part of his life. In the 1890's he had three traveling outfits on the road in New England and New York State selling his remedies, among which were Lesure's Veterinary Colic Cure, All Healing Balm, Electric Hoof Ointment, and Horse Renovator. After his death in 1901, the business was carried on by his family until the early 1930's.

Since 1875 there had been factories in Keene for the manufacture of bent chair stock, hoops, and wooden rims, all of which came in the same class of wood work. The chair stock consisted of the bent arms and backs of rattan and cane-seated chairs and rockers, and the rims and hoops were used for sieves of various kinds, banjos, toy drums, and other articles requiring a wooden hoop. These various hoops and bent chair stock were made out of nearly all kinds of hard woods and required a special skill to get the wood bent and set properly without splitting or injury. Oscar D. Beverstock, who started the business in Keene in 1886, was a successor to the Keene Hoop Co. The O. D. Beverstock Co. was last mentioned in the 1944 Keene city directory.

John M. Duffy began his long business career in 1887, when he established a shoe store at 32 Church Street. He ran it until 1952, nearly 64 years at the same address.

By 1890 there were 7 banks, 10 carpenters and builders, 7 blacksmiths, 5 carriage and sleigh manufacturers, 5 chair manufacturers, 5 clothing dealers, 3 coal dealers, 5 dentists, 5 druggists, 16 dealers in confectionery, fruits, etc., 21 dressmakers, 6 jobbers and expressmen, 3 laundries, 11 dealers in flour, grain, and feed, 6 livery stables, 11 lawyers, 9 lumber dealers, 4 machine manufacturers, 7 masons and plasterers, 11 milkmen, 7 meat markets, 13 music teachers, 8 dealers in millinery and fancy goods, 3 newspapers, 11 nurses, 5 dealers in music and musical instruments, 15 painters (carriage, house, and sign), 4 plumbers, 4 upholsterers, and 2 undertakers.

In 1890 the Keene Granite and Terra Cotta and Tile Co. was organized by Joseph R. Beal, John A. Wright, and Wallace L. Mason. They erected a wooden factory on Water Street to make pottery and building bricks out of ground granite. Vases, pitchers, and urns of an unpainted greyish granite color were also turned out, though none of their pieces were marked. The business was short-lived, however, ending in 1894, at which time it was called the New Hampshire Moulded Granite & Tile Co. The building was sold to the Indurated Paper Co., of which Frank Adams was president. In 1899 John P. Rust bought the



Gilmore's Store circa 1892

plant as new quarters for his manufacture of wooden pails, a firm he had established in Swanzev in 1889. Pails and packages of various sizes and styles were made for use of preserve manufacturers and packaging houses. As the Keene Woodenware Co., this firm continued until 1946, when Wilson W. Bolton and Frederick J. Daley, two navy veterans in search of new careers, read in the *New York Times* that the building on Water Street was for sale and bought it the following day. A corporation was formed with Bolton as president and Daley as secretary-treasurer. The name Dalbolt combines the first syllables of the names of the two founders. At this time paper draperies were coming into fashion, and by developing special inks the new company soon became the largest independent manufacturer of paper drapes in the nation. In a short time plastic replaced the paper in drapes, and Dalbolt, Inc. became a leading color printer of plastic sheeting. Today, in 1967, the firm prints all kinds of synthetic and plastic fabrics.

In 1892 Charles C. Beedle began the C. C. Beedle Piano Co. in the rear of the Museum Block and in 1896 moved it to Main Street. In 1898 he sold a half interest to his son Karl. Early in 1899 he sold the remaining 50 per cent to Ellery Blake, a descendant of one of the three historic families of Upper Ashuelot. These two purchasers then formed the Beedle Co., occupying three floors. In 1924 Karl R. Beedle became sole proprietor, and in 1946 his son Karl J. took over the business. Over the years the store changed locations and in 1959 moved to its present site. Music is still the main item of business, although emphasis has shifted in

75 years from pianos and organs to radios, phonographs, and tape recorders.

The Fresco Stencil Co. (Henry J. Johnson and George Hodgkins) manufactured stencils for wall and ceiling decoration. These were used by ornamental house painters and dealers in painters' and artists' supplies. The business was located in South Keene.

In 1891 Austin A. Ellis took over a brush handle business, which had been established in 1843. In 1905 he began manufacturing wooden fish, about 31/2 inches long, to be used as artificial bait. In 1917 he sold out to the Burdett Chair Co., which moved the business from Mechanic Street to its Washington Street factory.

In 1892, when Herschel J. Fowler moved his three-year-old box factory from Swanzey to Beaver Mills, he began using new and improved equipment, such as grooving and locking machines. In 1904 he built a new factory on Island Street and in 1911 joined with Leon C. Norwood and Charles K. Whitcomb to form the Fowler-Norwood-Green Co., manufacturers of lock-corner boxes and packing cases, the output going to the leading business centers of the country. Around 1920 the plant was sold to the New England Box Co., which had been formed in 1898 through a merger of three firms, Ansel Dickinson & Sons of Winchester, N. H., Shepherdson-Russell Co. of Baldwinsville, Mass., and the National Keg and Box Co. of Orange, Mass. The Keene branch, which had begun in 1917 on Island Street with LaFell Dickinson as president, became the largest of the company's eight mills. In a life span of approximately 60 years the New England Box Co. turned into one of the leading makers of wooden boxes in New England. Recognizing that the most important measure of a shipping container is its strength per weight, the company pioneered in the development of the Linderman Joint, which it used extensively in box production. The Linderman machine cut a tapered dovetail joint on two boards simultaneously, glued and fitted them together, all in one operation, and produced a joint stronger than one-piece construction. The Keene branch made all types of boxes and, when requested, would analyze customer needs and design styles of packaging or shipping containers to meet his requirements. Many local concerns used their packing boxes, and at one time 50-60 carloads of boxes and by-products were shipped weekly out of Keene. In spite of the fact that it maintained a large fleet of trucks, the firm became the city's major user of rail transportation. The plant closed in 1957, and a few years later the factory was occupied by the Marlboro Manufacturing Co., organized by four brothers, John L., David E., A. Reuben, and Thure S. Ohman, to make juvenile furniture.

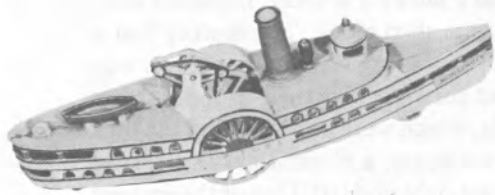
It is still under the same management as of 1967.

Sixty years earlier another Keene firm had been founded by brothers. In 1893 Walter L. and Windsor H. Goodnow established a clothing store on Main Street, 19 years after Walter L. Goodnow had opened his first store in East Jaffrey, N. H. During the period from 1895 to 1920 other Goodnow stores were added in various communities in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, until there was a total of 22 in all. During this interval Goodnow stores were operated in such nearby towns as Marlborough and Winchester, with the Keene store acting as their source of supply. As transportation improved, these smaller stores were no longer needed, as people could easily travel to Keene. At the present time the Keene store operates a branch in Greenfield, Mass., and is closely associated with the Goodnow store in Taunton, Mass. These stores are still owned and operated by the Goodnow family, with Ronald P. Bach president of the Keene-Greenfield Co., a position he has held since 1922. Mrs. Ronald P. Bach, a daughter of the late Windsor H. Goodnow, is treasurer, and Windsor G. Brooks, grandson of Windsor H. Goodnow, is vice-president of the Keene-Greenfield Co. and president of the Taunton company. Other Goodnow stores are still in operation in Jaffrey N. H., and in Gardner, Mass., although under separate ownership.

In 1894 the Cheshire Beef & Produce Co. was formed by William C. Coughlin and John M. Hovey, with a place of business on Emerald Street. They were wholesale dealers in western dressed beef, pork, lamb, tripe, and tongue. In 1938 Abraham Cohen bought the business from the Coughlin estate. In 1954 he moved it to Railroad Street, where he carries on a wholesale meat and storage locker business today.

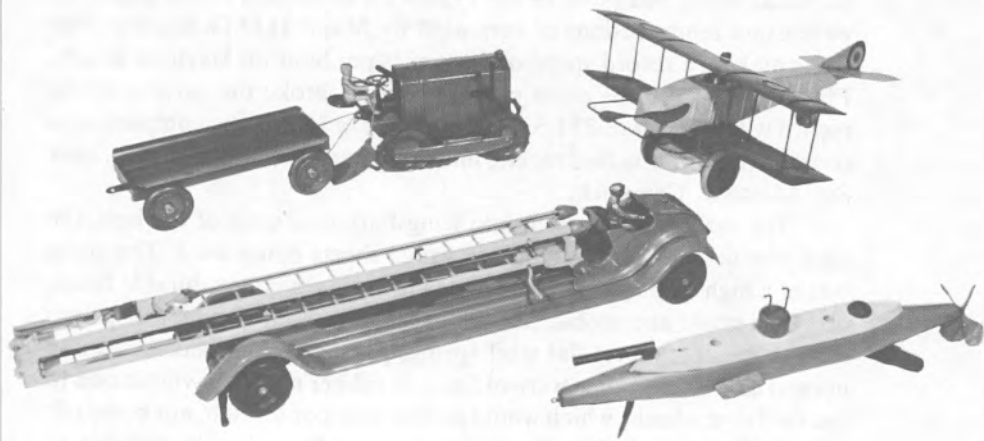
Young Harry Thayer Kingsbury, assisted financially by his grandfather, Edward Joslin, bought parts rescued from a fire at the Clipper Machine Works, and in 1894, with the same financial backing, purchased the Wilkins Toy Co. Around 1890 James S. Wilkins of Memphis, Tenn., who had married Mary Colony in 1878, designed and introduced an attractive line of model iron toys. However, the factory ran into financial difficulties and was sold to young Kingsbury. The new owner continued production of Wilkins' line of toys of the horse-drawn carriage type and other cast iron models. These miniatures included a landau with horses that moved up and down and carriage doors that opened; a Brownie fire department; a Roman chariot, drawn by three prancing steeds; tiny stoves; toy wringers; street cars; hansom cabs, and cannon. These were on the market by 1895. Another 1895 toy was a realistic steamboat named Monadnock. The Kingsbury Toy Co.

(though still running under the name of Wilkins Toy Co. in those early years) also made such diverse toys as a horse-drawn road sprinkler wagon which could be filled with water, a horse-drawn mowing machine, and a rowing shell with tiny oarsmen whose motion seemed to propel the craft forward. A push toy, a clown on a bucking donkey, imparted double motion to the figures as they were pushed along. The donkey had a bucking motion with each revolution of the wheels, and the clown was unseated, being thrown upward and forward and then dropped back into normal position. Other push toys, which were popular from the turn of the century, were a jockey on a race horse, a comical monkey in suit and cap, and a fire engine which turned right and left. One of the earliest of the company's toy automobiles was a reproduction of the horseless carriage. Spring-driven, the car had one occupant, a lady motorist. The drivers of Kingsbury toys, cast in sitting positions, were made with a peg that fitted into a hole in the seat of the vehicle, holding each driver in position as the wagon or car whirled about. By 1901 the company had become the largest manufacturer of toy automobiles in America. In 1906 it was selling a fire truck with removable ladder and a ringing bell. The firm marketed a Perfection Printing Press in a number of small models. In 1911 toys with detachable horses were introduced, including wagons, fire engines, and ladder trucks. In 1915 came a reproduction of a parcel post cart, complete with uniformed driver. World War I inspired a toy submarine that would dive, rise to the surface, and automatically shoot a projectile. The company also promoted production of toy destroyers and transport ships. The years passed; cast iron gave way to sheet iron, and the company produced motorized auto roadsters, cabriolets, dump trucks, auto derricks, trolley cars, trains, wrecking cars, army trucks, airplanes, and grocery trucks. The Kingsbury tractor, on the market by 1918, was moved by a crank at the side and equipped with a governor that regulated to any desired speed. There was a lever for starting and stopping. The tractor would crawl over obstructions, climb steep grades, and haul several trailers. In time some of the toys were equipped with electric head and tail lights lit by batteries. The Kingsbury auto aerial truck ladder, with gong and platform, had one of the most novel features ever applied to a toy up to that time. The ladder, automatically released whenever the front of the truck touched a wall, desk, table leg, or other obstruction, slowly unfolded and rose to an upright position. The strength of Kingsbury toys was graphically proved when three men, weighing a total of 655 pounds, stood on an aerial ladder truck without damaging the small toy or in any way impairing its running condition. The toy Kingsbury Fire Department consisted of a



Early Kingsbury toys





Later Kingsbury toys



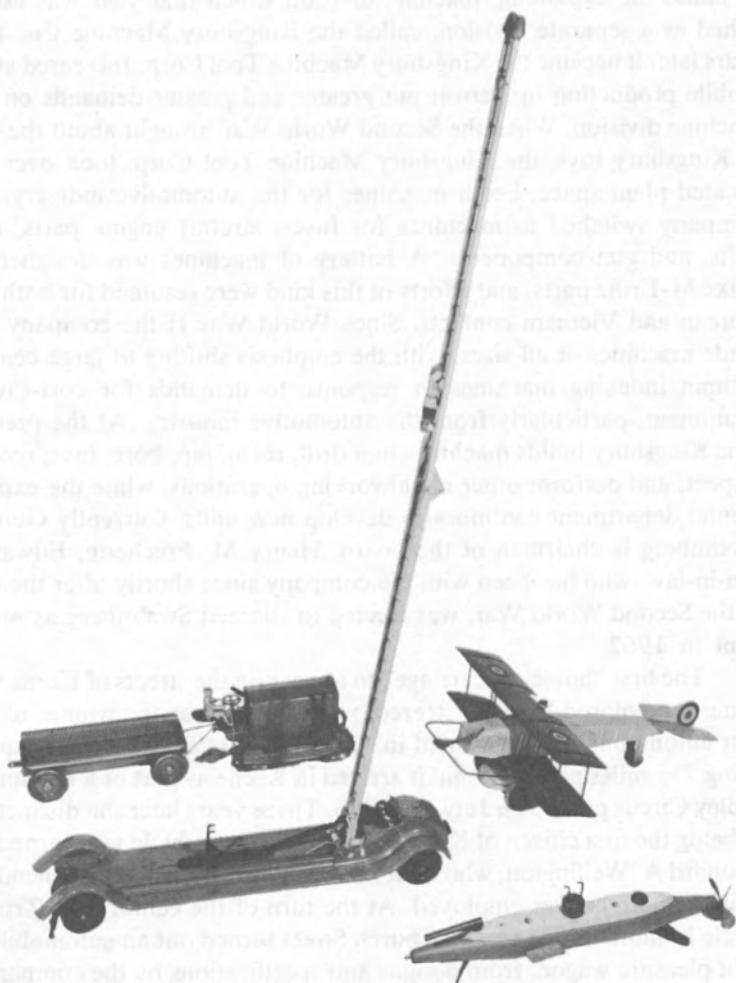
pumping fire engine (24 inches long), an aerial ladder truck (34 inches long), a combination chemical fire engine (31 inches long), and a hook and ladder truck (37 inches long), with four extra-long steel ladders, chemical tanks, and hose. In the 1930's the motorized racers produced were exact reproductions of cars used by Major H.O.D. Segrave, one while making a record speed of 203 miles per hour on Daytona Beach, Fla., in 1927, and the other one in which he broke the existing world record with a speed of 231.5 miles per hour in 1929. The company also constructed two Bluebird racers, models of cars driven by Captain, later Sir, Malcolm Campbell.

The materials that went into Kingsbury toys were of the best, the steel was first quality, only heavy gauge sheets being used. The paint was of a high quality baking enamel, which gave a glossy durable finish, or a high grade automobile lacquer was sprayed on. The motor springs were made of the best flat steel spring, practically unbreakable under normal use. Rubber tires were of fine soft rubber and were vulcanized to the steel disc wheels, which would neither mar nor scratch, nor come off.

By the early 1940's the company was advertising, in addition to the ever-popular Kingsbury Fire Department toys, coal trucks with a crank to raise the body high above the frame to dumping position; a sand loader; a trailer truck; a Greyhound bus; "De Soto" sedans; a "radio equipped" coupe and trailer (the radio, Swiss musical movement, played a rollicking tune when the trailer door was open and stopped when the door closed), train push toys, a camp trailer, consisting of five pieces (blue coach with light blue trailer, folding tent, picnic table and bench, the latter two pieces folding into the trailer), and a fisherman's trailer with car, a water-tight floating boat with removable oars and a detachable boat trailer which hooked on to the car. A very practical toy was the bank clock, which registered coins, the minute hand showing cents, the hour hand denoting dollars. The first coin deposited locked the bank; it unlocked at \$10. Also popular was the army defense gun and truck, as well as a 15 1/2 inch outboard motor boat that would travel 90 feet per winding.

The firm operated as a leader in the toy industry for nearly half a century, coming to a halt in 1942, when the needs of World War II diverted necessary sheet steel to more vital production efforts. Considering also that the rise of molded plastics for use in toys might make a difference in future production, the company sold its patents and equipment. Now, a quarter of a century after the demise of the Kingsbury toys, these articles have become collectors' items, bringing high prices at auctions and in antique shops. Back in 1915 the founder's oldest son,

Edward J. Kingsbury, a graduate of MIT, had joined his father's concern. To overcome difficulties in toy production in 1917, Edward invented a two-spindle drilling machine with a weight feed. Drill pressure could be varied by adjusting a weight along a lever. To allow other manufacturers to use the machine, the company put it on the market, with the result that industries began asking for machines to solve other drilling problems. (In 1961 the original drilling machine was donated to the



More Kingsbury toys

Smithsonian Institution for its collection of historic models from which current industry has developed.) A new department was set up under Edward, and the Kingsbury Machine Tool business was launched in 1920. A year later Gunnar Swahnberg, an experienced draftsman from a Detroit engineering firm, came to the new company. Chester Kingsbury, Edward's brother, joined his father in the toy division, while Edward assumed responsibility for the promotion and development of the newly created machine tool division. In 1926 a new factory was erected to house the expanding machine division which that year was established as a separate division, called the Kingsbury Machine Co. Two years later it became the Kingsbury Machine Tool Corp. Increased automobile production in Detroit put greater and greater demands on the machine division. When the Second World War brought about the end of Kingsbury toys, the Kingsbury Machine Tool Corp. took over the vacated plant space. From machines for the automotive industry, the company switched to machines for fuses, aircraft engine parts, rifle bolts, and gun components. A battery of machines was designed to make M-1 rifle parts, and efforts of this kind were resumed for both the Korean and Vietnam conflicts. Since World War II the company has made machines of all sizes, with the emphasis shifting to large center-column indexing machines in response to demands for cost-saving equipment, particularly from the automotive industry. At the present time Kingsbury builds machines that drill, ream, tap, bore, face, recess, inspect, and perform other metalworking operations, while the experimental department continues to develop new units. Currently Gunnar Swahnberg is chairman of the board. Henry M. Frechette, Edward's son-in-law, who has been with the company since shortly after the end of the Second World War, was elected to succeed Swahnberg as president in 1962.

The first "horseless carriage" to appear on the streets of Keene was a maroon-colored Duryea, steered by a tiller. It was the winner of the first automobile race ever held in the United States, its average speed being 7 1/2 miles per hour, and it arrived in Keene as part of a Barnum & Bailey Circus parade on July 11, 1896. Three years later the distinction of being the first citizen of Keene to own a motor vehicle was earned by Leonard A. Wellington, who built a small motor wagon at Winchendon, Mass., where he was employed. At the turn of the century the Trinity Cycle Manufacturing Co. on Church Street turned out an automobile, a light pleasure wagon, from designs and specifications by the company's superintendent, Reynold Janney. It had its trial run on June 26, 1900. Janney is also credited with having been the first to own a "boughten"

automobile, which he purchased at Tarrytown, N. Y. It was propelled by a three-cylinder naphtha motor. The next year the business was sold to the Steamobile Co. of America, a Delaware corporation, which had started the manufacture of Steamobiles to sell for \$950. This firm apparently ran into financial difficulties and was out of business in a year or so.

In 1898 Harry T. Kingsbury established the New England Cycle Co. in conjunction with his Wilkins Toy Co. Kingsbury invented and patented many devices for the use of cycle repairers, makers, and dealers. These various devices and machines included the semi-automatic rim drill, the Keene universal repair jack, the wheel assembling chuck, the Keene frame straightener, the Keene crank and axle straightener, and the Apollo home trainer! In 1900 he made a naphtha-driven automobile. The next year George B. Robertson established a blacksmith shop in the rear of the Eagle Hotel. In those days it was to the blacksmith that car owners turned for repair jobs, and in 1904 Robertson began dealing in automobiles. By 1905 he and Frank J. Bennett were selling Stanley Steamers and Wintons. That same year the local paper wrote that six automobile licenses had been issued in Keene under a new state law. By 1908 there were 76 cars and 10 motorcycles registered in Keene, and that same year the Cheshire County Automobile Association was formed, with Dr. Ira J. Prouty as president. Also that year John E. Benton was arrested by Officer Lawrence E. Gilbo for exceeding the speed limit of eight miles per hour! The first motor vehicle show in New Hampshire was held in Keene City Hall on March 2, 1909. There were six different makes of automobiles on exhibit, and Fred Little showed the Indian motorcycle, of which he held the agency. At the 1910 show Alva W. Dickerman, the agent for Metz cars, also showed a line of Kodak cameras, Victor talking machines, and Edison phonographs. The first airplane to be shown in New Hampshire was a Curtis displayed at the 1911 Keene automobile show. By this time the automobile had become big business; Harry A. Pierce was agent for the Mitchell car, Edward C. Sweeney for the Whiting, Louis E. Roundy had the Ford agency, and Guy F. Fairfield was selling the Cadillac. Needless to say, the passage of years saw an ever-increasing use of cars, and by 1966 there were 29 automobile franchises held in Keene.

Two years after its incorporation, on June 15, 1897, the Keene Savings Bank (which had begun as the City Savings Bank) opened its doors in the Clarke Block in Central Square at the corner of Washington Street. Its first president was Dr. George Hill. In 1912 the bank moved

to the old Ashuelot building at 48 Central Square. Since Dr. Hill's time the following have served as presidents: James S. Taft, Martin V. B. Clark, LaFell Dickinson, Ronald P. Bach, and Richard L. Holbrook. Lawrence C. LeBeau has served as executive vice-president and treasurer since 1963.

In 1897 electric power was introduced into Keene factories. Makin's Dining Room at 33 Central Square was advertising a nice line of pastries, with orders delivered by the pastry cart.

In 1899 Frank L. Sprague and William Carleton founded their local factory for the production of porch rockers and settees. They began in a small rented space on the third floor of Beaver Mills. Even then Sprague & Carleton used rock maple in the production of furniture. Rattan seats were woven at the factory, but most of the back frames were made by women and children in homes throughout the city. At one time there were over 100 families engaged in this type of work in their own homes. This was the period during which Keene was known as the "porch chair center of the United States," with an output of nearly 1,000,000 rockers a year. As chairs were sold and shipped only during certain months of the year, the need for storage space was great during the winter season. Empty barns were rented, and horse-drawn wagons piled high with porch chairs were a common sight on Keene streets in the early years of the century. When Frank L. Sprague died in 1908 the business was continued by his partner, with Harold A. Peart, Sprague's grandson, as manager of the Sprague interests. After the surviving partner's death in 1919, his interest was acquired by Harold Peart, who continued to use the name Sprague & Carleton. In the early 1920's the company built its own factory. By the next decade the sale of porch rockers had declined. To meet this change in furniture fashion, the company introduced a solid rock maple line of ladderback chairs and breakfast and sunroom furniture. In 1937 Howard E. Page joined the firm as general manager, and the company continued to broaden its line. During World War II they assisted in the war effort mainly through the manufacture of gun stocks. In 1945 Franklin Sprague Peart, a great-grandson of the founder, and Howard E. Page Jr. were elected vice-presidents. The elder Page died in 1956. In 1958 Sidney S. Ladin bought into the company, and today he is president and general manager. The smooth, satiny finish that tops off their items of furniture is the result of a special stain applied in a certain way, with plenty of rubbing in its application.

In 1898 Jean P. Howes, for 10 years manager of the jewelry department of the A. B. Skinner Co., started his own jewelry store in Central Square, where it is still located 67 years later, the oldest jewelry

company in Keene. Jean's brother, Van Howes, joined him in the business, and later Van became sole owner. In 1957 Franklin Sullivan, who had been an employee for 40 years, took over the business, which his widow, Pauline, runs today.

About 1899 Clifford C. Wilber, a native of East Westmoreland, became one of the first in the city to handle the sale of typewriters, with an office in the Gurnsey Building. He was the agent for the Underwood typewriter, which had been placed on the market in 1897. He was also a partner with his father, Charles W. Wilber, in a real estate business. Later he became the first representative in Keene for the Harley-Davidson motorcycle. Wilber devoted much of his life to independent historical research, becoming one of Keene's outstanding local chroniclers.

According to the 1900 city directory there were 6 pail and pail stock manufacturers, 3 box makers, 2 brick manufacturers, 5 chair shops, 2 carriage makers, 2 engine builders, a tannery, a woolen mill, 4 sawmills, and a soap manufacturer; 9 banks were in operation, 10 blacksmiths, 8 livery and boarding stables, 2 book sellers, 5 jewelers and opticians, 3 bands, 9 shoe stores, 18 carpenters and builders, 5 fish dealers, 17 painters (carriage, house, and sign), 10 meat markets, 5 druggists, 10 clothing dealers, 2 coal dealers, 22 dressmakers, 18 grocery and provision stores, 8 insurance agencies, 5 real estate brokers, 9 dentists, 4 tobacconists, 11 hairdressers, 4 photographers, 18 flour, grain, and provision dealers, 6 oyster dealers, 4 plumbers, and 13 milk and cream dealers.

In the early 1900's Abe Berger represented the Armstrong Co., dealers in papers and periodicals, and his newsstand was located in the old railroad depot. The firm moved into the new station when it was erected in 1911, and in 1914 William C. Hall, station master, and Amos A. Bartholomew, baggage master, took over the management. After the latter's death in 1925 his widow, Jeanette, ran the business for almost eight years. The shop is now on the site of the station, which was taken down in 1958, and Joseph Doherty is the present manager, having served in that capacity since the late 1930's.

In 1901 Frederick B. Pierce moved his brush handle business, established in 1876, from Spofford to South Keene, where power was provided by damming the Ashuelot River. When the dam washed out a few years later, steam replaced this inexpensive power source. On his retirement in 1909, his co-partner and son-in-law, Harry D. Hopkins, and a grandson, Benjamin F. Hopkins, ran the business. They also owned the Keene Chair Co. In 1920 the Pittsburg Plate Glass Co. purchased the firm, which was to supply handles for the Baltimore and San Francisco

brush plants. In 1936 PPG bought a brick building on Marlboro Street and moved in the next year. However, the company continued to out-grow its quarters, and in 1945 built a new plant which made brushes of various sizes from New Hampshire's native birch, beech, and maple trees. Nearly two decades later, in 1963, the company finally closed its Keene branch. The following year Lane Buckets, Inc., a new company formed by Raymond L. Lane, formerly associated with his brother at the C. L. Lane Bucket Co. in Swanzey, began making wooden buckets and pails in the vacated factory.

The Peerless Insurance Co. dates back to 1893, when Calvin B. Perry and his sons, Walter G. and William F., started the C. B. Perry & Sons Insurance Agency. Out of this grew the Peerless Casualty Co., incorporated in 1901 to write accident and health insurance. After several moves the company, now the Peerless Insurance Co., erected its own building on Maple Avenue, where it is still located. In 1957 Peerless became the United States managers of the Netherlands Insurance Co. of The Hague. By 1964 the controlling interest in Peerless had been purchased by member companies of the Mutual Fire Insurance Association of New England to provide casualty facilities for their agents. In 1966 stockholders were told by Robert G. Pyne, president of the company, that new business was at an all-time high, with 1,829 agents representing Peerless and the United States managed Netherlands Insurance Co. of The Hague, Holland.

Around 1905 Charles L. Russell and his sons, Harry L. and George T., built a two-story brick factory on Water Street to make porch chairs. The firm closed its doors around 1937.

In 1905 the Brattleboro Overall Co. established a branch in Keene to manufacture overalls, with George D'Arcy as president and treasurer. In 1910 this firm was supplanted by the New Brattleboro Overall Co., formed by Nathan A. Pelonsky. Around 1926 the name was changed to Watch the Wear Overall Co. Frederick E. Pelonsky and Alford J. Podbury started the Brattleboro Mfg. Co. at the same location to make pants and khaki cloth. **In** the early 1930's the name was again changed, this time to Fit and Wear Co., Inc. It was sold to Henry E. Swan around 1933. Swan retired in another year or so, and the business closed.

Also in 1905, John Carrier and Caleb and George E. Stickney established the Newburyport Silver Co. in Keene, making sterling silver flat and hollow ware, souvenir spoons, and novelties in bronze in a factory at 25 Church Street. Caleb Stickney was once associated with the Towle Silver Co. in Newburyport, Mass., but left to work on his own.

Around 1908 attention was given to a new line of novelties manufactured from Tobin bronze, a metal of high polish. From it were made smoking sets, trays, loving cups, candlesticks, and the like. Stock was sold to the public as a means of financing operations, but the business closed around 1914, a not too successful enterprise. Assets were liquidated, probably at public auction. The mark on the back of the silverware was NSC Sterling.

James L. Perry, a native of Warwick, Mass., who had lived in Keene since 1897, set up a shop with his father, John L. Perry, on Vernon Street in 1907 to handle carriages, wagons, and sleighs, along with bicycles and sewing machines. In later years James L. Perry & Co. sold furniture, antiques, and second-hand articles. In 1937 John C. Perry, the founder's son, took over the business, which is now located at 7 Court Street.

The Carey Chair Co. was established in 1907 by Forrest L. Carey to turn out rattan, reed, and splint seat chairs. A specialty was made of piazza chairs, and by 1908 the factory was making 150 per day, the output being sold to jobbers throughout New England. The factory was on upper Washington Street at first, but later moved to Willow Street. When this factory burned down, a new one was built on Victoria Street. Over the years this became the last company to manufacture porch rockers in Keene. It also turned out Early American chairs and juvenile furniture. The company closed in 1963, at which time Franklin A. Carey, the founder's son, was president-treasurer.

One of the first to advertise Edison phonographs in Keene was Alva W. Dickerman. In his store, established in 1906 at 15 Church Street, he and his wife also sold Victor Talking Machines, records and supplies, and sporting and athletic goods. The business continued for about another eight years.

In 1909 the Ashuelot Shoe Co., organized by John P. Rust and William F. Holbrook, began making ladies', misses', and children's McKay shoes. Over the years the firm changed hands, though retaining the same name. In 1925 it was sold to the Crescent Shoe Co. By 1933 the company listed a capital of \$50,000. President and treasurer at that time was Benjamin Segall and this was the last year the company was mentioned in the city directory.

In 1887 George L. Hitchcock and Bert W. Hodgkins started a drug store at 39 Central Square, but the partnership was of short duration, and Bert Hodgkins continued as sole proprietor at their original address. Called City Pharmacy, the store offered for sale amateur photographers' outfits and supplies, paper hangings, patent

medicines, toilet requisites, ground and whole spices, cream of tartar, stationery, and all kinds of sundries. In 1914 Hodgkins sold out to Norman H. Farr, who continued, under the name of Farr's Pharmacy, at 39 Main Street. In the early 1920's, just prior to the building of the Latchis Theatre at 39 Main Street, the store moved to 49 Main Street. In 1934 it became LaFortune's Pharmacy, under the proprietorship of Arthur A. LaFortune. In 1936 it was known as Gallup's Pharmacy, with John S. Gallup as proprietor. By 1939 it was called Medical Hall, and Ward F. Archer was the new proprietor. He was succeeded by William and Thomas Davoren. In 1944 Elmer A. Roentsch took over and has run the business ever since. In 1964 he moved into a new one-story building designed especially for the business.

After discontinuing his partnership with Bert Hodgkins around 1890, George Hitchcock opened his own drug store in the Cheshire House Block at 18 Main Street. In 1910 Milton E. Daniels bought Hitchcock out and changed the store name to his own. Around 1923 the business was sold to Archie Davis. It was in operation until the mid-thirties, though under different management.

In 1909 the drug store at the head of the Square that had been established by Ben O. Aldrich and Salmon F. Dutton was 15 years old. In 1910 it was sold to Nahum C. Dodge, a resident of Springfield, Vt., and Clarence A. Morgan, and the name was changed to Dodge's Pharmacy. In 1913 Glen D. Griffin and Clyde E. Perkins bought the store, running it until 1933, when the former became the sole proprietor. Two years later two brothers, John E. and Edmond J. Stapleton, acquired the property, but by the early 1940's it was permanently closed.

In 1909 the Cheshire Clothing Co. was organized by Aaron Aliber to sell men's and women's clothing. In 1936 it became Vogue, Inc., selling ladies' ready-to-wear, with Philip Aliber as president and Louis Cohen, treasurer. Today, still specializing in women's apparel, the store is run by the founder's daughter, Florence, and her husband, Rubin Lipsky.

In 1910 the city included among its many businesses 8 pail and pail stock manufacturers, 7 chair makers, 4 box shops, 2 brush handle shops, 2 carriage and sleigh manufacturers, 2 gristmills, a glue manufacturer, a woolen manufacturer, and 6 harness makers and dealers. There were 8 blacksmiths, the same number of livery stables, 5 hack lines, 12 clothing dealers, 14 grocery stores, 10 dry goods shops, 5 druggists, 7 jewelers and opticians, 3 hardware stores, 5 coal dealers,

3 undertakers, 5 makers of agricultural implements, 8 bicycle and auto dealers, repairers, and suppliers, 5 boarding houses, 23 confectionery and fruit dealers, 10 dentists, 6 engravers, 5 florists, 15 hairdressers and manicurists, 5 hotels, 11 insurance agencies, 15 jobbers and expressmen, 4 laundries, 23 music teachers, 7 oyster dealers, 9 piano tuners, 5 real estate brokers, 7 steam and gas fitters, 7 dealers in paints, oil and glass, 6 paper hangers, 4 veterinary surgeons, and 9 dealers in trunks and valises.

Also in 1910 F. W. Woolworth opened its doors on Main Street, the first chain store of its kind to locate in the city. In 1964 the company built a new store on the corner of Main and Church Streets. Since Woolworth's, a number of other chain stores have been established over the years, though many are bypassing Main Street for less congested shopping areas.

In 1906 the American Insulator and Mica Co. was incorporated, with Arthur R. Skoog of Malden, Mass., as president. Another similar company was the Keene Mica Products Co. which, as in the case of many industries in earlier times, was granted an exemption from taxation by the city for 10 years. The new company, organized with Leonard L. Howard as president and Donald Waling as treasurer, ran a mill on Ralston Street and a mine in Alstead. By 1922 the business had been bought by the Golding-Keene Co., with Charles E. Golding as president and J. Alfred Dennis as vice-president. Under Dennis' direction a new system for grinding the feldspar was developed. The firm mined and ground feldspar for the ceramics industry, adding mines in Gilsum and Surry, and branch mills in New Jersey and North Carolina. One of the principal mica (sometimes called isinglass) products was artificial snow, such as is used in Christmas decorations, the brilliancy of mica crystals giving the sparkling effect to the artificial snow. Feldspar also grew in importance and was used by glass, pottery, and abrasive industries. At one time Golding-Keene was shipping feldspar to 16 states in the west and south. During World War II the feldspar miners provided critically needed mica for electronic equipment. In 1953 the company was sold to a Buffalo concern, which in turn sold it to Strategic Materials, Ltd. of Canada, but by 1965 operations were discontinued. In 1966 the equipment and real estate of Golding-Keene were sold at auction.

Around 1911 the Whittemore Shoe Store established a branch at Keene. Leon Ellsworth bought the business in 1914, selling it in turn to Harry Grower. In 1942 it became the Footwear Center, with Harold C. Ladam as manager. Today the business is under the co-pro-

prietorship of James F. Ferriter and Kermit E. Baker.

In 1912 Frederick C. Wilcox organized the Wilcox Comb Co., Inc. to manufacture combs, brushes, mirrors, hair ornaments, and novelties in celluloid. Maintaining a branch office on Fifth Avenue in *New York City*, Wilcox continued in business until 1925, when he sold to Albert P. Delay, who changed both the name (to Delay Mfg. Co.) and the products (to golf tees, novelties, and plain, beveled, and bent glass). The firm closed in the early 1940's.

In 1912 the Victoria White Granite Co. erected stone-cutting works, the city voting it exemption from taxes for 10 years. This seems to have been a family concern, with Earle C. Dodds heading the company. The firm ceased operations in 1921, before the exemption period had expired.

The Keene Development Co. was incorporated in 1912 to attract new industry to the city, with William F. Holbrook as president. The company bought land and built several plants and houses, interesting a number of firms in the area, among them the A. E. Martell Co. of Boston, which was brought to Keene through an offer to build the firm a plant to their specifications. The Keene Development Co. was liquidated in 1965.

In 1912 the Keene Building and Loan Association was formed, with Joseph A. Ryan as secretary-treasurer. In 1951 the name was changed to the Keene Co-operative Bank. Today Roland L. Harper is president-secretary. Presidents up to the present time have been William C. Coughlin, Harry D. Hopkins, John M. Duffy, and Roland A. Whitney, who currently is chairman of the board.

Orvis K. Fairbanks came to Keene in 1913 and established a grocery store at 130 Elm Street, which today, more than a half century later, is run by two of his sons, Orvis B. and Albert W. Other members of the family operate grocery stores at various locations throughout the city.

The Family Shoe Store was started in 1913 by Henry L. Dubois. **In** 1915 when Harry S. Amsden bought the business, he changed the name to his own. Today, still operating under the name of Amsden's Shoe Store, the business is owned by Russell E. Riley.

The city directory listed Frank P. Gleason as a clairvoyant, in the issues dating from 1914 to 1918. Actually he had been established as a trance medium since 1888, giving readings in regard to lost articles and business and matrimonial interests. He was also available for seances and lectures.

In 1914 ex-Governor Eugene Noble Foss of Massachusetts moved

the Lynn Wood Heel Co. to Keene. This firm made wooden heels for ladies' shoes in what was known as the Rawson factory on Emerald Street. Parker A. Brown, manager under Foss, later bought control of the business, and in 1935 it was purchased by Colley B. Court and Eli Court, who still carry on in 1967 under the name of Keene Wood Heel Co.

August Henkel and Carl Saam moved their manicure implement industry to Keene from Newark, N. J., in 1914, attracted by a newspaper advertisement inserted by a group of Keene men functioning as a chamber of commerce. Descendant from a family of master craftsmen, Henkel brought the art of fine cutlery-making to America from Germany in the late 19th century and over the years started a number of firms, with which the company now has no connection. Two years after coming to Keene, Henkel bought out his partner and returned to Newark until 1929, when he again came to Keene. In 1933 the company, then called A. Henkel & Son, bought its present factory on Norway Avenue. In 1947 Jack B. Miller of New York purchased the controlling interest in the firm and, operating under the name of Henkel Mfg. Corp., it is a subsidiary of Millers Forge Mfg. Corp. For a number of years it has turned out surgical instruments, as well as manicure implements, with the brand names Millers Forge and Premier. Today Jack E. Miller is still president, with C. Frederick Pfistner as general manager. The New Hampshire Tool & Die Corp. is a subsidiary of this company.

The A. E. Martell Co. was established in Boston in 1892 and moved to Keene in 1916. Originally founded by Arthur E. Martell as a small job printing shop, it branched out into the design and manufacture of machine accounting records to suit individual requirements, as well as loose-leaf equipment and manifold forms. A good percentage of its output was sold to banks, including deposit slips used by Keene banks. In 1916 Edgar S. Small, a former salesman for the company, became vice-president and in 1942, its president. At the present time his son, John T. Small, is president-general manager.

In 1915 the International Narrow Fabric Co. was started by Emil Grube, Ralph A. Rieth, and Frederick Graf. The three young men had been childhood friends in Barmen, Germany, before each had journeyed on his own to America. Grube answered an advertisement in a trade journal for the Keene Artistic Narrow Web Co., and though he could not speak English at the time, he was hired as superintendent, on the basis of his experience in weaving narrow fabrics. In Germany he had attended the Barmen Textile Institute. Encour-

aged by the Keene Commercial Club, he advised his friends to settle in Keene. **In** the beginning the partners did all the work themselves, and all earnings (save for \$10 a week living expenses) were ploughed back into the business. By the next year, on the third floor at Robertson & Bennett's, the firm was operating 24 hours a day, running 3 shifts. They made trimmings for dresses and corset binding for women's foundation garments. In the middle 1920's the firm changed to elastic webbing, which it still manufactures. It is New Hampshire's only manufacturer of elastic goods. It also produces a non-elastic webbing in intricate patterns and designs. During World War II the company turned out 25,000,000 yards of material for helmet liners, belts, airplane safety straps, parachute harnesses, leggings, cots, gas masks, and other GI items. When fire completely destroyed their Eagle Court factory in 1943 they moved the entire operation to Congress Street, where they are still located. Today the executive officers are Emil Grube, Ralph A. Rieth, Ralph A. Rieth Jr., and Frederick W. Graf.

After the turn of the century the Morgan Mfg. Co. of Newport, R. I., began business in Keene under the corporate name, Morganmade, producing many parts used in the manufacture of automotive machinery and airplanes. During World War I the entire capacity of the Keene factory was devoted to government work. All of the clamps used on the famous Liberty motors were Morganmade. **In** 1925 the company put on the market a combination auto stop and tail light, known as the "Keen-Lite." The firm was last mentioned in the 1930 city directory.

The Markem Machine Co. was established in 1911 in Boston by Fred Asahel Putnam to meet the need for a mechanical method of marking sizes on quarter linings of shoes, replacing the slow and costly hand process then used. F. A. Putnam recognized the opportunity for improving on this hand process, and with the aid of associates, built the first mechanical stamping machine, engraved type, and devised the formula for the special ink which the machine used. He later organized another firm to develop and manufacture the inks and chemical compounds needed, each commodity requiring a special kind of ink. This was known as the F. A. Putnam Mfg. Co., and is still the companion chemical company of Markem Machine. The marking of shoe linings logically led to development of additional products to solve the shoe manufacturer's identification problem—machines, type, and ink to mark shoe parts in process, shoe boxes, and production tags. The textile industry next followed with requests for machines to mark

size, shade, and style number of hosiery boxes and to print small labels for identifying cones of thread and yarn. Since then, capabilities and markets have grown. Today Markem sells its products to all industry and makes 80 different standard machines, as well as many "specials," to mark all types of packages and containers, ball point pens, clothing labels, automobile parts, toys, zippers, chinaware, TV tubes, fishing rods, paint brushes, and thousands of other items.

Over the years innovations in research and development have opened up many new markets. For example, the design of a machine to print on vacuum radio tubes led Markem to discover many other uses for marking systems in the electronics industry. Today this represents an important segment of sales volume. When radio tubes were made obsolete and transistors came into use, Markem machines and miniature printing type were required to print on transistors sometimes as many as 14 characters, plus trademark, in an 0.125 inch diameter area.

Similarly, in the drug and pharmaceutical industry, additional applications developed after Markem had solved the need for a machine to print on glass medical ampules and vials with an ink that would withstand sterilizing solutions and autoclaving to replace paper labels. The most recent request was for a machine to print capsules and tablets. Edible inks were formulated, and a machine was built that will automatically print up to 120,000 tablets or capsules per hour.

While Markem makes several models of machines for producing labels, many times a direct printing (as on glass) replaces paper labels. The latest case in point is a revolutionary new process called Markem "Super Kemgo" which produces four color prints in perfect registration at high speeds on "no return" glass beverage bottles; thus the purchase and application of paper labels is eliminated. Super Kem^{go} is now in use by many major glass container manufacturers and appears to have an outstanding future.

Markem has grown continually over the years. In 1918 the plant moved to Keene, where it located on Emerald Street. Keene was selected because of the city's fine community spirit, its attractive living conditions, and its available supply of highly skilled craftsmen. In 1950 Markem moved to new facilities constructed on Congress Street. Offices and production areas have been enlarged several times since then to keep pace with company growth. Branch offices and show rooms have been added in New York City, Elk Grove Village, Ill., Charlotte, N. C., Los Angeles, Cal., and Dallas, Tex. Firms overseas are equally interested in modern marking methods, and Markem has

always had a vigorous export program. Markem International Inc. directs a worldwide network of agents, and in addition, has offices in Rugby, England; Amsterdam, Holland; and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

In 1966 the company announced the development of a new method of printing on glass, a revolutionary process that was termed "the first outstanding innovation or improvement in offset printing in many years." This new development is a method of inking several impressions in various colors, one on top of the other, on a rubber blanket and then transferring them simultaneously to glass, effecting a 100% ink transfer, leaving the rubber blanket spotless.

Markem policies and practices have been determined by three generations of the Putnam family: Fred A. Putnam, founder; Claude A. Putnam, who became president in 1919 and held that office until his retirement in 1956; and David F. Putnam, who began working for the company as a chemist in 1936 and is currently president and director of the Markem Machine Co., with which F. A. Putnam Mfg. Co. merged in early 1968.

The Perkins Machine Co. was established as a general job shop on Water Street in 1919 by Melvin S. Perkins, a native of Waltham, Mass., who had purchased the wood-working machine business of James C. Black. In 1922 Perkins bought the machine repair business of the Putnam Machine Co. For a time the Perkins firm had two branches, one in High Point, N. C. (sold in 1940), and the other in Bellows Falls, Vt. The Keene plant occupied more than a half-dozen buildings in various parts of the city. Over the years the company continued to develop, reaching a wartime high of 450 employees when the national emergency demanded time fuses and bomb parts. At this peak, 94% of production was apportioned to war work. In 1961 Perkins sold the firm to Roberts-Hart, Inc., which in 1964 sold it to Lee P. Hart, who operates the company today under its original name.

In 1919 Arthur R. Jones, owner of a woolen mill in Maine, started the Wassooskeag Woolen Co. on Mechanic Street to manufacture woolen fabrics. The mill ceased operations in 1932 as a result of the Great Depression.

In 1920 the Keene Silk Fibre Mills were established to make decorative silk yarns out of waste silk, becoming a pioneer concern in the reworking of waste silk on the woolen system. The first president of the company was Albert C. Bowman. Soon rayon replaced silk in the market, and the firm then turned to making wool, alpaca, and mohair yarns. In 1945 the mill was purchased by the Charlestown Woolen Co., of which A. Harold Kendall was president and Reginald

Swan treasurer, both former officers of the Keene Silk Fibre Mills. Looms were installed and it became a weaving mill, making women's fabrics. In 1954 the Wallisford Mills purchased the factory. Another plant was located in Montpelier, Vt. B. Harold Erskine and Walter T. Ransburg formed the Hargo Woolen Mills in New Bedford but moved to Keene through the efforts of the Keene Regional Industrial Foundation. They took the name of Wallisford Mills because they liked the sound of it. The company made woolen fabrics until it closed in 1968.

In 1920 there were about 48 industries in the city, turning out many different products. Included were a brick yard, 2 mica products concerns, a box maker, 2 brush handle shops, 6 chair manufacturers, a comb factory, a manifold book maker, 2 door makers, a keg maker, an overalls manufacturer, 2 pail factories, 4 machinery companies, a pottery concern, 2 shoe manufacturers and a wooden heel factory, a toy factory, a silver polish manufacturer, 4 textile mills, and a glue factory. There were 6 banks, a building and loan association, 38 grocers and 3 wholesale grocers, as well as 8 clothiers, 6 druggists, 6 contractors, 6 bakers, 5 vulcanizers, 15 painters and paperhangers, 10 shoemakers and repairers, 3 hardware stores, 26 dressmakers, 3 grain dealers, 4 oil dealers, 5 jewelers, 3 livery stables, 8 blacksmiths, 2 hack lines, 4 opticians, 10 automobile dealers, 8 garages, 6 bicycle dealers, 25 music teachers, 15 real estate agencies, 13 expressmen, and 3 theaters.

In 1920 the Kafelt Manufacturing Company was formed by Harry M. Kharfen. Turning out scissors, tweezers, nail files, and surgical implements, the Kafelt Manufacturing Co. sold to jobbers and makers of manicure set cases and dresser sets. Their brand name was Keen-edge, a play on the words Keene and keen. They went out of business about 1948.

In 1921 Theodore H. Bergeron began as a general contractor, continuing in the construction business until his retirement in 1959, when his son Edward J. became president and manager. In 1961 the firm was incorporated as Bergeron Construction Co.

In 1919 Abraham N. Fine started The Royal and soon began to purchase raw furs from local hunters and trappers. He sold these furs to New York and Massachusetts furriers, but in 1928 he decided that his own company would make and repair fur coats, as well as sell ready made coats. Over 48 years later Fine is still in business and has expanded his operation to include women's other wearing apparel.

Because they lived in rural communities and did less driving than urban dwellers, it was believed that members of the National Grange

of the Patrons of Husbandry should be able to purchase automobile insurance at more favorable rates than those charged by commercial insurance companies. Insurance men of Keene, Richard C. Carrick, William F. Perry, Walter G. Perry, and others met with the National Grange Insurance Committee for the purpose of forming a company to insure Grange members. The National Grange Mutual Liability Co. (changed to National Grange Mutual Insurance Co. on January 1, 1959) issued its first policy in 1923 and subsequently extended its operations from the insurance of motor vehicles to become New Hampshire's largest mutual property fire and casualty insurance company, writing insurance in 1966 in 22 states and the District of Columbia, and ranking 24th in premium volume in 1965 among the nation's 2,230 mutual casualty and property insurers. President of the company is Kenneth P. Colby, and James C. Farmer is chairman of the board of directors. In 1967 the company occupied a new four-story addition to its home office building at 55 West Street.

In 1925 Carl R. Bloomer and Fern D. Haselton bought the old armory on Winter Street and converted it into a furniture store. Later they rented apartments above the store. The building was destroyed by fire on September 9, 1967.

In 1926 Harold L. Holden began a sheet metal business on Railroad Street. Forty years later, in 1966, the H. L. Holden Co., ventilating contractors and producers of fabricated steel and aluminum, moved from its location on Main Street to a new factory in Keene Industrial Park. Mrs. Wilhelmina S. Holden, the founder's widow, is currently president of the company, and Albert L. Guyette is treasurer.

Waldo J. Giovannangeli, who had worked in Leveroni's fruit store, opened his own market in 1928. At that time Mac's Fruit Store was located under the Ellis Hotel. In 1930 he moved to his present location at 105 Main Street, and in 1947 the store became known as Mac's Cut Rate, the name it retains today.

In 1929 Bernard A. Streeter and Glenn E. Heald established a grocery store on Vernon Street, moving to the present location on Washington Street in 1941. Known today as Streeter's Super Market, its proprietors are Bernard A. Streeter and his son, Thompson C., Streeter.

One of the first oil heater installations in the city was around 1927 in the Ellis Hotel. Arthur Nims of the Nims Plumbing Co. is said to have been the first to sell and install oil heaters for the home in 1929.

In 1931 George G. Nichols started Ye Goodie Shoppe, a con-

fectionery store, making fresh candy daily. Tourists buying a variety of hand-dipped chocolate creams, ginger, and other candy specialties brought about an expanding mail order business. Nichols sold to the present owner, Robert L. Domey. The only homemade candy shop in this area, it offers over 75 varieties from its own recipes.

In 1931 Carl W. Johnson and James H. Henry started the electrical firm of Henry and Johnson. Today the business is located at 38 Washington Street, with James H. Henry, president.

In 1930 there were 52 industries in the city, producing 38 lines of merchandise and employing approximately 2,000 persons. There were about 200 retail stores and businesses. Among these were 2 paper box manufacturers and a wooden box one. (All boxes used to package Jello were made in Keene at this time.) There were 3 chair manufacturers (at this time it was estimated that 40% of all porch chairs made in the United States were made in Keene), a brush handle factory, a broom maker, a comb manufacturer, 2 cutlery manufacturers, a glue factory, a hoop manufacturer, a silver polish factory, a toy manufacturer, 4 shoe factories, 5 textile mills, and 3 machinery manufacturers. There were also 5 banks and a building and loan association, 2 wholesale grocers, 44 retail grocers, 15 automobile dealers handling 14 different makes of cars, 9 garages, and 22 automobile repairers. Though there was only one livery stable, there were still 5 blacksmiths. There were also 7 coal dealers and a fuel oil dealer, with 4 firms selling oil heaters; 9 stores were retailing radios. Not to be overlooked were 13 lawyers, a maker of veterinary medicine, an architect, 3 veterinarians, 13 clothing dealers, 8 stores retailing confectioneries and ice cream, 24 contractors, 14 dentists, 5 electrical contractors, 5 shoe dealers, 9 shoe repairers, 3 florists, 6 furniture dealers, 16 insurance agents, 6 jewelers, 20 lodging houses, 12 restaurants and lunchrooms, 15 painters and decorators, 6 photographers, 15 real estate agencies, a wagon maker and repairer, a yeast manufacturer, 3 theatres, 29 truckers, 2 taxicab services, 2 undertakers, 4 variety stores, an overalls manufacturer, 2 auctioneers, 14 music teachers, a mica products manufacturer, 5 laundries, 9 beauty shops, 14 barbers, 3 junk dealers, a glass dealer, a fish dealer, a bottler, 4 bakers, an artist, and a clairvoyant.

In 1931 the W. P. Chamberlain Co., Nims Plumbing Co., and the Public Service Co. of N. H. began selling electric refrigerators.

In this same year Arthur K. Whitcomb started his construction business as general contractor for roads. Besides general contracting, the firm also builds airports and supplies Monadnock blocks and other

types of building materials. In 1933 Whitcomb built his first washed sand and gravel plant. In 1942 the firm began the manufacture of cement blocks. Today Arthur Whitcomb is president of both Arthur Whitcomb Construction Co., Inc. and Keene Sand and Gravel, Inc.

In 1932 the World Radio Sales Agency, located in the Bruder Block, was advertising radios at lowest prices.

Also in 1932, the Puritan Chain Store established a clothing store in Keene. The first manager was Henry Legere; the present manager is Edmund F. Fleming.

In 1931 Mrs. Sadie Snowling established the Quality Shoppe, selling ladies' ready-to-wear. Today the store, still selling ladies' clothing, is run by Samuel C. Snowling, Jr.

The year 1933 also saw the beginning of Dr. William E. Dexter's optometrist's office at 23 Main Street. In 1950 the firm of Dexter Optometrists moved to the residential area of Main Street to a house renovated for their professional needs, where the practice is still carried on by Dr. Richard Dexter, the founder's son, in partnership with Dr. Joseph W. Alger.

Robert P. Wheeler, in 1935, established a grain feed mill on Railroad Street, which today, known as the Elm City Grain Co., is the only such mill in Keene.

In 1936 the Princess Shoe Co. was founded by Luigi L. Farina, who had been co-owner of a shoe factory in Lynn, Mass. The company made women's leather shoes in the popular price field. In 1963 the business was purchased by the United States Corp. Gino Farina is president and general manager.

Frederick A. Farrar, Inc. was started in 1937 by Farrar in a rented space at Perkins Machine Shop to rebuild and repair electric motors. In 1948 it moved to a new building at 15 Avon Street, where the firm is still doing business.

In 1938 Roberts-Hart, Inc. was organized by Raymond S. Roberts and Lee P. Hart to manufacture men's work shoes, and located in a building once occupied by the Crescent Shoe Co., which moved out in 1935. In 1948 Paul A. Crane bought out Roberts and in 1964 purchased Hart's interest.

In 1938 Ralph W. Payne started R. W. Payne Inc., a construction company, which is operated today by his son, Stanley Payne, vice-president of the concern.

Around this time Keene had about 160 modern retail establishments. The 1940 city directory showed 48 factories which included 4 chair manufacturers, 2 box manufacturers, 3 machine manufacturers,

3 textile plants, 3 polish manufacturers, a mica concern, 2 shoe manufacturers, a broom manufacturer, and a chewing gum manufacturer. The livery stables had disappeared, and there was only one blacksmith shop. There were about 40 grocery stores, 11 dressmakers, 18 clothing dealers, 25 restaurants, 5 druggists, 16 automobile agencies, 5 hardware dealers, 6 bakers, 15 barbers, 21 beauty parlors, 5 florists, 7 furniture dealers, 17 insurance agencies, 19 lawyers, 6 jewelers, an architect, 2 auctioneers, and a medium.

A big event of 1940 was the move of radio station WKNE, which had started in Springfield, Vt. (the first in that state) to Keene, where it became the second station in New Hampshire. The move was made because of geographical conditions suitable for good broadcasting. Called the Voice of the Twin-State Area, WKNE reaches into seven counties in three states. In 1945 its present owner, Joseph K. Close, bought the station from Colonel Harry Wilder. The studio was located at 17 Dunbar Street until it moved in October 1965 to its new quarters on Stanhope Avenue.

In 1941 Grant J. Holt and his brother, Clarence G. Holt, moved their New England Screw Co. from Massachusetts to Keene, locating in the former Boston & Maine Railroad repair shops on Emerald Street. It was the arrival of this new concern which allowed the B & M shops to move out of Keene. Plans for the further development of West Keene gained in momentum as the coming of the New England Screw Co. saw an intensive building program develop there to supply homes for company employees, as well as the general public. The firm manufactured screws and bolts of all kinds. In 1947 the business was bought by the Central Screw Co. of Chicago. Today David S. Jennings is president-treasurer.

In 1941 a company known as Miniature Precision Bearings, Inc., which had been formed the previous year, moved to Keene, one trailer truck handling all its equipment, and located in the two-story vacant Greene Mineral Paste factory. Engineer Winslow S. Pierce Jr., inventor of the first miniature radial ball bearing in 1924, was one of the founders of the company, together with Arthur N. Daniels. Pierce, a native of New Jersey, married Mary Davenport Brush, daughter of artist George de Forest Brush, at Dublin in 1921. His father purchased a small machine shop in Lebanon for him, and it was there that the young man created a method of fracturing a ball bearing race so that it could be rejoined exactly at the break. A company called Split Ballbearing Corp. was formed, and Pierce was one of the stockholders. In 1938 he received an order from Carl Norden, in-

ventor of the Norden bombsight. In 1940 Miniature Precision Bearings was organized as the small bearings division of SBB, and the move to Keene marked its separation from the parent company. Officers included Pierce, Horace D. Gilbert, and Arthur N. Daniels. During the Second World War MPB's products were in highest-priority demand by the government, which required an all-out war effort by these plants. With peace came new demands for an output to satisfy the many uses for precision bearings required by a civilian-dominated market. In 1950 Horace Gilbert became president and treasurer of the firm. Winslow Pierce, after a three-year illness, died on October 5, 1950. In 1956 a new plant, the first in the United States designed specifically from the ground up for the production of miniature ball bearings, was opened on an 18-acre site on Optical Avenue, and the Winslow S. Pierce Jr. Research and Development Laboratory was dedicated. In 1957 Split Ballbearing became a wholly owned division of MPB. In 1960 the company purchased the Carter Engineering Co. of Ferrysburg, Mich., and the next year acquired the Wafe Mfg. Co. of Bridgeport, Conn. That same year MPB was incorporated in Canada and Liechtenstein. By 1963 MPB was producing bearings to 20 millionths of an inch tolerance. In 1963 they acquired the Joy Ball & Roller Bearing Co. of Chicago, and in 1965 began construction of an overseas plant at Medemblik, Holland. The Vietnam crisis generated greater military demand for miniature and instrument bearings, and employing 1,400 people in four producing plants in this country and one in the Netherlands, today MPB manufactures over 1,000 types and sizes of bearings. Currently William M. Scranton is president, and Horace Gilbert is chairman of the board.

In 1945 Findings Industries, Inc. was established by John L. Thornton to manufacture findings for the jewelry trade. Thornton is currently president of the company.

Pewter Ornaments, by Christina, is a handcraft product which started as a hobby and ended as a means of livelihood and independence in 1940 because of the desire of a couple to live in the country, and specifically in Keene, in the homestead of Christina Bauer. Christina Bauer, a former art teacher, forms the original models and her husband George Bauer, a former Ph.D. research scientist, utilizes his knowledge of material processing. Their products are considered exceptional as, unique in the costume jewelry business, all designs are copied from nature. Many items are cast directly from the nature specimen, such as flowers, leaves, and small sea animals. From the modeled items, covered bridges and other New England items,

dogs, cats, horses, birds, and sports, it can be said, they all are first in their originality and quality.

Pewter was chosen as a metal which finishes like silver but places the item in a popular price range. Also, pewter had never been used before in this country for ornament-making. The word "pewter," in the European sense, means tin without the addition of lead.

The Christina Ornaments sell from the Maine coast to Virginia along the tourist routes, and the State of New Hampshire uses them as gifts to notable visitors as a unique souvenir from this state.

Also in 1945, Fred D. Laurent, an ex-marine and Keene native, who was for a short time after the war employed in the research department of a Massachusetts leather concern, pursued a hobby. The result was the Douglas Toy Co., which used his middle name. Stuffed animals of shearing lambskin and fabrics, specially constructed to take rough handling, were his products. In 1956 the firm was bought by St. Clair M. Smith, who is currently president-treasurer. The name is now Douglas Co. Inc. Most popular among the approximately 100 toy models are the little stuffed dolls with plastic heads and vinyl faces, Boy Blue and Bonnie. Of the stuffed animals, the raccoon and squirrel are favorites.

In 1946 Guy E. MacMillin formed the MacMillin Co., Inc., which became one of the largest construction firms in the area. Today James D. Walker is president. A former officer of the company, Richard E. Bean, left in 1954 to form the R. E. Bean Construction Co., Inc., which he still operates in 1967.

In 1947 a group of merchants set up the Keene Business Bureau, which was reorganized in 1954 as the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce. The current managing director is William W. McGowan III, who coordinates the efforts of more than 300 members in 35 committees. To create a "shop Keene" attitude, this organization instituted such merchandising ideas as the Sidewalk Carnival Days, during which merchants move part of their wares outdoors and don costumes for festival sales at the booths, and a new look during the holiday season, with 42 garland "fantasy" trees to light the Central Square business district, a Christmas tree on the Common with 1,000 multi-colored lights, and an annual Christmas parade with around 30 floats and 7 bands. Other programs in recent years have included a citywide beautification program, an education program of career opportunities in the area, and a comprehensive study for planning, expansion, and renovations in the central business district. The Chamber was successful in its efforts in 1964 to have Keene named an All-

America City, the first so designated in New Hampshire. The award was "made in recognition of progress achieved through intelligent citizenship action."

The Monadnock Cutlery Co., Inc. moved into a factory on Railroad Street in 1949 to begin the manufacture of manicure and surgical instruments. The founder, Leon J. Bergeron, is still president of the concern.

At the suggestion of Governor Sherman Adams, the Keene Industrial Foundation was formed in 1951. The purpose of the organization, financed by individuals, is to aid existing business and encourage new industry to settle in Keene. Diversification is the key word with emphasis on "hard goods."

Also in 1951, Rowco Mfg. Co. established a business on Emerald Street to make portable power brush cutters. In recent years the firm has added other lines of power equipment. Arshag M. Hovhannesian is vice-president and general manager.

In 1952 the American Optical Co. of Southbridge, Mass., built a branch factory in Industrial Park off Marlboro Street. The first resident manager was W. Kelley Hannon. At the start of operations in Keene the company manufactured bomb sight assemblies for the Air Force, optics for range finders, and aerial camera lenses, and later added microscopes, optical machinery, rifle telescopes, and tank periscopes. The current plant manager is Kenneth L. Pursell.

In 1955 Albert J. Ricci, founder of The Melody Shop, Inc. (which was established in 1945 to sell record albums, radios, and phonographs) brought the television cable to Keene, making TV reception more universal throughout the city. They were also first in Keene with color TV. In 1962 Ricci sold his cable business, Better TV, and it became New England Video. When it was sold again in 1964, this time to American Cable Vision, the firm kept the name New England Video, making it a division of the parent company. Over 56 miles of cable provide reception of nine television stations and all-band FM. In 1966 Ricci sold The Melody Shop to Mario Farina, who operates it today as the MGF Melody Shop in a new place of business at 102 Main Street.

The Abbott Co. moved from Clinton, Mass., to Keene, locating on Railroad Street, where they manufactured baby's play pens and cribs, with Arthur L. English as general manager. In 1964 the business was taken over by the Abbott Industries Inc., which makes hardwood products.

In 1957 H. Leigh MacDonald began a one-man ceramic con-

cern, Folklore Pottery, operating in a single room in the Bennett Block on Washington Street. His wares have been sold throughout the United States.

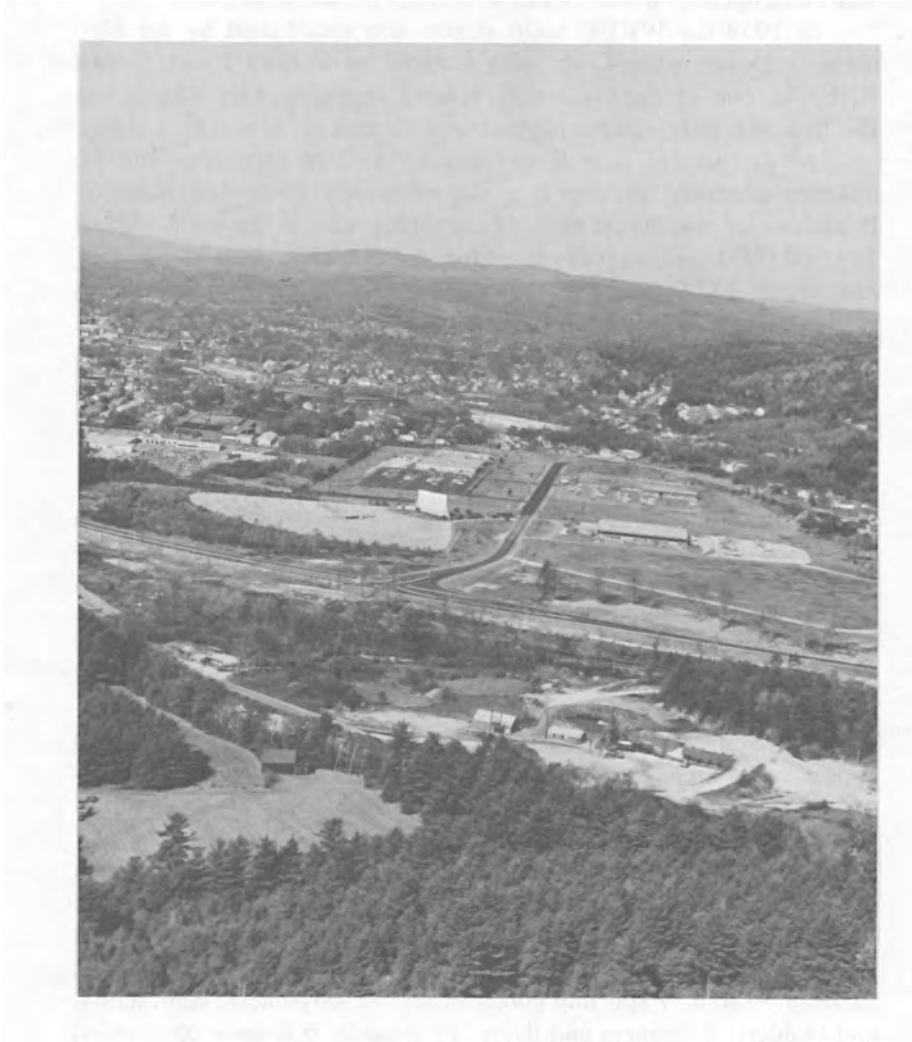
In 1958 Edward Fairbanks and his brother, Lester Fairbanks, built Keene's first shopping plaza on West Street, and in 1966 Riverside Plaza opened on Winchester Street near the Keene bypass.

In 1959 the WKBK radio station was established by the Monadnock Broadcasting Corp. with a studio on Vernon Street. Talbot R. Hood, one of the owners, is general manager. This station has the first and only radio-equipped mobile unit in Cheshire County.

At the present time Keene has 35 modern factories, with 46 different products, making it a city of widely diversified industry. It has one of the lowest rates of unemployment in the state. About \$15,500,000 is paid annually to approximately 4,500 persons in wages, and nearly \$32,000,000 in finished work results from these active establishments. The principal products include furniture of various kinds, shoes, textiles, surgical instruments, toys, drilling machinery, electronic components, optical instruments, miniature ball bearings, business forms, jewelry findings, industrial marking equipment, silver and furniture polish, machine tools, and specialty products.

Keene is the trading center for southwestern New Hampshire, serving an estimated 100,000 individuals, with over 385 retail stores and about 200 professional offices. The three national banks have approximately \$27,000,000 in deposits; the two savings banks about \$34,000,000; its one co-operative bank has close to \$8,000,000. Among the largest employers in the city are the home offices of two insurance firms (National Grange Mutual Insurance Co. and Peerless Insurance Co.) which do business throughout the nation.

There are now approximately 8 accountants and auditors; 10 appraisers; 4 architects; 32 lawyers; 34 automobile accessories dealers, garages, and repairers; 23 insurance agents and agencies representing a greater number of insurance companies; 8 laundries; 6 milk dealers; 11 music teachers; 20 painters and decorators; 11 dealers in oil burners and equipment; 7 photographers; 5 printers; 34 real estate dealers; 24 restaurants; 7 shoe dealers; 2 theaters; 3 travel agencies; 3 veterinarians; 29 automobile agencies; 11 barber shops; 21 beauty shops; 7 sporting goods stores; 72 carpenters, contractors, and builders; 7 cleaners and dyers; 17 dentists; 6 finance companies; 30 grocers; 7 hardware dealers; and 5 variety stores.



*Keene Precision Park, a planned
industrial district*