

History of Keene.

CHAPTER I.

THE MASSACHUSETTS GRANT.

1732-1740.

Before the year 1740 the grantees and provincial authorities of Massachusetts claimed all that part of New Hampshire which lies west of the Merrimac river, as far north as the present towns of Lebanon and Meredith, as a part of their province. The grants from the crown to the original grantees in each of these provinces were full of inaccuracies and conflicting descriptions, caused by the fact that no one at that time had any definite knowledge of this vast, unexplored country.

An early grant described the north boundary line of Massachusetts as "beginning at the Sea three English miles north from the black Rocks So called at the Mouth of the River Merrimack as it emptied it Self into the Sea Sixty years agoe, thence running Parralel with the River as far Northward as the Crotch or parting of the River, thence due North as far as a certain tree Commonly known for more than Seventy Years past by name of INDICOT'S TREE Standing three English miles Northward of said Crotch or parting of Merrimack River, and from thence due West to the South Sea."

Upon that description the Massachusetts grantees claimed that the line beginning three miles north of the mouth of the river was intended to run along that side of the river, at the same distance from it, to the source of the main stream; which gave them a strip three miles wide on the east side, as well as on the north side of the river.

In 1652 the general court of Massachusetts appointed a commission to survey the boundary line between the

two provinces. That commission, consisting of Capt. Simon Willard of Concord and Capt. Edward Johnson, with guides and assistants, accompanied by a committee of the general court and escorted by a squad of soldiers, surveyed as far north as the "Weares," near the outlet of Lake Winipisiogee. They there marked,¹ at the head of a small island in the channel, what they claimed to be the northeast corner of Massachusetts, by chiseling on the face of the rocks—still to be seen—the initials of the names of the commissioners and the full name of "John Endicott Gov." A line running "due west" from that point strikes the Connecticut river near the south line of Lebanon.

The New Hampshire grantees, following the language of their grant, claimed that the "Southern Boundary of Said Province should begin at the end three miles North from the Middle of the Channel of Merrimack River where it turns into the Atlantic Ocean, and from thence should run on a Straight Line West up into the Main Land until it meets with His Majesty's other governments." That line, starting at a point on the shore three miles north of the mouth of the Merrimac, "would cross that river a little south of Reed's Ferry, pass north of Mount Monadnock, south of Keene, and strike the Connecticut river in the northern part of Chesterfield."²

Under her claim Massachusetts granted many townships in the disputed territory: Dunstable in 1673, including what are now Nashua, Hollis, Brookline, Pelham, Hudson, and parts of other towns; Penacook (afterwards called Rumford, now Concord) in 1725; Suncook (Pembroke) in 1726; Souhegan West (Amherst) in 1728; and several others before the boundary was finally established in 1741.

In 1693 Lieutenant Governor Usher of New Hampshire and his council appointed commissioners and surveyors to run the boundary line between the two provinces and invited Massachusetts to join in the survey, but she declined the invitation. From that time on for more than forty

¹ Dr. Philip Carrigan, author of the first general map of New Hampshire.

² Report of commission on boundary line, 1895.



SALMA HALE, AUTHOR OF "ANNALS OF KRENE."

years disputes between the two provinces concerning the boundary line continued, and at times were sharp and bitter.

On the 1st day of June, 1732, in his speech to the legislature of the province of Massachusetts, Governor Belcher said, "I think it would be wise in this assembly to take a proper care for settling the ungranted lands," etc., and on the 20th of that month the house of representatives "Voted that there be seven Towns opened of the contents of six miles square, including two on the Ashuelot¹ River above Northfield;" and the vote went on to describe in the usual way how it should be done. This vote, however, was not concurred in by the council, but on the 1st day of July following, upon the report of a committee of conference, their vote of non-concurrence was reconsidered, and a vote of concurrence passed on the 3d, with amendments which were agreed to by the house. But the act was not recorded until after the meeting of the council in April, 1733.

Under date of the 20th of that month we find the following record, the legislature being then in session:²

	Present in Council		
"Friday April 20, 1733	}	His Excellency, Jonathan Belcher Esq. ^r Gov. ^r	
		The Hon ^{ble} . Spencer Phips Esq. ^r Lieu ^t Gov. ^r	
"Thomas Palmer	Will ^m Clark	Ebenezer Burrill	
Will ^m Pepperil	John Alford	Ezekiel Lewis	
Will ^m Dudley Esq. ^r	Jos ^{ph} Wadsworth Esq. ^r	Isaac Lothrop	
Jon ^a Remington	Thomas Cushing	Francis Foxcroft."	
	* * * * *		

"The Secretary sent down the following Message from His Excellency to the House of Represent^{ves} viz. Gentlemen of the House of Represent^{ves}—When I was last at N. H. the assembly there pass^d an Order for the stopping at present of any Process in the Law against the Borderers on the Lines disputed betwixt this province and

¹"The name was originally written *Nashue lot*. The Indian word *nashue* signifies *in the midst*, and was applied by them to a point or angular piece of land lying between two branches of a stream or other water; *ut* means *at*. The application of the term here is plain. The natives called the triangular peninsular formed by the bend of the Connecticut and touched on the east by the smaller stream, *nashue ut*; and the settlers, without inquiring into the specific meaning of the word, made it the name of the smaller stream. By omitting the initial *n* and with the introduction of *l* before the termination, it makes a most musical appellation. The regret is that our fathers did not retain more of those apt and significant Indian names."—Temple and Sheldon.

²Jonathan Belcher was at that time governor of both Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and each province had a lieutenant governor, Spencer Phipps in Massachusetts and John Wentworth in New Hampshire.

that which I have communicated to His Majesty's Council here, and I now send it you by Mr. Secretary and earnestly recommend your coming into an Order of the like nature that the people of both Governmen^{ts} may have the happiness of living with each other as becomes good Neighbors and good Christians."

Then follows the record of the act as amended and concurred in, passed July 3, 1732, "Consented to" April 20, 1733.

The following is from the Massachusetts archives:

"Vote pass'd both House in July last, viz: In answer to that part of His Excellency's Speech which relates to the ungranted Lands of the Province—Upon Consideration y^t Power is given the General assembly to Grant Lands especially for the Planting or Settling of the province and that by the Great Increase of His Majesty's good Subjects, many that are inclined to Industry have not been able to obtain Lands for the Employment of themselves and Families, and great numbers have removed to Neighboring Colonies for their accommodation,—Voted that there be four Towns opened of the contents of six miles square Each, viz.—One at Paquoiag (Athol) on Miller's River, Two on Ashuelot River above Northfield, the other in the Eastern Country at the Head of Berwick, all to be surveyed in October or November next at furthest by the Direction of Comm:^{tees} to be appointed by the General Court and their several Surveys to be Reported at the Fall Session and the Charge of the Comm:^{tee} and Survey to be paid out of the public Treasury, y^t Comm:^{tees} be appointed to admit Settlers and to lay out the House Lots so that y^e Settlement may be made in a Defensible manner and to direct in the drawing thereof, but not to lay out any other Division without further Direction from this Court, Each Home Lot to consist of so many acres as the Court shall Order after Report is made of Quality and other Circumstances of the Land, the Comm:^{tees} to be paid as the Court shall Order, that there be sixty three House Lots laid out in Each Township, One for the first Settled Minister, One for the Ministry, one for the School and one for Each of the Sixty Settlers who shall Settle thereon in his own person or by one of his Children. The rest of the Land to be allotted or Divided equally into Sixty three Parts; That one year be allowed from the Survey for the admission of Settlers, and that the Comm:^{tee} be directed to Demand and receive from Each Settler at his admission Five pounds part of which shall be employed for reimbursing the Province the Money to be advanced for paying the

Committee and the Charge of the Survey, the remaining part to be employed for building houses for public Worship or otherwise as the General Court shall Order; That Each Settler actually live on his Land within three years from his admission, build an House on his Land of eighteen feet square and Seven feet Stud at the least, and within the same Time do sufficiently fence in and till or fit for mowing Eight acres of Land. Each Settler to have his Land on Condition that he perform the foregoing injunction, and in Case any Settler fail of performance in the whole or in part, his Right to be forfeited & such Land shall revert to the province & the Comm:^{tee} to be appointed to admit Settlers are directed at the Time of admission to take a Bond of Twenty pounds of each Settler to be paid to them or their Successors for the Use & Benefit of the Settlers in Case he fail of performing the several Conditions and Injunctions before mentioned, & that the Settlers in each Town to be obliged to build a suitable meetinghouse and to settle a learned orthodox minister in such Town within the space of five years from the admission of the Settlers. Consented to J. Belcher."

On the same day the house "Voted that Major Chandler, Mr. Choate and Mr. Samuel Chandler with such as the Hon:^{ble} Board shall appoint be a Comm:^{tee} to Survey & lay out by a Surveyor & Chain men on Oath the three new Towns in the Western Frontier agreeable to the Vote of the third of July last, viz. One at Paquoiag & two at Ashuelot River and return Plans thereof to this Court in the next May Session.

"In Council; Read and Concurred & the Hon:^{ble} Spencer Phipps Esq. & William Dudley Esq. are joined in the affair. Consented to J. Belcher."

On the 19th of October of the same year the following preamble and vote were passed:

"IN the House of Represent.^{ves} WHEREAS this Court at their Sitting in April last past did appoint a Committee to survey & lay out three Townships in the Western Frontiers, agreeably to the Vote of the third of July preceding, one at Paquoiag & two at Ashuelot River, and return Plats to this Court at the then next May Session, which service has not yet been performed & the greater Part of the Committee being Members of the General Assembly—wherein their attendance is necessary, and the House being certified that there are great numbers of Persons desirous to settle themselves in said Townships in the next Spring of the year, which cannot be unless there be a speedy Survey thereof:

“Therefore Voted that Joseph Kellog and Timothy Dwight Esq.^r and Capt. William Chandler (or any two of them) be a Committee for that Purpose, and that they be directed forthwith to repair to those Lands, and with Chainmen on Oath to lay out a Township at Paquoiaig and two Townships at Ashuelot agreeable to the said Vote of the third of July 1732, unless they find that by reason of the laying out of the Township granted to Coll.^o Willard¹ and others the Land remaining at Ashuelot River will not well serve for two Townships, that then they lay out only one Township on Ashuelot, and that they return Plats thereof to this Court at the present Sitting.

“In Council Read & Concurred—

Consented to J. Belcher.”

(Massachusetts Archives.)

On the 6th of November following:

“IN the House of Represent.^{ves} Ordered that Mr. Israel Williams² and Mr. Samuel Chandler with such as the Hono[']ble Board shall appoint be a Comm:^{tee} to admit such person as they shall think proper to bring forward the Settlement of the new Towns lately granted at Ashuelot and Paquoiaig, who shall be subjected to the Conditions made in the said grant pass'd this Court in the May Session 1732, that the Committee make Report of their doings as soon as may be.—

“In Council Read & Concurred & Eben.^r Burrill Esq^{'r} is joined in y^e affair.—

Consented to, J. Belcher.”

On the 21st of February, 1734, a return was made by the committee of “A Plat of two Townships, each of the contents of six miles square & laid out by William Chandler and Nath[']l Dwight³ by Order of this Court situated on each side of Ashuelot River above the Tract of Land lately granted to Coll Josiah Willard—and others; beginning at a Spruce or White Pine Tree standing about midway between the South and East Branches of said Ashuelot River, about five perch East of the Bank of the

Main River marked West thus  and East with three chops with an ax, and from thence running each way as described in the Plat. (See note, page 23.)

¹ Earlington, afterwards called Arlington, (Winchester) had been granted to Col. Josiah Willard and others, April 6, 1733.

² Israel Williams was of Hatfield,—son of Rev. William Williams—graduated at Harvard 1729—afterwards judge of provincial court.

³ Nathaniel Dwight was the surveyor who laid out the land and made the plat. Timothy Dwight was one of the committee, but evidently did not come to Upper Ashuelot at that time.

“In the House of Represent.^{ves} Read and Ordered that the Plat be and hereby is accepted; and the Lands in the said two Townships are declared to ly in and be accounted as Part of the County of Hampshire hence-forward.

“In Council; Read and Concurred;—Consented to; J. Belcher.”

(Massachusetts Archives.)

On March 1, 1734: “In the House of Represent.^{ves} Oredered that Coll. Chandler Coll. Church & Major Daniel Esq.^{rs}, & M.^r John Hobson with such as the Hon.^{ble} Board shall join be added to the Committee appointed in Novem.^{er} last to admit such Persons as the Committee may think proper to bring forward the Settlem.^t of the new Towns at Ashuelot & Paquoiaq, any three of them to be im-powered to lay out either of the said Towns into Home or House lots, and to be laid in as compact & defensible a manner as may be, & that upon the admitting of Settlers the Committee or the Major Part of them meet at a suitable Place for that end, giving publick notice of the time & place of meeting:—

“In Council; Read & Concurred, and William Dudley and William Clark Esq.^{rs} are joined in the affair.—

Consented to J. Belcher.”

(Massachusetts Archives.)

On Monday, June 17, 1734:

“The Report of the Com.^{tee} for laying out the house Lotts in the two Towns on Ashuelot River, June, 1734.

“Pursuant to the order of the Great and General Court we Repaired to Ashuelot where we found in each of the said Towns Respectively That a very large Body of the Land lyes in one entire parcel being Interval Land and other lowlands altogether unsuitable for House Lotts and from the best view and observation that we Respectively were able to make of the value & quality of the Land there, we apprehend it impracticable to lay it out in a defensible manner and to lay out between twenty & forty acres to each house Lot according to the order of the Court and there being (in our humble opinion) no other way in which the House Lotts could be laid out but would Render (at least) many of them far less accommodable to the Intervals and also very Scattering & Remote.

“We Concluded that to lay out Small House lotts lying contiguous and also convenient for the Interval Lands would be more agreeable to the Intention of this Hon.^{ble} Court than either for us to Desist and Return without doing anything or to lay out large Lotts which must have been Extremely Scattering and indefensible and therefore proceeded as follows viz.

"To lay out in the uppermost of the said Ashuelot Townships fifty four Lotts in the most Convenient place for Building on and adjoining to each other each Lott Containing eight acres and that place not accomodating more lotts there, we were obliged to lay out the other nine Lotts about three quarters of a mile Distant from the Fifty four Lotts aforesaid. We also laid out a Street thro' each Division of Land aforesaid four Rods wide.—

(Signed) "Sam^l Chandler Ebenezer Burrill
John Hobson Edw^d Goddard
Charles Church

"In the House of Represent.^s Read and Ordered that this Report be accepted.

"In Council Read and Concurred.—

Consented to J. Belcher."
(Massachusetts Archives.)

"Tuesday }
June 18, 1734 }

"A Plat of the House lotts in the Upper Township on Ashuelot River.

"In the House of Represent.^{vs} Read and Oredered That the House lotts in the Upper Township at Ashuelot as within Delineated and protracted be accepted—

"In Council Read and Concurred.—

Consented to J. Belcher."
(Massachusetts Archives.)

"In the House of Represent.^{vs} June 19, 1734.

"Whereas the Committee that have Layd out the Home Lotts in the two Towns Westward on Ashuelot River and paquoiag have notified all persons that are desirous to take up Lotts on the Terms & Conditions this Court has directed to meet at Concord on Wednesday the Twenty Sixth Instant and it being necessary after such Lotts are drawn that the Grantees be assembled and come in to proper methods for the Settlement of their said Lotts &c.

"Voted that after the Sixty persons for each Township shall have Drawn Lotts and given Bonds and paid their five pounds according to the order of this Court July 1732 that they forthwith assemble at Concord and then and there Choose a moderator a Proprietor's Clerk and agree upon Rules and methods for the fulfillment of their Respective Grants, and for making any further Division and for calling other meetings for the future and any other matters or things for the Speedy Settlement of the said Township.

"Sent up for Concurrence. J. Quincy Speaker.

"In Council June 19th 1734 Read and Concurred

J. Willard Sec^{ry}
Consented to J. Belcher."
(Massachusetts Archives.)

" On the 26th day of June 1734 the General Court Committee met at the house of Mr. Jonathan Ball, Innholder, in Concord, in order to admit proprietors into the upper Township on Ashuelot River. The names of sd Com.^{tee} are as followeth (viz) :

" William Dudley Esq.	Col Charles Church
Ebenezer Burrill Esq.	M.r Samuel Chandler
Daniel Epps Esq.	M.r John Hobson
Edward Goddard Esq.	M.r Israel Williams
John Chandler Esq.	

"On the day abovesaid the said Hon.^{bie} Committee Received as proprietors of the upper Township on Ashuelot River the persons hereafter Named. The Grantees Received their Lots by Draught Numbered as Affixed hereafter to their Names Respectively, Each Grantee paid five pounds money to the said Com.^{tee} upon admittance Except the Minister, Ministry and School Lots.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| "1. Capt. Samuel Sadey. | 33. David Chandler. |
| 2. Jeremiah Hall. | 34. Benjamin Whitney. |
| 3. Samuel Heywood. | 35. Joseph Allen. |
| 4. John Witt. | 36. Nicholas Sprake jr. |
| 5. Joseph Wright. | 37. Abraham Master. |
| 6. Samuel Flood. | 38. Nathan Fairbanks. |
| 7. Solomon Kees. | 39. Nathaniel Rockwood. |
| 8. Jonathan Morton. | 40. John Corbitt. |
| 9. Thomas Weeks. | 41. John Guild. |
| 10. Isaac Power. | 42. Joseph Ellis. |
| 11. William Hoaton. | 43. John Nims. |
| 12. Eleazur Allen. | 44. Jonathan Southwick. |
| 13. Ministers Lot. | 45. Robert Grey. |
| 14. Daniel Haws. | 46. Thomas Abbott. |
| 15. John Hawks. | 47. Josiah Fisher. |
| 16. Philemon Chandler. | 48. Jabez Ward. |
| 17. Robert Moor. | 49. Isaac Tomberlin. |
| 18. Irael How. | 50. Jonas Wilson. |
| 19. William Witt. | 51. Ebenezer Witt. |
| 20. Jonathan Whitney. | 52. Amos Foster. |
| 21. Joseph Hill. | 53. David Harwood. |
| 22. William Puffer. | 54. Edward Twist. |
| 23. Bartholomew Jones. | 55. John Burge. |
| 24. Joseph Priest. | 56. Ebenezer Mason. |
| 25. Jonas Kees. | 57. Daniel Hoar. |
| 26. William Smeed. | 58. Elisha Root. |
| 27. Joseph Hill. | 59. Mark Ferry. |
| 28. School Lot. | 60. Josiah Fisher. |
| 29. Ministry Lot. | 61. Elias Witt. |
| 30. Edward Hall. | 62. Samuel Witt. |
| 31. David Moss. | 63. Stephen Blake." |
| 32. Isaac Heaton. | (Massachusetts Archives.) |

No charter was granted by Massachusetts. The title rested in the acts of the legislature and the compliance with those acts by the payment of five pounds by each grantee, for himself and his heirs, and the fulfillment of all the conditions of the grant. Under that title these sixty-three grantees owned all the land in the township. The house-lots were laid out by the committee of the legislature, to be drawn by lot, and these proprietors and their successors divided the remainder of the land among themselves from time to time, as will be seen by their records.

"At a full meeting of the proprietors of the upper Township on Ashuelot River held at the Dwelling house of M^r Ephraim Jones in Concord (Innholder) on the 27. day of June 1734 the several votes were passed:

"Primus } Capt. Samuel Sady of Medfield was chosen
 } Moderator of said meeting.

"Voted that Samuel Heywood of Concord be proprietors Clerk, was immediately sworn to the faithful discharge of that trust before the Worshipfull Justice Goddard.

"Voted that Capt. Samuel Sadey of Medfield, M^r Daniel Hoar of Concord, Dr. Israel How of Andover, Lieut. Benjamin Whitney of Marlboro, M^r Elisha Root of Deerfield be a Committee to call a meeting of the said proprietors from time to time as need shall require.

"Voted that twenty days warning by posting up in some publick place within the Respective Towns where the proprietors Dwell shall be sufficient warning to call meetings.

"Voted that this meeting be adjourned until the Eighteenth day of September next, to be held at the upper Township on Ashuelot River."

(Massachusetts Archives.)

In the following September, six of the proprietors, Capt. Samuel Sady,¹ Jeremiah Hall, Elisha Root, Nathaniel Rockwood, Josiah Fisher and William Puffer, with Daniel Hoar, Jr., representing his father, and Seth Heaton representing Isaac Heaton, came to the township to hold the meeting adjourned from Concord on the 27th of June to be held here on the 18th of September; and to open up the township for settlement. They must have come by the

¹The Annals of Keene do not mention the name of Capt. Sady as one of this party, but the records state that he was the moderator of the meetings here, both on the 18th and 19th. When the next meeting was held on the township, the following year, the records state that "Capt. Sady not being present Jeremiah Hall was chosen moderator," and if that had been the case at these first meetings no doubt the records would have so stated.

only practicable route at that time—following an old Indian trail, which, for a part of the distance, had become the “Bay Path” from Boston to Agawam (Springfield)—through Concord, Worcester, Brookfield, Belchertown, Hadley, Hatfield, Deerfield and Northfield.

“None of them having previously visited it, [the township] they were accompanied by Deacon Alexander, of Northfield, as a pilot. They did not arrive at the line of the township until late in the evening of the 18th, the day to which the meeting was adjourned; and as soon as their pilot informed them that they had passed it, they opened the meeting,¹ and adjourned to the next day.”

(Annals, page 7.)

The records state that: “At a General meeting of the proprietors of the upper Township on Ashuelot River on the Eighteenth day of September 1734, held on said Township by adjournment from the 27. day of June Last past, Capt Samuel Sadey being Moderator of sd meeting.

“Voted that this meeting be adjourned untill tomorrow at ten of the clock in the forenoon to be on sd Township.”

“At a General meeting of the proprietors of the upper Township on Ashuelot River on the Nineteenth day of September, 1734, on said Township, Held by adjournment from the Eighteenth day of September Currant, Capt Samuel Sadey being moderator of said meeting.

“Voted that Daniel Hoar jun^r be allowed to vote in the Room of his father Daniel Hoar.

“Voted that Seth Heaton be allowed to vote in the Room of Isaac Heaton.

“Propounded Whether mesueres Josiah Fisher of Dedham, Samuel Witt of Marlborough, and John Hawks of Deerfield shall be a committee to Survey the Whole of the Entervail in said Township and to allott out the one half thereof, in order to be Drawn by the proprietors, Said Lots to be Layd out as convenient as they can be to fence in in two General Inclosiers, to acomedate the house Lots Layd out by the General Court Committee (viz) That the 54 house Lots have their Lots Layd out as convenient as they can to acomidate them, and that the 9 house Lots

¹ That was on the “Thompson farm,” on the meadow south of Main street and it has since been known as “Statia”—the first *station* of the proprietors, and of the preceding party of surveyors, of whom, doubtless, Deacon Alexander was one. They made their camp on the east bank of the river, very near the town line, and the blackened roots of the pine stump where tradition says they built their camp fire were still to be seen as recently as 1880. But the “spruce tree” which the surveyors had taken for their starting point, and on which they made their curious hieroglyphic, stood in the line of the township five rods east of the river.

Layd out at a distance from the other house Lots, have their Lots Layd out as convenient as they can to acomodate them and that they have Liberty to Imploy a Surveyor and Decon Elexander of Northfield to assist them therein, this was voted in the affirmetive.

“Voted that the proprietors shall pay the cost of the above said Laying out of said Lots when they Draw them, or that they will do it by the Last day of May next Ensuing.

“Voted that the cost of a Pilot (viz) of Decon Elexander’s press¹ Shewing the propriators Said Township and house Lots shall be paid by the proprietors according to their Interest.

“Voted that mesueres Josiah Fisher, Samuel Witt and John Hawks be a committee to search and find out the best and most convenient way to travil from the upper unto the Lower Township.

“Voted that this meeting be adjourned untill the Last Wednsday of May next at twelve of the clock on said day, to be at the Dwelling house of m^r Ephraim Jones Inn holder in Concord.”

(Proprietors’ Records.)

The committee appointed at this meeting laid out sixty lots of the intervale land that fall, but neglected to lay out the three extra lots as required by the grant.

The Massachusetts legislature again took cognizance of the settlers as follows:

“Friday }
Nov^r 22, 1734 }

“In the House of Represent.^{es} Whereas by the accompt of the Committee of the three Towns to the westward, there Remains three hundred and Sixty Eight pounds nine shillings and Eight pence in their hands to be Disposed of as this Court shall order; Voted That when and as soon as the said Com.^{tee} or any three of them on view or otherwise shall be Certified that forty familys are settled in Each or Either of the said Towns and they have Raised the Frame of a meeting house that the sum of One hundred pounds be paid to each Town or their order and that in the mean time the Hon.^{ble} William Dudley Esq^r y^e Chairman of the Committee be Desired and Impowered to Improve the money by letting it out to Interist for the use of the said Towns Rendering an acc^t thereof when he shall pay the said Three hundred pounds, or any part thereof to Either of the said Towns that shall have forty

¹ Probably “presence.”

familys and shall have Raised a frame of a meeting house as aforesaid; The Remaining sixty Eight pounds nineteen shillings and Eight pence with the Interest money that shall be Received further to be accounted for—

“In Council Read & Concurred—

Consented to J. Belcher.”

(Massachusetts Archives.)

Agreeably to the adjournment of the meeting on the township, Sept. 19, 1734, the proprietors met on the last Wednesday in May, 1735, at the inn of Ephraim Jones in Concord, Capt. Samuel Sady, moderator, and immediately adjourned to the town house.

The report of the committee to lay out the lots of intervale land was accepted with the “amendment” that three blanks to represent the three lots yet to be laid out be put in to be drawn with the sixty lots. As the lots were not all of equal value those of less than the average worth were “qualified” by an additional allotment of two to four acres each. These lots of intervale land, like the house lots, were of eight acres each; and they voted to pay twenty shillings for each lot, into their treasury, when they drew their second division lot. The lots were drawn at this meeting.

It was voted that Josiah Fisher, Ebenezer Alexander and John Hawks, or any two of them, be a committee to lay out the three additional lots, and also the allowances of land to those lots that needed “qualification.”

Capt. Samuel Sady and Lieut. Joseph Hill were chosen a committee “to joyn with such as the Lower Town proprietors shall appoint to search and find out whether the ground will admit of a convenient Road from the two Townships on Ashuelot River Down to the Town of Townshend.”¹

“May 28th, 1735, the accompt of the charge of Laying out of the second Division Lotts in the upper Township on Ashaelot River Exhibited by the committee as followeth:

“Josiah Fisher for sixteen days at twelve shillings pr day£09=12=0
 Samuel Witt fourteen days at twelve shillings pr day.....08=08=0
 John Hawks ten days at twelve shillings pr day.....06=00=0

¹On the 30th of June, 1737, the proprietors “Voted that there be the sum of 27 pounds paid out of the proprietors Treasury to Capt. Samuel Sady for searching and Laying out a Road from this Township down to the Town of Townshend.”

Decon Ebenezer Elexander eight days at twelve shillings pr day 04=16=0
 Nathaniel Kellogg Surveyor thirteen days at fifteen shillings pr
 day and for drink twelve shillings and six pence.....10=07=6
 Thomas Weeks twelve days at ten shillings pr day.....06=00=0
 William Smeed ten days at ten shillings pr day.....05=00=0

on the day abovesaid the proprietors by a } Total 50=03=6
 vote accepted the above accmpts }
 "Attest Samuel Heywood proprietors Clerk."

This meeting adjourned to meet at the township on the second Wednesday of the following September; and all succeeding meetings of the proprietors were held at the township.

Agreeably to adjournment the proprietors met at the township on the 10th day of September, 1735. "Capt Samuel Sady not appearing the said proprietors proceeded to the choice of another in his Room, and upon Examination of the votes for that purpose it appeared that M.^r Jeremiah Hall was chosen Moderator of said meeting;" which then adjourned till the next day.

On the 11th it was "Voted that Daniel Haws jr., Gideon Ellis and Joseph Guild shall be accepted as voters on their fathers Rights." It was also voted to assess the proprietors in the sum of sixty pounds to defray charges, to be paid to the treasurer "by the second Thursday of May next." Jeremiah Hall, Elisha Root and Nathaniel Rockwood were chosen "assessors to make the Rate," and William Puffer, William Hoaton and Seth Heaton "collectors to gather the Rates." Deacon Samuel Heywood of Concord was chosen proprietors' treasurer, and it was "Voted that William Puffer, John Guild and John Corbet be a committee to bill out this money according to the proprietors' direction.

"Voted to adjourn to tomorrow morning at five of the Clock. Jeremiah Hall Moderator."

The adjourned meeting on the 12th "Voted That Elisha Root, Josiah Fisher and Seth Heaton; be a com^{ttee} to Lay out a Road to the sawmill place, and to cleare the same, and to cleare the Road from the house Lots, to the Lower Township and to desire the other Towns (Arlington and Northfield) to clere their Roads to meet the same, and to prosecute any that neglect, and to be paid at the proprietors cost. Jeremiah Hall moderator."

The same meeting voted to "give an Hundred acres

of midling good Land and twenty five pounds of money out of the Treasury with conveniencies, to any man or men that shall appear to build a saw mill in the most convenient place to accomodate the said proprietors, they giving Sufficient Security, to a committee that shall be chosen, that they will have a good saw mill fitt to saw, at or before the first day of July next, and dureing the Term of ten years next after, will keep sd mill in good Repair, and saw bords for the said proprietors for Twenty shillings pr Thousand, And slitwork for three pounds and ten shillings pr Thousand, during the said term of ten years."

In case of neglect to fulfil the contract the privileges of the dam and stream were to be forfeited to the proprietors. The vote also required the same parties "to build a good Grist mill on the said dam within the space of three years and three months, from this time." John Corbet and Elisha Root appeared and gave the required security for the building of the mills, and John Hawks, William Hoaton and Seth Heaton were chosen "a committee to Lay out said Land." The meeting then "adjourned to the second Thursday of May next to meet at the House Lott of Joseph Fisher.

(Signed) Jeremiah Hall, Moderator."

The minutes of the survey of those one hundred acres, in three lots, may be found in the Proprietors' Records, page 13, signed by Josiah Willard, surveyor; and those first mills were built on what is now the middle one of the three dams on Beaver brook, near upper Washington street.

Thursday, May 13, 1736, the proprietors met according to adjournment at the house lot of Joseph Fisher—Jeremiah Hall, standing moderator—and immediately adjourned to meet at 6 o'clock the next morning.

On the 14th the meeting voted to make another "Division of meadow Land of ten acres Layd out to Each Right by a Skilfull Surveyor, according to the judgment of a committee of three meete persons who shall be chosen and Impowered by the Proprietors to Lay out the said Division according to the following Directions (viz) that they proportion Each Lott in quallety by considering the Qualities of Each mans former Divisions to make Each mans Right in all former Divisions alike in Quallety; coupling Each Lott, by saying which Lott Belongeth to Every peticuler Right or house Lott."

Each proprietor was to pay the charges for surveying

his ten acres, and if any neglected or refused to pay within the next three months, their lots were to be "consecrated" to the use of those who did pay.

Capt. Samuel Sady, Elisha Root and Seth Heaton were chosen a committee to make this distribution, and Seth Heaton was authorized to receive the money and pay the charges of the survey. The meeting adjourned to meet at the same place on the last Thursday of September.

It was at this time that the first permanent settlement of the town was made.

How many of the proprietors came that spring is not known, but Jeremiah Hall, Capt. Samuel Sady, Elisha Root, Seth Heaton, and John Corbet were present at the meeting, according to the records, and there are indications that there were several others in the party. It was during this summer of 1736 that Nathan Blake put up his log house, on the lot which is still the homestead of his descendants in the direct line, at what is now the corner of Main and Winchester streets. There is little doubt that this was the first house erected in town, but it is probable that others were built during the same summer; for, by the records of the meeting in the fall, Josiah Fisher, Joseph Fisher, William Smeed, Joseph Richardson, Nathan Fairbanks, Samuel Daniels, Nathaniel Rockwood and Stephen Blake—and it is likely there were others—had spent the summer at the township, preparing for settlement; and the saw mill had been built and completed, ready for use. A large number of settlers arrived the next spring, and it is altogether probable that houses—log cabins—had been prepared for them.

But only three of that party were prepared to spend the winter here. The others all returned to their former homes, as in the two previous years.

At that time the "Upper Township on Ashuelot River," as it was then called, was the extreme northern point of the frontier settlements in the valley of the Connecticut. On the south, Agawam (Springfield), had been settled for one hundred years, and ground had been broken at Northampton in 1654, and at Hadley and Hatfield soon afterwards. Pocumtuck (Deerfield), settled in 1670, and

then including Greenfield, Conway and parts of other towns, was a village of several hundred inhabitants. Squawkheag (Northfield), covering both sides of the Connecticut river and including Vernon, Hinsdale, and parts of Winchester and other towns, had been settled in 1673; Hinsdale as a part of Northfield, lying on both sides of the Connecticut and afterward called Fort Dummer, had been settled by Rev. and Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale in 1683. A few log cabins were put up at Earlington about the same time with those first built here; and the settlement of Lower Ashuelot was made at the same time as that of the upper township.

To the east there were settlements at Penacook, Con-toocook (Boscawen and Franklin), Canterbury, Suncook, Bow, Amherst, Dunstable, and the older places further east. New Hampshire had a population of about 12,000 at that time, but it was all in the eastern part of the province.

To protect her western frontier against the Indians, whose incursions were usually made from the west, or from Canada by following down the Connecticut river, Massachusetts had established a line of forts along the valley of that river, at Springfield, Northampton, Hadley, Deerfield, Northfield and Fort Dummer, manned them with a few troops, kept up communication with them, and maintained them partly at least at the expense of the province. In most cases, those fortifications—some of which were mere block houses—had been built by the pioneers themselves for their own protection, and afterward enlarged and equipped at the public expense. But the line was weak from the long distances between the posts and the small number of troops employed; and to the north and northwest of Upper Ashuelot there were no settlements and no protection whatever.

The country was a wilderness, covered with dense forests through which no roads had yet been opened. Roving bands of Indians prowled those forests for game, or threaded them in single file, on habitual trails, to and from their more permanent abodes. For many years but few Indians had lived in this immediate vicinity, and never since the landing of the Pilgrims had this region been

occupied by them in any large numbers. Dr. Trumbull computes the whole number of savages in New England to have been at one time 123,000, but in the winter of 1616-17 a virulent disease swept away, as was believed, more than one-half the whole number; so that soon after the landing of the Pilgrims it was estimated that not more than 12,000 warriors could be mustered in all New England. This would indicate a population of about 50,000 Indians at that time.

The Schaghticoke tribe had lived in this region about Grand Monadnock, but removed to the Hudson river before the arrival of the whites, and but little is known of them. More definite information has been preserved concerning the Squawkheags. They had been nearly destroyed by the Mohawks, and probably came as fugitives to the Ashuelot country, which had been abandoned by the Schaghticoques. They occupied the country along the Connecticut river and its branches from Greenfield to Brattleboro and above, extending about ten miles to the west, and as far east as the head waters of Miller's river and those of the Ashuelot. On this territory, rich in fish and game, they lived for several generations, cultivated the meadows in their rude way, and raised corn, which they preserved for use in winter, and sometimes sold to the early settlers of the towns below. They claimed all the territory of northern New Hampshire and Vermont; but it is not known that they sold lands, as was done by some other tribes, except in a very few instances. They did give a deed to William Clark and John King, agents of the original proprietors of Squawkheag, granting the tract for that township, six miles wide on each side of Connecticut river, dated August 13, 1687, and signed by Nawelet, chief of the Squawkheags, and by four subordinate chiefs of the same tribe—Gongequa, Aspiambemet, Hada-rawansett, and Meganichcha. No other deed of that tribe is known to have been preserved; and this deed was given after the tribe had been nearly destroyed and most of the remnant had abandoned their country. They were reputed to be relatives of the Pennacooks and in close alliance with them after King Philip's war in 1675.

At one time during that war the Squawkheag country was the rendezvous for Philip's forces; and his warriors assembled here to the number of more than 3,000. Here he held his court, surrounded by many powerful chiefs and notable squaws. Among them were a sister of Philip, a princess of the Wampanoags; the wise and wary Awashauks, the powerful squaw sachem of Sogkonate, with all her braves, led by Peter Awashauks, her son and chief captain; and the unfortunate queen Weetamoo, the widow of Wamsutta, the elder brother and predecessor of Philip.

To the north and east the Coös tribe occupied what is now Coös and the upper part of Grafton counties; the Winnepesaukees lived on the shores of the great lake; the Ossipees on the smaller ones beyond; and the Pennacooks and the Amoskeags were in the Merrimac valley, their chief places being Pennacook and Amoskeag (Manchester).

The Pennacooks, at that time, were the most powerful tribe in all that region, and their great chief, Passaconaway, had been a staunch friend of the whites. The Pawtuckets were below, and these three tribes, the Pawtuckets, Amoskeags and Pennacooks, with some others, formed at one time a confederacy under the general name of Pawtuckets, or the Pawtucket Confederacy, with Passaconaway for their chief. His son, and successor as chief of his tribe, Wonalanset, adopted the friendly policy of his father, and, when King Philip's war broke out in 1675, he withdrew his people farther north to avoid joining the other tribes against the whites. The Nashuas occupied the valley lower down and along Nashua river, and there were other small tribes in eastern Massachusetts.

To the east, and in Canada, was the large and powerful family of the Abenakis, one of whose tribes gave its name to the Penobscot river, and another to the Androscoggin. It was the Penobscot chief Bashaba of whom Whittier wrote his "Bashaba's Feast." Those eastern tribes sometimes invaded this region, and they gave the name Gonitigow (Long river) to the Quinnehtuck or Quinnetticut of the Pocumtucks—the Connecticut—but they never remained here for any long time.

The Massachusetts, or Wampanoags, were in the south-

eastern part of the province of Massachusetts Bay, and their great chief, Massasoit, had also been a firm friend of the whites; and, for a long time (54 years) while he lived, there was peace. He was succeeded by Wamsutta, and he by his brother, Pometacan, called by the English King Philip, who intrigued against the white faces, formed a confederacy to destroy them, and roused the savages all over New England. He was slain in 1675, when his short but celebrated and disastrous war ended.

The Narragansetts were in Rhode Island, and the Pequots in Connecticut, with the Mohegans, an offshoot of the same tribe, to the north of them, extending from the Hudson to the Connecticut river. The Mohegans frequently roamed through this region, and might almost be said to have lived here at times.

The Mohicans—a tribe wholly distinct from the Mohegans—were on the Hudson river below Albany; and the Agawams were about Springfield.

At the same time that the Squawkheags were on the Ashuelot, the Pocumtucks were on Deerfield river and on both sides of the Connecticut, with their principal village at Deerfield; and the Nipmucks east of them, in central Massachusetts, about Brookfield and Worcester. In King Philip's war the Nipmucks joined his confederacy and fought the whites, although previous to that time they had been friendly. All these smaller tribes in New England belonged to the great family of Algonquins, which ranged from the St. Lawrence river to the Carolinas; and they all spoke the same language.

To the westward were the Mohawks, one of the Five Nations of the Iroquois family, the most powerful and warlike tribe then known. They occupied the Mohawk valley and all the adjacent country. So fierce and savage were they that the smaller tribes stood in abject fear of them and called them "Man Eaters;" and the whites learned to dread them more than any other tribe.

When the pioneers from Dedham explored the Connecticut valley in 1668, and purchased their land with a view to the settlement of Deerfield, they found the Pocumtucks more intelligent and civilized than most of the other tribes.

They recognized many of the rights of women, and understood perfectly the nature of the contracts they made and the effect of the deeds by which they conveyed their lands to the whites; but they did not understand the value of those lands, or that of the trinkets they received in payment. Some of those deeds were given by squaws who held their lands by inheritance from their ancestors. A few years previous to that time this tribe numbered about 5,000. They formed a confederacy with the Nipmucks and Squawkheags, and became so powerful and arrogant as to defy even the Mohawks. When the latter sent an ambassador, with presents, to make peace with them, they murdered him and his suite in cold blood. The Mohawks in revenge attacked and destroyed them; and then turned north and punished their allies, the Squawkheags, whom they had once before nearly destroyed.

The Mohawks then swept across Cheshire county to the Merrimac valley, and the Pennacooks, the Amosheags and the Abenakis—particularly the Pennacooks—felt the fury of their vengeance in retaliation of former defeats, and were severely punished. The Mohawks approached the river cautiously, encamped on the west bank, opposite the Pennacooks, and watched their prey, who had gathered their corn and withdrawn into their fortifications on the east side. After some maneuvering, the Pennacooks were decoyed from their fort and a terrible fight ensued, in which that tribe was nearly destroyed. The Mohawks then recrossed this region and returned to their own country; and this part of New England was almost wholly forsaken by the savages, except for an occasional hunting excursion. The hostile incursions made later were chiefly by those residing in Canada.

So thoroughly had the Mohawks done their work of destruction in the Connecticut valley, that when the pioneers from Dedham laid out their grant at Deerfield in 1670 there was apparently not a wigwam standing in all that region of desolation; and after the defeat and death of King Philip western Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire were almost entirely destitute of Indian inhabitants.

The remnant of the Pocumtucks went west and joined the Schaghticokes, who had formerly been their neighbors. The few that were left of the Squawkheags remained for a short time and partly rebuilt some of their villages, but they finally went north, at one time acting with the Penacooks, at other times with the St. Francis tribe in Canada, whom they undoubtedly led back to their familiar grounds in subsequent raids in the Connecticut valley. They continued to claim title to their lands as late as 1721-3, and came back at times to hunt and fish, as well as for worse purposes in later years. The Schaghticokes and Pocumtucks also joined the St. Francis Indians in raids on the inhabitants of their former dwelling place.

One of those raids had been made in King Philip's war; in September 1675, when seventy young men—detached troops—"the flower of Essex county," were waylaid and slain at "Bloody Brook," where now stands the village of South Deerfield. Another was made in "Queen Anne's war," in 1704. Deerfield then had 200 to 300 inhabitants and was the most northerly settlement in the Connecticut valley. In the dead of a snowy winter Vaudreuil, the French governor of Canada, sent a force of about 300 French and Indians under Hertel de Rouville. Provided with snowshoes, they came up Lake Champlain to Onion river, followed up that stream, crossed the divide, thence down Wells river to the Connecticut, and on the ice of that river to Deerfield, and took that town completely by surprise. Just before daybreak on the 29th of February, with their blood-curdling war whoop, the savages burst into the fort. Forty-seven of the citizens were slain and 112 captured, about twenty of whom died or were murdered on the way to Canada. Among the captives were the Rev. John Williams, his wife and several children. His wife and two of his children were murdered before his eyes.

Such was the terrors of frontier life in this valley of the Connecticut in the early days. That valley had also suffered from raids in the war of 1722, as well as the eastern parts of both provinces; and, to give better protection to the western frontier, the general court of Massachusetts, in December, 1723, voted to build a blockhouse on the

Connecticut river, and man it with forty men, who were not only to hold the fort but were to scout the country to the west and above Grand Monadnock. Col. John Stoddard of Northampton commanded on the frontier, and, under his direction, early in 1724, Lieut. Timothy Dwight with a squad of soldiers and four carpenters built Fort Dummer—named in honor of Lieut. Gov. William Dummer, then acting governor of the province. It stood in what is now Brattleboro—at that time a part of Northfield, afterwards named Hinsdale—on the west bank of Connecticut river, in a narrow gorge between the hills, about one mile below the present bridge leading to Hinsdale. The river was fordable a short distance below the fort.

A brief description of the fort is given for the reason that, at the time when Upper and Lower Ashuelots were settled, it was the nearest place of refuge from the Indians, on the only practicable route of communication between those townships and the other settlements on the frontier, and even with Boston and other eastern towns; for that route followed the rivers to Northfield, Deerfield and beyond;¹ and it was for many years the principal military post for the protection of all this part of the country. The fort was of logs, nearly square, about 120x120 feet, with strong bastions, or blockhouses, at the corners for mounting cannon, and were so constructed as to be defensible on the inside in case the enemy got inside the fort. Officers' quarters, two stories high, were built inside in connection with the walls, and made defensible like the bastions. There was also a strong log-building near the centre of the "parade ground" inside the fort, called the "citadel," designed as the last resort of the besieged in case of overpowering numbers. The whole was surrounded with a stockade and armed with four swivels and one large gun which was used chiefly to sound an alarm to the other posts when threatened by the enemy.

Soon after the fort was completed, a scouting party of six men was attacked by the Indians; two were killed,

¹ Even later, after the forts numbered 1 to 4 had been built, at what are now Chesterfield, Westmoreland, Walpole and Charlestown, and in the "Old French and Indian war" of 1745, the route between those posts and these townships was by the way of Fort Dummer, following the rivers.

three captured and one escaped. In October following, the fort was attacked by about seventy Indians, but Capt. Dwight then had fifty-five men, and he repulsed them, with the loss of four or five of his men killed and wounded.

In time of peace, about 1730, the fort was used as a trading station with the Indians, and as a missionary post. Houses were built for the accommodation of the red men and many went there to trade. A Capt. Kellogg was then in command, and six Indian chiefs held commissions—from that of colonel down to lieutenant—and drew pay from the province of Massachusetts. When those pioneers broke ground here, in the spring of 1736, there had been peace in the Connecticut valley for ten years, and for eight years afterward they were not disturbed by hostile Indians.

On the 30th of September, 1736, before leaving for their homes in the lower towns, the proprietors met according to adjournment on the house lot of Joseph Fisher, "Jeremiah Hall standing moderator," but immediately adjourned to the house of Nathan Blake.

"Voted that Nathan Fairbanks be scribe to write the votes of this meeting." They then adjourned, to meet the next morning at 8 o'clock.

On Oct. 1, the committee chosen at the May meeting to make a third division of (meadow) land not having completed its work, Jeremiah Hall, William Smeed and Nathan Blake were added, and the committee was instructed to complete the division forthwith. Three of the members were to remain here through a part of the winter and could attend to that duty.

Nathan Blake, Seth Heaton and Stephen Blake were chosen a committee authorized "to agree with a man to build a Grist mill within the said Township where it may be most beneficial for the said proprietors, and not to Exceed forty pounds Encouragement therefor, and to take and give Sufficient bonds for the fullfilment of the same, and to have it built and compleated within one full year from this day."

It was also "Voted that they will build a meeting house at the upper Township on Ashuelot so called forty feet Long twenty feet Stud and thirty and five feet wide, to underpinn cover and Inclose the same and Lay down

bords for the Lower floor and to set the same at the south End of the Town street at the place appointed by the General Court Committee,¹ and that meseiurs Jerimiah Hall, Samuel Daniels, Joseph Richardson, Stephen Blake, and Josiah Fisher be a committee to build or Let out the same, and to see that sd work be compleatly performed by the twenty sixth day of June next."

They also voted to make another division of thirty acres of "upland" to each proprietor, to be surveyed that fall, the lots to be drawn on the 23d of November. Jerimiah Hall was "appointed to keep a Record of the said Lotts, and the respective choyces in order to their being Recorded in the s^d propriators Book of Records, And that meseiurs Samuel Sady, Jerimiah Hall, Seth Heaton, Nathan Blake and William Smeed, be a committee to Lay out the said Devision." Those lots were surveyed by Josiah Willard, founder of the town of Winchester.

"One Hundred and four-score pounds" were assessed on the proprietors to defray public charges.

Jeremiah Hall, Nathaniel Rockwood and Joseph Richardson were chosen assessors, and Josiah Fisher, Jr., and William Smeed, collectors.

"Voted That Nathan Fairbanks is appointed to act for and in behalf of the three publick Lotts."

The following vote was also passed:

"Forasmuch as the Town Street is judged to be to narrow Conveniently to accomidate the Proprietors, Voted, That Every Propriator whose Lotts Ly on the west side of said street, that will Leave out of his Lott at the front or next adjoyning to sd Street four Rods in depth the whole bredth of their Respective Lotts to accomidate the sd street Shall have it made up in quantity in the Rear or other End of their Lotts."

The proposition was accepted by all the owners of lots on the west side, and to this act of those early proprietors Keene is "indebted for its broad and elegant Main street."

"Voted That this meeting be adjourned untill the second Thursday of May next at three of the clock in the afternoon to be Holden at the meeting house place in the upper Township on Ashuelot River.

Jerimiah Hall Moderator."

¹ Where Blissha F. Lane's house now stands. The first burying place was a little to the southwest of Mr. Lane's barn.

"No person had hitherto attempted to remain through the winter on the township. Those who came in the summer to clear their lands, brought their provisions with them, and erected temporary huts for shelter. In the summer of 1736, at least one house was erected; and three persons, Nathan Blake, Seth Heaton and William Smeed, the two first from Wrentham and the last from Deerfield, made preparations to pass the winter in the wilderness. Their house was at the south end of the street.¹ Blake had a pair of oxen and a horse, and Heaton a horse. For the support of these, they collected grass in the open spots; and in the first part of the winter, they employed them in drawing logs to the saw-mill, which had just been completed. Blake's horse fell through the ice of Beaver Brook and was drowned. In the beginning of February, their own provisions were exhausted, and to obtain a supply of meal, Heaton was dispatched to Northfield. There were a few families at Winchester, but none able to furnish what was wanted. Heaton procured a quantity of meal; but before he left Northfield, the snow began to fall, and when, on his return, he arrived at Winchester, it was uncommonly deep, and covered with a sharp crust. He was told 'that he might as well expect to die in Northfield and rise again in Upper Ashuelot, as ride thither on horseback.' Remembering the friends he had left there, he nevertheless determined to make the attempt, but had proceeded but a short distance when he found that it would be impossible to succeed. He then returned, and directed his course toward Wrentham. Blake and Smeed, hearing nothing from Heaton, gave the oxen free access to the hay, left Ashuelot, and on snow shoes proceeded either to Deerfield or Wrentham. Anxious for their oxen, they returned early in the spring. They found them near the branch, southeast of Carpenter's [Robinson's]² much emaciated, feeding upon twigs and such grass as was bare. The oxen recognized their owner, and exhibited such pleasure at the meeting as drew tears from his eyes."

(Annals, page 9.)

In the spring of 1737 a large party of the proprietors came to the township with their families for permanent settlement. Some of their names are already familiar, others will appear in the records of the meetings held soon after their arrival, and there must have been at least forty

¹The house in which those three men attempted to pass that winter was the log cabin of Seth Heaton, on the west side of what is now the Marlboro road, south of Mr. Cole's, and the oxen were found in the spring, near the branch, southwest of the cabin. (Tradition in the Heaton family, handed down from Seth Heaton.)

²Now Elisha F. Lane's.

proprietors in all, as will be seen by the records of the meeting of the 20th of May. They came by the route already indicated,—via Brookfield, Hadley, Deerfield, Northfield and Hinsdale, bringing a small number of cattle, horses, fowls and other domestic animals. Their provisions and a few articles for housekeeping were packed on horses, or on “horse-barrows,” made by attaching a pole to each side of the saddle, the butt-ends dragging on the ground, fastened at a proper distance apart. On these could be lashed barrels and other articles behind the horse. The last twenty miles of the route were marked simply by “blazed” trees. It was more than fifty years after this time that the roads were sufficient for the introduction of anything lighter than ox-carts for vehicles.

They came in time for the adjourned meeting of the proprietors, to be held on Thursday, the 12th of May, at the meetinghouse place, Jeremiah Hall, moderator. At that meeting it was:

“Voted that Philemon Chandler be the scribe or penman to set down the votes that shall be passed at this meeting.

“Voted that all persons that have Purchased Rites in sd Township shall have the Liberty to vote and act in said meeting.

“Voted that the charge brought in for Laying out the Thirty acre Division be allowed as followeth (viz)

	£	s	d
“To Capt. Josiah Willard surveyor for twenty five Days twenty pounds.....	20	00	00
To Jeremiah Hall for twenty days ten pounds.....	10	00	00
To Seth Heaton for twelve days six pounds.....	6	00	00
To William Smeed for twelve days six pounds.....	6	00	00
To Nathan Blake for eight days four pounds.....	4	00	00
To Stephen Blake for half a day three shillings & sixpence.....	00	03	06
To Aaron Brooks for five days thirty shillings.....	01	10	00
To Edward Dale for four days twenty four shillings.....	01	04	00
To Moses Chamberlin for two days twelve shillings.....	00	12	00
For the surveyors Diet nineteen shillings & sixpence.....	00	19	06
To Nathan Blake for a journey to Concord fifteen shillings.....	00	15	00

Total £ 50-04-00

“Voted to Assess the sum of sixty Pounds on the proprietors of the House Lotts in said Township to Hire a Gospel minister and that the same be collected and paid into the Treasury at or before the first Day of August next.

“Voted and chose Jerimiah Hall Nathan Blake and Daniel Haws Assessors to assess the sd sixty pounds.

“Voted and chosen Ebenezer Nims collector to collect the said Sixty pounds and pay it in to the Treasury according to y^e vote above.

“Voted and chosen Jerimiah Hall David Farnsworth & John Thompson a committee to agree with some meet person to preach the Gospel amongst them at y^e Upper Ashuelott.

“Voted That Jerimiah Hall shall be allowed the sum of Eight pounds four shillings and one penev for money he Expended, and four pounds & ten shillings for his time in waiting on the General Court.

“Voted to adjourn the meeting until the nineteenth day of May currant, to be at the meeting house place in sd Township at one of the clock in the after-noon.

Jerimiah Hall Moderator.”

The meeting of the 19th, after passing a vote and choosing a committee to rectify the boundary lines between some of the lots, adjourned to meet at the same place the next morning at six o'clock.

The meeting of the 20th was opened at the time and place of adjournment, but:

“Voted that the meeting be Removed down upon the Enterval for better conveniances there,¹ to be held Immediately.”

After some votes had been passed in relation to the last division of land:

“Voted that Mes^{rs} Philemon Chandler and David Farnsworth be chosen and Impoured to Represent this propriety in applying for and Receiving of the Honorable the General Court Committee for this Township the money Granted to Sd propriators when they shall have the frame of a meeting house Raised and forty Propriators settled on the spot, and that they Return the same into the Propriators Treasury.”

This vote shows that there must have been not less than forty proprietors residing in the town at that time, and that they had, or were about to have, the frame of a meetinghouse raised.

“Voted and chosen for surveyors to mend the Highways Nathan Blake and Seth Heaton and that they be allowed Eight shillings per day.

¹One can easily surmise that a cold wind was blowing that morning which drove them to shelter under the bluff.

"Voted to Assess the sum of one Hundred and fifty pounds on the Propriators of the house Lotts in the said Township."

Jeremiah Hall, Nathan Blake and Daniel Haws were chosen assessors, and Ebenezer Nims, collector: "And forasmuch as the propriators Treasurer Lives at a Great distance from sd Township

"Voted That Jerimiah Hall shall be the Propriators Treasurer, and that he be Imediatly Sworn to the faithful Discharge of the Dutys of that office and trust."

This meeting adjourned to the 30th of June at the "meeting house place."

On that day the propriators met "at the meeting house frame," and:

"Voted that there be the sum of twenty seven pounds payd out of sd propriators Treasury, to Cap^t Samuel Sady for searching and Laying out a Road from this Township down to the Town of Townshend Employed by the said propriators so to do."

"Seth Heaton and Josiah Fisher now Resident, and Samuel Heywood a non-Resident" were added to the committee to apply to the general court committee for the £100 due the propriators when forty propriators were settled in the township and the frame of a meetinghouse had been raised.

At that meeting it was provided that thereafter meetings of the propriators should be called upon the application in writing to the clerk of five or more propriators, setting forth the business desired to be acted upon; the clerk thereupon posting his notice of the meeting, at the meetinghouse, fourteen days prior thereto. In case of the absence of the clerk, or his refusal to act, application might be made in the same way to any justice of the county, and his notice posted in the same way should be sufficient warning of the meeting.

It was also voted that "no meeting of the sd Propriators for the future shall be held but at this Township so Long as there shall be seven propriators Inhabiting here."

Some doubts having arisen as to the legality of the acts of the propriators up to this time this meeting was "Dismissed."

So grave were those doubts that on the 8th of the previous December, Elisha Root, Isaac Power, John Corbett

and other proprietors had petitioned the general court of Massachusetts to have the legality of those acts confirmed and established. That petition was referred to a committee which reported on the 16th of December, and the following order was made:

"Thursday }
Dec^r 16, 1736 }

"A petition of Elisha Root and others proprietors of the Upper Township on Ashuelot River, Showing (etc.)

* * * * *

"In Council Read and forasmuch as the pet.^{rs} are already Sufficiently Impowered by this Court for the purposes within mentioned—Ordered that this petition be Dismissed—In House of Representat.^{cs}

"Read & Concurred.—

Consented to J. Belcher."

Soon after the meeting of the 30th of June, Jeremiah Hall, William Smeed, Stephen Blake, Amos Foster and Josiah Fisher petitioned Ebenezer Pomeroy of Northampton, "One of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace" to call a meeting of the proprietors: "To Confirm and Establish all Grants and Divisions of Land agreed upon and Granted by the proprietors, at their meetings," and votes passed, assessments made, committees appointed and acts done at all their former meetings; and "To come into some method to Hinder people selling any timber out of Town, or needlessly destroying of it in Town."

On the 6th of July, Justice Pomeroy, under the heading: "Hampshire ss." issued his warrant "in His Majesty's Name" for a meeting to be held at the meeting house on the 25th of the same month, reciting the objects as set forth in the petition. The meeting was held as called, and Jonas Woolson was chosen moderator and David Nims, scribe; and votes were passed confirming all that had been done at previous meetings. The article concerning timber was passed over.

On the 10th of October, upon a petition of nine of the proprietors, Thomas Wells of Deerfield, a justice of the peace for Hampshire county, issued his warrant "in His Majesty's Name" for a meeting of the proprietors to be held at the meetinghouse in Upper Ashuelot on the 26th



DAVID NIMS.

of the same month. The meeting was held and Jeremiah Hall was chosen moderator and David Nims, scribe. Votes were passed and committees chosen to rectify some inequalities in former divisions of lots. The meeting then adjourned to the house of Jeremiah Hall and immediately proceeded with the business.

“Voted That the Lott number Nine In the second Division of medow Land be taken out and be Recorded to the ministers Right before the Rest be Drawn.

“Voted That any man that doth not Like his Lott In the ten acre Division of medow Land, shall have Liberty to deface the Lines, and to Lay it out in any other place, By a surveyor and com^{ttee} on his own cost and charge, And Return a plan thereof to the clerk attested by said committee.

“Voted That the worthy m^r Jacob Bacon should Draw the Lotts for the second division of medow Land for the whole Propriety who accepted and Drew as followeth (viz).” (The list of names of the proprietors follows, with the number drawn for each.)

“Voted To Lay out one Hundred acres of upland to Each House Lott or Rite in the following method (viz) to Draw Lotts for choyce, and he who draws the first Lott shall make his choyce or Pitch on the first day of March next if it be not Sabbath Day, and if it be to make it on y^e second day of March, and he who Draws the second Lott the next working day, and he who draws the third y^e next and so on giveing every man his Day, according to his Draught from the first of March next untill they shall go through Sabath Days Excepted.

“Voted That William Smeed pitch or choose y^e Hundred acres belonging to the three publick Rights (viz) the ministers Ministrey and School and Employ a committee to Lay out the same at the proprietors cost and charge.

“Voted That Nathan Blake Jerimiah Hall Ebenezer Force Daniel Haws William Smeed Joseph Ellis Ebenezer Nyms Seth Heaton Thomas Weeks Isaac Clark Josiah Fisher be a committee to Lay out said Division”—any three of them being sufficient to act.

“Voted That the worthy m^r Jacob Bacon Draw y^e Lotts for the whole propriety who accepted and Drew as follows (viz):” (Another list of names and numbers then follows.)

The meeting then adjourned to the next day when it:

“Voted That the Com^{ttee} appointed to Lay out the Hundred acre Division shall proceed in the following method

(viz) to Lay out the Lotts in good shape and forme and not Leve small slips of Land Between Lot and Lot, and that they Leave Land for Roads where they shall Judge it to be needfull and if any man shall not Lay out his Lot on his day, nor bring in his pitch or choice In writing to Nathan Blake by the Day then he shall not Lay out his Lot untill the time be Expired for Laying out of Each mans Draught or pitch In said Hundred acre Division, and that they Lay out no mans Lot or choice In more than one piece, and If any man shall not Lay out his Lot within six days after he made his pitch then it shall not be Layd out to hinder any other man of the pitch.

“Voted That William Smeed Seth Heaton Ebenezer Force be a committee to Renew the south-east and North Lines of this Township, and Imploy a surveyor to Run the west Line.

“Voted That m^r Jerimiah Hall make application to the Court for a quicker way for gathering In the money, that hath or may be Granted by this Propriety to defrey necessary Charges.”

(Signed) “David Nymys scribe
Attest Jerimiah Hall moderator.”

“Each lot was surveyed by a committee, in such place and in such shape as the proprietor drawing it directed. Some of the plans recorded in the proprietors’ records exhibit figures which Euclid never imagined, and probably could not measure. Common land was left in every part of the township, in pieces of all sizes and shapes. In this manner, great confusion in lines was introduced, by which the owners of real estate are yet perplexed and embarrassed.

“The first pitch under the vote before mentioned, was made by a Mr. Morse, the fortunate drawer of the right to choose first. Attention was first attracted to it by finding a certified copy of the laying out among the papers of the late Noah Cooke, Esq., which was obligingly communicated to the compiler by his son, Josiah P. Cooke, Esq., of Boston. In this copy, the pitch is thus described:—Beginning at a stake on the the West side of the road, marked for the N. E. corner, (which is near the junction of Washington and Cross streets,) then runs W. 108 rods—then S. 16° W. 120 rods—then S. 11° W. 38 rods, for the S. W. corner—then E. 53 rods—then E. 30° N. 32 rods—then E. 27 rods to the road (Main street) at the causeway—then N. 6 rods to a stake on the West side of the road—then E. 42½ rods to the S. E. corner—then N. 3° W. 44 rods—then W. 10° N. 16 rods—then N. 10° E. 40 rods—then W. 10° N. 8 rods—then N. 10° E. 40 rods to where it began. A memorandum on the copy, in the

handwriting of the deceased Mr. Cooke, states that the southwest corner of the pitch is 'the south-west corner of my house-lot.' Starting from that point, the lines have been run, by Mr. Sturtevant, and are shown by the dotted lines on the map at the end of the book. [See map of 1850.] It will be seen that they enclose what is now the most compact part of the village. These boundaries cannot be far from correct. That the South line crosses the present Main street before it turns and 'runs North 6 rods,' raises a doubt whether the starting point is the true S. W. corner of the pitch, or should be farther West; but other circumstances, and especially the fact, that the West line runs along the edge of the upland, tend to remove this doubt. And it is not at all improbable, indeed the survey may be assumed to prove, that the road 'to go to the saw-mill' then turned to the right, at the North line of the houseslots, and, taking a straight course to the saw-mill, passed East of where the street now goes, until it came near the site of the glass factory, and that it was afterwards altered. The land is described as 'lying on the plain called Saw-mill Plain,'—so called, doubtless, from the saw-mill just erected on Beaver Brook; and an allowance is made of eight acres and sixty rods for two roads, one eight rods wide to go to the saw-mill; the other four rods wide to go to the river. No road up the river being mentioned proves that no such road then existed."

(Annals, page 11.)

On the 7th of February, 1738, another meeting was held at the house of Jeremiah Hall under a second warrant from Justice Wells, upon a petition of twelve of the proprietors.

"Upon the First article voted and chose m^r Jeremiah Hall Moderator for sd meeting.

"Upon the second article voted and chose Jacob Bacon (A M) scribe to Record the votes of said meeting.

"Upon the Third article voted and chose Jacob Bacon (A M) Proprietors clerk.¹

"Upon y^e Fourth article voted and chose Jacob Bacon (A M) Proprietors Treasurer.

"Voted to set apart a certain stream known by the Name of East Branch and Land thereto adjoining Necessary and Convenient for the building of a mill or mills for the Proprietors use," and David Farnsworth, John Thompson and Jeremiah Hall were chosen "a committee to Lay

¹ Many pages of the proprietors' records are in the neat handwriting of Mr. Bacon, and his letter of acceptance of the call to the ministry is entered in full, and is something of a curiosity. (Proprietors' Records, page 32.)

out the same," and 240 pounds were assessed "to support the Preaching the Gospel in said Township," and to defray other charges.

Joseph Ellis, Nathan Blake and Isaac Clark were chosen a committee "to procure an anvil Bellows vice sledge Hammer & Tongs fit for the work of a blacksmith as soon as conveniently they can at the Proprietors cost and charge and to Let out the same to a Blacksmith so Long as he shall use and Improve them in the Proprietors business by faithfully doing their work at their Request, before any other business or work for any other person or persons Whatsoever."

Isaac Clark, Jeremiah Hall, Ebenezer Nims, Seth Heaton and David Farnsworth were chosen a committee to lay out roads "where they shall be found Necessary," to report at the next meeting.

"Voted that Mes^{rs} Nathan Blake Ebenezer Nims Joseph Ellis Joseph Guild Isaac Clark be a committee to provide preaching.

"Voted That Mes^{rs} Nathan Blake Joseph Ellis Obadiah Blake be a committee to go to Deaⁿ Sam^l Heywood proprietors clerk and humbly Request the proprietors Book and to take and bring the same and deliver to the Clerk now Chosen.

(Signed) "Jacob Bacon scribe
Jeremiah Hall Moderator."

On the 1st day of May, another meeting was held at the meetinghouse under a third warrant from Justice Wells—Jeremiah Hall, moderator, and David Foster, scribe—and adjourned to the 5th "to meet at S^d Meeting House."

"And being met on May y^e 5th upon adjournment according to a vote passed on May y^e first, It was proposed by y^e Moderator To see if y^e Proprietors will proceed to y^e Choice of a Suitable Person to Settle in y^e Ministry in this Place according to y^e *Third Article* in y^e *Warrant* Voted in y^e affirmative. M.^r Jacob Bacon was Chosen by Every vote."

The meeting then adjourned to the house of Jeremiah Hall, and under the fourth article it was voted to "give M.^r Jacob Bacon y^e Sum of one Hundred & fifty pounds (in Bills of Credit of y^e Old Tenor) Settlement Provided he accept y^e Call of y^e Proprietors to Settle in y^e Ministry among them."

It was also voted under the same article to "Give Mr Jacob Bacon one Hundred & Thirty pounds of y^e Old tenor according to y^e present value of it, for his Yearly Salary for y^e Space of Ten Years and then to add Ten pounds to his Salary so Long as he Shall be their Minister."

Jeremiah Hall, David Foster, Isaac Clark, Josiah Fisher and Ebenezer Nims were chosen a committee to lay these proposals before Mr. Bacon, "& if he accepts of y^e Proposals, to appoint y^e Day for his ordination, & to call in Suitable Help to Carry on y^e work of y^e Day, & to make Suitable Provision for his ordination upon y^e Proprietors Cost."

The committee laid the proposals before Mr. Bacon, and after a prolonged consideration of the matter, on the 5th of August he sent in his letter of acceptance, "with this amendment or consideration y^t you send to me a yearly supply of fire wood at my Door, and y^t from time to time as my need shall require."

On the 2d of October, upon the request of six proprietors, a meeting was held at the meetinghouse in "y^e Upper Township on Ashuelot River (so-called)" under the warrant of Mr. Bacon as proprietors' clerk—David Foster, moderator—at which it was:

"Voted To add y^e sum of Ten pounds, to Mr Bacon's Salary at y^e End of Ten years from his Settling among them, & thereby raise his Salary to y^e sum of one Hundred and fifty pounds money of y^e present Currency.

"Voted To find y^e Worthy Mr Bacon so much Good fire wood yearly as he shall need for his fire ready Drawn to his Door, & y^t from time to time and at all times so Long as he shall Continue to be y^e Minister."

Under the third article, we have the first record of roads accepted as laid out by the committee, viz.: "a Road from y^e Line Between y^e Lower and Upper Ashuelots Eight rods wide by y^e Heads of y^e House Lots Laid out on a plain called y^e Nine Lot Plain, & so over s^d Plain till it comes to y^e Northeast corner of Meadow Lot No (20) & yⁿ on y^e North side of s^d Lot, Three rods wide until it comes to Meadow Lot No (18) & from Meadow Lot (20) to y^e Meeting House hill Two rods wide, & yⁿ Through y^e Town Plat Eight rods wide Between y^e Heads of y^e House Lots & so on to y^e Saw-mil Eight rods wide, where it

now goeth, as also a road or way two rods wide from y^e Meeting House to y^e River in y^e most Convenient place Between House Lot No (54) and Meadow Lot No (12) & from thence Between s^d House Lot and y^e Meadow Lot Drawn by John Burge No (35)—running Westwardly to y^e Ash Swamp, also another road or way from y^e Town street three rods wide Between House Lot No (13 & 14) to y^e East Beach Hill, and another from s^d Street Westwardly Between House Lots No (41) & (42) toward the Ash Swamp Three rods wide—”

From the descriptions, it is evident that the first road ran from Swanzey line to Keene very nearly as it does now, passing the house lots on “Nine Lot Plain” eight rods wide. Descending to the meadows, it was reduced to three rods in width, and in crossing the South Branch and the low lands by the present pottery, where it was difficult to make a road, it was but two rods wide. The rise from the low ground to the lower end of Main street was called “Meeting House Hill.” Then “Through y^e Town Plat”—the present Main street—it was laid eight rods wide, and continued so to the saw-mill. But that does not account for the generous breadth of Washington street, for that first road to the saw mill, “where it now Goeth,” ran much farther east, from the present railroad crossing, entering our present Washington street in the vicinity of Burdett’s mills.

The second road, two rods wide, ran “from y^e Meeting House” along the south side of the south house lot on the west side of Main street, between that and the burying ground, which was southwest of the meeting house, to the river and on to Ash Swamp. On that bluff around the meeting house and the burying ground there was an open common, as later records show.

The third road, three rods wide, ran from Main street to “East Beach Hill.”

The fourth road, three rods wide ran from the same point on Main street west, making four corners there—nearly in the same place as our present “Appian Way”—but it is probable that neither of these last two roads was built, for they do not appear on the map of the village in 1750, while one further north, where Water street is now, is shown.



RESIDENCE OF DR. CHARLES G. ADAMS. SITE OF THE OLD FORT.

Joseph Ellis and Beriah Maccaney (McKenny) were chosen "Surveyors of High ways to take care and mend them, and yⁿ Voted y.^t y^e Meeting be adjourned to y^e House of Joseph Guild, to meet Immediately, and yⁿ met—&—

"Upon y^e 6th Article Voted, To finish y^e Fort w^c is already Begun in s^d Township, & y.^t Every one y.^t works or has workt at s^d Fort, should bring in his or y^r accompt to y^e surveyors of High ways, & to be allowed to him or y^m as so much Done in mending or Clearing High ways or roads.

"Voted To assess and raise y^e sum of one Hundred and Eighty pounds to Build y^e Fort and to Clear and mend High ways &c." David Nims, Josiah Fisher and Timothy Puffer were chosen assessors, and Solomon Richardson collector.

It was also voted that plans of the divisions of land be recorded by the proprietors' clerk, "Excepting of y^e House Lots and of y^e 4th or Thirty acre Division, and them to be fastened into the Prop^{tors} Book in a General Plan and all this to be at y^e Prop^{tors} cost and charge."

A committee was also chosen to "Lay out Equivalent Land to those whose land had been taken for roads."

"This fort was situated on a small eminence, a few rods North of the house of Dr. Adams.¹ When completed, it was about 90 feet square; there were two ovens, and two wells in the inclosure. It was built of hewn logs. In the interior, next to the walls, were twenty barracks, each having one room. On the outside, it was two stories high, in the inside, but one, the roof over the barracks sloping inwards. In the space above the barracks, were loop-holes to fire from with muskets. There were two watch-houses, one at the south-east corner, and one on the western side, each erected on four high posts set upright in the earth. And for greater safety, the whole was surrounded by pickets."

(Annals, page 13.)

"At a Council Held at y^e Upper Ashuelot Township in y^e Province of y^e Massachusetts &c for y^e Gathering of a Church & y^e Ordination of y^e Rev^d M^r Jacob Bacon Pastor, present by y^r pastors & Delegates y^e churches of Wrentham, Sunderland, Northfield & Medway, October 18. A D: 1738—Then Ordained y^e Rev^d M.^r Jacob Bacon Pastor of y^e Church of Christ then Gathered in y^e s^d Ashuelot (y^e advice of y^e Neighboring Ministers of Christ being first had

¹"On the spot where now (1850) stands the new house of Dr. Charles G. Adams." [Now Mr. Lemuel Hayward's, 1903.]

according to Law) according to y^e rules of y^e Gospel, as—

“Attest—Benj^a Doolittle¹ Moderator of s^d Council in y.^e Name and by order of y^e s^d—Council—

“A true Coppy Exa^{md}

Pr Jacob Bacon

Prop^{tors} Clerk.”

(Proprietors' Records, page 34.)

The members of the church “gathered” at that time were:

“Jeremiah Hall	Joseph Fisher	David Nims
David Foster	John Bullard	Benjamin Guild
William Smeed	Joseph Ellis	Edward Dale
Seth Heaton	Joseph Richardson	Solomon Richardson
Nathan Blake	Ebenezer Nims	Abner Ellis
Josiah Fisher	Joseph Guild	Ebenezer Day
		Obadiah Blake.”
		(Church Records.)

Soon afterwards the church was organized by the choice of David Foster and Josiah Fisher, deacons.

On the 4th of December, a meeting of the proprietors was opened at the meeting house, and after choosing Capt. Jeremiah Hall moderator, immediately adjourned to his house on the opposite side of Main street. Two hundred and eighty pounds were voted “for y^e Rev^d M^r Bacon's Settlement and Salary for y^e present year,” and in addition, the sum of twenty-four pounds for his fire wood.

A vote was passed setting apart the common land around the meeting house “for a Training Ground and such publick use or uses,” and a tract on the road leading west from the meeting house over the river to Ash Swamp, “for y^e use and Benefit of Digging Clay and making Brick.”

“Upon y^e Sixth article, Voted, To finish y^e Meeting House on y^e out Side, workman Like (viz) to cover it with Good Sawed Clabbords, well plained, Good Window frames; —well Glazed, and handsomely to case y^e Doors; and so far to finish y^e Inside as to Lay y^e Lower Floor and Build y^e Body of Seats,² the Pulpit, one Pew, y^e Table and Deacons Seat, all Compleatly Workman Like—

“Voted, That Cap^t Jeremiah Hall, Ebenezer Force, Serj:^t Josiah Fisher be a Com^{tee} to have y^e oversight (of y^e work in finishing y^e Meeting House agreeable to y^e Prop^{tors} vote) in y.^t affair.

¹Rev. Benjamin Doolittle, surgeon and physician, author of “Doolittle's Narrative,” was pastor at Northfield for nearly twenty years.

²The men had seats on one side of the house, the women on the other.

“Voted, To assess y^e Sum of two Hundred pounds on y^e Propriety to pay for finishing y^e Meeting House as before voted to be done.”

“Serj:^t Joseph Fisher, Serj:^t William Smeed, Leu:^t Seth Heaton” were chosen assessors, and Joseph Ellis collector. Evidently there were rumors of war. They were building forts and giving men military titles.

At a meeting held on the 17th of February, 1739, William Smeed, moderator, Joseph Ellis, Beriah Maccaney, Isaac Clark, Ebenezer Force and Nathan Blake were chosen a committee to finish the fort, repair roads, and build bridges.

“About this time, John Andrews came from Boxford, to settle in Upper Ashuelot. He sent back Ephraim Dorman and Joseph Ellis, with a team of eight oxen and a horse to bring up his furniture. The route they came, which was probably then the best, if not the only one, led through Concord, Worcester, Brookfield, Belchertown, Hadley, Hatfield, Deerfield, Northfield, Winchester, Swanzey and on the bank of the Ashuelot to the house lots. When they passed through Swanzey, it rained hard, and they did not reach the station until night. As it continued to rain, was very dark, and as the water, which already covered the meadows, rose rapidly, they, apprehensive of being drowned, unyoked their oxen, chained their cart to a tree, and hastened to the settlement, then a mile distant. As soon as daylight appeared, the next morning, a boat was despatched in search of the cattle and furniture. When passing over Bullard’s Island, a man cried to them for help. It was Mark Ferry, the hermit.—Wearied with the noise and bustle of the settlement, he had retired to a cave, which he had dug into the bank of the river, where he constantly resided. The water had now driven him from his dwelling, and compelled him to seek refuge on a stump, where he then sat, with a calf in his arms, over which he had drawn a shirt. The boatman answered, ‘we must take care of the neat cattle first,’ and passed on. They soon came to the cart, which was afloat. Proceeding further and guided by the sound of the bells, which the cattle as usual wore, they found them on several little hillocks, some with only their heads out of water. They forced them into the water, and guided them, swimming to high land, where they left them until the flood subsided. Hearing cries for help below them, they proceeded to Crissen’s house, in the borders of Swanzey, to the chamber and to the top of which the family

had been driven. These they took off, and, on their return home, took Ferry and his calf into the canoe. This, which was known by the name of Andrews' flood, was the highest ever known in the township. The water came within a few feet of the street, North of Capt. Blake's old house.

"Mr. Andrews was the father of ten children, nine of whom he brought with him. Between September, 1744, and September, 1745, every one of the nine died of the throat distemper, and he then returned disconsolate to his former residence."¹

(Annals, pages 13 and 14.)

Up to about this time, the town had been called "the upper Township on Ashuelot River," but people began to shorten it to "Upper Ashuelot," and on the 6th of October Rev. Mr. Bacon issued his warrant as proprietors' clerk, upon the request of eight of the proprietors, for a meeting to be held on the 22d at the meetinghouse in "Upper Ashuelot (so called);" and by that name the town was known until it was changed to Keene in 1753.

That meeting was opened at the meetinghouse and adjourned to the house of Capt. Jeremiah Hall, Nathan Blake, moderator. Sergt. Joseph Fisher was chosen treasurer. Another division of five acres of meadow land was voted to each proprietor, with instructions to the committee to equalize the lots by adding in quantity what any might lack in quality.

Joseph Priest, Beriah Maccaney, Samuel Smith, Amos Foster and Timothy Puffer were chosen a committee "to go around y^e Town & run Every Line agreeable to y^e plan, Employing a Surveyor to take & run y^e points of Compass Given in s^d Plan."

"Voted to Build a pound in y^e most convenient place at y^e Prop^{tors} Cost, Fifty feet Square, Seven feet posts, and y^t Isaac Clark, Eben^r Force, Josiah Fisher, be a Com^{tee} to take care and Build y^e same.

(Signed) "Nathan Blake, Moderator."

On the 7th of January, 1740, the proprietors met at the meetinghouse, chose Jeremiah Hall moderator, and immediately adjourned to his house. The 4th article in the warrant was: "To make such grant or grants of land to such

¹A virulent throat distemper had swept over New Hampshire in 1785, carrying off more than a thousand victims. This year it attacked Upper Ashuelot, and many died.

person or persons as they shall think deserve the same, for hazarding their lives and estates by living here to bring forward the settling of the place." After passing the usual votes for raising money for Mr. Bacon's salary and fire wood:

"Upon the 4th article—

"Voted—To Grant y^e Sum or quantity of Ten acres of Upland to Each of y^e Persons hereafter Named, viz. Jacob Bacon, Clerk, Josiah Fisher, Joseph Fisher, Nathan Blake, William Smeed, Seth Heaton, Joseph Ellis, Ebn.^r Nims, Joseph Guilde, Joseph Richardson, Isaac Clark, Edward Dale, Jeremiah Hall, Eben.^r Force, Daniel Haws, Amos Foster, Ebn.^r Day, Beriah Maccaney, Jabez Hill, Obed Blake, Jer: Hall Jun^r, David Nims, Timothy Puffer, Eben.^r Daniels, Nathan Fairbanks, John Bullard, David Foster, Solomon Richardson, Abner Ellis, Benj^a Guilde, Asa Richardson, Ebn.^r Hill, Sam^{el} Fisher, Ephraim Dorman, Timothy Sparhawk, Jon^a Underwood, Joh Andrews, Sam^{el} Smith, Sam^{el} Daniels, [39] and to such other Persons, having an Interest here, who from y^e first of next March to March 1742, Shall make up y^e quantity or space of Two years in Living here and Building a Legal Dwelling House, to y^e Number of Sixty, Including those in y^e Number fore mentioned by Name——."

Doubtless that list contains the names of nearly all the men who were living here at that time.

Isaac Clark, William Smeed, Joseph Fisher, Edward Dale and Joseph Ellis were chosen the committee with instructions to "Lay out [the land] to each person in order as they are Named the first first and so on as they are Named."

On the 8th of February seven of the proprietors joined in a request to the clerk for a meeting to consider the question of "Building of Forts or fortifications for y^e present and future safety of y^e place and Inhabitants under y^e present rumours of wars," and other matters relating to the same subject.

The meeting was held on the 25th, at the house of Ebenezer Nims, William Smeed, moderator, and voted to build two forts or fortifications, "one about y^e House of Joseph Ellis in s^d Township and another about William Smeeds House, at y^e Prop^{tors} cost, and y.^t they shall be Built when seven of y^e Prop^{tors} or Inhabitants shall apply

themselves to y^c Com^{tee} w^c shall be appointed to have y^c oversight in Building s^d Forts." William Smeed, Ephraim Dorman and Joseph Guild were placed on that committee.

"Voted y^t Every man w^c works about s^d Forts shall be allowed Eight shillings p^r Day, and four shillings p^r Day for a yoke of oxen.

"Voted y.^t y^c sum of Seventy two pounds be assessed equally on y.^c Prop^{tors} for to Defray y.^c charge In Building s^d Forts—

(Signed) "William Smeed, Moderator."

Whether these fortifications were ever built is not known. The pioneers of those days were strangely lax in protecting themselves against the Indians, as was proved in many cases.

A meeting on the 18th of March, Seth Heaton, moderator, voted that all timber on the common and undivided lands should be free for the use of the proprietors, but no waste should be allowed.

It was in this year, 1740, that the decree was made by the king and council fixing the boundary line—surveyed and established in 1741—between Massachusetts and New Hampshire where it has ever since remained, giving to New Hampshire all the territory north of that line and the jurisdiction over all those towns therein which had been granted by Massachusetts.

The acts of the stronger province in continuing to grant townships in the territory in dispute were felt to be grasping and overbearing, and in 1731 the colonial authorities of New Hampshire had determined to appeal to the home government to settle the controversy. They chose, as their agent for this purpose, John Rindge, a merchant of Portsmouth, a man of wealth and influence, a son-in-law of Lt. Gov. Wentworth and a strong opponent of Gov. Belcher, between whom there was a personal quarrel which entered forcibly into the question of the boundary. This appointment proved to be an exceedingly fortunate one. The agent was earnest and efficient, and advanced the necessary funds to carry on the suit. The case was prolonged for years, and when Mr. Rindge could no longer remain abroad he left it in the hands of Capt. John Tomlinson, a merchant of London, "who was well

known in New Hampshire, where he had frequently been in quality of a sea commander." (Belknap's History of New Hampshire, vol. 2, page 107.)

Tomlinson was also a strong friend of Wentworth and opponent of Belcher. After much delay and disappointment, on the 9th of April, 1737, King George II, with the advice of his privy council, appointed a commission of fifteen members, prominent citizens of the neighboring provinces of Nova Scotia, Rhode Island and New Jersey, to adjust and settle the boundary line between the two contending provinces.

That commission met at Hampton, N. H., on the 1st of September of the same year, heard the arguments of both parties, and rendered a decision with which neither was satisfied, and from which both appealed. The case then went before the king in council. The agents of New Hampshire employed as their solicitor, "Fernando John Parris, a lawyer of much shrewdness and learning, who being well supplied with money was indefatigable in his attention." (Belknap's History of New Hampshire, vol. 2, page 107.) So ably was the case presented, that, on the 5th of August, 1740, the following judgment was rendered:

"Ord.^d and adjudged That the Northern Boundary of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay are and be a Similar Curve Line pursuing the Course of the Merrimack River at three Miles Distance on the North side thereof beginning at the Atlantick Ocean and ending at a Point due North of a Place in the Plan returned by the Commis^{rs} called Pawtucket Falls [Lowell] and a Strait Line drawn from thence due West cross the said River till it meets with his Majestys other Governm^{ts}."

By this decree New Hampshire gained a large tract of territory—"comprising about thirty towns"—more than she had ever claimed. It may have been a just and equitable construction of the conflicting language of the several grants, but it has been suggested that as all the best pine trees, "suitable for masts," had been reserved to the crown in New Hampshire, while those in Massachusetts had not, the king and council ran the lines as far south as the charters would allow.

Gov. Belcher was instructed to see that the order of the court was executed, but his sympathy had been with the

more important province all through this controversy, and he was so mortified at the decision of this court of final appeal that it was only after a second and peremptory command that he laid the matter before the legislature of New Hampshire and forced that body to appropriate money for the whole expense of the survey, although the decree evidently intended that Massachusetts should bear her share.

In the meantime, even after New Hampshire had appealed to the home government, and while the question was still undecided, Massachusetts continued to grant townships in the disputed territory. Besides the two Ashuelots and Winchester, Boscawen and Bedford had been granted in 1733; Hopkinton, Henniker, Warner, Chesterfield, Westmoreland, Walpole, Charlestown, New Ipswich and Rindge (as Rowley Canada) in 1736; Peterboro in 1738, and Hillsboro, Lyndeboro and several others previous to 1740.

Having secured the appropriation from New Hampshire, Gov. Belcher claimed the right to run the line. In March, 1741, he appointed George Mitchell surveyor of the east end, from the ocean to the point designated above Pawtucket Falls, and Richard Hazen of the west end—the "Strait Line due West" from that point. Mr. Hazen began his work at once, and completed it on the 16th of April, running to the Hudson river. He was instructed by the governor to run due west, but to allow 10° variation north while the actual variation of the needle at that time was between seven and eight degrees. By that arbitrary dictation, Massachusetts secured a strip about three miles wide at the Connecticut river, running to a point above Pawtucket Falls, which did not belong to her according to the king's decree. But New Hampshire had won her case, had been very well treated by the king and council, and was loath to reopen the controversy. Soon afterwards the distraction of Indian wars, followed by that of the Revolution, drew attention away from that subject, and the line was finally established only a few years since. Identical acts were passed by the Massachusetts legislature in 1899 and the New Hampshire legislature in 1901, defining the boundary.

Later, in 1764, the king declared the west bank of the Connecticut river to be the boundary line between New Hampshire and Vermont; and now, on the west shore of that river at low water, a little to the south of the passenger station at South Vernon, may be seen a monument of dark Windsor granite, standing six feet above the surface, which marks the southwest corner of New Hampshire, the southeast corner of Vermont, and the north line of Massachusetts.

The inhabitants of Upper Ashuelot were greatly disappointed, as were those of all the towns affected, to find themselves shut out from Massachusetts. They felt that the province of Massachusetts Bay was the one to which they belonged. There were the homes of their childhood, and all their patriotism centered there. It was like closing the doors of a father's house against them. They had no connection or intercourse with the people of New Hampshire; and above all, they feared that the title to their lands might not now be valid.

On the 3d of October, 1740, the proprietors held a meeting—David Foster, moderator—and placed the following upon their records:

“The Prop^{rs} being Informed y.^t by y^e Determination of his Majesty In Councill Respecting the Controverted Bounds Between y^e Province of y^e Massachusetts & New Hampshire they are Excluded from y^e Province of y^e Massachusetts Bay to w^c they alwayes Supposed themselves to Belong,—

“Therefore *Unanimously Voted* that a Petition be preferred to the Kings most Excellent Majesty Setting forth our Distrest Estate & Praying we may be annexed to y^e s^d Massachusetts Province.¹

“Also *Unanimously Voted* y^t Thomas Hutchinson² Esq^r be Impowered to Present the s^d Petition to his Majesty and to appear & fully to act for and In Behalf of This Town Respecting the Subject Matter of s^d Petition, according to his Best Discretion.”

¹ The proprietors of nearly all the towns in the disputed territory which had been granted by Massachusetts sent petitions. (State Papers, vol. 19, page 476.)

² Thomas Hutchinson was afterwards governor of Massachusetts and still later author of a “History of Massachusetts.” He was the agent in London of that province in this controversy concerning the boundary and spent some years in London on his mission, but had no success against the agents of New Hampshire. He was also agent for the towns that petitioned in 1740. A copy of his petition is published in New Hampshire State Papers, vol. 19, page 511. He was evidently so chagrined at the failure of his agency that he does not even mention it in his History of Massachusetts.