

## CHAPTER XVII.

### RAILROAD AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

1841—1860.

On the 4th of March, 1841, the Whigs of Keene fired a salute of one hundred and fifty guns in honor of the inauguration of William Henry Harrison as president of the United States. The Sentinel of April 7, shaded with heavy black lines, announced his death.

A meeting of the citizens of Keene nominated Charles L. Putnam, a young lawyer who had recently come to town, for postmaster under the new administration. He was appointed, and the office was removed to the first door south of the Cheshire House.

For a long term of years, down to about 1850, Election Day—the first Wednesday in June, the day of the meeting of the legislature—was a very enjoyable holiday. This year it was celebrated by a gathering of 1,000 to 1,200 persons, pupils of the district schools and others, on the banks of the Ashuelot river, where they indulged in a feast of “lection cake,” listened to speeches and music, and spent the day in social enjoyment.

On the same afternoon, Gen. James Wilson, who had been appointed surveyor general of Wisconsin and Iowa territories, was given a complimentary dinner at the Cheshire House, previous to his departure for the West. Hon. Thomas M. Edwards presided, Gen. Wilson made an elegant speech, toasts were drunk, and other short speeches were made.

The valley road up the Ashuelot river from Gilsum to Marlow was opened this year, 1841, connecting with the Beaver brook road, built in 1837, from Keene to Gilsum, and giving an easy and pleasant route to Newport, thirty-three miles.

At this time there was a revival of sentiment in favor of temperance. The Washington Total Abstinence Society

had been organized in 1841, Hon. Salma Hale president, with 600 members; and a temperance jubilee was held on the 22d of February, 1842. On the 4th of July a temperance celebration was held in John Elliot's grove, on the banks of the Ashuelot, west of his house. All the temperance societies, the Sunday schools and other organizations and the people generally, joined. A procession was formed in the Square, headed by the military band, and marched to the grove, where seats had been provided, tables spread and a bounteous repast prepared. Mr. Hale presided and there were speeches, toasts and responses, and music by the united choirs. It was estimated that at least 2,000 people were present. The day began with the roar of cannon and the ringing of bells, and closed with bonfires and fireworks.

In the early part of 1842, Thomas W. Dorr, who claimed to have been elected governor of Rhode Island, and attempted to hold that office by military force, was compelled to flee from that state. He came to New Hampshire, made his home for some months in Westmoreland and spent considerable time in Keene. He was indicted for high treason by the supreme court of Rhode Island, and his opponents, who were in possession of the government of that state, made a requisition on Gov. Hubbard of New Hampshire for his extradition. The governor refused to comply and Dorr was not molested while in this vicinity. He was afterwards arrested in Rhode Island for treason, imprisoned for two or three years, and then released.

There were two musters in town this year. In September, the Sixth and Twentieth regiments mustered together on Nine Lot plain. A fine company of riflemen from West Keene, Capt. Benjamin Gurler, made its first appearance at that time. The two companies of light infantry from Keene and Westmoreland, with their usual spirit and rivalry, turned out with 120 to 130 men each. In October, 1842, the uniformed companies of the Sixth, Twelfth and Twentieth regiments, joined by the Fitchburg Fusileers, about twenty companies in all, mustered on the same ground and were reviewed by Gov. Hubbard.

The building of the railroad from Boston to Fitchburg

was agitated at this time, and meetings were held to arouse the people to the importance of the scheme. A large one at the town hall in Keene, in December, 1842, was addressed by Alvah Crocker of Fitchburg, the chief promotor of the road. At a meeting in Boston in January following, Hon. Thomas M. Edwards was elected one of the directors of that road, and in the spring of that year the work began.

Many deaths of notable persons occurred in 1842, among them Thomas Baker, aged ninety; John Pierce, seventy-seven; Luther Bragg, seventy; Mrs. Harriet, wife of Nathaniel Evans, thirty-four; Mrs. Martha, widow of Samuel Bassett, eighty-seven; John G. Thatcher, fifty-six; Col. Alvah Walker, the "prince of landlords," of the Cheshire House, forty-seven; Phineas Fiske, fifty-seven; Gen. Justus Perry, fifty-three; Francis Faulkner, fifty-five; and Elijah Knight, a Revolutionary soldier who had held a commission in the army, was judge of probate for fourteen years in Windham county, Vermont, and had lived in Keene nearly twenty years, a part of the time keeping the tavern on the "Kate Tyler place."

In 1842, the town had appropriated \$950 to build a stone bridge at South Keene. The bridge was built that year, with a single arch, but the key was not sufficiently weighted, and upon removing the timbers after its completion, but before it had been accepted by the town, the arch rose, from the pressure of the heavy abutments, and the whole fabric fell into the stream. In 1843, a committee was chosen to rebuild, consisting of John Elliot, Josiah Colony, Zebadiah Kise, Isaac Gray and Aaron Davis. But there was a controversy about the liability of the contractors, and the matter lingered until 1846, when a wooden bridge was built, which was replaced by an iron structure in 1900.

Pianos kept for sale in town were first introduced in 1843 by Eliphalet Briggs. They were made by Lemuel Gilbert of Boston.

In September, the Twentieth regiment mustered on ground now occupied by Woodland cemetery, the east end of Beaver street, and the residences in that vicinity. The

reviewing officer was Maj. Gen. John McNeil of Hillsboro, who had been a colonel in the war of 1812. One of the young officers of his staff was George Barstow, author of a history of New Hampshire, who made the speech for the general.

The question of building the Cheshire railroad agitated the public at this time, and meetings were held in the larger towns along the line. One here, in December, 1843, in the Congregational church, was presided over by Hon. Salma Hale. Hon. Thomas M. Edwards made a stirring speech and the meeting was enthusiastic. A central committee to push the enterprise was appointed, consisting of Salma Hale and John H. Fuller of Keene, George Huntington of Walpole, Amos A. Parker of Fitzwilliam, Wareham Rand of Winchendon, and Stackpole & Phelps of Boston. Books were opened, and \$40,000 were subscribed here in the first two days. Later reports of the engineers of the Fitchburg road gave the preference to the route through Templeton and Greenfield to Brattleboro, and the Massachusetts legislature granted a charter for that line, but declined to grant one for the one through Winchendon and Keene to Bellows Falls. That action produced excitement along the Cheshire line; there was much discussion of the different routes; the extension of this line to Rutland and Burlington was vigorously agitated both by the Cheshire advocates and the people of Vermont; and another large and spirited meeting was held in the town hall here in April, 1844.

In June, 1844, the New Hampshire legislature granted a charter for the Fitchburg, Keene & Connecticut River Railroad. That charter was at first accepted; but upon the report of Benaiah Cooke, agent to agree with the owners upon land damages, the charter was rejected by the corporators.

The charter for the Cheshire railroad was then obtained and the first meeting for organization was held in Keene on the 10th of January, 1845. The charter was accepted, Hon. Salma Hale was chosen president and Benaiah Cooke clerk of the corporation. A committee consisting of Thomas M. Edwards, Samuel Dinsmoor, John H.

Elliot and four from other towns was appointed to secure a charter from Massachusetts and lay out the road. Mr. Edwards went before the joint committee of the Massachusetts legislature and made a powerful speech in favor of the charter. The Greenfield and Brattleboro road fought it, as dangerous to their line, but the charter was granted without delay.

In March, 1845, the Fitchburg road began running cars to Fitchburg. On the 21st of that month the books of the Cheshire road were opened and in four days \$131,300 had been subscribed; and on the 30th of April 9,000 of the 10,000 shares at \$100 each had been taken—\$900,000—and all were taken before the middle of May. In June, the shares sold in Boston at a premium of four per cent. Three of the seven directors chosen at the first annual meeting were from Keene—Thomas M. Edwards, Salma Hale and Benj. F. Adams—and Mr. Edwards was chosen president. Much time was required by the engineers, W. S. Whitwell and Lucian Tilton, for locating the road among the hills and through Keene, but in August, 1845, proposals for grading were called for, and in September contracts were let for the grading between Keene and Winchendon. The land damages paid for the whole distance between those towns were less than \$7,000, the owners generally accepting small compensation with a view to aiding the road.

At the adjourned annual town meeting in 1844, Mr. William Lamson presented a communication, which was entered in full in the town records, asking that the old burying ground on the Robinson farm at the south end of Main street be fenced and preserved. A committee was appointed, consisting of Calvin Chapman, Salma Hale and Aaron Hall, who were to confer with Mr. Robinson concerning the matter and report at the next town meeting. At the next annual meeting the same committee was authorized to fence the ground. But nothing was done, and in 1846 the town directed the selectmen to fence the ground, "provided Mr. Robinson consents and the expense does not exceed seventy-five dollars." Still nothing was done, for Mr. Robinson was unwilling to surrender the

rights he had gained. Thus the sacred burial place of the earliest inhabitants of Keene, many of them distinguished men and women,<sup>1</sup> was suffered to be lost to official and affectionate care.

Washington's birthday in 1845 was celebrated by the Washington Total Abstinence Society, Dr. Amos Twitchell, president, which held its annual meeting on that day. "Father Taylor," the distinguished temperance advocate, of Boston, made the principal address.

At a legal meeting in September, 1845, the town "Resolved That all places where playing cards or other gambling articles, and all intoxicating drinks are kept and sold, and other immoralities are practised, is hereby taken and deemed by the good people of this town, to be a public nuisance;" and at the annual meeting following, it was voted to "instruct the selectmen not to grant license for the sale of wine and spirituous liquors within said town" — the vote standing 251 to 41. In 1847 and 1848, similar votes were passed.

Teachers' institutes for the county were held in Keene oftener than anywhere else, the towns appropriating money for their support. In 1845, a four weeks' session was held here in April, presided over by Hon. Salma Hale; and another in October.

William L. Foster, who had recently opened a law office in Keene, was appointed postmaster. In August he removed the office from below the Cheshire House to the store of his father, Mr. John Foster, on the west side of the Square, now Whitcomb's.

It was in the autumn of 1845 that the potato rot first made its appearance in this region. For several years following, the crop was almost wholly destroyed by it and a total loss of that tuber was feared, but it has since been gradually recovering from the attack.

David Carpenter died in April, aged eighty-six. He had served nearly through the Revolutionary war, was at the surrender of Burgoyne and several other battles, and was one of the guard at the execution of Major Andre.

<sup>1</sup> Capt. Ephraim Dorman, Col. Isaac Wyman, Major Josiah Willard and most of the leaders in the settlement of Keene, with their wives, were buried there, as that was the first burial place in town and the principal one until 1795.

On the 1st day of January, 1846, the Keene Fire Society, a vigorous institution then nearly a quarter of a century old, had its annual meeting and supper at the Cheshire House. Its officers had always been the leading men of the town, the clergy were always invited to its annual supper, and it was an enjoyable and important gathering of the citizens. Spirituous liquors had been banished from its tables twenty years before this time. But the next year the society turned over to the town all its property, consisting of two fire engines, leathern hose, fire-buckets and engine house, which stood on the Cheshire House grounds, Roxbury street; and the Keene Fire Society ceased to exist. Two years later the town, with one-third of the expense paid by subscriptions, bought a new engine and other apparatus.

In February, the large cabinet and furniture shop of E. & W. S. Briggs, on Washington street, near the Square, with the old two-story brick schoolhouse north of it, used for a joiner's shop and lumber room, a carriage house belonging to French's stable, the two-story house of Joseph Willard, south of the shops, with barn, were all destroyed by fire; with a large quantity of lumber, furniture, machinery, etc. It was Sunday morning, just at the hour for church services. Mr. Livermore dismissed his congregation and went with them and assisted vigorously at the fire; but Mr. Barstow, as tradition has it, with a different conscientiousness and a devout sense of his religious duty, although his church edifice was in great danger, continued his services as if it had been the usual quiet New England Sunday morning. Two lines were formed, as usual, to the town well on the south side of the Square, for passing buckets. The weather was intensely cold, but there was no wind and the village was saved from a further spread of the flames. The loss was about \$6,500, over and above a small insurance.

The Briggses moved to the Thomas F. Ames building, east side of Main, below Church street, which they bought, and carried on business there for several years.

There was a controversy in 1846 about the location of the railroad station in town, some of the citizens preferring

the present spot, others wishing to have the road cross Main street between Water and Marlboro streets. To induce the railroad corporation to decide upon the present spot the citizens subscribed \$4,500,<sup>1</sup> bought the present station grounds of the estate of Capt. Joseph Dorr and his wife, including the orchard, where the Episcopal church and the houses of Mrs. Edward Joslin, the two Faulkners and Mrs. Tilden now stand—the last purchase from the old Capt. Josiah Richardson farm—and made it a gift to the railroad. The commissioners then decided the question in accordance with the wishes of the corporation and of the majority of the citizens.

The Twentieth regiment mustered in Keene in September, 1846, Col. Virgil M. Kimball commanding. Capt. Francis S. Fiske commanded the Keene Light Infantry, and there was the usual emulation and antagonism between the Keene and the Westmoreland "Lights."

The Mexican war had broken out in May, and New Hampshire was called upon for two regiments of troops; but not many New Hampshire men were disposed to volunteer. One battalion was ordered by Gov. Steele to be prepared and held in readiness. In June, a mass meeting was held at Concord for the purpose of arousing the people to the support of the government in the war, at which Gen. James Wilson of Keene and Col. Franklin Pierce of Concord made patriotic speeches, and both were reported as having volunteered; but the statement was true of Pierce only. The next year Col. Trueman B. Ransom raised a regiment of Vermont and New Hampshire volunteers which joined Gen. Scott's army. At Molino del Rey, Capt. Charles B. Daniels of Keene, in the regular army, was mortally wounded while gallantly leading an assault; and Capt. Albemarle Cady, a native of Keene, in the Sixth infantry, was wounded, and promoted to brevet major for gallant and meritorious conduct.

At the annual election in 1847, the town chose three representatives to the legislature; and Gen. James Wilson of Keene was elected to congress. The county having

<sup>1</sup>A. & T. Hall gave \$800; Azel Wilder \$400; J. & J. W. Prentiss \$350; Abijah Wilder \$300; S. A. Gerould and William Lamson \$200 each; and fifty others smaller sums.

allowed its rights in the courthouse to lapse by failing to comply with the conditions of the gift of the land on which it stood, the town thereby lost its public hall, and a committee of five, of which Hon. Joel Parker was chairman, was chosen to devise ways and means to build. At a legal meeting on the 31st of March, 1847, that committee made a long report—recorded in the town books—and the subject was recommitted to the same committee, to report at the next annual meeting.

The old Cheshire bank building having been removed to give place to the railroad, the present structure with its granite front was built. The passenger station was also built in 1847, and the road was opened in the autumn for use as far as Winchendon, and soon afterwards to Troy.

The building of the railroad through the "summit" required a large force, and many Irish families with children settled there in temporary cabins. The Ladies' Charitable Society of Keene established a school for those children under the direction of the wives of the three clergymen in town, Mrs. Barstow, Mrs. Livermore and Mrs. Gilbert Robbins. The Irishmen put up a suitable shanty and a Miss Soule, from Vermont, taught about sixty pupils there for ten weeks in the spring and summer, and Miss Nancy Towns of Keene was employed for a fall term, the same year. At the next annual meeting, in 1848, the town appropriated fifty dollars from the literary fund for a school there, to be expended under the direction of the selectmen. That aggregation of Irishmen of different clans, particularly of "Corkonians" and "Fardowners," produced a population of very excitable nature. The failure of one company of contractors after another to complete their work and pay their men gave cause for complaint, and in the autumn of 1848, matters culminated in a riot. Stones, brickbats, knives and guns were used and several persons were seriously injured. Mr. John Foster was sheriff of the county at that time, and the riot became so serious that he called on the Keene Light Infantry for assistance. A detachment of the company hastened to the scene in teams, each man supplied with sixty rounds of ball cartridges. But the presence of armed troops cooled the ardor

of the rioters, and the affair ended with the arrest, conviction and punishment by heavy fines and costs of upwards of twenty of the ringleaders. A similar affair occurred earlier at what was then Bruce's tavern, in Marlboro, near the present railroad station on that line of road.

The Twentieth regiment mustered in Keene again in 1847, but only the uniformed companies, the infantry companies of the line having disbanded. The "Keene Lights" were commanded by Capt. S. A. Gerould, Jr.

Among the deaths in 1847 were those of Capt. Aaron Hall, aged sixty-two; Aaron Wilson, eighty-eight; and Michael Metcalf, eighty-six. Mr. Metcalf was born in the fort in Keene, and after the age of seven lived on the "Metcalf farm," in Ash Swamp, where Mr. Henry O. Spaulding now lives. He built the brick house on that place, and the one east of it for his son. He lived to see seven generations of his family.

The committee appointed in 1847 on the question of building a town hall reported verbally at the annual meeting in 1848, and a building committee consisting of Levi Chamberlain, Samuel Dinsmoor, Nathan Bassett, Samuel Wood, Thomas H. Leverett, Joshua Wyman and George Tilden was chosen by the town, with authority to purchase a site and "erect thereon a building with suitable accommodations for town purposes," and "to hire money in behalf of the town, to pay the expenses thereof," and the main part of the present edifice<sup>1</sup> was built that season. Charles Edward Parker of Boston, a native of Keene, son of Elijah, was the architect, and Lanmon Nims was the contractor.

The selectmen were directed to take 1,500 copies of Mr. Hale's new edition of the Annals of Keene, at a reasonable price to be agreed upon.

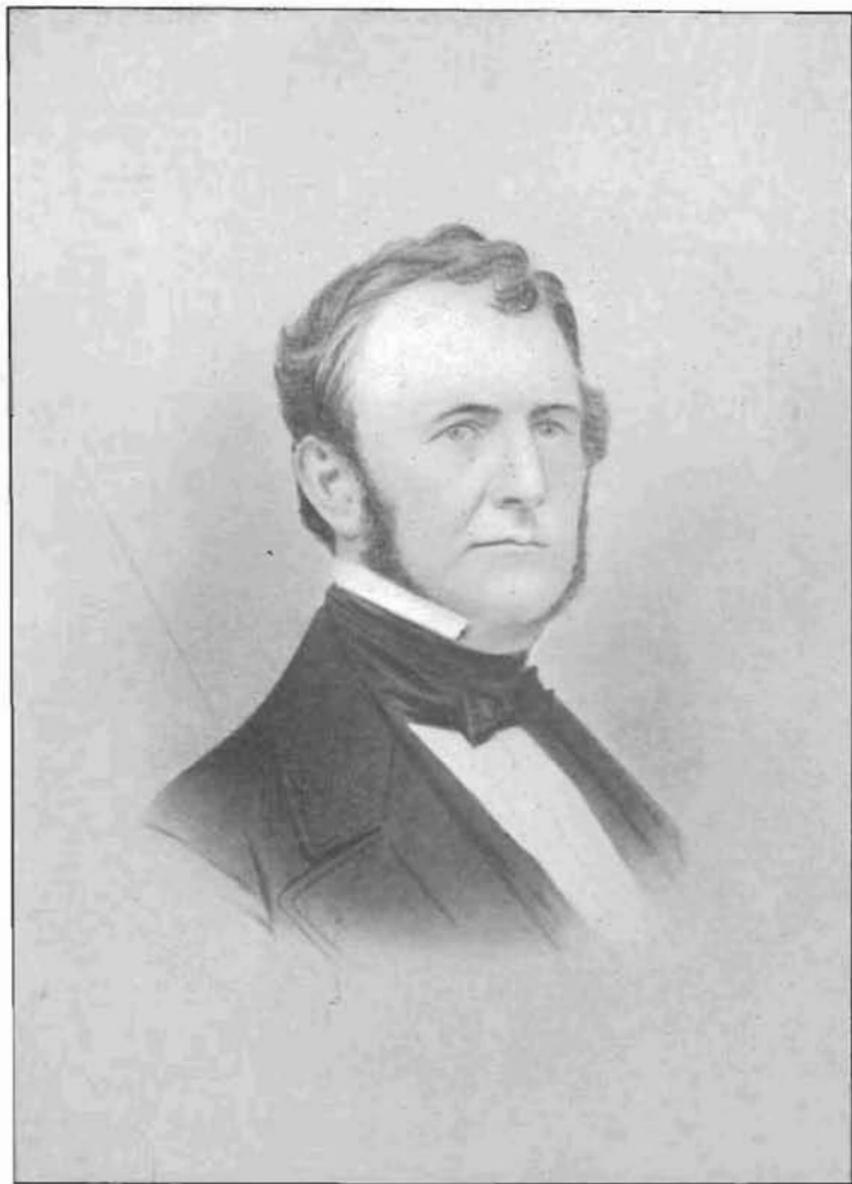
On the 16th of May, 1848, the Cheshire railroad was opened to Keene. The morning train brought Mayor Quincy of Boston, Mayor Warren of Charlestown, S. M. Felton, Alvah Crocker and many other distinguished men, with the Suffolk brass band. The day was fine, people along the route joined the train, and when it reached Keene,

<sup>1</sup> Additions have since been made, and the inside has been completely remodelled.

at half past one o'clock, it consisted of twelve long passenger cars decorated with flags and evergreen, besides three platform cars with seats, containing, in all, about 1,200 people. As it came in sight, two miles distant, and rolled into the station, the bells were rung, cannon fired, and a crowd of five thousand people shouted its greeting. A procession formed and marched to the town hall, where a short meeting of the corporation was held, then reformed and returned to the station, where tables were set on the platform for fifteen hundred persons. Speeches were made, songs were sung, and the Suffolk band gave some of its fine music. The event was highly successful and gratifying. Hon. Levi Chamberlain was chairman of the committee of arrangements and Hon. Thomas M. Edwards, president of the road, presided over the exercises, and gave a reception in the evening. Mr. Lucian Tilton was chief engineer and the first superintendent, and the road was pronounced to be of superior character. The massive and graceful arch over the Branch at South Keene—a single span ninety feet broad and sixty feet high, designed by Mr. Tilton and built under his direction—is one of the finest of the kind in the country and worth travelling a long distance to see. Keene took about \$300,000 of the stock of the road, besides \$50,000 in the Fitchburg, and many thousands in other roads. On the first of July two regular trains a day, each way, were put on, leaving both Boston and Keene at 7 a. m. and 2 p. m., and arriving at 11 a. m. and 6 p. m. On the first day of January, 1849, the cars ran through to Bellows Falls, and soon afterwards the road was opened to that point for regular traffic.

The wives of Dr. Amos Twitchell and Gen. James Wilson died in 1848, and very tender and appropriate obituary notices of each were published.

On the 28th of February, 1849, the new town hall, which had been finished during the winter, was dedicated with a grand citizens' ball, under the general management of a committee of twenty-five, headed by the building committee. About five hundred persons attended; and for many years afterwards the "Citizens' Annual Ball" at the town hall was an important and enjoyable function.



SAMUEL DINSMOOR, JR.

The annual town meeting of 1849 was held in the new hall. The building committee reported that the lot purchased of Sumner Wheeler, executor of the estate of Gen. Justus Perry, cost \$1,750; and the building—60x80, 20 feet posts—\$13,829.08; total, \$15,579.08. At that election Samuel Dinsmoor was chosen governor and Gen. James Wilson was reelected to congress. Levi Chamberlain was the Whig candidate for governor that year and the next, but that party was in the minority in New Hampshire.

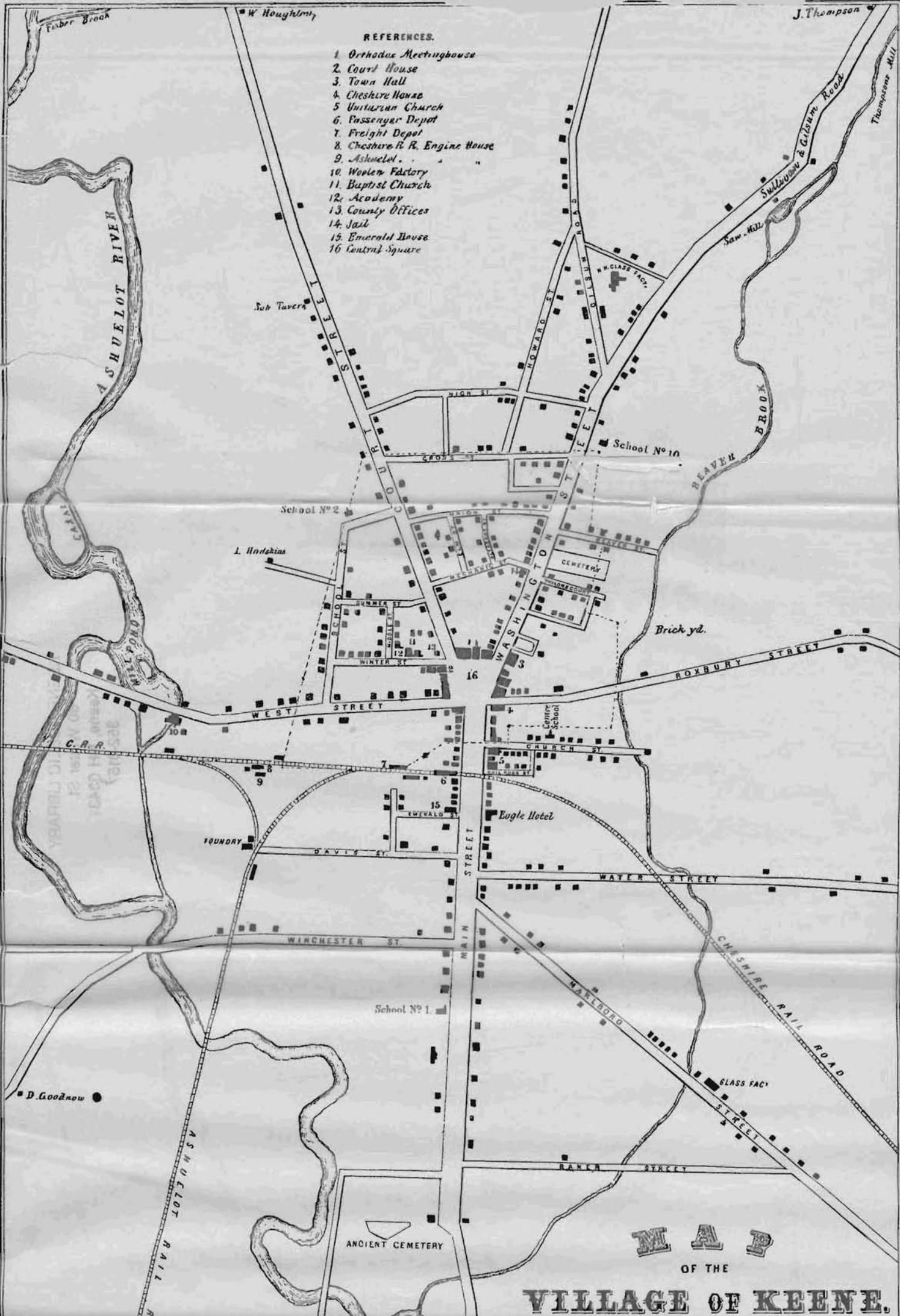
Selden F. White was appointed postmaster to succeed William L. Foster, and the postoffice was removed to his store in Wilders' building. In July, Mrs. Anne E. (Jarvis), wife of Gov. Dinsmoor, died, and a very touching and affectionate obituary of her was published.

For nearly twenty years previous to 1847, public interest in agricultural fairs had languished. A society had been in existence, called at one time the Cheshire County Association for the Promotion of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts, which held a very creditable "cattle show" in Keene in 1843, and paid out a large sum in premiums; but the exhibitions were not kept up. In 1847, there was a revival of interest, the Cheshire County Agricultural Society was formed and a fine exhibition was given here in October, followed by a similar one the next year. Hon. Salma Hale was president, and the leading men and women gave it their support. In 1849 it gave a remarkably fine exhibition. Sixty pairs of oxen were entered for premiums, and more than 100 pairs were on exhibition. There was a profusion of fruit and produce of all kinds, fancy articles and manufactures. Among those who took premiums were Dr. Amos Twitchell, Mrs. A. A. Livermore, Mrs. George Tilden, Mrs. Sarah Sturtevant and Miss Pamela M. Prentiss. The next year the display was considered fully equal to that of Worcester county, Mass., one of the best in the country; and for several years a high standard was maintained.

The project of building the Ashuelot railroad was started as early as 1845-6, and was vigorously pushed by John H. Fuller and others. It was surveyed in 1847, a

charter obtained in 1848, and after many difficulties had been overcome, and much delay in raising funds, the road was built in 1850. It was leased to the Connecticut River railroad, and trains began to run in 1851. John H. Fuller was president of the corporation.

At the close of the decade ending 1850 and the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century, "Keene Street" had become a thriving village of about 1,500 inhabitants—the whole number in the town about 3,400—with direct lines of railroad to Boston and New York, and its position as the most important town in Cheshire county firmly established. Its growth was slow, but constant and healthful. Its men of business were almost invariably successful and many of its farmers acquired wealth. True, the staunch old firm of A. & T. Hall, which for forty years had been the trusted merchants and bankers of many customers, through the expansion and complications of their business and insecure investments, had been compelled to close; but that was an extreme case. The store was bought by Henry Pond, refitted, and for many years afterwards was occupied by Charles Bridgman, an enterprising grocer who had begun business here in 1845, with Alfred Hebard, in the Lamson store, and later had taken the "Railroad Store," where Gurnsey's block now stands. James B. Elliot & Co. had succeeded B. F. Adams & Co. in the hardware store in Elliot's building, still leaving the corner room for John Bixby's drug store. In 1843, Joshua D. Colony withdrew from the firm of Keyes & Colony, and established that of J. D. & T. Colony on the east side of the Square, and E. & F. H. Keyes, afterwards E. C. & F. H. Keyes, continued on the corner of West street until 1851. The Colonys—later, J. D. Colony & Co., including Timothy and Henry Colony—also carried on the manufacture of window glass, and were the last to utilize the old north factory. In 1851, George H. Richards bought the Lamson store and removed his jewelry business to the corner room, next to Roxbury street. The main part of that store, upon the retirement of Mr. Lamson in 1841, had been occupied by his partners, Denny & Briggs, afterwards by Bridgman & Hebard, then by Hebard &



REFERENCES.

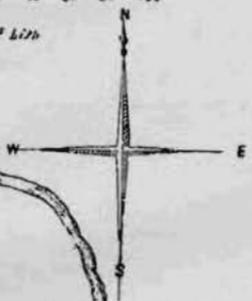
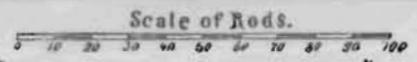
1. Orthodox Meetinghouse
2. Court House
3. Town Hall
4. Chestnut Row
5. Unitarian Church
6. Passenger Depot
7. Freight Depot
8. Chestnut R. R. Engine House
9. Ashuelot.
10. Woollen Factory
11. Baptist Church
12. Academy
13. County Offices
14. Jail
15. Emerald House
16. Central Square

**M A P**

OF THE

**VILLAGE OF KEENE.**

From actual Survey by  
GEO. W. STURTEVANT,  
1850.



ASWUELOT RIVER

SWANZEY ROAD

BRANCH

Statia  
D Thompson

G D Dort

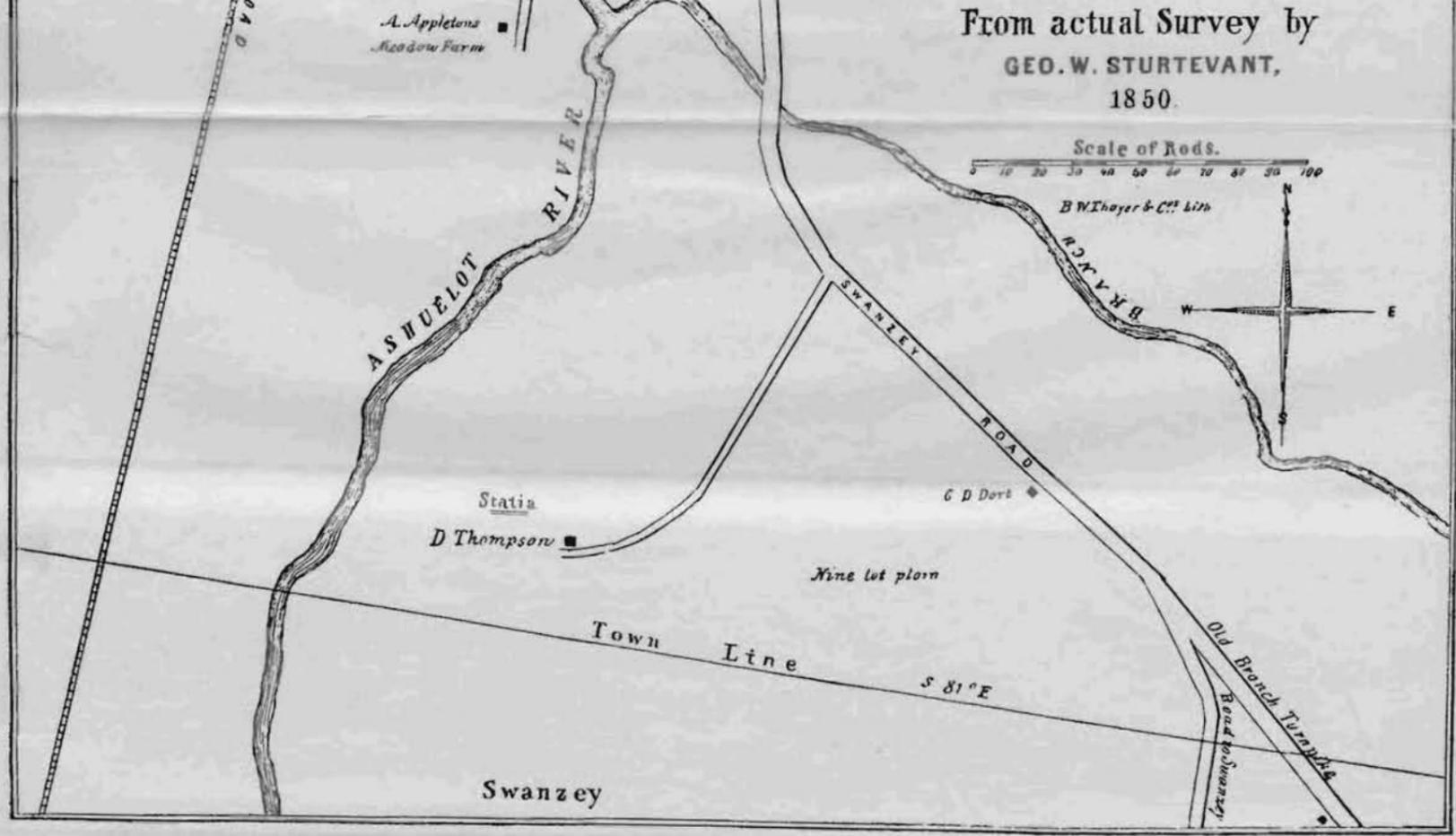
Nine lot plow

Town Line  
S 81° E

Old Branch Turnpike  
Road to Swanzy

Swanzy

A. Appletons  
Meadow Farm



Tilden (Geo. W.), and later by Tilden & Colony (J. D. C.). Lucius H. & Joseph W. Briggs, afterwards Briggs & Kimball, succeeded Sumner Wheeler in the Justus Perry store, but the glass bottle business on Marlboro street had been sold and removed to Stoddard. J. & R. Shelly occupied the store next north of the Briggses, but in 1851 they took the one on the "cheap corner" (Keyes & Colony's). Selden F. White and Hager & Whitcomb, succeeded by D. W. Buckminster & Co., were in Wilders' building; and Buffum & Parker, for a long term of years, were on the west side of the Square, in the present Whitcomb store. Kidder & Winchester, afterwards E. W. Winchester (who married a daughter of Abijah Kingsbury), succeeded Abijah Wilder in the cabinet and furniture business, and they and the Briggses were each doing a large business. Wm. A. Norwood, afterwards Norwood & Weeks, succeeded Norwood & Hubbard, tinsmiths, on the west side of Court street, where Barker's block now stands; and a little later J. C. & T. New followed John P. Barber & Co. in the tin and stove business in the old brick store where the Sentinel building now stands. Joseph and Ephraim Foster—afterwards Fosters & Felt—were manufacturing parlor organs and melodeons on the west side of Court street; Jason and William French, who came from Brattleboro, were making sleighs and carriages on Church street, on the site now occupied by the Jones building; and Marvin T. Tottingham had a shop over them for sign and ornamental painting. Chester Allen was taking daguerreotypes in Gerould's block and continued that business there for many years.

Drs. Geo. B. Twitchell and A. S. Carpenter had come to town. Dr. Twitchell occupied the house on Washington street, now Mrs. Sarah D. Wheeler's, and Dr. Carpenter's office was in Briggs' building below the old Unitarian church. Dr. Thomas B. Kittredge came from Claremont soon afterwards, bought the stone house on Washington street, corner of Taylor, and spent the remainder of his life there—an excellent physician and a highly respected citizen. William P. Wheeler, C. C. Webster, Edward Farrar and Farnum F. Lane had joined the corps of attorneys in town.

A large social book club, an important organization for literary culture, was in existence at this time. It was started in 1847 by Rev. A. A. Livermore, and contained, besides choice books, all the leading periodicals of the day, English and American.

On the 2d of October, 1850, was held the last of the old-time military musters in Keene. It was a muster of all the "independent" uniformed companies of the Fifth brigade. Those that were particularly noticed for their fine appearance were the Keene, Westmoreland and Winchester light infantry companies, the Fitzwilliam artillery, the Jaffrey rifles and the Richmond grenadiers. D. W. Buckminster commanded the Keene Light Infantry. But the day was stormy and the pouring rain added to the funereal aspect of the occasion.

The census of 1850 gave Keene a population of 3,392 — 3,381 white and 11 colored. The total population of the United States was 19,387,671.

The Cheshire Provident Institution for Savings reported the amount of deposits on hand to be, after seventeen years of existence, \$391,290.09.

The twelve highest taxpayers were Josiah Colony, John Elliot, Charles S. Faulkner, Charles Lamson, Cheshire Provident Institution for Savings, Thomas M. Edwards, Aaron Appleton, William Dinsmoor, Calvin Page, Cheshire railroad, Charles G. Adams and John Towns.

The Sons of Temperance, the Washingtonians and other temperance organizations, and the citizens generally, celebrated the 4th of July, 1851. Hon. Jared Perkins presided and Rev. A. L. Stone of Boston was the orator. It was to have been an outdoor affair, but rain fell, and it was held in the town hall.

The New Hampshire Union railroad was incorporated in 1851, to run from Keene to Concord via Hillsboro Bridge. The first meeting of the grantees was held at the Cheshire House. Samuel Dinsmoor and Josiah Colony were chosen directors for Keene; Samuel Dinsmoor, president, Wm. L. Foster, clerk. But the probable amount of business did not warrant the cost, and the enterprise was abandoned.

Ever since its first settlement the citizens of Keene have taken a deep interest in the beauty and reputation of their town, and have endeavored to ornament and improve it wherever there was opportunity. The agitation for enlarging and beautifying the common in 1820 and previous to that date, has already been referred to, and the improvements made in 1828 have been described. When those radical changes had been completed the common was left a broad, open square, which, although in handsome form for the center of the village, was described in 1840<sup>1</sup> as a "sandy waste." One of the methods adopted for the improvement of the appearance of the town was the formation of the Forest Tree Society, and at a legal meeting in November, 1844, the town passed a vote permitting that society "to fence in and ornament a small central portion of the Common of such size and shape as the Selectmen shall deem compatible" with the convenience of the public highway. For many years that society was active and energetic and did much towards ornamenting our streets with trees. At its annual meeting in September of that year (1844), it reported having planted in the spring 141 trees, ninety-nine of which were then alive. But there was bitter opposition to the project of planting trees to "conceal the signs" of the traders or in any way obstructing the free use of that public common—the parade ground of the military, and the rendezvous and market place of the farmers and others, with their teams—and threats were made that such trees would be very quickly uprooted and removed if they were planted there. So the planting of the trees was delayed; but the wordy controversy continued until the spring of 1851, when the Forest Tree Society, the more active members of which were George A. Wheelock, Dr. F. S. Stratton, George H. Richards, Francis S. Fiske, Selden F. White and a few others, ploughed up a small circle, about fifty feet in diameter, in the center of the Square, planted a few trees, which they brought from the "Statia" farm, and enclosed the area with a fence. The oak tree grew from an acorn planted by Eliphalet Hale, a

<sup>1</sup>Until within a few years of that time a large guide board had stood at the south side of the common pointing the way and giving the distances in miles to Boston, Walpole, Montpelier and many other places.

retired merchant of Boston who was boarding here at that time. Twice since 1851 the area of the park has been enlarged and other trees added, and in 1860 gravelled walks were laid, radiating from the center as at present.

In compliance with a vote of the town at the annual meeting in 1852, the selectmen procured a fireproof safe for keeping the town records.

At South Keene important improvements were made. In 1830 to 1833, George Page had a small shop—with a lathe operated by foot and later by horse power—on the site of the present Washington school grounds, where, with the financial aid of Thomas M. Edwards, he secured a patent and made mortising machines, under the firm name of T. M. Edwards & Co. About 1834, they were joined by J. A. Fay and Edward Joslin. In 1837, to get the benefit of water power, they bought one-half of the hoe making shop of Aaron Davis and removed to South Keene. They enlarged the shop; Messrs. Edwards, Davis and Page sold out; and the firm became J. A. Fay & Co.. They made planing and mortising machines, and all kinds of wood-working machinery—the first ever made in America. In 1847, to meet the large demand for their machines, they established branch factories at Norwich, Conn., and Cincinnati, O.; and this year (1852) built the factory at South Keene. The branches soon became large establishments, that at Cincinnati being the largest of the kind in the world, with a capital of \$1,500,000, and the whole establishment bears the corporate name of the J. A. Fay & Egan Co. In 1862, all the manufacturing was transferred to Norwich and Cincinnati, and the factory at South Keene was closed. Mr. Fay died in 1854, and Mr. Joslin in 1901.

Upon retiring from the above enterprise, Aaron Davis, with his sons, established the iron foundry on Davis street, near Ashuelot river. Mr. Davis died in 1857, and was succeeded in the business by his son, Alfred S., and he by Moses Ellis, who rebuilt the foundry and enlarged and improved the business.

At the national election in November, 1852, the town "Voted That the Selectmen in conjunction with the board

of Fire Engineers, be authorized to purchase a suitable number and proper uniforms to be kept by said Town, for the use of each member of the several Fire Engine companies of said Town."

The Ashuelot Fire Insurance Company (mutual) was organized in February, 1853, with Thomas M. Edwards, Benj. F. Adams, William Dinsmoor, Sumner Wheeler and Francis S. Fiske incorporators. It did a successful business in this and adjoining counties for nearly half a century.

In 1848-9, two young men—one a Mr. Towns—began operations in a small building on our present Mechanic street, where the main shops now stand, with a twelve horse-power engine. Soon afterwards Mr. Lanmon Nims came from Sullivan and bought them out, took in Nelson N. Sawyer and Sawyer Porter as partners—afterwards Daniel Buss, the firm becoming Nims & Buss—enlarged the plant and manufactured sash, doors and blinds. Mr. Cyrus Woodward succeeded Mr. Nims, and for a few years the firm was Buss & Woodward. In 1856, the buildings were destroyed by fire, causing a loss of \$1,500 to \$2,000. The property then passed into the hands of S. D. Osborne and S. W. Hale, and the shops were rebuilt for the manufacture of chairs, Messrs. Lanmon Nims and Samuel B. Crossfield (Nims & Crossfield) hiring power and continuing the manufacture of sash, doors and blinds. The Keene Steam Power Co. was organized in February, 1853, for the purpose of improving this property, but the necessary capital was not raised and the project was abandoned for that time.

Joshua D. Colony was appointed postmaster to succeed Selden F. White, and removed the office to the east side of the Square, where it remained twelve years.

The centennial anniversary of the organization of the town under the New Hampshire charter was celebrated on the 26th of May, 1853, in compliance with a vote of the town at the annual meeting in March, when \$500 were appropriated for that purpose.<sup>1</sup> A large tent had been pitched on a green plat near the Square, but the rain poured in torrents and the exercises were held in the town

<sup>1</sup>\$356.40 were afterwards appropriated to meet a deficit.

hall. Hon. Thomas M. Edwards was president of the day; Hon. Levi Chamberlain was chief marshal; and Samuel Dinsmoor, Salma Hale, Charles G. Adams, John Elliot, John Wood, Josiah Colony, Elijah Parker, Timothy Hall, John Prentiss, John H. Fuller, Charles Lamson, Samuel Wood, Thomas F. Ames, George Tilden, Abel Blake, Enos Holbrook, Luther Nurse, B. F. Adams, William Lamson, Calvin Chapman, Sumner Wheeler, J. D. Colony, Thomas H. Leverett, Michael Metcalf, Daniel Watson, Samuel Towns, Noah R. Cooke, James Buffum, Kendall Crossfield, Josiah Sawyer, Geo. K. Wright, J. W. Briggs, Albert Godfrey, Harvey A. Bill, Charles S. Faulkner, Abijah Wilder, Eliphallet Briggs, Wm. P. Wheeler, John H. Elliot, F. A. Faulkner, F. F. Lane, Virgil M. Kimball, Geo. B. Twitchell, Wm. S. Briggs, Geo. A. Wheelock, James B. Elliot, Leonard Bisco, Isaac Sturtevant, Joshua Wyman, Robert Wilson, S. A. Gerould, Jr., Edward Farrar, J. W. Prentiss, S. F. White, F. S. Fiske, and others, served as vice presidents, members of committees, secretaries, marshals, etc. A large number of natives who had left town, and other former residents, returned to assist at this celebration.

The program of exercises was as follows:

1. Prayer by Rev. Z. S. Barstow, D. D.
2. Ode, written for the occasion by Rev. Gilbert Robbins of the Baptist church, and sung by a large choir under the direction of Wm. S. Hutchins.
3. Oration by Hon. Joel Parker, professor of law in Harvard university, late chief justice of New Hampshire.
4. Anthem by the choir.
5. Concluding prayer by Rev. Gilbert Robbins.

The rain having ceased, a procession was formed, headed by the Boston Brigade band, P. S. Gilmore, leader, and marched down Main street, to the Eli Metcalf lot, the site now occupied by Mrs. Ball's residence, where a collation under a tent was provided by Mr. John Wright of Boston, with seats for 2,000 persons; and although many were kept away by the storm, 1,700 to 1,800 were present. Grace was said by Rev. Wm. O. White, and at the close, thanks were offered by Rev. Mr. Quimby. The following toasts were announced by the president—as prepared by a committee:

1. "Our Centennial Celebration—with all its reverential and pleasant memories." Dr. Watts's version of the 78th psalm was sung to the tune of St. Martins by the whole assembly, led by the choir and accompanied by the band.

2. "Sir Benjamin Keene—We pay the debt for his name by 'keeping his memory green.'" The band played "Over the Waters to Charley."

3. "The First Settlers and Early Inhabitants of Keene—May their foresight, their energy, their sacrifices, be held in grateful remembrance by those who reap where they sowed." Singing, "Auld Lang Syne." Response by Mr. John Prentiss.

4. "The Ladies of Keene—The first census showed their superiority in numbers, and our whole history bears testimony to the influence of their virtues and graces." The band, "Believe me if all those endearing young charms." Response by Dea. Samuel Greele, of Boston. The president of the day gave: "The memory of Miss Catherine Fiske."

5. "The Ashuelot—That bright stream which gave the first Indian and poetical name to our town." Band, "The Meeting of the Waters." Response by Gideon F. Thayer of Boston.

6. "The Sons of Keene who have left us—The reports that come back to us prove that they have done us honor abroad." Band, "Oft in the Stilly Night." Responses by George S. Hale of Boston and Horatio G. Parker, then of Greenfield, Mass.

7. "The House of Nathan Blake—The first house erected in the township; and the Meeting House of 1753, built of slabs, with earthen floor." Band, "I remember the house where I was born." Responded to by Rev. Geo. G. Ingersoll, D. D., of Keene, with a witty original poem upon local matters in which were the lines:

"The Keene that was, dream of an earlier year,  
Its very name was music to my ear,  
\* \* \* \* \*

Like some sweet, far off, visionary scene,  
My very name for Fairy-Land was 'Keene.'

8. "The 'worthy Jacob Bacon,' the first Minister of Upper Ashuelot, and his worthy successors, the Ministers of Keene." Singing, "Ye Christian Heralds," Zenner. Response by Rev. Dr. Barstow, and Rev. David Oliphant, a former minister of Keene.

9. "Old Captain Wyman and the 'Thirty Volunteers' who marched, at twelve hours' warning, against the 'Regulars.'" Band, "Yankee Doodle."

10. "The first annual school tax of six pounds—the last of two thousand dollars." "The Schoolmaster."

11. "The first 'Town Resolve' against 'drinking and tipping,' with the forfeit of 'two shillings for the use of the poor.'" "Rogues' March."

12. "Hon. Daniel Newcomb; and the Bar of Keene in his day, and their worthy successors." "Fine Old English Gentleman."

13. "The Adopted Citizens of Keene—Let their numbers increase; we shall always be glad to give them room and welcome."

In addition to the above, the following volunteer toasts were responded to:

1. "The Traders of Keene forty years ago, and the Merchants of Boston today." Response by Isaac Parker, of Boston, formerly a trader in Keene.

2. "The Author of the Annals of Keene—He has secured for himself an honorable place in the annals of any future historian of the town." Response by Hon. Salma Hale.

3. "New Hampshire and Massachusetts, Keene and Boston—May they ever continue to pursue with one heart and one purpose whatever is patriotic, or elevated, or philosophic for the amelioration of man." Response by G. F. Thayer.

4. "Moses Johnson—For many years an active, enterprising, and public spirited citizen of the town. He has stamped the impress of those qualities upon various portions of the village in a manner hardly to be effaced by time."

5. "The memories of Dr. Amos Twitchell—The skillful physician and surgeon, and of Capt. Aaron Hall, the benevolent merchant and apothecary."

6. "The memory of Hon. Phineas Handerson—The sound lawyer, upright magistrate, and exemplary Christian."

Hon. Levi Chamberlain was called upon to respond to the thirteenth regular toast, but the lateness of the hour prevented.

The three fire companies of Keene, the Deluge, Tiger and Lion, made their first appearance in new uniforms, with full ranks, and did escort duty. The meeting adjourned for one hundred years. In the evening the band gave a concert at the town hall, and the president of the day opened his house for a general reception.

The general committee by a unanimous vote requested a copy of Judge Parker's oration for publication, and a

committee was appointed to publish a full report of the celebration. At the annual meeting in 1855 the town passed a vote of thanks to Judge Parker "for his learned and eloquent address," and instructed the selectmen to publish twelve hundred copies of it—provided "the expense shall not exceed \$250." The address was never published, nor any report of the celebration except by the local newspapers.

The subject was revived at the annual meeting in 1860, and a committee was appointed to procure a copy of the address for publication—300 copies of the pamphlet to be printed instead of 1,200. But Judge Parker's reply to the request—recorded in full in the town books—was to the effect that the address was not historical and therefore would not be of sufficient general interest to warrant its publication.

The Keene Debating Club, a resuscitation of the old Forensic Society, now (1853) held regular meetings, every Tuesday evening, in Odd Fellows' hall. The Keene Lyceum lectures had also been established by Levi Chamberlain, Samuel Dinsmoor, Thomas M. Edwards, Wm. P. Wheeler, Wm. O. White, Geo. B. Twitchell, F. A. Faulkner and others, afterwards managed for several years by George Tilden. The list of lecturers comprised the names of Josiah Quincy, Jr., George W. Curtis, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Anson Burlingame, John G. Saxe, Wendell Phillips, J. G. Holland, Bayard Taylor, Charles Sumner, Grace Greenwood, Revs. E. H. Chapin, Starr King and Henry Ward Beecher, and others equally distinguished.

At the annual meeting in 1854, upon the report of a committee previously appointed, the town voted to purchase the "Woodland Cemetery" lot of Thomas M. Edwards, which included a part of the muster field; and the trade was consummated in June. In 1856, a committee, consisting of N. B. Harrington, Timothy Twitchell and Geo. W. Sturtevant, was appointed to lay out and appraise the lots, and Mr. George A. Wheelock was appointed superintendent.

In October, 1854, the State Agricultural Society held its annual fair in Keene, on what is now Wheelock park,

continuing four days. The lot—twenty-five acres—had recently been purchased by the county society, largely through the influence of Thomas H. Leverett, fenced and provided with excellent buildings and conveniences. A building nearly 100 feet long had been erected for the display of fancy articles, farm products and manufactures; a barn for horses; a grand stand capable of seating 2,000 persons; and numerous pens and stalls along the west and north sides of the lot for stock. The display was fine and drew a large number of people. More than 200 pairs of oxen and about 400 head of other cattle were entered for premiums, besides large numbers of horses and other stock. Governor Baker and many distinguished men were present, and the Manchester Cornet band furnished the music. For many years afterwards the Cheshire county fair was a permanent and important institution, excelling other county and even state fairs in the display of fine oxen and other exhibits.

In the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 2, 1854, a wind and snow storm visited Keene, which increased in violence and continued through the night. Much damage was done to buildings, fences and timber. Fifty chimneys in the village were blown down and some buildings were destroyed. More than 500 old growth pine trees, belonging to Stephen Chase, were blown down, and large numbers on a lot in Ash Swamp, on the ministry lot, on the Wright farm on Beech hill, and in other parts of the town. The following summer, Mr. Chase, in connection with his brother Charles, put up a steam sawmill on the east side of the road a few rods north of his house, to cut up the pine timber. After running a few years, the mill was sold to Charles Chase and Madison Fairbanks, who removed it to Ralston street in 1860, increased the power, added other buildings and carried on a large business in the manufacture of sash, doors, blinds and other products of wood. Later the plant was owned and operated by Mr. Fairbanks alone.

On the 30th of December, 1854, the old Watson harness shop, next south of the Cheshire bank, was destroyed by fire. The fire department was commended as being very efficient; there was no wind and other buildings were saved.

The Cheshire County bank was organized in August, 1855, and occupied the brick building which was erected during the summer by Henry Pond on the north half of the Watson lot; capital, \$100,000. The board of directors consisted of Zebina Newell, George Huntington, William Haile, Frederic Vose, Amos A. Parker, Lawson Robertson and Harvey A. Bill. The president was Zebina Newell, and the cashier, Geo. W. Tilden. Mr. Newell died in 1858. He was succeeded by Frederic Vose, and he, in 1871, by Edward Joslin, who died in 1901.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Tilden was cashier until his death in 1879, and was succeeded by J. R. Beal, who held the office until his death in 1895, when he was succeeded by Wallace L. Mason. In 1865, it was organized as a national bank, and the name changed to Keene National bank. The capital remained the same.

On the 21st of December, 1855, the old glass factory at the north end of the village, which had been an important landmark for nearly half a century, was destroyed by fire.

Mrs. Betsey (Nourse), widow of Capt. John Leonard (who died in 1829, aged seventy-six), died, December 7, aged one hundred years, seven months and ten days.

The 4th of July, 1856, was celebrated, many people from other towns joining. Hon. Thomas M. Edwards was president of the day, Capt. D. W. Buckminster marshal. A procession was formed on the arrival of the train from Boston and marched through the principal streets of the village. Speeches were made and a collation provided at the Emerald House.

In January, 1857, there was a term of remarkably cold weather, lasting ten days. "The mercury ranged below zero for several days." On the 16th, it fell to 40° below, and at Montpelier, Vt., to 50° below.

A firemen's muster was held here in September, 1857. Sixteen companies from this and neighboring towns, with their engineers—seven of them with military bands—paraded and marched through the streets. In the afternoon there was a trial of efficiency in which the Deluge Company, No. 3, of Claremont, won the first prize, \$150; the Franklin, No. 2, of Greenfield, Mass., the second, \$100;

<sup>1</sup>Elisha F. Lane followed Mr. Joslin, serving one year. He was succeeded by George A. Litchfield. [Eds.]

and the Alert, No. 1, of Winchendon, the third, \$50. The engines were the old-fashioned tubs, with hand brakes, and they threw water to the height of 160 feet.

When the courthouse was removed from the east to the west side of the turnpike, in 1808, Capt. Josiah Richardson gave the land for the new site (conveyed to the county by "lease and demise;" consideration one dollar) with the condition: "To have and to hold the same for the use of a Court house thereon, and for so long a Time as said County shall Choose to use it for that purpose and no longer." When the county was about to build a brick courthouse on the same site in 1824 it procured a deed of the same premises (consideration five dollars) from Joseph Dorr and his wife, Rebecca—sole surviving heir of Capt. Richardson—but that deed contained the same condition as to the use of the land and courthouse as the conveyance of Capt. Richardson. The county forfeited its rights in the premises by permitting the building to be used for other purposes than those of a courthouse. Dea. Samuel Wood purchased the reversionary rights of Mrs. Dorr and brought suit to recover the property. The case was decided against the county in 1856. (See New Hampshire Reports, vol. 32, Wood v. Cheshire Co.) The county convention of the legislature then authorized the purchase of an additional tract of land on the north side of the stone county building, the removal of that building, and the erection of a new courthouse. From a larger committee Thomas M. Edwards, of Keene, and Nelson Converse, of Marlboro, were appointed a sub-committee to superintend the work, and the present courthouse was built in 1858. G. J. F. Bryant of Boston was the architect. The south half of the old courthouse came into possession of S. A. Gerould & Son, was rebuilt, and was for many years the drug store of Dort & Chandler and B. W. Hodgkins; the north half is the store of Bullard & Shedd.

At the annual election in 1859, a committee, Wm. S. Briggs, Thomas H. Leverett, and Levi Chamberlain, appointed the previous year, reported that they had purchased a strip of land eighteen feet wide at the north end of the town hall for a driveway, as instructed; and Wm.



COURTHOUSE. ERECTED 1858.

Courthouse. Erected 1858.

P. Abbott, F. F. Lane and Arba Kidder were appointed a committee to enlarge the hall and provide an entrance at the north end. The enlargement was made later.

Hon. Thomas M. Edwards was elected to congress in 1859.

Early in this year the Young Men's Christian Association of Keene was organized—S. D. Osborne, president; Reuben Stewart, Albert A. Woodward, S. W. Hale, D. R. Calef, Simeon Ballou, directors. They occupied chambers on the east side of the Square.

In 1857, after several years of subsidence, interest in the subject of a public library in Keene again revived. A meeting of the citizens in December appointed Wm. P. Wheeler, Wm. O. White, George Tilden and Wm. H. Thayer a committee to consider the subject, propose a plan of procedure and report at a future meeting. Under the call of that committee a meeting of the citizens was held at the town hall on the 31st of January, 1859, Hon. Thomas M. Edwards, chairman. The result of that meeting was that a voluntary association was organized by Wm. P. Wheeler, John H. Elliot, Geo. B. Twitchell, E. A. Webb, Gilman Joslin, F. F. Lane, Wm. H. Thayer, D. H. Sawyer, Wm. S. Briggs, George Cook, Leonard Bisco and their associates under the general laws of New Hampshire, taking the name of the Keene Public Library. It had a paid-up cash capital of \$1,000, in shares of \$5 each, and was managed by a board of twelve trustees, chosen each year. The library began its circulation on the 3d of September, 1859, with a few remaining volumes of former libraries, forty-two volumes of public documents, presented by Hon. A. H. Cragin, M. C., fifty-three bound volumes of the New Hampshire Sentinel—1799 to 1852—and other ancient newspapers from John Prentiss, many miscellaneous volumes from others, and about 1,000 new books. Its room was the office of Leonard Bisco, on the second floor in Elliot's block, corner of West street, and Mr. Bisco was the librarian; and there it remained until it was transferred to the city of Keene, in 1874, and was made a free public library. It then numbered 2,644 volumes.

At the annual meeting in 1860 the town voted to

accept the bequest of \$1,000 made by David A. Simmons, a native of Keene. The conditions of the bequest were that it "be safely invested and the interest thereof and income only to be forever annually applied by the Selectmen of the said Town for the time being toward the relief and comfort of such of the poor of the Town requiring assistance therefrom who are aged and infirm."<sup>1</sup>

In the original grant of Upper Ashuelot by the province of Massachusetts one "house-lot," or right—one sixty-third part of the township, or a fraction over four hundred acres—was reserved for the first settled minister, one for the ministry and one for the school; and those house lots, carrying with them the rights in the subsequent divisions of the lands, were laid out with those of the sixty individual proprietors and were numbered, respectively, 13, 28 and 29. Again, the New Hampshire charter of 1753 granted "One Sixty forth Parte of the Said Tract (394½ acres) for the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign Parts, One Sixty forth Parte of the Said Tract for the first Settled Minister of the Gospel in S<sup>d</sup> Town One Sixty forth Parte of the said Tract for A Glebe for the Church of England as by Law Established." In March, 1761, the proprietors granted the minister lands—the one sixty-fourth part of the township as prescribed in the charter—to Rev. Clement Sumner, as the first (permanently) settled minister of the town; and he disposed of those lands at his pleasure, as we find by the records of deeds. But nothing appears to have been done concerning the lands belonging to the "ministry" until 1787, when the proprietors of the undivided lands in Keene voted to lay out in said lands fifty acres to be kept for a woodlot for firewood for the gospel minister of said town, and to be used for no other purpose—to be under the care of the selectmen. This grant of about one-eighth of what both the Massachusetts grant and the New Hampshire charter required of them apparently satisfied the consciences of the proprietors concerning the "ministry" lands.

<sup>1</sup>In 1887, the Simmons fund of \$1,000 and the bequest of Susan Eastburn of \$300 for the same purpose, with some accrued interest, were deposited in the Guaranty Savings bank, resulting in a serious loss. In 1896, Julius N. Morse bequeathed \$1,000 to be added to the Simmons fund.

Concerning the glebe lands we find the following in the proprietors' records:

"Cheshire ss }  
 May 28th 1804 Met according to adjournment. On the 2nd Article voted that Elijah Dunbar or any other person or persons legally authorized should lay out one sixty fourth part of said Township for a Glebe for the church of England as by Law established and have the same entered on the Proprietors book of Records, provided the same be done at his or their own expense & the same be laid out in the common and undivided lands in not more than three lots or Divisions by the Committee for laying out the last Division in said Town."

"I have laid out the said land and taken possession of the same in behalf of the Episcopal society which I hereby affirm I have a right to do by virtue of a Lease of the Rev.<sup>d</sup> Daniel Barber agent for said Society.

Elijah Dunbar.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Attest L. (Lockhart) Willard, Prop<sup>s</sup> Clerk."

Mr. Dunbar's grant was not secured to him nor to the Episcopal church or society, no record of its lay-out has been found, and no one knows where it was located. The "Glebe road" to Westmoreland was so called because it ran through or near the Westmoreland glebe, not that of Keene, so far as is known.

No account has been found in the proprietors' records, or in those of the town of Keene, concerning the disposition of those original school lands, nor has the town ever had them in its possession or received any income from them for the benefit of the schools. Apparently they were seized by the proprietors, and finally passed into the hands of private parties. And the same is true of the glebe lands and those granted to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

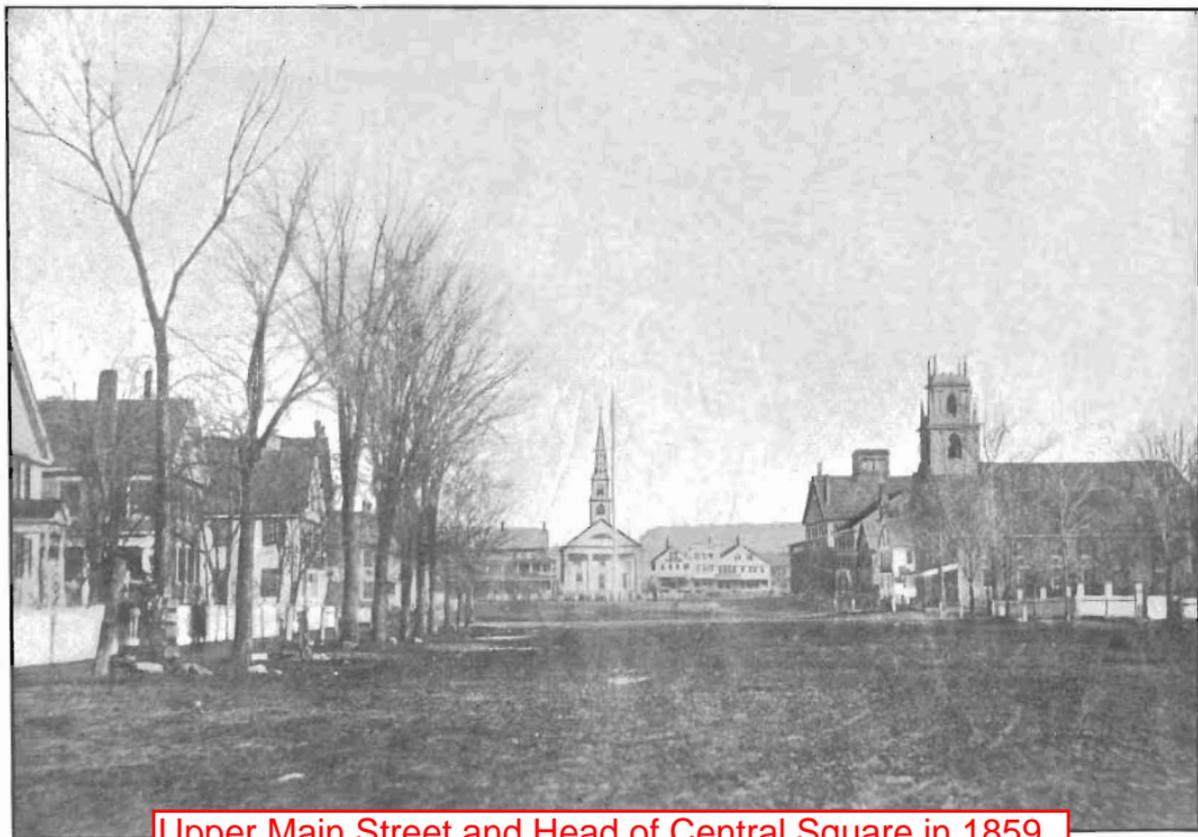
To return to the ministry lot. Many years after the grant of fifty acres in 1787, when more than one minister had been settled in town, firewood from that lot was given to each of them. It was laid out in the north part of the town, about two miles from the village, on the hills west of Beaver brook. On it was a heavy growth of pine timber, a large part of which was blown down by the

wind storm of 1854. The selectmen sold the wood and timber, and afterwards such trees as were deteriorating, and put the money into the town treasury to be accounted for. At the annual meeting in 1860, the town instructed the selectmen to separate from other moneys the proceeds of the sales from the ministry lot and treat them thereafter as a separate fund.<sup>1</sup> The interest of that fund has since been divided each year among the resident settled ministers in lieu of firewood.

The close of this decade, ending 1860, showed decided progress and many improvements in Keene. Shelly & Sawyer had built a three-story brick block on the east side of the Square, in place of the old Perry & Wheeler store; and, adjoining it, the Cheshire Mills corporation of Harrisville (the sons of Josiah Colony of Keene) had put up a handsome building with an iron front, of smaller dimensions but of the same height, filling the space to the old Lamson building on the corner of Roxbury street; the Cheshire House had been remodelled by Henry Pond, the south wing added, with stores on the ground floor and a hall above 40 x 76 feet, 17 feet high, and the large stables in the rear built; the Congregational meetinghouse had been moved back four feet to the line of the Wilder building, raised, to give height for the vestry beneath, widened, to give room for two more rows of pews, the steeple remodelled and extended twenty to thirty feet in height, and a new organ placed in the gallery. In January, 1861, it was rededicated, and Rev. John A. Hamilton was ordained as assistant to Rev. Dr. Barstow.

St. James' Episcopal church had been organized, Rev. E. A. Renouf, rector. The incorporators of the parish, under the general laws of New Hampshire, were Thomas B. Kirtledge, Wm. P. Wheeler, Samuel Dinsmoor, James Q. Newell, Josiah Colony, Cyrene Johnson, F. M. Ballou, Lucius Goodnow, John Bixby, Harry Brownson, M. T. Tottingham, D. H. Sawyer and Joshua D. Colony. Episcopal services had been held in Keene as early as 1816, in the old courthouse, by Rev. Mr. Leonard, of Windsor, Vt., and Rev. Mr. Moss, of Newburyport, Mass. Among the citizens

<sup>1</sup>In 1887, the accumulation of those sales and interest amounted to \$4,155.



Upper Main Street and Head of Central Square in 1859.

UPPER MAIN STREET AND HEAD OF CENTRAL SQUARE IN 1859.

who aided in those services were Elijah Dunbar, Ithamar Chase and Dr. Thomas Edwards. The burial service of that church was first used in Keene by Rev. Dr. Strong, of Greenfield, Mass., in August, 1817, in the First Congregational church, at the funeral of Hon. Ithamar Chase, and made a deep impression. Occasional services were held afterwards by Rev. Mr. Barber, of West Claremont, and by Rev. Nathaniel Sprague,<sup>1</sup> a native of Keene, son of Hon. Peleg Sprague; and Dr. and Mrs. Edwards were confirmed by Bishop Griswold. Services were held here for several weeks in the summer of 1850 by Rev. Henry N. Hudson, the celebrated Shakesperian scholar, but he was called to another field and it was not until 1858 that they were renewed by the Rt. Rev. Carlton Chase, bishop of New Hampshire, with the result above related. The stone church on West street was built in 1863, Charles E. Parker, architect. The corner stone was laid on the 30th of June with appropriate ceremonies, and the edifice was completed during the following winter and spring, and was used for the first time on Sunday, August 21, 1864.

T. J. French had built the brick house on West street, now the residence of Mrs. Eliza Faulkner, and Henry Pond his residence on the same street, now owned and occupied by his son, Herbert. Chase & Fairbanks had set up their steam mill on Ralston street, and nearly one hundred buildings had been erected in the village within the preceding two or three years.

The Keene Gas Company had been organized—J. H. Carter, president; Solon A. Carter, secretary and treasurer; J. H. Carter, F. A. Faulkner, T. H. Leverett, Edward Gusting, Geo. B. Twitchell, F. M. Ballou and Samuel Woodward, directors. The pipes were laid and a part of the village was lighted by gas for the first time in December, 1859.

The fire department consisted of a chief engineer and four assistants; the Deluge and Neptune fire companies—former names Lion and Tiger—and the Phoenix Hook and Ladder Company.

The Cheshire House was kept by C. H. Brainard, succeeded by E. Holbrook; the Eagle Hotel by Asaph

<sup>1</sup>A memorial window inscribed to him was placed in the church edifice by his sister, Miss Elizabeth Sprague.

Harrington, who kept the house until he died in 1867; the Union Hotel, formerly the Emerald House, by G. A. Goddard, soon succeeded by Ashley Jones. And those were all the public houses in town at that time.

Elliot & Ripley were keeping the hardware store on Elliot's corner; Bridgman & Co. were still in the old Hall store; G. H. Richards, jeweller, on the corner of Roxbury street; J. D. & L. J. Colony in the main part of the Richards building; Shelly & Sawyer in their new block north of them; Parker & Beal, dry goods and clothing, afterwards J. R. Beal & Co., and S. D. Osborne, furniture, were in Pond's block; D. W. Buckminster & Co. were in the old courthouse (now Bullard & Shedd's); S. A. Gerould & Son and G. & G. H. Tilden were in the same stores they had occupied for thirty-five and twenty-five years, respectively; Elbridge G. Whitcomb had bought the Prentiss building and Whitcomb & Dunbar occupied the south store. J. H. Spalter, with a bookstore in Pond's block, formerly Wilders' building, was publishing Adams's arithmetics; E. C. & F. E. Keyes were in their store on the corner of West street; William French was selling groceries, and his brother, T. J., dry goods under the town hall. E. R. Gilmore and Elbridge Clark were in the millinery business, and Reuel Nims kept the store in the old Cooke building, where Lane's upper block now stands. The druggists and apothecaries were O. G. Dort, E. Goddard and Jacob Green; M. T. Tottingham succeeded Wm. S. Briggs in the furniture business, east side of Main, below Church street; O. H. Gillett had followed J. C. & T. New in stoves and tinware; and Geo. O. Leonard made excellent rifles on Winter street, many of which were used in the Civil war. The principal shoe dealers and manufacturers were George Kingsbury, S. L. Randall, Geo. P. Drown, David Hutchins, O. P. Hall and W. O. Willson; the principal blacksmiths were Wm. H. Brooks and Wm. L. Davis, on Church street, L. P. Dean, on Mechanic street, and A. H. Freeman, on the north corner of Marlboro and Main streets; the principal carpenters were D. W. Comstock and H. P. Muchmore. John Humphrey made wood-working machinery, and soon afterwards began the manufacture of water wheels; James

Knowlton had a steam planing mill on Davis street; W. H. Wilkinson—succeeded by S. S. Wilkinson—and A. S. Tilden were manufacturers of harnesses and trunks; and carriages were still made on the north corner of Mechanic and Washington streets by A. H. Miller, and by the Frenches on Church street. Chester Allen, S. C. Dustin and J. A. French were taking photographs; Henry Pond dealt in furs and made hats and caps; P. B. Hayward had succeeded Dea. Asa Duren in the bakery; and Laton Martin, the prince of horsemen, kept an excellent livery stable in rear of the Eagle Hotel for many years, and afterwards north of the present City Hotel. Thomas Hale & Co. were publishing the Sentinel in the Whitcomb block, and Horatio Kimball, the Cheshire Republican in Pond's block. The physicians in town were Geo. B. Twitchell, Thomas B. Kittredge, J. J. Johnson, Wm. H. Thayer, Wm. B. Chamberlain, homeopathic, and J. F. Jennison, botanic and eclectic; and Dr. Jacob H. Gallinger, now United States senator, was here for a short time a little later. The lawyers were Thomas M. Edwards (in congress), Levi Chamberlain, Wheeler & Faulkner, F. F. Lane, C. C. Webster, Harvey Carleton, Edward Farrar and Silas Hardy.

At South Keene, manufactures were flourishing and profitable; Edward Joslin had built and then occupied the two-story house east of the factory; the mechanics were a bright, intelligent class, and a lively debating club was sustained by them and the villagers.

The Cheshire County Agricultural Society continued its yearly exhibits. The former building on the fair grounds for manufactures, produce and fancy articles had been replaced by "Floral Hall," 200 feet long, and other improvements made, and the displays of stock and other exhibits were remarkable. Distinguished men were employed as speakers, and upwards of 6,000 tickets of admission were sold on favorable days; and the interest continued through the Civil war.

Another organization that was of much importance to Keene was the Cheshire County Musical Institute. Its object was the improvement of music in the churches. As early as 1826 and 1827, conventions for that purpose were held in Keene, and the music of the Handel and Haydn

Society's collection was used. In 1849, the subject was revived and B. F. Baker, of Boston, and I. B. Woodbury, of New York, conducted conventions in the town hall. Those yearly conventions became permanent in 1852, and soon afterwards developed into the institute, with Rev. Dr. Barstow, president, conducted in different years by Osgood Colleston and Edward Hamilton, of Worcester, B. F. Baker, E. H. Frost, L. O. Emerson and Carl Zerahn, of Boston, and Wm. B. Bradbury and Geo. F. Root, of New York. Mrs. J. H. Long and other professional singers were employed as soloists, and brilliant concerts were given at the close of each session. The chorus sometimes numbered as high as 600. Its sessions continued through the Civil war and for many years afterwards.

The census of 1860 gave Keene a population of 4,320, three of whom were colored. The state had 326,072.

The fifteen highest taxpayers in town that year were C. S. Faulkner, Cheshire Provident Institution, Josiah Colony, estate of John Towns, Henry Pond, J. A. Fay & Co., Charles Lamson, John Elliot, Samuel Dinsmoor, S. A. Gerould & Son, Keziah Appleton, J. H. Elliot, Thomas M. Edwards, J. B. Elliot, and the Ashuelot bank.

The threatenings of internecine strife in the nation were distinctly seen and heard, but they were generally believed to be the mere blusterings of the slave power and there was little fear of real war; nevertheless the excitement of the presidential campaign in 1860 was intense and the spirit of loyalty was thoroughly aroused in the North. At the election in November, Keene cast 635 votes for the Lincoln electors to 224 for the Douglass, 31 for the Breckinridge and 5 for the Bell tickets.

The following paragraph was written from Keene about this time by a correspondent of the *Christian Freeman*: "Nearly in the middle of the county, on a broad plain where once was the bottom of a lake, surrounded by hills, is the smart and beautiful village of Keene. Its broad, straight, well made streets and sidewalks; its many large and ornamental trees; its elegant dwelling houses and fine gardens; its convenient 'Square' and miniature park render it absolutely the handsomest village of the size in the Eastern States."