

CHAPTER VI.

TOWN AFFAIRS.

1760—1774.

The warrants for town meetings at this period were headed "Province of New Hampshire," and issued "In His Majesty's Name;" and this form was used until 1771.

One article in the warrant for a town meeting held December 31, 1760, was "To see if the Town will agree to give a gentleman a Call in order to settle in the ministry among us." No record of that meeting has been found, or of any other until that of March 26, 1761, when it was "Voted to add Ten Pounds Sterling money of Great Brittain to the Worthy Mr. Clement Sumner to the sum that was voted to him February y^e Sixteenth last past and also a Sixty fourth Part of this Township as mentioned in Our Royal Charter to the first Setled Gospel Minister Provided he shall settle among us."

From this it appears that Mr. Sumner had been called at a previous meeting in February and "His salary was fixed at thirty-five pounds sterling and his firewood, with an annual increase of one pound ten shillings sterling, until fifteen pounds should be added." (Annals, page 35.)

April 15, 1761, the town "Voted Ten Pounds Sterling Money of Great Brittain to be added To Mr. Clement Sumners Sallary and the Whole Sallary to be stated on Commodities as they be now and so from year to year in case that Mr. Sumner Should Except our call; Commodities as they be now wheat at $3/2\frac{1}{2}$ pr Bushel sterling pork at 3^d pr pound Beef at 2^d p^r pound Indian corn at $1/8^1$ pence pr Bushel Rye at $2/6$ per Bushel Labour in the Summer 2/ster pr Day." This was rescinded in November of the following year, upon the complaint of Mr. Sumner that the article of beef had been stated above the market price.²

¹One shilling, eight pence. The diagonal mark / stood for shillings.

²The records of this meeting are signed by Ephraim Dorman, town clerk, showing that he must have been elected at the annual meeting in March.

Mr. Sumner accepted the call in a letter dated April 27, which is recorded in the town books, page 23, old records; and he was ordained on the 11th of June. The church was reorganized at that time, with fourteen male members—having been without a pastor for a year and eight months—and two years later Dr. Obadiah Blake was chosen one of the deacons.

Mr. Amos Foster, who died March 2, 1760, had bequeathed one-half his estate to the town. On the 31st of August, the town voted that Mr. Sumner's settlement and salary should be paid out of that legacy; but it was several years before the land could be sold and the money collected. The same meeting "Voted to give the Sum of Twelve Pounds Lawfull money of the Massachusetts Bay to Doct^r Obadiah Blake and to Doct^r Thomas Frink For their Trouble and Charge in Providing for the Council at Mr. Sumners Ordination." (Dr. Frink had recently come to town and was keeping tavern next below where Capt. Isaac Wyman built the next year.)

Sept. 28 the town "Voted to build a house for Sick Soldiers;" and "Voted Fifteen Pounds Sterling Toward Finishing the meeting House."

The selectmen this year laid out the road afterwards called Prison street, "beginning at the North end of the Street by the Causeway by the Crotch of the Roads that Lead to ash Swamp and up to the Old Saw mill then running by Mr. David Nims' to the North Side of David Morses 100 acres Eight Rods wide thence Four Rods wide up the Old Road through the Old mill yard," etc. The "causeway" at the north end of the original Main street was a little north of the present railroad tracks; David Nims lived where Charles Wright 2d now does; and the old road to the saw mill ran from the causeway much farther east, curving nearly to Beaver brook; and this new road entered it about opposite our present jail, forming our present Washington street.

What was then called the new road to Westmoreland—now the "old road"—was also laid out that year: "beginning at Jesse Clarks [since known as the Ingersoll place at old West Keene] and running up past the Ellis

and Foster farms." Previous to that the road to Westmoreland was the old one that leaves the present Chesterfield road just beyond the railroad arch. That was sometimes called the glebe road, as it ran through or near the Westmoreland glebe.

A proprietors' meeting on the 23d of February was called at the meetinghouse, but adjourned to the house of Nathan Blake:

"Voted upon the Fourth article that that neck of Comon Land where Isaac Clark and Amos Foster were buried be appropriated and Set apart for a burying Place for this Town."¹

"Voted on the 5th article that the Lots of Land Laid out to the Rev^d M^r Clement Sumner by a Com^{tee} Chosen for that Purpose be Recorded and made Sure to him—viz House Lots N^o 28-29 eight acre Lot of Meadow Land (54) Thirty acre Lot (50) Ten acre Lot of Meadow Land (23) a Hundred acre Lot to House Lot (29) also a five acre Lot of Meadow to the same House Lot."

"Voted on the Sixth article that the Prop^{rs} will Lay out Sixty acres of Upland to Each Right in this Township and that they will Proceed in the following manner viz that Each Prop^r shall have Liberty to lay out Ten acres or Less of the same joining their Lands which they have already Laid out where there are Strips of Common Land and that they may Lay the same in Several Pieces not hurting the Common Land or their Neighbours Privilege and where there is Strips of Common Land Lying between two mens Land they Shall Divide the same according to their Interest in the Common Rights—and the Remainder of the above said Sixty acres which shall not be Laid out in Strips of Common Land they will Proceed in the Following manner viz that they will Draw Lots for Choice and he who Draws the first Lot Shall make his Choice or Pitch on the first Day of September next Ensuing the Date hereof and he who Draws the Second Lot the Second Day and so Giving Every man his Day according to his Draught from the first of September Next Until they shall go thro the whole Sabbath Days Excepted and that The Com^{tee} appointed to Lay out said Land shall Proceed in the Following method Namely to Lay out the Lots in good Shape and Form and not Leave Slips of Land between Lot & Lot, and that they Leave

¹On a knoll north of the road leading to West mountain, near Ash Swamp brook, southwest of Henry O. Spaulding's house. The inscription on Mr. Foster's gravestone is still legible, though nearly obliterated. This was the second burying-place used in town, the first being southwest of the first meetinghouse.

Land for Roads in Every Lot—and if any man Shall not Lay out his Lot in his Day nor bring in his Pitch or Choice in writing to David Foster by the Day then he shall not Lay out his Lot till the time be Expired for Laying out Each mans Draught or Pitch in Said Division and if any man shall not Lay out his Lot in Six Days after he made his Pitch it Shall not be Laid out to hinder any other man of his Pitch. Chose Lieu^t Ephraim Dorman Joseph Ellis Joseph Blake Simeon Clark Benjⁿ Hall David Foster and Nathan Blake a Com^{tee} to Lay out said Lots.”

The names of the original proprietors with the numbers of their house lots in regular order, and the numbers of their pitches in this division then follows.

The annual town meeting in 1762 was opened at the meetinghouse, chose “Deacon David Foster Moderator” and immediately adjourned to the house (tavern) of Thomas Frink, Esq. A full list of town officers was elected, including Michael Metcalf, Jr., “Clark of the market,”¹ and “Michael Metcalf and Dr. Obadiah Blake Deer Reifs.”² Thomas Riggs was chosen “Leather Sealer,” and “Dan Guild to Dig the Graves in the Burying Place by the Town Street,”—at the south end, near the site of the first meetinghouse.

The first “merchant” in town was Ichabod Fisher, and at this time he used to go to Wrentham, his native town, once a year, on horseback, and bring back his saddle bags filled with calicos, ribbons, pins, needles, etc., which supplied the dry goods trade in Keene for a year. His store was in his house on “Poverty Lane,” now West street, the small yellow house which stood nearly opposite School street until 1880.

On the 2d of September the town “Voted to Clabbord the meeting House Lay the Floors and Glaze the windows of s^d House and make all the Doors and Brace the Meeting House as the Carpenter and Committee shall think Needfull—Choose Eben^r Nims Michael Metcalf Elisha Briggs Eben^r Clark and Josiah Willard to be a Committe To carry on said Business Relating to the meeting House.”

There was delay in the settlement of the estate of Amos

¹This office was continued for twenty years before the “Haymarket” was established, but nothing is known concerning its duties.

²It was the duty of deer reeves to enforce the law against killing deer in the spring and summer.

Foster, and the town "Choose Thomas Frink, Esq.^r Agent to act in all affairs Relating To the Estate Given to the Town by Mr. Amos Foster Deas'd."

The annual town meeting in 1763 was opened at the meetinghouse, chose David Nims, moderator, and immediately adjourned to "Cap^t Wymans" (tavern). A full complement of town officers was chosen, among them Capt. Wyman first selectman, Ebenezer Clark and Thomas Riggs, tythingmen.

On the 21st of June the town "Voted Thirteen Pounds Sterling to Pay for the Sashes and Window Frames of the meeting House and for Provideing Stone Boards &c for the meeting House."

On the 13th of September the proprietors met at the meetinghouse, chose David Nims moderator, and "adjourned to the House of Sarah Harrington, Inn Holder." Many of the proprietors having neglected to make out their claims under the Massachusetts grant, it was voted that if they did not present their claims on or before the last day of May, 1764, "then their lands shall be free for any man to lay out." The time was afterwards extended to the last day of September, 1765.

The annual town meeting in 1764 was opened at the meetinghouse, chose Dr. Thomas Frink moderator, and adjourned to the house of Nathan Blake.

On the fifth article: "Voted Six Pound Sterling to Defray the Charges of a School." This is the first record of money appropriated by the town for schools.

On article 7: "Voted Fifty Pounds Sterling to Defray the Charge of mending the Highways and to allow Each man Two Shillings Sterling p^r Day for Labour in mending the Highway from the month of May to September and One Shilling and Sixpence Sterling p^r Day after Septem^r Through the Season of working on the Roads."

A town meeting on the 27th of September, adjourned to the 18th of October—Dr. Thomas Frink, moderator—"Voted to Build a Pulpit in the meeting House and make the Seats in the Body of the meeting House and Set up the Pillars put in the Joyce of the Gallerys all to be Completed by the First Day of Septem^r Next." The sum of ten

pounds, sterling, was raised for that purpose, and Lieut. Ephraim Dorman, Benjamin Hall and Simeon Clark were chosen a committee to carry on the work.

At the annual meeting in 1765, on article 7, "Voted the Sum of Sixty Pounds Sterling to make and mend the Highways and that Two Shillings and Six Pence be allowed p^r Day to Each man untill the Last of Septem^r and then Two Shillings p^r Day for each man and one Shilling p^r Day for a yoke of Oxen and Sixpence p^r Day for a Cart."

On the 7th of May a legal meeting of the proprietors was held at the meetinghouse under a warrant from Benjamin Bellows of Walpole, "one of his Majestys Justices of the Peace for said Province" of New Hampshire. Capt. Isaac Wyman was chosen moderator.

"Upon the Second article voted to Confirm all the former votes of the Propriety." A committee was chosen to sell the blacksmith's tools, and a vote passed that the money received for them should "be Laid out to Pay for finishing the meeting House."

"Upon the Fourth article Voted that the Propriety will Lay out Sixty acres of Land to Each Right in said Township."

This was the ninth division of the common land, and the method adopted was the same as that of February 23, 1762.

Twelve acres of land were voted to David Foster for his services as clerk in recording the charter; and "Tho^s Frink Esq.^r David Nims and Breed Batcheller"¹ were appointed a committee to make an allowance out of the common lands to those who had had roads laid through their thirty acre lots.

The annual town meeting in 1766 chose Capt. Isaac Wyman moderator, and adjourned from the meetinghouse to the house of Benjamin Hall. Ichabod Fisher was elected town clerk and Michael Metcalf "Saxton."

After transacting other business the meeting adjourned to the second Tuesday in April at the meetinghouse, when it was "Voted that Benjamin Hall be agent to represent the Town in Behalf of a Shear Town."

¹ Breed Batcheller, a surveyor, was the first settler of Packersfield, in 1765 — afterwards noted as a tory.

“Voted that the money Given to the Town by Capt. Nathaniel Fairbanks Deas'd The interest of which was for the use of the school in this Town That the Security of said money be Delivered to the Care of the Town Treasurer and his susesors [successors] in said office for the Time Being.

“Voted to Give the Priveledge of the Pew which shall be made at the Right Hand of the Pulpit in the meeting House (That is) adjoining to the Pulpit Stairs to the use and For the Service of the ministers Family in this town for the Time Being Said Pew to be made at the Cost and Charge of the Town.

“Voted to give the Privelege of the Pew Ground in the meeting House to those Persons in this Town who have Paid the Largest Taxes upon Real Estate for Three Last years Past and said Persons shall have Their Choice of Said Pew Ground by Succession according to The Value of the Taxes they Paid in s^d Term and shall build their Pews within Six months from this Date and if any of the Said Persons Refuse or Neglect to build their Pew or Pews in Said Term Then the Next highest Payers of the Rates Shall have the said Refusers Property.

“Voted that Benjamin Hall David Nims and Josiah Willard be a Committe to Examine and Determine who are the Persons That have Paid the Larges Taxes in this Town on Real Estate for the Three Last Years Past.”

On the 7th of October, the town “Voted to Build a New Bridge Over the River on the Road Leading to Ash Swamp”—to be completed by the first of April following. James Guild was the master mechanic, and Benjamin Hall, Nathan Blake, Simeon Clark, Jesse Clark and Joseph Blake were the committee to oversee the work. Thirty pounds, lawful money, was raised to defray the expense, and men were allowed 2/6 per day for work on the bridge.

On the 10th of November, the town: “Voted for the Better accommodation and Satisfaction of Sundry Persons —That Twelve Persons more being the Next Highest in the Taxes in Real Estate for the Three Last years Past be added to the Former Twelve and may have the Privelege with the former Twelve in the Pew Ground or Pews already made Provided they will Pay their Equal Part to the Satisfaction of those on whose Charge the Pews were Built.” The article “To see if they will Do anything about Finishing the meeting house” was dismissed.

The annual meeting of 1767: "Voted to Pay unto Pricilla Ellis the sum of Three Pounds Thirteen Shillings and One Penny Lawful Money for her Service in keeping the School." Article 6th of the warrant: "To see if they will Do anything Further about Finishing the meeting House," was dismissed; but, on the 21st of April, Abraham Wheeler, Benjamin Archer and Josiah Ellis were chosen a committee to lay the gallery floors, and build the stairs and "Breastworks" of the gallery in the meeting-house. At the same meeting six pounds were appropriated to purchase standard weights and measures, new books for the town records and "a Law Book for the use of the town."

Down to this time all public business in the province had been transacted at Portsmouth, but the convenience of the people required the establishment of counties. It was proposed in the assembly, in August of this year, that the portion of the province lying east of Merrimac river should be divided into three counties, and that all the towns and settlements west of the Merrimac should constitute a fourth county. In a postscript to a letter on this subject written by Rev. Daniel Wilkins of Amherst to Hon. George Jaffrey of Portsmouth, an influential member of the council and treasurer of the province, Mr. Wilkins said:

"Amherst Oct y^e 1st 1767.

"P: S: S^r I must beg leave to tell your Hon^r that Mr. Willard a son of Coll Willard of Winchester and one Mr. Hall was at my House the Last Evening as agent for Keen and other towns towards the great River to desire that the Shire Town might be Amherst and likewise that there is a general uneasiness of its being at Merrimack and also Walepole as that every town save two would be greatly Discommoded if the Court was had at Walepole and not at Keen and also beg the favour of its being established at Keen as Keen will much best commode the People in General or at least that his Exelency with your Hon^{rs} would grant them Liberty to bring Down the minds of the People." "D.: W."

November 17, the town chose "Josiah Willard agent to act in Behalf of this Town Respecting the Setling a New County;" and "Voted to Have a School Kept in the Town."

(Probably this was a re-election of Capt. Willard, as Mr. Wilkins called him an agent in October previous.)

The first regular census of the province was made this year by order of the general assembly, with an inventory of the ratable estates and the number of polls, and on the 7th of October the selectmen made their return of the number and description of the inhabitants in Keene as follows:

Unmarried men from 16 to 60.....	51
Married men from 16 to 60.....	66
Boys from 16 years and under.....	84
Men, 60 years and above.....	4
Females, unmarried.....	149
Females, married.....	68
Widows.....	8

Total.....430

(Provincial Papers, vol. 7, pages 168-9.)

The assembly established the proportion which each town should pay on £1,000 of tax. The number of polls in Keene¹ was 106, the valuation of the ratable estates £4,000, and its proportion of tax to £1,000, was fixed at £9 10s.

The annual town meeting of March 1, 1768, adjourned to the 7th, in consequence of the extraordinary flood of waters whereby some of the principal inhabitants could not attend the meeting at that time. The meeting was then held at the house of Benjamin Hall, adjourned from the meetinghouse. "Chose Josiah Willard Benjamin Hall and Ichabod Fisher a Committe to Transcribe the Town Records into a New Book and Rectify Mistakes in said Record if any be Relating to Mr. Sumners Sallary."

At a legal meeting on the 9th of May, Capt. Josiah Willard was chosen representative to the "General Assembly" at Portsmouth—the first representative from Keene

¹ Swanzy returned	74	polls, estates valued at.....	£3,000
Winchester "	108	" " " "	4,000
Westmoreland "	94	" " " "	2,700
Walpole "	75	" " " "	2,900
Charlestown "	100	" " " "	4,500
Rowley Canada (Rindge)	65	" " " "	2,200
New Ipswich "	150	" " " "	5,000
Exeter "	390	" " " "	13,000
Dover "	384	" " " "	14,700
Portsmouth "	910	" " " "	32,339

(Provincial Papers, vol. 7, page 166.)

to the legislature of New Hampshire. His father, Col. Josiah Willard, represented Winchester at the same time.

November 17 the town "Voted the Sum of Ten Pound Lawfull Money for Defraying the Charge of a School."

The annual meeting of 1769 was opened at the meetinghouse but adjourned "to the House of Leut. Benj^a Hall." After this for a long term of years the town meetings were held at the meetinghouse.

This meeting "Voted to Raise the Sum of Sixty Three Pounds Six Shillings and Eaight Pence Lawfull money For the Rev'd mr. Sumners Sallary the Present year—

"Voted the Sum of Ten Pounds Lawfull money for Procuring Mr. Sumners Firewood: and each Person to have Liberty to Pay his Propotion of the above Sum in Good Marchantable Firewood at Five Shillings pr cord to be Deliv'd at Mr. Sumners Door at or Before the First Day of February Next;" or in default thereof the money was to be collected. "Choose Benjamin Archer Collector to Collect said Fire wood or the money for Procuring the same."

"Voted to Build a Bridge Over the North Branch upon the Road Leading to Joseph Browns." Mr. Brown lived in what is now Roxbury and this bridge was on the present Roxbury road—the first at that place.

"Choose Capt. Ephraim Dorman and Leut. Benjamin Hall and Jeremiah Stiles a Committee to Perambulate the Town Lines." The first perambulation had been made in 1760 by "Lieut. Ephraim Dorman, Ensign William Smeed and Lieut. Seth Heaton."

On the same day, March 7, the proprietors held a meeting and voted to grant another division of land—twenty-five acres to each right—the distribution to be made in the same manner as that previously adopted, except that each proprietor was given the right to lay out ten or less of his twenty-five acres adjoining his own land.

The annual meeting of 1770 "Voted to Seat the meeting House" and chose "Thos Frink Esq. Thomas Baker Leut Benjamin Hall Dan Guild and Abraham Wheeler" a committee for that purpose.

"Voted further to give Liberty to Jeremiah Stiles Thos Wilder Samuel Wadsworth Robert Gillmore Benjamin Archer Jotham Metcalf Elisha Briggs Silas Cooke Eben^r Carpenter Eben^r Newton Amos Patridge and Daniel Kings-

bury to build Four Pews in the front Gallery and two more Pews over the mens & Womens Gallery stairs said Pew Ground to be Devided amongst them as they shall agree among themselves."

Article 10, "To se if they will Do anything Relating to a School," was dismissed.

The proprietors met on the 27th of April, chose David Nims moderator, and appointed a committee consisting of Lieut. Seth Heaton, Major Josiah Willard and Lieut. Benjamin Hall "to make Search and See what money is due to Coll^l Bellows for the Charter." The meeting then adjourned to the 30th of May, when it "voted to Elisha Briggs Liberty to Lay out forty acres in any of the Common Land in this Township he the said Briggs Discharging the Prop^{rs} and Grantees from what Coll^l Bellows Requires of the Prop^{rs} and Grantees for the Charter of this Town which Sum is Sixteen Dollars and Three Quarters¹ which offer M^r Briggs accepted and Ingaged to bring a Discharge in the space of a month from the Date above."

On the 13th of December, 1769, Gov. John Wentworth granted a charter to Dartmouth college, to be established at Hanover. Towards the close of the following summer Rev. Eleazar Wheelock, with his family, in a coach—the gift of a London friend—his servants, his laborers and some students, numbering in all seventy persons, with cattle, swine and carts loaded with furniture, clothing, books and implements of husbandry and the arts, made their long and tedious journey of 200 miles from Lebanon, Conn., to Hanover, N. H.² Doubtless they passed through Keene, as the best route must have been through Deerfield, Northfield and Winchester, and here they would strike the military road opened by Col. Goffe in 1759 through Keene to No. 4; and a military road had also been opened from No. 4 through Hanover to Haverhill, N. H.

The following advertisement appeared in the Connecticut Courant, published at Hartford, October 16, 1770:

"DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, in Hanover, Oct. 11, 1770.

"WHEREAS a meeting of the honorable corporation of Dartmouth College, was appointed to be on this day in

¹ Showing the value of the best common land to be about 42 cents per acre.

² Sanborn's History of New Hampshire, page 154. McClintock's History of New Hampshire, page 517, and address of Nathan Crosby.

this place, but by some means the advertisement of the same, which was sent to be published in the New Hampshire Gazette miscarried, which makes another appointment necessary.

"These are therefore to notify all concerned that a meeting of said corporation is now appointed to be held at the house of Mr. Wyman, innholder in Keen, on Monday the 22nd instant, at nine o'clock in the forenoon.

By Eleazer Wheelock
President of said College."

"Captain Wyman's tavern in Keen," which he had then kept for seven years, was noted far and wide as an excellent inn.¹ It was a convenient rallying point for the trustees, who were scattered from northern New Hampshire to Connecticut, and they met there according to notice, in the northeast room of that house—now the residence of Mrs. R. S. Perkins, 339 Main street. "Rev. Dr. Eleazer Wheelock presided and Rev. William Patten was clerk," and the administrative work of Dartmouth college was begun in that room.

A legal meeting on the 29th of October voted to divide the town into four school districts corresponding nearly to the four territorial quarters of the town, and each district was required to build a schoolhouse. Fifteen pounds were raised for the support of the four schools, each district to have its proportion according to the tax it paid.

At the annual meeting in 1771, upon a petition of some of the people living on the east side of North branch, they were set off into a school district by themselves;

¹ The statement has been made that Dr. Thomas Frink had previously kept this same tavern, but that is found to have been an error. Dr. Frink preceded Capt. Wyman as the principal tavern keeper at that end of the town, but not in the same house. From the registry of old deeds in the state library at Concord we learn that in 1757, while still in command of Fort Massachusetts, Capt. Isaac Wyman bought of Joseph Fisher, of Dedham, Mass., the original house-lot No. 47, "on the West side of the Town street" in Keene, (where the "Old Wyman Tavern" still stands); but there could not have been a house of any value on it then, for he paid only "one hundred Pounds Lawful Money" for that and the adjoining lots Nos. 46 and 48, and thirty acres on Beech hill. In 1761, while still at Fort Massachusetts, he bought of Rev. Jacob Bacon, then of Plymouth, Mass., the four lots at the south end on the same side of the street,—with some exceptions, as the east end of lot 54—Nos. 51 to 54. The town records of 1762 show that he was then living in Keene, a man of comparative wealth, owning a large amount of property in the town. The records also show that in March, 1763, he was keeping the same tavern that he kept in 1775, and until it passed into the hands of Wm. Ward Blake, who married his daughter Roxana. The inevitable conclusion is that he built the costly (for those days) tavern-house on lot 47 in that first year of his residence here, 1762. It was built specially for a tavern, having a hall over the south half, wine closets, and other tavern conveniences, and the southeast room was the all-important tap room. Dr. Frink never owned lot No. 47, but did own lots 49 and 50, on which were a "Dwelling House and Barn," buying them in December, 1761, and selling them to Col. Josiah Willard in 1765.



WYMAN TAVERN. BUILT 1762.

and Elijah Blake, and others on the west side of the river, in the northwest quarter, were set off in the same way.

A meeting on the 15th of May chose Lieut. Benjamin Hall representative to the "General Assembly;" and "voted to Glaze the meeting house and Choose Josiah Richardson Leut. Timothy Ellis & Elijah Williams committe to carry on s^d Business."

In all these years the people in this part of the province had suffered the expense and inconvenience of going to Portsmouth whenever they had business before the courts. For many years the subject of establishing counties had been agitated, and in 1769 an act passed the legislature and was signed by the governor dividing the province into five counties—Rockingham, Strafford, Hillsborough, Cheshire and Grafton. The first three and the last were named by Gov. Wentworth for English noblemen who were his personal friends. Cheshire was named after the English county of that name, and included the present county of Sullivan. Keene was made one of the shire towns of Cheshire, and Charlestown the other.

But the operation of the act was suspended until the king should approve. His assent having been obtained, the act went into effect in 1771. From that time, for several years, the warrants for town meetings were headed "Cheshire s.s.," and for three years longer they were issued in "His Majesty's Name." The first meeting for the choice of jurors in Keene was held on the 2d of September. Grand jurymen were chosen by the voters; petit jurors were "drawn and appointed" by the selectmen.

"His Majestys Superior Court of Judicature" was held for the first time in Keene on the "Third Tuesday of September;" "His Majestys Inferior Court of Common Pleas" on the "Second Tuesday of October;" and the "Court of General Sessions of the Peace" on "the Thursday following the Second Tuesday of October." Thomas Baker, Joseph Ellis and Eliphalet Briggs were "chosen" grand jurors, and Nathan Blake, Michael Metcalf and Thomas Wilder were drawn as petit jurors for the several courts.

Major Josiah Willard of Keene had been appointed

“Recorder of Deeds & Conveyances of Real Estate” in March, and he held that office until 1776.

At a legal town meeting held on the 14th of February, 1772, it was “Voted by the Majority both of the Church and Congregation that it is the mind of the Town that the Rev^d M^r Sumner be Dismissed from the Work of the Ministry in this Town.”

A council of elders and delegates from the churches of Cornish, Northfield and Warwick was convened here on the 29th of April, at Mr. Sumner’s request, which recommended his dismissal, and a town meeting on the 30th accepted the recommendation and he retired from the pastorate, but remained an estimable citizen of the town. At the close of Mr. Sumner’s ministry of eleven years a very large proportion of the citizens were members of the church. The cause of the dissatisfaction with Mr. Sumner was said to be “the misconduct of his children.”

The annual meeting of 1772 not having been legally held, ten citizens of the town petitioned “The Hon^{ble} Elisha Marsh Esq^r one of his majestys Justices of the Peace” to call a meeting for the choice of town officers, etc. That meeting was held on the 24th of March—Thomas Frink, moderator—and voted thirty pounds for the support of schools for the year. Various sums were also voted to individuals for labor and materials furnished in finishing the meetinghouse.

A meeting on the 5th of June “Voted to Dispose of the Towns Land to pay the Towns Debts,” and chose a committee for that purpose, but no record of sales with that object in view has been found.

The annual meeting of 1773 raised forty pounds for the support of schools. In July, 1772, a committee had been chosen to provide a suitable person to preach the gospel. The meeting in 1773 made it the duty of the selectmen to engage the minister, and “Voted the Sum of Sixty pounds for the Charge of preaching the Gospel the year Ensuing.” A “Mr. Porter” and a “M^r Nathaniel Niles” had been employed for some months in that capacity, and a meeting on the 23d of March, 1773, “Voted to Hear M^r Nathaniel Niles Preach upon probation in order to Settle

in the Ministry among us." In December, the same year, the town "Voted to hear Mr. Augustine Hibbert [Hibbard] preach further upon probation."

In September the town "voted to allow Josiah Richardson to alter the Road Leading from the meeting house to Ichabod Fishers and to Remove Said Road and to Turn out on the South Side of the meeting house with a Stait line to Ichabod Fishers in the place which the Said Richardson has choesen." The meetinghouse then stood on the south side of what is now Central park.



THE RICHARDSON TAVERN.

Josiah Richardson had built, and then kept tavern in, the colonial house which was replaced in 1893 by the Y. M. C. A. building, and this change opened the present line of West street from the Square. It had previously turned west from Main street, diagonally, about where Lamson block now stands, and was called Poverty lane. With this change it was given the name of Pleasant street.

In October, Gov. John Wentworth requested a census of the population of the province, to be taken by the selectmen of each town. The return for Keene was:

"Unmarried men, 16 to 60 yrs.....	65
Married men under 60 yrs.....	96
Boys, 16 and under.....	140
Men, 60 yrs. and upward.....	11
Females unmarried.....	217
Females married.....	105
Widows.....	10
Male slaves.....	1

 645

David Nims, Eliphalet Briggs, jr., Benjamin Hall, Selectmen."
(State Papers, vol. 10, Census, 1773.)

The total population of the province was given as 72,092; whole number of slaves, 674; slaves in Cheshire county, 9.

In those years of peace and prosperity and rapid growth of the towns and the provinces, the mutterings of the approaching storm of the Revolution began to be heard. A young monarch, George III, had come to the throne; the colonists were loyal to their sovereign and regarded the mother country with devotion; but the abundant evidences of prosperity in America had led the home government to believe that a large income might be drawn from that source, and thus relieve the over-taxed people of England. To make the taxes as little burdensome and irritating as possible, they were levied chiefly in the form of duties on foreign sugar, molasses and other commodities which came in competition with colonial products, and by stamps on all legal and mercantile papers. But even these softened measures were felt to be an assumption of the right to seize and dispose of the property of the colonists without remuneration or representation, and aroused a determined spirit of opposition. Neither the petitions of the colonists for redress nor the arguments of powerful advocates of their cause in parliament produced any effect. The government persisted in its blind folly. The people became greatly excited, and acts of violence followed the attempt to enforce the obnoxious laws. The stamp act was to go into operation on the first day of November, 1765. On the last day of October the New Hampshire Gazette, published at Portsmouth, appeared with a mourning border. The next day people came in from the towns around, the bells were

tolled, and there was a mock funeral of the Goddess of Liberty. Similar demonstrations were made in Massachusetts and other colonies.

In 1766 the stamp act was repealed, greatly to the joy of the colonists; but there were other laws which bore harshly upon them, and this was only a lull in the storm of resentment and opposition. The martial spirit of the people, aroused and stimulated by the French and Indian wars, had not died out, and while there was no thought of separation from the mother country, the trained veterans of those wars were not disposed to submit to any impositions, or any encroachments on their rights.

The militia had been kept up, not at the expense of the government, or of the province chiefly, but of the citizen soldiers themselves. John Wentworth had succeeded his uncle, Benning Wentworth, as governor of the province. He was only thirty years old, was fond of military display, and he gave his personal and official influence to the improvement of the militia. The number of regiments was increased to twelve, and the 6th covered the southwest corner of the province as in 1760. Josiah Willard of Winchester was still its colonel, Benjamin Bellows of Walpole lieutenant colonel, and Josiah Willard, Jr., of Keene and Breed Batcheller of Packersfield, majors. Keene had a company of 117 officers and men, and an alarm list (of the older and not fully able-bodied men) of forty-five.

"The following muster-roll has been handed to the compiler, by a veteran of the Revolution:

"A LIST OF THE FOOT COMPANY IN KEENE.

"Lieut. Benjamin Hall,	Joseph Gray,
Ensign, Michael Metcalf,	Samuel Hall,
Clerk, Simeon Clark,	Jesse Hall,
Serj. Elijah Blake,	Peter Hubbert,
Serj. Thomas Baker,	Seth Heaton, Jr.,
Serj. Isaac Esty,	John Houghton,
Serj. Jedediah Carpenter,	Joseph Hills,
Corp. Dan Guild,	Davis Howlet,
Corp. Joseph Blake,	Ziba Hall,
Corp. Abijah Metcalf,	Jonathan Heaton,
Benjamin Archer,	Luther Heaton,
Jonathan Archer,	Nathaniel Kingsbury,
Asahel Blake,	Daniel Kingsbury,

John Brown,
 Elisha Briggs,
 John Balch,
 Benjamin Balch, Jr.,
 Luther Bragg,
 Samuel Bassett,
 John Burt,
 Nathan Blake, Jr.,
 Obadiah Blake, Jr.,
 Royal Blake,
 Naboth Bettison,
 Thomas Baker, Jr.,
 John Pray Blake,
 Cephas Clark,
 Seth Clark,
 Eliphalet Carpenter,
 Ebenezer Carpenter,
 Samuel Chapman,
 Silas Cook,
 Isaac Clark,
 Simeon Clark, Jr.,
 Jonas Clark,
 John Day, Jr.,
 John Daniels,
 Reuben Daniels,
 John Dickson,
 Addington Daniels,
 Ebenezer Day, Jr.,
 Jacob Day,
 James Dean,
 Timothy Crossfield,
 Joseph Ellis, Jr.,
 Gideon Ellis, Jr.,
 Simeon Ellis,
 Timothy Ellis, 3d,
 William Ellis,
 Caleb Ellis,
 Stephen Esty,
 James Eady,
 Henry Ellis,
 Benjamin Ellis,
 Benjamin Ellis, Jr.,
 Joshua Ellis,
 Jabez Fisher,
 Silas French,
 David Foster, Jr.,
 Peter Fiskin,
 Aaron Gray, Jr.,

Stephen Larabee,
 Daniel Lake,
 Ezra Metcalf,
 Jonathan Metcalf,
 Moses Marsh,
 Eli Metcalf,
 Daniel Metcalf,
 William Nelson,
 David Nims, Jr.,
 Ebenezer Newton,
 Asahel Nims,
 Eliakim Nims,
 Zadoc Nims,
 Alpheus Nims,
 Joshua Osgood,
 Benjamin Osgood, Jr.,
 Amos Partridge,
 Jonathan Pond,
 Abiathar Pond,
 Nathan Rugg,
 Josiah Richardson,
 Eleazer Sanger,
 Abner Sanger,
 Robert Spencer,
 Jeremiah Stiles,
 Richard Smith,
 John Swan,
 Jacob Town,
 Joseph Thatcher,
 Abraham Wheeler, Jr.,
 Joseph Willson,
 William Woods,
 Oliver Wright,
 Jedediah Wellman,
 David Willson,
 Daniel Willson,
 Thomas Wells,
 John White,
 James Wright,
 Zadoc Wheeler,
 Walter Wheeler,
 Samuel Wadsworth,
 Abijah Wilder,
 Jonathan Wheeler,
 Thomas Wilder,
 Thomas Morse,
 Ephraim Leonard,
 Peter Daniels,

William Goodenow,	Luke Metcalf,
John Griggs,	Isaac Wyman, Jr.,
"To Col. Josiah Willard.	Ephraim Dorman, C.
	Errors Excepted.

Keene August 7, 1773."

"THE ALARM LIST BELONGING TO KEENE.

"Lieut. Seth Heaton,	Samuel Woods,
Dea. David Foster,	Samuel Daniels,
John Day,	Jesse Clark,
Abraham Wheeler,	Joseph Brown,
Nathan Blake,	Robert Gillmore,
Joseph Ellis,	Obadiah Hamilton,
Uriah Willson,	Peter Rice,
Ebenezer Nims,	Elisha Ellis,
David Nims,	Isaac Billings,
Gideon Ellis,	Josiah Ellis,
Lieut. Andrew Balch,	Timothy Ellis, Jr.,
Aaron Gray,	Ichabod Fisher,
Ebenezer Day,	William Gray,
Eliphalet Briggs,	Benjamin Hall, Jr.,
Benjamin Archer,	Benjamin Osgood,
Capt. Isaac Wyman,	Nathaniel Hall,
Doct. Obadiah Blake,	Samuel Woods, Jr.,
Lieut. Timothy Ellis,	John Connolly,
Thomas Frink, Esq.,	Samuel Colhoun,
Doct. Josiah Pomeroy,	Ebenezer Cooke,
Doct. Gideon Tiffany,	Daniel Snow,
Elijah Williams,	Eliphalet Briggs, Jr."
Israel Houghton,	

(Annals of Keene, pages 37-38.)

The number of ratable polls in Keene, as returned by order of the general assembly in May, 1773, for a new apportionment of taxes, was 150.

The annual town meeting of 1774 voted sixty pounds for the support of preaching and forty pounds for schools; and the selectmen were made the committee to supply the pulpit.

The first school committees of which we have any record were chosen this year, consisting of two members in each district, of which there were now seven.

A town meeting on the 31st of March chose Lieut. Benjamin Hall representative to the provincial assembly which met at Portsmouth, on the 7th of April. He also represented the town at the previous session of the

assembly, which began on the 11th of January, although no record of his election is found.

“Voted that all marks of Sheep and Cattle belonging to this Town be put on Record in a book provided for that purpose.”

Parliament continued to enforce laws which irritated the colonists, the feeling of opposition grew more and more intense, and the war clouds more and more threatening. One of the most obnoxious of those laws was that levying a duty of three pence per pound on tea, and the people determined to deny themselves their favorite beverage. Keene and nearly all the towns took action condemning its use, the colonies adopted articles of agreement against its importation, and the people refused to allow it to be brought into the country. The “Boston Tea Party” took place in December, 1773. In June, 1774, the ship “Grosvenor” from London arrived at Portsmouth with twenty-seven chests of Bohea tea consigned to Edward Parry, a merchant of that town. The people compelled him to reship it to Halifax. In September another consignment came to the same person. A mob attacked Parry’s house, broke in his windows and threatened more serious consequences if the tea were not immediately reshipped. That consignment was also sent to Halifax; and for a long time afterwards “Sent to Halifax” was a common by-word in the province.

At the spring session of the assembly of New Hampshire in 1773, the house of representatives had appointed a “Committee of Correspondence”—usually called the “Committee of Safety”—as had been done in other provinces; and a vigorous correspondence was opened with those other committees. The result was that the colonies chose delegates to a general congress, which met in Philadelphia in 1774, to take into consideration the condition of public affairs and recommend measures upon which all could unite and act in concert. That congress was composed of some of the ablest men in the country.

Gov. Wentworth had labored to prevent the appointment of a committee of correspondence in New Hampshire, and when the act passed he dissolved the assembly. But

the patriots were not to be balked by mere forms. The committee at once assumed the position and powers of the general executive of the province and issued a summons to the representatives, who again met in their own hall. The governor, through the sheriff of the county, commanded them to disperse and keep the peace, but when he had retired they proceeded to business, recommended a day of fasting and prayer, which was solemnly observed, and called upon all the towns to send delegates to a convention at Exeter to choose delegates to the Continental congress. That committee met on the 21st of July, and was called the First Provincial congress. Lieut. Benjamin Hall was the representative to the general assembly, but he proved to be a loyalist, and Keene does not appear to have been represented in that convention.

Upon the meeting of the Continental congress, a statement of the grievances of the colonists was drawn up, followed by articles of agreement upon measures for securing redress. Those articles were called the "Non-Importation Agreement," or association, and the "Non-Consumption Agreement," which forbade the importation or consumption of any goods or merchandise whatever from Great Britain or Ireland, or the dependent islands of Great Britain. It was also agreed: "That a committee be chosen in every County, City and Town, those who are qualified to vote for Representatives in the Legislatures, whose business it shall be attentively to observe the conduct of all persons touching this Association," etc. The agreements were signed by all the delegates, for themselves and their constituents. Those agreements bore severely upon the people, for they shut out many articles that were necessary for their comfort and convenience; but the patriots readily submitted to the deprivation for the good of the common cause.

A town meeting was held on the 26th of September, 1774, David Nims, moderator. One article in the warrant was to see if it be the mind of the town to sign the covenant and engagement, which was sent and recommended, by the committee of correspondence, relating to the non-importation agreement. The general congress was

then in session but had not yet acted upon this question, and the meeting passed the following preamble and vote: "whereas the Towns in this province have chosen members to Represent them in a General Congress of all the Collines Now sitting at the City of Philadelphia to consult and Determine what steps are Necessary for the Collonies to adopt: voted therefore not to sign the said non importation agreement until we hear what measures said Congress has agreed upon for themselves & their constituents."

The same meeting "voted to get a Stock of ammunition for the Town viz. 200 lb of good gun powder, 400 lb of Lead and 1200 flints." Twenty-four pounds "lawful money" were raised for that purpose, and Capt. Isaac Wyman, Lieut. Timothy Ellis and Capt. Ephraim Dorman were chosen a committee to provide the articles. The same committee was instructed to build a magazine six feet square for storing the ammunition; but a subsequent meeting voted not to build the magazine.

October 17, the town "voted unanimously to give Mr. Elias Jones a Call to Settle in the work of the Gospel ministry in this Town;" and voted to give him "one hundred and Thirty Three pounds Six Shillings & Eight pence as a Settlement," and seventy-five pounds as an annual salary. The selectmen were made a committee to lay the votes of the town before him, but no report of any further negotiations with him has been found. "The Worthy Mr. William Fessenden" also preached as a candidate during the year, but the town voted not to call him.

At this October meeting, the town "choose Capt Isaac Wyman & Leut Timothy Ellis Delegates to attend the Congress at Walepole the Fourth Tuesday of this Instant" to take measures for the better security of the internal police of the county. Nothing is known concerning the proceedings of that "Congress."

A convention of delegates from the towns in this vicinity was held at Keene, on the 28th of December, which issued an address to the people urging patriotic action, and recommending the towns to hold public meetings and adopt a by-law which was prepared and sent out with

the address. No other record of that convention has been preserved.

An order had been passed by the king in council prohibiting the exportation of gunpowder and other military stores to America. Fort William and Mary, at the entrance of Portsmouth harbor, contained military stores, and the only force that held it at that time was a captain and five men. The committee of safety at Boston were on the watch for every kind of information. They learned of the orders of the king, and also that the frigate Scarborough was to take troops to the Piscataqua to secure Fort William and Mary. They sent Paul Revere express to Portsmouth with the news. He arrived on the 13th of December, 1774. Committees of safety had been formed in many of the towns, and the committee of Portsmouth promptly and secretly notified some of the leading men in that and neighboring towns. The Portsmouth company under Capt. Thomas Pickering turned out and was swelled by men from other places. Major John Sullivan and Capt. John Langdon joined the party and aided in giving direction to the movement. They proceeded to the fort, captured the small garrison, and brought off a hundred barrels of powder¹ and sixty stands of small arms. The next day fifteen of the light cannon and all the small arms and other stores were brought off—just before the arrival of the Scarborough and the sloop Canseau with several companies of troops, who took possession of the fort and dismantled it.

Some of the wealthy men in the province were disposed to be loyal to the crown on account of the property they had at stake; but a large majority of the people of Keene were outspoken patriots, and many of them were determined and enthusiastic in that cause. A few of the leading men were inclined to loyalty but were prudent and avoided controversy with their neighbors on that subject; and some of the citizens were inclined to follow the lead of those influential, secret loyalists.

Those officers of the law who had not thrown up their commissions were, of necessity, loyalists; but the patriots

¹ A part of the powder was secreted under Durham meetinghouse and part was used at the battle of Bunker Hill.

generally were extremely bitter towards all who were tainted with toryism, and refused to allow the royal mandates to be executed.

Elijah Williams, a lawyer, had come to Keene in 1771, and had been appointed a "Justice of the Peace" by Governor Wentworth in May, 1774. In the winter of 1774-5 he "instituted a suit against a citizen of Keene, the writ being in the form then usual, commencing 'George the Third, by the grace of God, King,' &c. Immediately afterwards, a large number of people, many coming from the neighboring towns, assembled at Keene, seized Williams, and took him with them to their place of meeting, which was a barn standing by itself, in a field. They required him to stop the suit, and to promise that he would issue no more writs in the name of the King. Perceiving he had no alternative, he complied, and was then set at liberty." (Annals, page 40.)