

HISTORY
OF THE
TOWN OF MASON, N.H.
FROM
THE FIRST GRANT
IN 1749, TO THE YEAR 1858
BY
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HISTORY OF MASON.

CHAPTER 1.

Captain John Mason; Grants to him of Lands in New Hampshire; Settlements commenced by him; Controversies with Massachusetts respecting the title and jurisdiction; how settled; Title vested in the Masonian proprietors.

THE town of Mason is situated in the county of Hillsborough, in the State of New Hampshire. It lies upon the southern border of the State, about midway between the eastern and western extremities of its southern boundary. On the south it bounds upon Townsend and Ashby, on the west upon New Ipswich, on the north upon Temple and Wilton and on the east upon Milford and Brookline. It is in that portion of the State of New Hampshire which was granted by the council of Plymouth in 1621 to Capt. John Mason. As the town derives its name from that gentleman, and the title to the soil therein is in fact derived: and claimed under this grant to him, and sundry subsequent grants in confirmation thereof, and as the State is also indebted to him for its name, it being derived from that Of the county of Hampshire, in England, of whose principal town, Portsmouth, Mason was at one time governor, a brief sketch of his life and of the titles granted to him, and of the various and long-continued controversies to which the uncertain and indefinite descriptions of the boundaries of the original and subsequent grants gave rise, and of the manner in which they were finally settled will not be deemed an inappropriate introduction to these memorials of the place and its people. For the facts stated, the authority mainly relied on, is Belknap's history of New Hampshire.

CAPT. JOHN MASON was born in Lynn Regis in the county of Norfolk in England. Of his parentage and early life little is known. The year of his birth is not stated by the historians. It must have been not far from the year 1570, in the midst of the stirring times of Queen Elizabeth. His first engagement in active life, was as a merchant in London. Afterwards he entered the naval service, and served as an officer in the fleet in the war between Spain and the Dutch republics. After the peace of 1609, by which the independence of Holland was secured, he was appointed Governor of Newfoundland.

This island was discovered by Sebastian Cabot in 1497. It was taken possession of, in the name of Queen Elizabeth, by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, August 5th, 1583. The fisheries upon the banks became, at an early period, an important business, the tendency of which was to foster and promote voyages of discovery to the continent. At the time Mason was appointed its governor, this island was one of the most valuable English possessions in North America. In this post he remained long enough to become acquainted with the country; and he formed so high an opinion of its future destiny, as to induce in him a willingness to adventure his fortune in advancing its settlement. This led him on his return to England, into a close intimacy with those who were engaged in discoveries in the new world. He was, after his return, appointed Governor of the town of Plymouth, in the county of Hampshire; and upon a vacancy happening in the council of Plymouth, he was elected a member of that body, and was chosen their secretary. He was thus placed in the front rank of those who were actively engaged in promoting discoveries and encouraging settlements in North America. He gave to these enterprises, not only his countenance and advice, but he was willing to embark his fortunes in the business, and to devote to it his time and means. With that intent he procured from the council of Plymouth, in March, 1621, a grant of "all the lands from the river Naumkeag," now Salem, "round Cape Ann to the river Merrimack, and up each of those rivers to the farthest heads thereof, then to cross over from the head of one to the head of the other, with all the islands lying within three miles of the coast." This district was called Marianna. This was the first territorial grant made by the Plymouth council. It bears date March 9, 1621. Those to Plymouth colony are dated in 1621 and 1623; that to Massachusetts, March 19, 1627, all subsequent to Mason's. Of these last, each was granted to a company or association, or to an individual in trust for a company. Mason undertook his enterprise alone and single handed. No individual can be found, who exhibited more courage and perseverance in the cause, or more confidence in its ultimate success, or who expended his means with a more liberal hand, or in larger amount, in promoting the settlement of the country.

In 1622, another grant was made to Gorges and 'Mason jointly, "of all the lands between the rivers Merrimack and Sagadahock, extending back to the great lakes and river of

Canada," and this was called Laconia. The points of commencement of the first of these grants were wholly within what is now Massachusetts. The territory included is partly in New Hampshire and partly in Massachusetts. The second grant included a large part of New Hampshire, a portion of Maine and of Canada. The knowledge then possessed of the country, and of the courses of the rivers, was imperfect and uncertain, and consequently, these boundaries were found to be uncertain and indefinite. Settlements were by Mason attempted to be made, at a place called Little Harbor, in Portsmouth, where salt works were erected; and a house called Mason Hall, was built at Dover. In 1629, he procured a patent under the common seal of the council of Plymouth, for the land "from the middle of Piscataqua river, and up the same, to the farthest head thereof, and from thence northward, until sixty miles from the mouth of the harbor were finished; also, through Merrimack river, to the farthest head thereof, and so forward up into the land westward, until sixty miles were finished, and from thence to cross over land to the end of sixty miles, accounted from Piscataqua river, together with all the islands within five miles of the coast." This tract was called New Hampshire, a name derived from that of the county of Hampshire, in England, of whose principal town, Portsmouth, Mason was governor. Under this charter the towns of Portsmouth, and Northam, afterwards called Dover, Hampton, and Exeter were laid out.

The attempts at settlement were not prosperous. The views of those engaged in the enterprise, were chiefly turned to the discovery of lakes and mines, the cultivation of grapes and the advantages of trade and fishery. Little regard was had to agriculture. They often complained of their expenses, and might with reason, for they had not only to pay wages to their colonists, but to supply them with "provisions, clothing, utensils, medicines, articles of trade, implements for building, husbandry and fishery, and to stock their plantations with cattle, swine and goats. Bread corn was either brought from England in meal, or from Virginia in grain, and then sent to the windmill at Boston to be ground. Very little improvement was made on the lands, the lakes were not explored, the vines planted came to nothing, no mines were found but those of iron, and those were not wrought; three or four houses only, were built in the first seven years; the peltry trade with the Indians was of some value, and the fishery served towards the support of the

inhabitants, but yielded no profit to the adventurers, who received but inadequate returns in lumber and fish. They, seeing their interests sinking and withering away, grew dispirited, and the greater part of them either abandoned the enterprise, or sold their shares to Gorges and Mason, who were more sanguine than the rest, and who thus became either by purchase or by tacit consent of the others, the principal, if not the sole proprietors. They prosecuted the settlement with zeal, but met with many hindrances, among Which were claims made by the Virginia company to have their charter revoked. Mason finally succeeded in procuring a new charter in 1635, extending from Nanmkeag to Piscataqua, and sixty miles northward within land. He did not long survive the issuing of this patent. He died Nov. 16th, 1635. In his will, he disposed of his immense estate, as follows: To the corporation of Lynn Regis in Norfolk, the place of his nativity, he gave two thousand acres of land in New Hampshire, subject to the yearly rent of one penny per acre to his heirs, and two-fifths of all mines royal, on condition that five families should within five years be settled thereupon. To his brother-in-law, John Wollaston, three thousand acres, subject to a yearly rent of one shilling. To his grandchild, Ann Tufton, ten thousand acres at Sagadahock. To Robert Tufton, his grandson, he gave his manor of Mason Hall, on condition that he should take the surname of Mason. He also gave his brother Wollaston in trust one thousand acres for the maintenance of "an honest, godly and religious preacher of God's word," and one thousand acres more for the support of a grammar school; each of these estates to be conveyed to [ffeoffees] in trust, and their successors, paying annually one penny per acre to his heirs. The residue of his estate in New Hampshire, he gave to his grandson John Tufton, he taking the surname of Mason, and to his lawful issue; or, in want thereof, to Dr. Robert Mason, Chancellor of the Diocese of Winchester, and his lawful issue, and to his own and other right heirs, forever; provided that it should not go out of the name of Mason. The residuary legatee was required to pay five hundred pounds out of the estate to his sister Mary, and all the grandchildren were to relinquish their right to one thousand pounds due from the estate to their father, Joseph Tufton. The estate in America was valued in the inventory, at ten thousand pounds sterling. It is under this will that the title to the soil: of the town of Mason is derived; and it is not a little remarkable, that so far as is now known, this town is the only representative of the name of Capt. John Mason in the State.

The little legacy of five hundred pounds given by the will to the sister of John Tufton, Would; if put and kept at interest and compounded, from the year 1635, when the testator died, up to the present time, 1858, amount to a greater sum than the total inventory and valuation of the real and personal property of the whole State of New Hampshire at the last valuation. Let those who doubt it try the figures, and let all who are paying interest for money borrowed or sums due, learn that unless the business or investment in which it is employed, is yielding more than six per cent. per annum, they must be sadly going behind hand.

It will be seen that Capt. Mason was particularly solicitous to perpetuate his name by attaching it to the ownership of his land in New Hampshire. He bestows it finally upon his "right heirs forever, provided it shall not go out of the name of Mason", but of all his vast estate, it is not probable that a single acre is now owned by any of his descendants, or that his name is now connected with any portion of the territory, except that of this town.

In 1638, after the death of Capt. Mason, his widow and executrix, Mrs. Anne Mason, sent over Francis Norton as her "general attorney," to whom she committed the whole management of the estate. But the expense so far exceeded the income, and the servants grew so impatient for their arrears, that she was obliged to relinquish the care of the plantation, and tell the servants they must shift for themselves; upon which they shared the goods and cattle. Norton drove above one hundred oxen to Boston, and there sold them for twenty-five pounds sterling per head, which it is said was the current price of the best cattle in New England at that time. These were a large breed imported from Denmark, from whence Mason had also procured a number of men skilled in sawing plank and making potashes. These Danes were the pioneers of the great lumber business, which has engrossed so much of the capital and enterprise of New Hampshire and Maine. Having shared the stock and other materials, some of the people quitted the plantation; others of them tarried, keeping possession of the buildings and improvements, which they claimed as their own. The houses at Newichwannock were destroyed by fire, and thus Mason's estate was ruined. These events happened between 1638 and 1644.

Lumber and the fisheries seem to have been the great objects in view in Mason's enterprise. These branches of business, though important in connection with other pursuits, form too narrow a basis for the foundation of a commonwealth. Persons who engaged in these employments, in those early times, did not possess that persevering industry and frugality required for the successful building up of a state. The character and manners of the fishermen of that day, are most vividly and happily painted in the following extract from Josselyn's two voyages, in Thornton's *Ancient Pemaquid*. The lumbermen would present a companion picture. Mr. Thornton says:—"Josselyn, who left Black Point for England in the summer of 1671, describes the people of Maine after several years' residence among them. He classifies them as "Magistrates, Husbandmen or Planters, and Fishermen; of the magistrates some be Royalists, the rest perverse Spirits, the like are the planters and fishers, of which some be planters and fishers both, others mere fishers; there are but few handcraftsmen, and no shopkeepers; English goods being kept by the Massachusetts merchants, here and there, on the coast, at a profit of cent. per cent., in exchange for fish." "They have a custom of taking Tobacco, sleeping at noon, sitting long at meals, sometimes four times in a day, and now and then drinking a dram of the bottle extraordinarily; the smoaking of Tobacco, if moderately used refresheth the weary very much, and so doth sleep"! The fisherman of that day he paints to the life. He says "to every Shallop belong four fishermen, a Master or steersman, a midshipman, and a Foremastman, and a shoreman who washes it out of the salt, and dries it upon hurdles pitcht upon stakes breast high and tends their Cookery; these often get in one voyage Eight or Nine pound a man for their shares, but it doth some of them but little good, "for there comes in "a walking Tavern, a Bark laden with the Legitimate bloud of the rich grape"; the conclusion of which is the costly sin of drunkenness." *Thornton's Ancient Pemaquid*. See *Col. Maine Hist. Society, Vol. 5. pp. 234, 235*.

If such was the character of Mason's planters and servants, no one can be surprised that his enterprise, though prosecuted with all his energy and perseverance, should prove to be a failure.

The character and object and results of Mason's efforts, are with much truth and pertinency thus summed up in Barstow's History of New Hampshire:—"In the midst of his fond anticipations of better fortune, Captain Mason was removed by death. This happened near the close of the year. (1635.) He had accomplished none Of the great purposes for which he came to this wilderness world. He embarked with vast expectations of boundless wealth and grandeur. * * Golden visions hovered around him to the last, in spite of the light of experience. He had no religious views in the purchase and settlement of New Hampshire. His whole energies were absorbed in the discovery of wealth, and the aggrandizement of himself and his family. His darling scheme was the introduction of the feudal system into New Hampshire; by which his family were to be the lords, and the people tenants of the soil. For this he labored; for this he sacrificed his all; still dreaming of the profits of discovery, and the glory of founding a state. But though a dreamer, he was at the same time a man of action. * * Nothing daunted him. Nothing deterred him. Though adversity might cloud his prospects, it never depressed his spirits. The frustration of his efforts and the frequent wreck of his hopes only seemed to display the indestructible vigor of his mind. Amidst disappointment and discouragement he continued to attempt the foundation of a feudal empire, until death interrupted his toils and left him only a reputation for attempting impossible things. * * *

Well was it for posterity that the unnatural eyes of Adventure, alone, could discern mineral wealth in the hills of New Hampshire. Fortunate was it that the soil was, for the most part, reserved for men who should settle upon it with no chimerical and vain hopes of treasure; but men viewing human life and society in a true light—not building the castles of avarice; but living by their industry—expecting only the rain and dew upon the seed they had sown--hoping for health and competence—and laying the only sure foundation for a great and flourishing country in intelligence and public virtue--good schools, good morals, government, and sober industry. These are the strength of a state."

[*Barstow's New Hampshire*, pp. 33,—37.

The inhabitants of towns finding it difficult to maintain any stable government, were with their consent, received into the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, about the years 1641, '42. The union continued about forty years. This extension of the colony's jurisdiction could

not fail of being noticed by the heirs of Mason; but the distractions caused by the civil wars in England, were invincible bars to any legal inquiry. The first heir named in Mason's will dying in infancy, the estate descended after the death of the executrix, to Robert Tufton, who was not of age till 1650. In two years after this, Joseph Mason came over as agent for the executrix, to look after the interests of her deceased husband. He found the land at Newichwannook occupied by Richard Leader, against whom he brought actions in the county of Norfolk, a county which then included the northeasterly part of Massachusetts and the New Hampshire towns. A dispute arose whether the lands in question were within the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, and the court of Norfolk judging the action not to be within their cognizance, recourse was had to the general court of Boston, which on this occasion ordered an accurate survey of the northern bounds of their patent to be made. A committee of the general court, attended by John Sherman and Jonathan Ince, surveyors, and several Indian guides, went up the river Merrimack, to find the most northerly part thereof, which the Indians told them was at Acquedochtan, the outlet of the lake Winnipiseogee. The latitude of that place was found to be $43^{\circ} 40' 12''$, to which three miles being added, made the line of the patent, according to their construction, fall within the lake, in latitude $43^{\circ} 43' 12''$. The same latitude was marked on an island in Casco bay, and an imaginary line drawn through these points from the Atlantic ocean to the South-sea, as the Pacific ocean was then called, was supposed to be the northern boundary of Massachusetts. This line included the whole of Mason's claim by his last patent. The committee of the general court to establish the line, were Capt. Edward Johnson, author of the History of New England, and Capt. Simon Willard, afterwards an assistant and a commander of a portion of the Massachusetts forces, in the Indian war of 1615. The expedition took up nineteen days in the months of July and August, and the whole expense was not less than eighty-four pounds. The following is a copy of the report of the surveyors:

"The answer of John Sherman, Sergeant at Watertown, and Jonathan Ince, Student at Harvard College in Cambridge, to Capt. Simon Willard and Capt. Edward Johnson, Commissioners of the General Court, held at Boston, May 17, 1652, concerning the latitude of the northernmost part of Merrimack river.

Whereas we, John Sherman and Jonathan Ince, were procured by the aforesaid Commissioners to take the latitude of the place above named, our answer is, that at Aquedahcan, the name of the head of Merrimack, where it issues out of the lake Winnapusseahit, upon the first of August, one thousand six hundred and fifty-two, we observed and by observation found, that the latitude of the place was forty-three degrees forty minutes and twelve seconds, besides those minutes that are to be allowed for three miles more north w^{ch} run into the Lake.

In witness whereof, wee have subscribed our names, this nineteenth of October, one thousand six hundred and fifty-two.

JOHN SHERMAN,
JONATHAN INCE,

Jur. coram me, ***JOH. ENDECOTT, Gubr.***"

Having settled this matter, the Court were of the opinion that some lands by agreement of Gorges, and by purchase of the Indians, and by possession and improvements, were properly claimed by Mason, and they ordered a quantity proportionable to his disbursements, with a privilege of the river, to be laid out to his heirs.

The agent, finding it hopeless to prosecute the claim any farther, left the country. During the Commonwealth and the Protectorate of Cromwell, there could be no hope of relief; as the family of Mason had always been attached to the royal cause. On the restoration of Charles II Tufton, who had taken the surname of Mason, petitioned to the king for restoration of his rights. The petition was referred to Sir Geoffrey Palmer, the attorney general, who reported, that "Robert Mason the grandson and heir of Capt. John Mason had a good and legal title to the province of New Hampshire." Nothing effective was done to restore to him his rights. Edward Randolph who was a kinsman of Mason, was sent over with the king's letter to the government of Massachusetts, requiring them to send over agents within six months, to answer to the complaints which Mason and the heirs of Gorges had made, of their usurpation of jurisdiction over the territory claimed by them: all the answer he could get from Govenor Leverett and the council, was that "they

would see about it." The matter was pursued in England. Lieut. Gov Stoughton and Peter Bulkley, the speaker of the house of deputies, were sent to England in behalf of Massachusetts. The subject was referred to the judges. They reported that they could give no opinion as to the right of the soil, the proper parties not being before them; that Mason had no right of government, none having been granted to him with the soil; and finally, that the four towns Portsmouth, Dover, Exeter and Hampton, were out of the bounds of Massachusetts. It was also admitted that the title could only be tried in the place, there being no court in England that had cognizance of it. It became necessary, therefore, to set up a new jurisdiction before Mason's title could be tried. It was done. Thus, in consequence of this controversy and claim, New Hampshire was separated from Massachusetts, and was again organized under a distinct and independent jurisdiction. Randolph was appointed governor. He was greatly and deservedly unpopular. The whole number of voters in his province was 209, all in the four towns of Portsmouth, Dover, Hampton and Exeter. In the first assembly, the whole number of Representatives was eleven: from Portsmouth, Dover and Hampton, three each, and Exeter two. Mason came over from England in the latter part of the year 1681. He had been appointed one of the council, and took his seat as such. He attempted to enforce his claims in a haughty and arbitrary manner. He met with a sturdy resistance on the part of the tenants, and by his hasty and injudicious proceedings, lost the countenance and support of the council. The controversy with the council prevailed to such length, that a warrant was issued for apprehending him, which he avoided by making his escape to England. Finding the government, which he had procured to be erected, was not likely to be administered in a manner favorable to his views, he made it his business to bring about a change, and procured Edward Cranfield to be appointed Lieut. Governor. To provide for his support, he surrendered one fifth part of his quit rents, to the king. These, and the fines and forfeitures, were appropriated for the governor's support. Not satisfied to rely on these alone, he took from Mason a mortgage on the whole province for twenty one years, to secure the payment of one hundred and fifty pounds per, annum for seven years. On this encouragement, Cranfield relinquished a profitable office at home, with a view of bettering his fortunes by this arrangement.

His commission gave him almost absolute power.. He commenced his rule in 1682. Mason was named in, his commission as one of the council, and seems to have had a great share in the management of affairs. Suits were brought to enforce his claims. They were resisted. Nothing effectual was done to establish his title. When he succeeded in obtaining judgment, he was forcibly resisted in his attempts to get possession. Many of the tenants claimed under Indian deeds, which were then much regarded; others shew possession for from forty to sixty years, uninterrupted by any successful enforcement, of his rights. In 1686 a purchase was made of the Indians of a tract on both sides of the Merrimack river, six miles in breadth, extending from Souhegan river to Winnipisseogee lake. The purchasers were Jonathan Tyng, Joseph Dudley, Charles Lidgat, John Usher, Edward Randolph, John Hubbard, Robert Thompson, Samuel Scrimpton, William Stoughton, Richard Warton, Thomas Hinchman, Thaddeus Maccarty, Edward Thompson, John Blackwell, Peter Bulkley, William Blathwayt, Daniel Cox and "three other persons, to be thereafter named and agreed upon." Mason, by deed, confirmed this purchase, reserving to himself and his heirs a yearly rent of ten shillings. This was called the million acre purchase. About the same time he farmed out to Hezekiah Usher and his heirs, the mines, minerals and ores within the limits of New Hampshire, for the term of one thousand years, reserving to himself one quarter part of the royal ores and one seventeenth of the baser sorts; and having put his affairs in the best order the times would admit, he sailed for England to the hearing of a case appealed against him to the king.

The appeal was decided in his favor, and, returned in the spring of 1687, full of hope of realizing some thing out of his claims; but unexpected obstructions were in his way. The government, under Andros, was in the hands of a set of harpies, who could not look on without determining to come in for a share of his success. He succeeded in getting his case brought before the Supreme Court in Boston, but before he could get a decision he died at Esopus, N. Y., on a journey to Albany, where he had accompanied the governor, Sir Edmund Andros, leaving his sons, John and Robert, heirs of his claims and controversies. They sold their claim to Samuel Allen, of London, for seven hundred and fifty pounds. John Usher married Allen's daughter. He was a native of Boston, and by profession a stationer; was rich, was one of the partners in the million acre purchase, and

had sanguine expectations of gain from that quarter, as also, probably, from the mines he had purchased of Mason. He was appointed lieutenant governor, and administered the affairs of the province. He resolved to enforce Allen's claims. He found that Pickering, the defendant's lawyer, had with a company of armed men, taken out of the hands of Chamberlain, the secretary and clerk, the records and papers relating to the Mason suits. After having recovered the papers, he seems to have made no effectual progress with the suits. In 1700, Allen took the matter in hand himself, but found, when the records were examined, that twenty-five leaves were missing, in which it is supposed the judgments recovered by Mason were recorded. No evidence appeared of his having obtained possession, and the whole work was to be gone over again. Suits were commenced anew. The jury found for the defendant. Allen claimed an appeal to the king, which the court would not allow, and he was compelled to apply to the king by petition, on which his appeal was granted. Allen appointed Usher to act for him in prosecuting his appeal, having previously mortgaged one half the province to him for £1,500. When the appeal came on for hearing, it appeared that no proof was produced to show that Mason was ever in possession, and therefore judgment was rendered against him, but with the right to commence again in the courts in the province. New suits were commenced, ending as before, in judgment for the defendant and appeal by the plaintiff. Allen was now old and poor, and proposed a settlement by compromise, but before it was effected he died. His son, Thomas Allen, renewed the suits with the same result, judgment for the defendants and an appeal to the queen in council. Before the appeal was ready to be heard, Allen died in 1715. This put an end to the suit, which his heirs, being minors, did not renew.

When the sale was made by John and Robert Mason to Samuel Allen, in 1691, it took place in England, and by a fiction of law, the land was supposed to be in England and the conveyance was by fine and recovery in the king's bench. In this process the land was described as being in " New Hampshire, Maine, Masonia, Laconia, Mason Hall and Mariana in New England in America, in the parish of Greenwich;" a fiction of law by which a parish in England includes within its limits the principal part of two states of this Union. John Tufton Mason, the son of Robert Tufton Mason, after the death of his uncle and father, who were Allen's grantors, being advised that their conveyance to Allen

could give him only an estate for their own lives, and that the recovery in the king's bench in England was void for want of jurisdiction, prepared to assert his claims, but died in Havana in 1718, where he had gone to procure means to carry on his suit. His son, John Tufton Mason, came of age about the year 1738. The controversy between the provinces about the southern boundary of New Hampshire, was at this time renewed and brought to a crisis. Massachusetts claimed that the line should run three miles east from the river to a point three miles north of the junction of the Pemigewasset and the Winnipisseogee river; thence due west till it should meet the boundaries of the other governments. The commissioners doubted whether this should be the line, or a line commencing three miles north of the mouth of Merrimack river and running due west till it should meet the other governments, and they referred the question to the king in council. While this controversy was pending, negotiations were entered into both on the part of Massachusetts and New Hampshire for the purchase of Mason's title. The agent of New Hampshire, Thomlinson, made an agreement with him for the purchase, on behalf of that province, of his whole interest, for one thousand pounds New England currency, but no legal assent to the purchase was made by the authorities of the province.

The question of boundary was settled not in accordance with either statement of the commissioners. The reason for departing from the letter of the grant was, that when it was made it was supposed, the country not having been explored, that the course of the Merrimack river was from west to east, and therefore that the dividing line would run nearly west, and that so far then, as the course of the river corresponded with that supposed state of facts, a line three miles north of it should be the dividing line, and then the line crossing the river should take a course due west; and such a line was finally adopted and established. Thomlinson was the agent for New Hampshire, and Thomas Hutchinson for Massachusetts. The line was run by George Mitchell, from the ocean to the station north of Pawtucket falls, at which point the due west line was to commence; and by Richard Hazen from that point to Connecticut river. They were directed to allow ten degrees for the westerly variation of the needle. The work was done in February and March, 1741. "This determination," says Belknap, vol. I, p. 257, "exceeded the utmost expectation of New Hampshire, as it gave them a country fourteen miles in breadth and

above fifty in length, more than they had ever claimed. It cut off from Massachusetts twenty-eight new townships, between Merrimack and Connecticut rivers, besides large tracts of vacant land, which lay intermixed, and districts from six of their old towns on the north side of the Merrimack, and if as was then supposed, the due west line were to extend to twenty miles east of Hudson's river, the reputed boundary of New York, a vast tract of fertile country on the western side of Connecticut river was annexed to New Hampshire, by which an ample scope was given for landed speculation, and afterwards for cultivation and wealth."

The establishment of this line was undoubtedly a public benefit. It put to rest doubts and controversies about jurisdiction and ownership, which had seriously retarded the settlement of the country. But it occasioned in many places great heartburnings and trouble. It severed the ancient town of Dunstable into two parts, leaving them in different jurisdictions. The line passed through the town nearly in the centre, leaving the meetinghouse a short distance on the New Hampshire side. This town had been granted by Massachusetts nearly eighty years, and had been more or less settled more than one hundred years before this time. It had always claimed and been considered to be within the limits of Massachusetts. This decision placed their meeting-house, their minister, their grave-yard, and a large portion of themselves in another jurisdiction, and threw an air of doubt and distrust upon the validity of the titles to the lands upon the New Hampshire side of the line. The effects were most disastrous upon their interests and institutions, both of town and church. The church was broken up. The minister withdrew and left the place. The meeting-house was abandoned, and for more than half a century the results of this disturbance of the municipal and church affairs in that place, were apparent. Hollis was then a part of Dunstable, a precinct or parish, and shared in the troubles of the mother town. Most of Brookline was then included in Hollis, and Pepperell was a part of Groton, which lost a portion of its territory by the new line. In Townsend, the complaints of the wrong done, were long and loud. At a legal town meeting held Oct. 6, 1740, in that town, John Stevens was chosen moderator. The proceedings of the meeting on this subject are recorded as follows: "Being informed that by the determination of his Majesty and Council respecting the controverted bounds between the Province of Massachusetts Bay

and New Hampshire, now part of this township, is excluded from the Province of Massachusetts Bay, to which they supposed they always belonged therefore voted, that a petition be preferred to the King's most excellent majesty, setting forth our most distressed circumstances, and praying that we may be annexed to the Province of the Massachusetts Bay, and voted nemine contradicente, that Thomas Hutchinson, Esquire, of Boston, be and is hereby fully impowered to prefer a petition to his majesty, and to appear and fully to act for the proprietors and inhabitants in said town, respecting the subject: Also, voted that the aforesaid agent *shall have no demand on the town of Townsend for charges* in petitioning as aforesaid, separate from any other town in the Province; Also, voted, in case the said Thomas Hutchinson be not chosen by the major part of the towns, or if chosen, cannot engage in said affair, then Capt. John Stevens be fully impowered to join with other the towns of the Province in the choice of another agent to act in said affair, and that the aforesaid John Stevens have full power in behalf of said town to prepare and sign any petition to his majesty concerning said lines, as shall be necessary, and that he shall have forty shillings reward for his services in this affair." Town Records Vol. I, p. 31. It does not appear that any remedy or recompense for the wrong done, resulted from these proceedings. But the good people of Townsend looked for and obtained a remedy nearer home. The general court granted to the town a tract of land as a compensation for lands cut off by the New Hampshire line, and at a town meeting in 1786, the selectmen were directed to make sale of the lands so granted. The agreement made by Thomlinson' with Mason for the sale of his title, to the Province of New Hampshire before mentioned, was lodged in the hands of the governor, and was by him laid before the house. It lay on their table a long time without any formal notice. In the meantime Mason had suffered a fine and recovery in the courts of New Hampshire, by which he could convey his interest in fee. He sent in a memorial, stating that he would wait no longer, but consider inaction on their part a refusal, and intimations were given that if the agreement should not be ratified, a sale would be made to other persons, who stood ready to purchase. At length a resolution passed the house, that they would comply with the agreement and pay the price, and that the land should be granted by the general assembly, to the inhabitants, as they should think proper. A committee was appointed to complete the business with Mason, but he had on the same day, by a deed of sale for the sum of fifteen hundred pounds,

conveyed his whole interest to twelve persons in fifteen shares. The purchasers were Theodore Atkinson three fifteenths, Mark H. Wentworth two fifteenths, Richard Wibird, John Wentworth, (son of the governor,) George Jaffrey, Nathaniel Meserve, Thomas Packer, Thomas Wallingford, Jotham Odiorne, Joshua Pierce, Samuel Moore and John Moffatt one fifteenth each.

When it was found that the conveyance had been made, there was much dissatisfaction. Some attempts were made to negotiate with these purchasers for a conveyance to the Province, but without success. One obstacle in the way was, that the house would not make the purchase, unless with the stipulation that the land should be granted by the legislature, but the governor and council and the purchasers seem to have insisted, that it should be granted by the governor and council, and for that reason principally the negotiation failed.

In 1749 the purchasers took a second deed, comprehending all the Masonian grant from Naumkeag to Piscataqua, whereas their former deed, was confined to the lately established boundaries of New Hampshire. This deed was not recorded till 1753. After they had taken the first deed, they began to grant townships, and continued granting them to petitioners, often without fees, and always without quit-rents. They quieted the titles in the towns on the western side of the Merrimack, which had been granted by Massachusetts, before the establishment of the line, so that they could go on peaceably with their settlements. The terms of these grants were, that the grantees should within a limited time, erect mills and meeting-houses, clear out roads and settle ministers. In every township they reserved one right for the first settled minister, another for the ministry, and a third for schools. They also reserved fifteen rights for themselves, and two for their attornies; all of which were to be free from taxes, until sold or occupied. By virtue of these grants, many townships were settled, and the interest of the people became so united with that of the proprietors, that the prejudices against them gradually abated. The heirs of Allen menaced them by advertisements, and warned the people against accepting these grants. To this fact and claim undoubtedly, reference is had in that clause in the grant of the township, by which the grantors engage "to defend through the law to the King in

Council, if need be, one action that may be brought against them or any number of them," &c. By these proceedings, a way was prepared for giving to settlers a valid title to the lands, which had so long been a subject of doubt and controversy; and a grant was made to the proprietors, under which the settlement of the town was commenced and proceeded with as will be detailed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

PROPRIETARY HISTORY.

Groton Grant in 1734, the earliest grant in this part of New-Hampshire. Order of time of grants in the vicinity. No. 1 granted by the Masonian Proprietors. First inhabitants. Division among the grantees. Plan of the township. Proceedings in proprietors' meetings. Roads. Report of settlements and improvements, in 1752. Meeting House. Mills. Ministers and preaching. Call of E. Champney. Two hundred acres added on the north side. Call of James Parker. Vote for incorporation. Vote giving the Meeting House to the town. Final meeting.

The earliest historical trace of the claim of ownership in the territory and soil of the town of Mason, is found in connection with the town of Groton. The original grant of the township of Groton, on the petition of Dean Winthrop and others, under date of 23d, 5th m., 1655, was of a tract "equal to eight miles square." In 1715, a portion of this territory was annexed to Nashobah and incorporated by the name of Littleton. There were also included within the bounds of Groton, as originally surveyed and located, two farms previously granted to individuals, containing about thirteen hundred acres, for which no allowance was made in the survey. In 1734, the inhabitants of Groton petitioned the General Court "for some of the unappropriated land of the Province, as an equivalent for the said farms, and the land so taken off by the line established, dividing between Groton and Littleton." On this petition a grant was made of "ten thousand eight hundred acres, in a gore between Townsend and Dunstable." This tract is undoubtedly the same represented on Douglas' map made in 1748, as "Groton Grant". According to that map, it embraced a territory extending to Souhegan river, which, would include a large part of Mason, and a part of Wilton. See extract from Douglas' map Hist. of New Ipswich, page 28. Under this grant, the inhabitants of Groton took possession of, and occupied the territory. It was their custom to cut the hay upon the meadows, and stack it, and early in the spring to send up their young cattle to be fed upon the hay, under the care of Boad, the negro slave. They would cause the woods, to be fired, as it was called, that is, burnt over in the spring, after which fresh and succulent herbage springing up, furnished good store of the finest feed, upon which the cattle would thrive and fatten through the season.

Bead's camp was upon the east side of the meadow, near the residence of the late Joel Ames. When the Province line was run in 1741, it "passed through Groton Gore, leaving a large portion thereof, and a triangular piece of what was originally Groton, in the state of New Hampshire." For the land so lost by the establishing of the Province line, on the petition of the inhabitants of Groton, the General Court in June 1771, granted them "seven thousand and eight hundred acres of unappropriated lands lying on the western part of the Province." See Butler's Groton, pp. 58—62. To have a distinct understanding of the state of territorial titles in 1734, the date of the grant of Groton Gore, it may be necessary to review the territorial grants previous and subsequent to that date, of the adjacent and neighboring towns.

Chelmsford and Groton were granted in 1655. Dunstable in 1673. This town originally comprised the territory now embraced in Dunstable and Tyngsborough in Massachusetts, Hudson, Nashua, Hollis, most of Brookline, all of Milford and Merrimack south of Souhegan river, and most of Litchfield, in New Hampshire. Dunstable was "bounded south by Chelmsford to Groton line, on the west by Groton and by countrey land, the line running due north from the boundary" [that is the north east angle of Groton] "ten miles till you come to Souhegan river, at a place called Dram Gup Hill at a great pine tree nigh ye said river, at a [bound or corner] of Charlestown scoole farm, bounded by the Souhegan river on the north," &c. As "a triangular piece of what was originally Groton" was by the running of the Province line in 1741, left within the State of New Hampshire, the north east angle of Groton must be found in Brookline ten miles south of Souhegan river, not far from Potanapus pond. The tradition is that the west line of Dunstable, which must have commenced at the north east angle of Groton, passed through this pond. A tract about one mile wide lying on the east side of Mason, was added to a portion of Hollis, formerly Dunstable, and incorporated by the name of Raby, afterwards changed to Brookline. Thus it appears that the western line of Old Dunstable passed about one mile east of the eastern line of Mason.

Townsend was incorporated in 1732. A part of this town also was left by the Province line, in New Hampshire, and is included within the limits of Mason. New Ipswich was

granted by Massachusetts in 1735. This grant was vacated by the establishment of the line; but it was regranted by the Masonian proprietors, with a change of boundaries, April 17, 1750. Hollis, the west part of Old Dunstable, was organized as a parish or precinct, December 28, 1739, and incorporated as a town, April 20, 1746. The name originally was Holles, from the family name of the Duke of Newcastle, prime minister of Great Britain in the reign of George II. at the time Louisburg was taken, in 1745, under Sir William Pepperell. Pepperell, another name commemorating the same event, was incorporated in 1753, being formerly a precinct or parish of Groton. Brookline, originally named Raby, was incorporated March 30, 1769. The original charter embraced a part of the west part of Hollis, two miles wide and the mile slip, so called, a piece of land a part of the old Groton Gore, about one mile wide, "lying on the easterly side of Mason." The east line of this mile slip must have been the west line of Old Dunstable, which bordered on "countrey land," from Groton to Souhegan river. In 1786, another portion of Hollis, three fourths of a mile wide, was added to Brookline. Wilton was granted by the Masonian proprietors, October 1, 1749. Temple was incorporated about the year 1770. Ashby in 1767. Thus it appears that the original grant of this tract to Groton, by Massachusetts, was prior, in point of time, to that of any adjoining territory, except Townsend.

The title to the township of Mason, except two gores, one on the north and one on the south side, was granted November 1, 1749, by an instrument of that date executed by Col. Joseph Blanchard, on behalf of the Masonian proprietors, of which the following is a copy:

[Copy of the Grant.]

PROVINCE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Pursuant to the power and authority, granted and vested in me by the Proprietors of lands purchased of John Tufton Mason, Esq. in the Province of New Hampshire, by their vote passed at the meeting, held at Portsmouth, in said Province, the 16th day of June, 1749,

I do by these presents, give and grant, all the title and interest, property and possession of the proprietors aforesaid, unto William Lawrence, Esq., Peter Powers, Eleazer Blanchard, John Goff, Esq., David Adams, Paul March, Philip Olerick, Eleazer Farwell, John Stevens, Nathaniel Meserve, Jr., Peter Powers, Jr., Joseph Blodgett, John Butterfield, Jonathan Powers, Jr., Zaccheus Lovewell, Jonathan Hubbard, John Varnum, Josiah Brown, John Jennison, Joseph Blanchard, Jr., Elnathan Blood, Mr. Thomas Packer, Jonathan Hubbard, Jr., Clement March, Robert Fletcher, Jr., Israel Hubbard, Amasa Parker, Jacob Gould, Benjamin Parker, David Stearns, Thomas Tarbell, Samuel Tarbell, Shadrack Whitney, Edward Jewett, all their [heirs] of in and to all that part of a township or tract of land in the Province of New Hampshire aforesaid, containing about the contents of seventy-seven square miles, bounded as follows, beginning at a stake and stones the southeast corner of the premises, and runs from thence, north eighty degrees west, five miles and twenty rods by the Province line to New Ipswich corner, from thence north by the needle, five miles to a white pine tree marked, from thence east by the needle, five miles to a hemlock tree marked, from thence south by the needle, to the first bounds mentioned, which said township is laid out, drawn for, and lots ascertained for each grantee respectively, with two lots for encouragement of building of mills, &c. and three shares for public uses, viz: one for the first settled minister, one for the ministry, and one for the schools there forever, which said shares and lots, to be the same as already drawn and entered in the schedule and plan hereunto annexed, unto them respectively and their heirs and assigns. To have and hold on the following terms, conditions and limitations, and on them only, that is to say, that a meeting house be built as near the centre of said town, as by the grantees shall be judged most convenient, and that when such place shall be agreed on, six acres shall be reserved for public uses; that the remaining lands not entered in the schedule and plan aforesaid, specified within the bounds of the township aforesaid, be and hereby are reserved to and for the use of the Grantors of the premises, their heirs and assigns forever, free and clear from all charges, tax or incumbrance of settlement, until their, or any of their parts are improved by them, or some holding under them.

That the aforementioned grantees, exclusive of the three public lots, shall carry on, perform and make settlement at their own expense, in the following manner, viz: that there be all necessary highways laid out in said town where they will be most convenient, without any pay or allowance, to those grantors or grantees, through whose land the same shall go, that the grantees build a convenient house for the public worship of God, there at or before the last day of May, 1753, for the use of those who shall then, or afterwards inhabit there. That there be on some one lot of each of the forty shares belonging to the grantees, three acres cleared, inclosed and fitted for mowing or triage, so far as is profitable, at or before the last day of November, 1751, and each of the said lots to be cleared as aforesaid, to be settled with having a house of sixteen feet square, at the least, and seven feet stud or more, with a chimney and cellar, finished and fitted for a dwelling house,

thereon at or before the last day of May, 1752, and some person or family inhabiting and resident in said house, and they or some others in each of their steads, continue residing there until the last day of May, 1755. That the owners of each of the forty settling shares, have on each of their rights respectively, three acres more, in like manner fitted, at or before the last day of November, 1752, and the like quantity annually, for two years then next coming. That the remaining six shares, to wit, the shares of Jonathan Hubbard, Benjamin Parker, Nathaniel Meserve, Jr., Josiah Brown, John Jennison, Eleazer Blanchard, be excused from the duty of building, improving or settling, until the last day of November, 1755, and then to have the whole duty performed as the others at that time. That each of the grantees at the executing of this instrument pay, thirty pounds each old tenor, to defray the necessary charges, risen or arising in bringing forward the settlement, to be deposited in the hands of such person as they shall appoint, being a freeholder and resident in the Province. That the aforesaid grantees or their assigns assess such further sum, or sums of money equally in [pro] portion to the right, or the share of each grantee, exclusive of the three public lots, as may be thought necessary, for carrying on and completing any of the public matters, in making the settlement and charges, always provided there be no Indian war, within any of the times aforesaid, for doing the duty conditioned in this grant, and in case that should happen, the same time to be allowed for the respective matters aforesaid, after such impediment shall be removed. That all white pine trees fit for masting his Majesties royal navy, growing on said land, be and here[by] are granted to his Majesty, his heirs and successors forever.

Lastly, said grantors do hereby promise to the said grantees, their heirs and assigns, to defend through the law, to the King and Council if need be, one action that shall and may be brought against them, or any number of them, by any person or persons whatsoever, claiming the said land, or any part thereof, by any other title than of the grantors, or that by which they hold and derive theirs from, Provided the said grantors are avouched in to defend the same, and that in case the same shall be recovered against the grantors, the grantees shall recover nothing over against the grantors for the said lands and improvements, or expenses of bringing forward the settlement, and further, that the said grantors will pay the necessary expenses of time and money, that any other person or persons shall be put to, by any other suit or suits, that shall be brought against them, or any of them, the said grantees for tryal of the title, before one action shall be fully determined in the law. In witness whereof, I the said Joseph Blanchard of Dunstable, have hereunto set my hand and seal, this first day of November, 1749.

JOSEPH BLANCHARD. [seal.]

This copy is a transcript from the proprietors' records. The original has not been found. There is undoubtedly a mistake in the number of square miles in the contents of the town. It should be twenty seven, not seventy seven.

There is no record or tradition existing which shows when the first inhabitants began to reside within the limits of the town. Joseph Herrick was chosen "second deer officer" in Townsend, at the annual town meeting in March, 1742. In 1745, that town "voted to abate Joseph Herrick's rates, provided the money was raised after he went out of town." Joseph Herrick lived in the south-easterly part of the town of Mason, near where Elisha Boynton lived. In what part of Townsend he resided before he "went out of town," is not known. He was undoubtedly the pioneer in the settlement of that part of Mason. There, probably, his oldest son, Joseph Herrick was born, Sept. 30, 1751. He may claim to be the first person of European parentage, born within the present limits of the town. His only competitor for this honor, is John Lawrence, son of Enosh Lawrence. No record of his birth is found. He was the youngest of the children of Enosh Lawrence and Sarah Stevens, his wife. The birth of nine of their children is recorded in the town records of Pepperell, the last of which was April 12, 1748. There is a tradition that he was born in 1751, and that he was the first child born in the town; that is, within the limits of the original grant. It would seem that Lawrence was residing in Pepperell in 1748, and that Herrick removed out of Townsend in 1745; so that the last was probably the earliest permanent resident within the present limits of the township. He was a "deer officer," which indicates that he was a hunter, fond of sylvan pursuits.

A meeting of the "grantees and proprietors" was held at the house of Capt. Joseph French, in Dunstable, Oct. 16, 1749; at which, the township having been divided into lots, and a list made of the lots, they were drawn, for, and entered to each proprietor his lots, which list is inserted [on page 34]. On [pages 32 and 33] will be found a plan of the town with the names of the grantees, &c., of the several lots according to the said list.

PLAN OF TOWNSHIP NO. 1, OR MASON

R	10	9	8	7	6
20	Robert Fletcher	J. Pierce	Jona. Powers, Jr.	J.T Mason	Scollay & Marsh
19	10	9	8	7	6
	S. Moore	J. Pierce	Jona. Moffatt	Saml. Tarbell	Saml. Tarbell
18	10	9	8	7	6
	S. Moore	D. Stearns	Thos. Tarbell	Jos. Blanchard	N. Messerve Jr. <i>D. Williams</i>
17	10	9	8	7	6
	J. Odiorne	Maj. J. Hubbard	Wm. Lawrence	Wm. Lawrence	Benj. Parker <i>O. Nutting</i>
16	10	9	8	7	6
	J. Odiorne	Maj. J. Hubbard	Jona. Hubbard	J. Blanchard	Jona. Hubbard <i>J. Hull</i> <i>E. & T. Blood</i>
15	10	9	8	7	6
	N. Messerve	N. Messerve	David Stearns	Benj. Parker <i>H. Jefts</i>	Joshua Pierce <i>E. Fish</i>
14	10	9	8	7	6
	J. Stevens	J. Stevens	George Marsh	J. Hubbard Jr.	M. H. Wentworth <i>N. Hall</i>
13	10	9	8	7	6
	J. Stevens <i>J. Barrett</i>	J. Stevens <i>Z. Davis</i>	Th. Parker, Esq. <i>Saml. Lawrence</i>	T.J. Mason <i>Saml. Lawrence</i>	Thos. Parker <i>H. Jefts</i> <i>J. Bachelder</i>
12	10	9	8	7	6
	J. Odiorne	N. Messerve <i>A. Allen</i> <i>Jos. Merriam</i>	Jos. Jennison <i>Josiah Wheeler</i> <i>H. Warren</i>	J. Hubbard Jr. <i>Samuel Hill</i> <i>John Blodgett</i>	Maj. J. Hubbard <i>Amos Holden</i>
11	10	9	8	7	6
	J. Jennison	J. Stevens	J. Stevens <i>N. Whipple</i>	Maj. Lawrence <i>B. Mann</i> <i>S. Ames</i>	Joseph Blodgett <i>Ab. Merriam</i>
10	10	9	8	7	6
	Josiah Brown	J. Stevens	J. Varnum <i>Jos. Merriam</i>	Maj. Lawrence <i>J. Jefts E. Ball</i> <i>N. Boynton</i>	School <i>Meet'g House Lot</i> <i>Dr. Wm Barber</i>
9	10	9	8	7	6
	Maj. J. Hubbard <i>A. Wheeler</i>	J. Stevens <i>E. Lawrence</i>	W. Parker, Esq. <i>Jona. Searle</i>	J. Stevens <i>N. Barrett</i> <i>J. Whitaker</i>	J. Jennison <i>S. Abbot</i> <i>Rev. E. Hill</i>
8	10	9	8	7	6
	Maj. J. Hubbard <i>Lt. O. Parker</i>	G. Jaffrey <i>T. Robbins</i>	J. Wentworth, Jr. <i>T. Wheeler</i>	E. Blanchard <i>D. Fay J. Wait, Jr</i> <i>J. Flagg</i>	E. Blanchard <i>Joshua Wyeth</i> <i>E. Wilson</i>
7	10	9	8	7	6
	Mr. Livermore <i>E. Davis</i>	Mr. Livermore <i>James Wood</i>	Josiah Brown <i>Ministry</i> <i>Stev. Lawrence</i>	J. Wentworth, Jr.	Jos. Blanchard <i>D. Blodgett</i> <i>John Winship</i>
6	10	9	8	7	6
	Z. Lovewell	M.H. Wentworth	J. Power, Jr.	John Butterfield <i>J. Webber, Jr.</i>	Ph. Olericke <i>W. Cummings</i> <i>John Swallow</i>
	10	9	8	7	6
			Jos. Farrar		

5	Z. Lovewell <i>T. Wheelock</i>	N. Messerve, Jr. <i>Samuel Woods</i>	<i>Mill Lot</i> <i>E. Shattuck</i>	John Butterfield <i>Seth Robbins</i>	School <i>Zac. Barrett</i>
4	10 S. Wallingford <i>O. Hosmer</i>	9 N. Messerve, Jr.	8 Geo. Jaffrey <i>T. Hodgman</i>	7 Rich'd Wibird	6 Wm. Lawrence <i>Capt. I. Brown</i>
3	10 T. Wallingford	9 Phil. Olericke <i>Wm. Cummings</i> <i>R. Weston</i>	8 Josiah Brown	7 Joseph Blodgett	6 Wm. Lawrence Enos Lawrence
2	10 P. March <i>E. Hodgman</i>	9 D. Adams <i>John Barrett</i>	8 W. Parker, Esq.	7 Rich'd Wibird	6 Wm. Lawrence <i>Josiah Robbins</i> <i>Dea. J. Webber</i>
1	10 G. Jaffrey <i>J. Hodgman</i>	9 P. Powers	8 E. Blanchard	7 School	6 Mark H. Went- worth <i>N. Winship</i> <i>W. Barrett</i>

20	5 Theo. Atkinson	4 Jona. Lawrence <i>J. Hubbard</i>	3 Jona. Hubbard	2 Benj. Parker	1 Amasa Parker <i>J. Jefts</i>
19	5 Wm. Lawrence	4 Thos. Tarbell	3 Elnathan Blood	2 David Stearns	1 Thomas Parker
18	5 Theo. Atkinson	4 Jacob Gould	3 Mr. Th: Packer	2 J. Hubbard, Jr.	1 E. Jewett
17	5 Wm. Lawrence	4 Wm. Lawrence	3 J. Hubbard, Jr.	2 George March	1 Ministry
16	5 Jona. Hubbard	4 Amasa Parker <i>J. Jefts</i>	3 J. Hubbard, Jr.	2 J. Blanchard, Jr.	1 J. Blanchard, Jr.
15	5 John Moffat	4 Saml. Tarbell	3 Robert Fletcher	2 Joseph Farrar <i>Mill Lot</i>	1 Eleazer Farwell
14	5 M.H. Wentworth	4 Jacob Gould	3 Robt. Fletcher	2 Jos. Blanchard	1 Scollay & March
13	5 Scollay & March	4 Samuel Moore	3 J. Hubbard, Jr.	2 J.T. Mason	1 Peter Powers
12	5 Amasa Parker <i>J. Jefts</i>	4 Peter Powers	3 Elnathan Blood	2 Jacob Gould	1 Peter Powers <i>Wm. Spaulding</i>
11	5 Minister	4 Thos. Tarbell	3 Elnathan Blood	2 John Stevens	1 Peter Powers <i>Wm. Spaulding</i>
10	5 Minister <i>J. Searle</i>	4 Peter Powers <i>John Tarbell</i> <i>Joshua Davis</i>	3 E. Jewett <i>T. Tarbell</i>	2 T. Parker, Esq. <i>Edm. Tarbell</i>	1 Th: Parker, Esq <i>Wm. Spaulding</i>
9	5 J. Stevens <i>N. Warren</i>	4 Jona. Blanchard <i>Jason Russell</i>	3 John Moffat	2 J. Wentworth, Jr.	1 M.H. Wentworth
8	5 John Goff <i>___ Greeley</i> <i>H. Russell</i>	4 Thos. Taylor <i>H. Russell</i>	3 Theo. Atkinson	2 Jona. Livermore <i>Hubbard</i>	1 J. Powers, Jr.
7	5 Ministry <i>Joseph Winship</i>	4 Paul March <i>S. Smith</i>	3 George March	2 M.H. Wentworth	1 Peter Powers
6	5 Peter Powers, Jr.	4 Jos. Blodgett <i>B. Barrett</i> <i>H. Richardson</i>	3 Davis Adams	2 Peter Powers	1 J. Powers, Jr.
5	5 J. Powers, Jr.	4 David Adams <i>Amos Blood</i>	3 Ministry <i>J. Brown</i>	2 Phil. Olericke <i>___ Cummings</i>	1 Peter Powers
4	5 John Varnum <i>John Dutton</i>	4 John Goff <i>S. Greeley</i>	3 Maj. J. Hubbard	2 W. Parker, Esq.	1 Rich'd Wibird

	<i>John Blood</i>	<i>Joseph Blood</i>			
	5	4	3	2	1
3	E. Farwell	John Stevens	John Stevens	Wm. Lawrence	Minister
	5	4	3	2	1
2	T. Wallingford	John Stevens	John Stevens	John Goff <i>Powers</i>	M. Livermore
	5	4	3	2	1
1	Paul March	John Butterfield	Shadr. Whitney	Eleazer Farwell	John Varnum

The plan of which the above is a copy was found among the papers in the town clerk's office. It is in the hand writing of John Blodgett, Esq., who was for many years town clerk. On the south side is represented a gore 240 poles wide at the east end, the south line of which runs to the south west corner of the town. It is not laid out into lots. The only note or memorandum on the plan is in these words: "A plan of Mason without any north slip," and on the south side, "Five miles East"; on the east, "Five miles North"; on the north, "Five miles West"; on the west, "Five miles South". In some instances the name of the original grantee is not on this plan, and is restored in this copy. The names of the grantees are in Roman letters. The names in *Italic* in all cases are those of subsequent residents on, or owners of the lots, and in most cases, of original settlers on the lots.

RECORD OF THE DRAFT OF LOTS IN TOWNSHIP NO. 1

Names	Draught	Number	Range	Number	Range	Number	Range	Names	Draught	Number	Range	Number	Range	Number	Range
Ministry	1	5	7	3	5	1	17	John Stevens, Esq.	35	8	11	9	9	3	3
School	2	6	5	6	10	7	1	Samuel Moore and *	36	10	18	10	19	4	13
George Jaffrey	3	10	1	9	8	8	4	Joseph Farrar †	37	2	15	8	5		
Peter Powers *	4	9	1	2	6	1	5	Minister	38	5	10	5	11	1	3
Eleazer Blanchard	5	8	1	7	8	6	8	Joseph Blanchard, Jr.	39	4	9	2	16	1	16
John Goff, Esq.	6	5	8	4	4	2	2	Peter Powers ‡	40	4	10	1	12	1	13
David Adams †	7	9	2	4	5	3	6	J.P. §	41	4	12	1	11	1	7
Paul March	8	10	2	4	7	5	1	Elnathan Blood	42	3	12	3	11	3	19
Philip Olerike	9	9	3	6	6	2	5	Thomas Parker, Esq.	43	8	13	1	10	2	10
Eleazer Farwell	10	5	3	2	1	1	15	Mr. Thomas Packer	44	6	13	1	19	3	18
John Stevens, Esq.	11	4	3	5	4	4	2	J.P. ¶	45	3	13	2	18	7	12
Thomas Wallingford	12	10	4	10	3	5	2	John Tufton Mason, Esq	46	7	20	7	13	2	13
Nathaniel Messerve, Jr.	13	9	5	9	4	6	18	George Marsh	47	8	14	3	7	2	17
Peter Powers, Jr.	14	5	5	5	6	1	6	Mark H. Wentworth	48	6	14	5	14	2	7
Joseph Blodgett	15	7	3	4	6	6	11	Capt. Robert Fletcher	49	3	14	3	15	10	20
John Butterfield ‡	16	7	6	4	1	0	0	Saml. Scollay and March	50	5	13	6	20	1	14
Jonathan Powers, Jr.	17	8	20	1	8	8	6	John Moffat, Esq.	51	5	15	8	19	3	9
Mark Hunking Wentworth	18	6	1	9	6	1	9	Jonathan Lawrence	52	6	16	4	20	2	8
Thomas Taylor §	19	10	6	10	5	4	8	Mr. Trowbridge, now Hubbard	53	5	16	3	20	8	16
Matthew Livermore	20	10	7	9	7	1	2	Amasa Parker	54	4	16	1	20	5	12
John Stevens, Esq.	21	10	14	7	9	5	9	Jona. Hubbard, Jr.	55	3	16	3	17	7	14
William Lawrence, Esq.	22	5	19	6	2	2	3	Jacob Gould	56	4	14	4	18	2	12
William Parker, Esq.	23	8	9	8	2	2	4	Wm. Lawrence, Esq.	57	5	17	8	17	7	17
John Wentworth, Jr.	24	8	8	7	7	2	9	Benja. Parker	58	6	17	2	20	7	15
Maj. Jona. Hubbard	25	10	9	10	8	3	4	Maj. Jona. Hubbard, J.P., ¶¶	59	9	17	9	16	6	12
Maj. Wm. Lawrence ¶¶	26	7	10	7	11			Mr. David Stearns	60	9	18	2	19	8	15
John Varnum ¶¶	27	8	10	1	1	5	4	Capt. Thomas Tarbell	61	8	18	4	19	4	11
John Stevens, Esq.	28	9	10	9	11	2	11	Joseph Blanchard, Esq.	62	7	18	6	7	2	14
Josiah Brown	29	10	10	8	3	8	7	Theodore Atkinson, Esq.	63	5	18	5	20	3	8
Richard Wibird, Esq.	31	10	17	10	12	10	16	Wm. Lawrence, Esq.	64	4	3	6	4	4	17
Jotham Odiorn	31	10	17	10	12	10	16	Capt. Saml. Tarbell	65	7	19	6	19	4	15
Nathl. Meserve, Esq.	32	10	15	9	12	9	15	Joshua Pierce	66	9	19	9	20	6	15
John Gennison	33	10	11	8	12	6	9	Shadrack Whitney	67	3	1				
John Stevens, Esq.	34	9	13	9	14	3	2								

The foregoing is a True Copy of the Draught and numbers of the lots In the Township No. One, so-called, lying, in the Province of New Hampshire, as they was Drawn by the Proprietors of said. Township. A true copy. Examined and Recorded,

Pr JOHN STEVENS, Prop's Clerk.

NOTE. In the original copy, in the margin against the names and figures, are sundry additions indicated by the references below:

*7.5	*Daniel Pierce
------	----------------

†8 [in the 6 th column should be 3.]	†Mill Lot
‡7.5	‡J.P.
§Z. Lovewell	§Capt. Peter Powers
⸰Two lots to this one right	⸰Jona. Hubbard, Jr.
¶J.P.	¶J.P. [above the name]

At the same meeting, William Lawrence and John Stevens, Esq., were "directed, at the charge of the grantees and settlers of this township, to mark out a highway in said township, from where the road enters into said township, that leads from Amos Sartell's house in Townshend, to the meeting-house place, as marked on the plan of the division of said township, and from said meeting-house place, to near the middle of the north line in said township, in the most convenient place for a road, and fit for a, feasible cart road, the said highway, as soon as may be, and that Messrs. Benjamin Parker and Peter Powers, be desired and empowered as aforesaid, to lay out, and clear, and fit for a feasible cart road, in the most convenient place, from said meeting-house place to the town of Hollis." In this extract from the proprietors' records, a distinction is made between "grantees and settlers," which is kept up through the whole period of the proprietorship, which continued long after the incorporation of the town. Many of the proprietors never resided in the town; some of the original proprietors resided in the town, and several persons, whose names do not appear among the original proprietors, resided in the town, and attended proprietors' meetings, and voted and took an active part therein; while other persons who resided and owned land in town, do not appear to have attended the meetings, or to have been recognized as having any of the rights or powers of proprietors. What constituted the line of distinction between the owners of land who had a right, and those who had not a right to meet and vote in proprietary meetings, does not appear. The road first above described, is substantially the same now travelled from Townsend west village, leading by the meeting-house northerly, to and beyond Jonathan Bachelders. The other was the road leading from the meeting-house to Brookline, then a part of Hollis. At an adjournment of the same meeting, held Nov. 7, 1749, at the same place, Joseph Blanchard, Jr. was chosen Clerk, Joseph Blanchard, Esq. Treasurer, Major Jonathan Hubbard, John Stevens, Esq. and Capt. Samuel Tarbell were chosen a committee "for managing the prudentials of the society." The mode of calling future meetings was also provided for; notices for which were to be posted fifteen days beforehand, in some public place in Dunstable, in Townsend, and in Groton. It was also "voted to accept of the two mill lots marked on the plan for that use, and chose a committee to bargain and indent with some person or persons, to build and finish a saw mill by the last day of February, 1750, and a corn mill in nine months from that time; that they contract for said mills to be

kept in repair; also that every of the inhabitants on bringing suitable timber, have it sawed for half the stuff at least; also to dispose of the two mill lots, or so much of them for that use as they shall agree for; that Messrs Benjamin Parker, Major Jonathan Hubbard, Capt. John .Stevens be the committee for this purpose."

The plan referred to has not been found; nor any plan upon which the mill lots are marked, among the records of the proprietors, but in the schedule of the lots drawn to the different rights against right or "draught," No. 37, are two lots 2 R. 15, and 8 R. 5, marked in the margin "mill lots," and in a plan in the hand-writing of John Blodgett, Esq., who was in 1799, and many years after, town clerk, on file with the papers in the town clerk's office, these two lots are each marked "mill lot."

Some question seems to have arisen at this early period as to the nature and the validity of the title claimed under the grant, for at this same adjourned meeting, Mr. John Varnum, Major William Lawrence, and Capt. John Stevens were chosen a committee "to enquire into, and view the tenor of the grant, and report their opinion of the safety therein; and that Capt. Thomas Tarbell be joined to this committee." Probably the committee were satisfied "of the safety therein," for no report has been entered on the records, nor does any question as to the validity of the title seem ever after to have been seriously made. This movement, probably, had reference to Allen's advertisements before mentioned to, cautioning persons not to take titles under the Masonian proprietors.

At this same adjourned meeting, it was also voted, that the committee chosen at the first of this meeting, for marking out and clearing highways, be directed to mark out, and open a road so that horses or cattle may pass from the meeting-house place, westward, near to the west line of the town." This was, probably, the road from the meeting-house to New Ipswich, by Obadiah Parker's house. At this early period, the roads leading from the south to the north, and from the east to the west borders of the town through the center, seem to have been provided for.

At an adjournment of the same meeting, holden on the last Tuesday in Dec. 1749, Capt. Thomas Tarbell was added to the committee for laying out and clearing the road from the meeting-house place to Hollis '; also "voted, that John Stevens, Esq. amend the range line between the sixth and seventh range, so as equally to divide the quantity of land between the two ranges, and he to be paid six pounds old tenor for that service, which he agreed to;" also " voted, that Capt. Samuel Tarbell be joined to the committee chosen to contract with some suitable person to build the mills in this township, in the room of John Stevens, Esq. ', voted, that Joseph Blanchard, Esq. take security of the person who builds the mills; that John Stevens, Esq. go and look out the mill places and see on whose lots they fall, and make return to Joseph Blanchard, Esq. where they are, by the first day of next March, and if any mistakes should be in his first account of said lots, that Col. Joseph Blanchard procure the said lots where the mills are to stand, in behalf of the grantees, they paying the sum or sums of money which they shall cost." No report on this subject is entered on the records. If any was made in writing, it has not been found. The two lots marked on the plan, were, one in the north east part of the town, near where Elias Elliot built a mill, and the other in the south west part, near where the mill of Frederic Jones stands. It seems that under this vote and instruction, some change was made, for the mills contracted for by the proprietors were built on the site of Dakin's mills, in the village.

At this adjourned meeting, it was also "voted, that Mr. Benjamin Parker run. out the two lines that are not already run, and that he have twelve pounds old tenor for doing said work, which he agreed to, [and] that he go and lay out two hundred acres of land lying between the north line of No. 1, and the south line of No. 2, in the best manner he can, for the use of the grantees of No. 1. Voted that the Treasurer pay him for doing said work, at his returning the plan of said land, [and] that if anything should happen that he should not do the work by the middle of January next, that Capt. Peter Powers be directed to do said work forthwith, on the same conditions as aforesaid."

By what claim or right the grantees of No. 1 were entitled "to go and lay out two hundred acres of land" between No.1 and No. 2, does not appear. A tract or gore of land between

the original lines or boundaries of these townships, was at some time annexed to No. 1. In the original location of townships in that part of the state, there was not the precision which has prevailed in the surveys of the public lands of the United States, or in the more recently settled parts of New England. No base lines or meridian lines were run. Each township or tract was run out by itself, and it might readily happen that different surveyors going into the wilderness to run out tracts of land, not knowing what other surveyors may have done, should not make their lines parallel, or corners coincident; so that it is not a matter of surprise, that gores should be found to exist between tracts, which were intended and supposed to be bounded by the same line. Such seems to have been the case in this instance. The original grant of No. 2, now Wilton, was as follows: In June, 1735, the General Court granted to Samuel King and others, in consideration of their sufferings in the expedition to Canada, in the year 1690, the township of Lyndeborough, and about one third of Wilton, on the north side, under the name of "Salem Canada." The word "Canada" added to names of grants, was common at that time. Thus, Ipswich Canada, New Ipswich, Dorchester Canada, Ashburnham, &c. are instances. The tracts, with this addition to the names, were granted to the citizens of the several towns indicated, for their services in the expedition to Canada in 1690. In 1749, the Masonian proprietors made a grant of a tract of land adjoining "Salem Canada" on the south, under certain conditions, to forty six persons. The grantees had it laid out and annexed to a part of Salem Canada, and called No. 2; which was afterwards, Jan. 2, 1765, incorporated under the name of Wilton.

A trouble which is apt to be incident to the undertaking of all new enterprizes requiring the expenditure of money, that is, the want of promptness on the part of those who are chargable with the payments, seems to have met the grantees at an early stage of their proceedings; and very frequent and repeated references to the same difficulty, even to the very last stage of their proprietary existence, show that it was a constant and permanent source of annoyance. The final proceedings of this first meeting, continued so long by adjournments, referred to this matter, as follows: "Voted, that all persons refusing or neglecting to pay the respective sums of money raised on their rights, after the third Tuesday of January next, [their rights] are hereby forfeited to the rest of the grantees,

they paying the aforesaid sums of money, to defray the necessary charges in bringing forward the settlement of the town."

The next meeting of the proprietors, was holden at the house of William Lawrence, Esq., in said township, on the 3d day of Dec. 1751. Wm. Lawrence, Esq. was chosen moderator. The proceedings were as follows: "Voted to build a meeting-house in said township, for the public worship of God, of the following dimensions; viz: thirty feet in length, and twenty four or twenty six feet in width, as the committee chosen for that service shall think fit, and sixteen feet between joints. Voted and chose for said committee, William Lawrence, Jonathan Hubbard, Esq., and Capt. Thomas Tarbell. Also voted, that the said committee be directed to inclose said house, lay the under floor, and to build a convenient place for the minister to stand to preach in."

"Voted, to choose a committee to let out the mills in said township. Chose for said committee, Wm. Lawrence and John Stevens, Esq.; the saw mill to be built and completed, fit for service, by the 25th day of May next, and the corn mill to be completed, fit to grind by the 25th day of May, 1753. Also voted, that the committee chosen to build the meeting-house, be directed to employ the proprietors or inhabitants both at the meeting-house, and at the highways, provided they will work as cheap and as well as others."

At a meeting held at the house of Mr. Enos Lawrence, on the 4th Tuesday of Oct. 1752, a vote was passed to change the dimensions of the meeting-house to be built, to 40 feet by 30, and to add Benjamin Parker and John Stevens to the, committee; that the frame should be set up by the first of January next, and the house finished as directed by the former vote, by the first day of November next, which must be intended November, 1753. At this meeting John Stevens was chosen proprietors' clerk, the road from the Province line to the meeting-house place, was accepted as laid out, and "the meeting was adjourned to Mr. James Lawrence's in Groton west parish, that day three weeks." At the adjourned meeting, "Voted, that if every proprietor, by the twentieth day of May next, obliged by the charter to settle a lot in said township, have not built a dwelling-house and

fenced six acres fit for plowing or mowing, [he] shall forfeit his land, according to the charter; except such proprietors at said time, shall ease or consider the same; provided that those persons that have done nothing on their rights, pay each man two shillings and eight pence lawful money for the use of said proprietary, for their past neglects, or else to have no benefit by the former vote."

And on said adjournment, the committee chosen to view the lots report, as follows:

THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

" This contains an account of what each man has done in No. one.

Enos Lawrence has a house, and about eight acres cleared, and dwells there.

Nathan Hall, a house and seven acres of land, six of it broke up, and dwells there.

Nathan Fish, a small house, about five acres cleared.

Henry Jefts, seven acres cleared, and about three of it broke up, and a house.

Obadiah Parker, a good house, and about two acres cleared.

Ebenezer Butterfield, a good house, eight acres well cleared and broke up.

Josiah Bobbins, about three acres cleared, and a poor fence.

John Swallow cleared about one acre, and got some timber for a house.

William Lawrence, a house and barn, and about ten acres cleared.

Samuel Bight, [Wright,] a cellar dug, two acres cleared.

James Withee, a cellar dug, and three acres cleared and broke up.

Simon Green, about two acres cleared and broke up, and a cellar dug, and a frame.

Ensign Shattuck, one acre cleared on each lot.

Capt. Thomas Tarbell, about three acres cleared.

Capt. Samuel Tarbell, about three acres cleared.

James Lasley, [Leslie,] house up, about three acres cleared.

George Lasley, [Leslie,] a camp, about one acre cleared.

Reuben Barrett, about three acres cleared, and two of it broke up.

William Spaulding, a pretty good house, and some land cleared, and something done to a second lot.

William Elliot, two acres cleared, and a cellar dug, [and] timber drawn for a house.

Capt. Stevens, about nine acres cleared and fenced, also, about five acres more.

Samuel Right, [Wright,] two lotts about one acre and a half cleared, and a camp.

Shadrack Whitney, a house and barn, and about twenty acres cleared and fenced, and a young orchard.

Signed, WILLIAM LAWRENCE, per order."

At a meeting at the house of Enos Lawrence in said township, on the 27th of November, 1753, "Col. Lawrence chosen moderator of said meeting; voted to choose a committee of three men for the service hereafter mentioned, &c. The committee to send Mr. Bellows a letter, to have the corn mill done by the first of June next, or else the Treasurer to put the bonds into execution.

"Voted to allow sixty pounds to pay for preaching between this and next May, and the inhabitants of said town to appoint the time and place. Col. Lawrence chosen to get a minister, and Col. Lawrence chosen Treasurer. Voted that the papers belonging to the proprietors, be put on public record, in the Province of New Hampshire so far as the committee shall think fit. The committee for said service to be the same that takes the bonds."

The delinquent proprietors continued to be a source of difficulty. On page 49 of the proprietors' records is entered at large the vote first, above referred to. It is as follows: "Whereas, it appears to this proprietary that some rights in the said township No. One, that were obliged to settle the lots according to charter, have neglected to comply with the same, and in order for as speedy compliance with their duty as possible, it is necessary that such others should be admitted in their room that will comply with the same. Therefore,

"Voted, That Col. Lawrence, Samuel Tarbell and John Stevens be a committee fully impowered to make a strict enquiry who are now wholly delinquent, or that was delinquent on the 4th Tuesday of October, 1752, and to take good security to the value of one hundred pounds new tenor, that they will enter upon and perform their duty agreeable to the charter, viz: that is to say, to have three acres of land well cleared and fenced at the least, a house built and inhabit the same by the first day of May next, and upon the failure of entering into bond with the aforesaid committee within one month from this date, to enter upon such delinquent proprietors' right and take possession of the same, and dispose of it to some suitable person, that will immediately enter upon such right and comply with the duty as abovesaid, and pay such sum of money for the use of said proprietors as

the said committee and the new grantee shall agree for, or such old grantee to pay such a sum of money for the use of said proprietors, to the abovesaid committee for the past neglect, as the said proprietors shall order at this meeting; and the abovesaid committee are further directed to take a bond of each grantee or settler, that hath not complied with their duty, for the faithful performance of the condition of their grants, &c., and to save the proprietors harmless, &c., for want of the duty being done and taxes paid in season, the obligation and condition of said bond to be as the abovesaid committee shall think most just and reasonable and better to bring forward the settlement of said plantation, &c. Also, Voted, That each delinquent proprietor that hath done nothing on his right shall pay three pounds, old tenor, to said committee for the use of said proprietors."

A meeting was called at the house of Enos Lawrence, on the 16th of July, 1754. A recital in the record of that meeting sets forth that William Lawrence, Esq., and others, at a meeting on the 17th of November, 1753, were appointed a committee and authorized to enter into and dispose of delinquent rights, and to take bonds for performance according to the tenor of said vote, &c., so that it is probable that the &c. after the word "vote," is one of the pregnant &c's of Lord Coke, and embraces and includes the whole vote so entered as above, and that the whole record commencing with the word "Whereas," should have been inserted in place of the &c., but not having been drawn up in proper form till the rest of the record had been made and entered, it was entered by itself, without preface or explanation. At the meeting July 16th, 1754, the time for taking bonds by the committee was extended thirty days from that date, and the time to comply with the requirements of the charter as to "inhabiting, fencing and clearing," was extended to November next, and Joseph Blanchard, Esq., was desired to apply to the grantors for an enlargement of the time for compliance with the settling duties.

At the same meeting, one hundred pounds of the money already raised was appropriated for preaching, and Thomas Tarbell, Enos Lawrence and Reuben Barrett, were chosen a committee "to provide preaching so far as one hundred pounds old tenor goes."

At a meeting held at the house of Enos Lawrence, November 18, 1754, fifty pounds, old tenor, was allowed out of money already raised to pay for preaching, and a committee of nine was appointed "to view for a burying place and make return to the next meeting." The committee were Enos Lawrence, Thomas Tarbell, Nehemiah Gould, Obadiah Parker, Beuben Barrett, Nathan Hall, Henry Jefts, Eleazer Butterfield and William Eliot, all of whom were probably then inhabitants, and most of whom remained inhabitants till the time of their death.

There is no record of any meeting between November 18, 1754, and May 11, 1757, at which last date a meeting was held at the house of Enos Lawrence. William Lawrence, Esq., was moderator. A vote was passed to have "ten days' preaching in said township, as soon as conveniently may be. Also, to raise ten pounds old tenor New Hampshire bills on each right liable to settle in said township, or two Spanish milled dollars to answer the same tax"; by which it would seem that one pound old tenor New Hampshire bills was equal to twenty cents. One hundred and fifty pounds was also appropriated to be worked on the highways, at thirty shillings per day. Enos Lawrence, Thomas Tarbell and Nathan Hall, were appointed "to have the oversight of working out the money on the highways." One half was to be worked out from the meeting house on the east to Pole Hill, one quarter from Townsend line to the meeting house, and the other quarter "by Mr. Hall north of the meeting house, and from said house to Obadiah Parker's house."

"Voted, To choose a committee to put Mr. Bellows' bond in execution for not building the mills, unless he immediately prevent the same by accommodation." Col. Blanchard, Col. Lawrence and John Stevens were chosen for this purpose, and directed if they could not agree with Mr. Bellows "then to agree with some other person or persons to build one or both of said mill or mills." "Voted, To add Nathan Hall and Thomas Tarbell to the committee for finishing the meeting house according to the former vote."

At a meeting held October 24, 1758, "Voted, That Reuben Barrett be joined to the committee for laying out highways in the room of Mr. Gould deceased."

This is the first record of death in the town. It appears by the journal of Joseph Holt, who resided many years in Wilton, which has just been published in the tenth volume of the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, see page 307, that Corporal Gould of No. 1, was killed in battle, near lake George, on the 20th of July, 1758. This was undoubtedly Nehemiah Gould, referred to in this entry in the proprietors' records. Who of the present inhabitants ever heard his name, or knows where he resided? How completely one hundred years had swept him to oblivion, but for this casual entry in this comparatively unknown and almost forgotten book. Jacob Gould was one of the grantees of the town. His lots were No's 4 R. 18, 4 R. 14, and 2 R. 12. Whether he was a relative of Nehemiah Gould, is not known. Nehemiah Gould was married to Molly Kemp, at Groton, March 9, 1773. He may have been a son of Corporal Gould. An extract from Holt's journal may be found in the Appendix.

A tax of £90 was "assessed on the rights liable to pay charges; to be laid out only for preaching." "Voted that Enos Lawrence provide a preacher."

A meeting was held January 2, 1759. "Chose Col. Lawrence, moderator. Voted, That Jonathan Blanchard be a committee man to supply the place or places of the late Col. Joseph Blanchard in anything wherein he was concerned for said proprietary. Obadiah Parker was chosen collector. "Voted the sum of forty six dollars, or equal thereto, accounting them equal to £276 New Hampshire old tenor, be raised on this proprietary. Voted, That half a dollar on each right, or equal thereto, in New Hampshire bills, be assessed on this proprietary, to be applied for preaching."

In the warrant for the meeting, November 26, 1759, the 5th article was " To see if the proprietors will make up the depreciation of the New Hampshire bills to Mr. Francis Worcester." This was undoubtedly Mr. Francis Worcester, of Hollis, the ancestor of the Rev. Dr. Noah Worcester, of Brighton, Mass., the Rev. Leonard Worcester, of Peacham, Vt., the Rev. Thomas Worcester, of Salisbury, N. H., and the Rev. Dr. Samuel Worcester, of Salem, Mass. The service for which he had been paid in depreciated bills, was probably preaching, for that was his vocation. The record of the meeting does not show

specifically what was done with this claim. No doubt it was allowed among" sundry accounts, the particulars of which are on file." where is a tradition, probably well founded, that Mr. Worcester, on one occasion going to No. 1 to preach, being overtaken by night and darkness in the forest, in the valley east of the old meeting house near where the railroad crosses the highway, was pursued by wolves and driven to take refuge upon the top of one of the immense bowlders so abundant in that locality, on which he spent the night, and in the morning went on his way rejoicing. Another version of the story concludes with stating that by his shouts he alarmed the neighbors, who, under the lead of Capt. Thomas Tarbell, went to his assistance and delivered him from his perilous condition. At this meeting, one dollar was raised on each right, to be applied for preaching next April, and Obadiah Parker was chosen a committee to provide a preacher.

In the warrant for a meeting to be held November 25, 1760, the second article is, "To see if the proprietors will choose an agent or trustee to succeed Joseph Blanchard, Esq., deceased, for the recovery of a certain bond given to him in. that capacity by Benjamin Bellows, Esq., for building mills in the township aforesaid," &c. At the meeting, Jonathan Blanchard was chosen trustee in place of Joseph Blanchard, Esq. One dollar on each right was raised for defraying the expenses of prosecuting the suit on Bellows' bond, and one dollar also for further finishing the meeting house, and one dollar more for highways.

This last record is in Jonathan Blanchard's hand writing, but is not signed. It is the last entry in his hand writing. A notice issued by him for a meeting, dated August 16, 1762, is recorded by Thomas Tarbell, Clerk. All the subsequent entries are made by Thomas Tarbell, as clerk.

His oath of office as clerk is recorded by him as follows:

"October the 20, 1762. Then Thomas Tarbell parsonely appeard & maid orth that in the offies of Propts Clerk for No. one, to which he was chosen, he would act acording to the beast of his judgment.

Sworn before

JOHN HALE, Jostes pees."

At the meeting September 14th, 1762, it was "voted that the remainder of the money not already laid out, that was raised for the prosecution of Mr. Bellosses Bond, be appropriated towards paying for preaching. Voted to rais for dolers for to pay for Preaching; voted, Capt. Thomas Tarbell, Mr. Nathan Hall and Enosh Lawrence, be a new meeting house comeete; voted Mr. Nathan Hall and Blias Eliot, be a committee to examin, and see if a good road can be had from the falls in Souhegon river at William Mansur's, through part of this Township, to come in by Mr. Hall's, and to make return at Next meeting." This was undoubtedly the road leading from the village, by Silas Bullard's and Jonathan Bachelder's, to the meeting-house. "Voted that Mr. Barrat and Mr. Robins, Capt. Thomas Tarbell, be comeett to provid preaching. Voted that ten dollars be paid to Jonathan Blanchard by the Treashuer as .soon as the saim coms into the Tresure, and Treshr be discharged of that sum accordingly when paid, for his sarvis as clark, with the ten dolers reed for the prosecution of Belloses Bond in full for his sarvis."

In the warrant for the meeting of the proprietors to be held on the 6th of April, 1763, the second article was, "to see if the proprietors will give a call to any of the gentlemen who have preached with them, and choose a committee to present said call and Incouragement, if any they will give, to said gentlemen, as shall be agreed on by said propraits." At the meeting, Obadiah Parker was chosen moderator. "Voted to give the first seteled minister, seven hundred pounds silver Old tenor as setelment, and four hundred pounds salary yearly, and a right of land in said township. Voted to give Mr. Ebenezer Champney a call to setel in the Gospel; chose for a comeett to present said call, Thomas Tarbell, Enosh Lawrence and Whitcomb Powers." There is a tradition, that Champney's reply to the committee who presented the *call*, was that it would take more than two such *cauls* to make a candle. His tastes inclined him to secular rather than clerical pursuits. He left preaching and became a lawyer, and was for many years Judge

of Probate, which office he held till he resigned it a short time before his death, September 10th, 1810. "Voted to give six months to have the mills completed." At the meeting, March 29th, 1764, Oliver Eliot, moderator, "chose Col. James Prescott, Capt. Thomas Tarbell and Obadiah Parker, a committee to examine the papers, and accompts belonging to said propts, and put them in a proper form, and prepare a list of the names of the *paiers* as well [as] the original grantees, with the sum of money that they may be *Essesed* for. Voted 10 reserve one dolar for preaching. Voted to except Left. William Prescott and others, to come in as proprietors of No. one, upon their obliging themselves to pay taxes as other propts, and that they should have a strip of land Ginning No. two." This Left. William Prescott was the famous Col. William Prescott of Bunker Hill memory. At a meeting, January 29th, 1765; "Voted to turn the road through Obadiah parker's land from wheare it was laid out, to wheare it gose now."

"Voted, that each man have half a dolar a day, [for work on the highways] said work to be done by the last day of Agost next."

"At a meeting of the priters of No. one, March 20th, 1765, at the house of Capt. Thomas Tarbell. Voted and chose Leftenant William Prescott moderator.

Voted not to chues a new proprts clerk. Voted not to chues a new Treshurer at present.

Voted to rais too dolers a wright to pay for preaching.

Voted for comeet to hier preaching, Capt. Thomas Tarbell, En. Enosh Lawrence and En. Whitcomb Powers.

Voted to have the proporters' meetings at the meeting-house in No. one, and their onely for the futer.

Voted that the svears of highways be etherized to setel with the Treshurer about highway raits," &c.

At the meeting April 23rd, 1766, "chose for svers, John Swallow, Jonathan Crosby, Ensign Whikomb Powers and Reuben Barrett.

Voted to Obadiah Parker four dollars for costs that he paid for being sued on the propts accompt. [interlined, June 16th, 1767, then the above accompt paid to Obadiah Parker.]

Voted that Jonathan Crosbe and Eben Blood be cometee to lay out a road from Richard Lawrence's, to the road that comes from Blood's to the meeting-house." This is a part of the same road which Hall and Elliot were to examine. In the warrant dated November 5, 1766, for a meeting to be held December 16, 1766, the 7th article was, "To see if the proitors will give the Rev'nd James Parker a call to setel with them in the gospel, and to see what Incouragement they will give him as to setelment and salery, and chose a comett to present said call.

"

At the meeting "chose Left. William Prescott moderator. Voted, To give Mr. James Parker a call to setel with them in the Gospel. Allso, Voted, To give him, if he setls, setlment, ninety three pounds six shillings & eight pence, Lafel money. Allso, Voted, To give as salery Four hundred pounds silver, old tener, yearly, until there is eighty familys, and then four hundred and fifty yearly until there is one hundred families, and then five hundred pounds yearly. Allso, chose a comeett to presant said call, Capt. Thomas Tarbell, Mr. Jona. Crosby, En. Whitcomb Powers."

In the warrant- for the meeting March 10, 1767, the 4th article was "To see if the proportors will chues a comeettee to lay out the pew and seat ground in said No. 1 meeting house.

" 5thly. To see if the propts will order in what maner the pues shall be disposed of.

" 6thly. To see if the propiortors will pass a vote that every man's vot in said meeting shall be according to the taxes he shall pay in said township."

At the meeting, it was "Voted, Chose Obadiah Parker, Nathan Hall and Whitcomb Powers comeett to Lay out the pue ground & seat ground in said meeting houes.

"Voted, That the first setelers & highest payers have the pew ground, provided they seal the meeting house to the girts by October next.

"Voted, That every man should not vot according to what he pays in said township.

"Voted, To except of Mr. Elias Eliot's mills."

At a meeting November 4, 1767:

"Voted, That the comeet Brais the meeting house forthwith.

"Voted & chose a comeett to view the roads to accomodat Slipton, said comeett, Mr. Joseph Bullard, Mr. Josiah Robins, Left. Obadiah Parker, Mr. John Swallow, Mr. Nathan Hall, and if the comeet think the road by Mr. Baret's mills will accomodat Slipon, then said comeett to lay out said road."

This was the road leading from Mason Village to Temple. Slipton was a slip or tract of land north of No. 1, and now included in Temple and Sharon.

" Voted, To rais one doler on each right for highways, and to make a bridge over the river at the mils, said mony to be divided as was usal, said comeett, Cornelius Cook, Ruben Barrat, Ins. Whitcomb Powers, Left. Obadiah Parker."

In the warrant for the meeting January 5, 1768, the 6th article was "To see if the proportors and Inhabitance will pas a vote to be Incorporated, and if so to chues a man or more to Goo to Portsmouth & get the same accomplished."

At the meeting it was, "Voted, for a comatt to make Inquiryes how the Township may be incorporated. Ens. Whitcomb Powers & Capt. Thomas Tarbell & Leftenant Obadiah Parker. Then ajornd the meeting four weeks.

"The propts meet at Time & place and voted as followeth, viz: Voted, To be incorporated. Allso, Voted, That Left. Obadiah Parker disburst the money, & that he shall have a hansom reward for the same, & that he get the same Incorporated as soon as may be."

In the warrant for the meeting March 8, 1768, the 3d article was, "To see if the propts will dispose of any of the public lots in No. 1. Namely: Lot No. 5 in 7 Raing, & No. 6 in the 5 raing. No. 1 in 3 raing, & No. 9 in 1 raing."

At the meeting it was,

"Voted, To dispose of two of the school lots, namely: No. 6 in the 5 raing, and 7 in the 1 raing, by a comeett chosen for that sarvis, sd comeett, En. Whitcomb Powers, Capt. Thomas Tarbell, Ruben Barrett and Josiah Robens. Voted and chose for comeet to Rectifie the mistakes in the school [lots], Josiah Wheeler, Enosh Lawrence and Thomas Ta.rbell."

The following is a copy, verbatim and literatim, of the warrant and record of the meeting, June 22, 1768:

"Where as aplication hath ben maid to me the subscriber for calling a propts meeting of the propts of No 1. North of Townshend in the province of Newhampshier These are there fore to notifie & warn said propts to asembl & meet at the meeting house on the 22 Day of this Instant June at Nine O clock in the fore noon to act on the foleing articals:

1ly. To chues a modrater to govern said meeting.

2dly To see what the propts will chues to have the Town called.

3dly. To chues a comeett to setel with such parsons as have ben consarned with the propts money sins the setalment with Col Lawrence ares.

4ly To see what the propts will do consarning Road to Mr Thos Barts mills

5ly To alow accompts to any persons that has don sarvis [for] said propts If they Think proper.

6ly To see if the propts will dispose of the grond of the two hind seatts to such parsons as they shall think proper,that shall make aplication

7ly To see if the propts will turn the road a few rods Through Thos. Robens Land that comes from Left Parker to the meeting house.

Test THOS TABBELL, propts Clerk.

June the 7th, 1768.

At a Legual meeting of the propts of No. one held at the meeting house on the 22 day of June 1768.

Voted & chose Josiah Robens modrator

Voted to have the Town called Sharon.

Voted for comeet to recon with the comeette [and] Treshureyr Joseph Bulard Ruben Baret & Olever Eliot.

Voted, for comeett to view & Lay out the road to Mr Thomas Baretts mills Obadiah Parker Nathan Whipel & John Swallow.

Voted Capt Thomas Tarbell four Dolers for his sarvis as propts. Clerk To be Drawn out of the Treshery to be in full for this sarvis to this Day.

Voted not to dispose of the Ground of the two hind seats.

Voted to turn the road a fue rods throe Thos Roben Land.

Then the meeting dismissed.

A True Intry. THOMAS TARBELL, propt Clerk."

At the meeting held March. 22, 1769, it was,

"Voted, To give the meeting house to the town, except the privilege of the pues."

At the meeting held October 18, 1769, it was,

"Voted, To raise two dolers on each right liabel to pay taxes in Mason, and the comeett to have their pay out of said money for their being sued for said propty for hiring preaching."

At the meeting held January 6, 1772, it was,

"Voted, To Josiah Robens one doler." [Interlined. "Robens got the doler March the 30, 1773."]

The following is the record of the last doings of the proprietors :

"PROVINCE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE—*Hillsborough, ss.*

"Pursuent to the request of more than five of the propts of Mason, in the county aforesaid, for calling a propts meeting, These are, therefore, To Notifie & warn the propts of sd Mason to meet at the public meeting house in Mason, aforsaid, on the second Tuesday of January next, at one of the clock in the afternoon, then and there to act on the fowling articals, to wit:

1ly. To chues a moderator for the regular carying on said meeting.

2dly. To hear and examine the accompts and demands of all persons that have any demands on the proprorts, for past services as Individuals, and they are desired to bring in the same, or Else Expect to befor Ever after debarred, &c.; and to alow such as shall appear Reasonabel, and give order for payment as the propriorts shall think proper.

3dly. To chuese a commettee to examine into the conduct of those who have heretofore recevd any of the propts money, as Tresherer, comats or Trustees, and to enabel them to give such discharges as they shall think proper, and to report as soon as may be.

THOMAS TARBELL, propt's Clerk.

MASON, Dec. 16th, 1772,

At a legal meeting of the propts of Mason, hild on the 12th of January, 1773,

Voted and chose Mr. Nathan Hall modrator, and voted to agorn the meeting to Mr. Samuel Abbots.

Voted for comeetee to Look into the Estait of the Treshery, and to Recon with the Tresherer, or commeetes, or Trustes Last chosen, to sell the Delinquants propts lands, said comeet Mr. David Bloget, Mr. Reuben Baret, Mr. Oliver Eliot. Then voted to agorn

the meeting to the Last Tuesday of March next, to the meeting-house in Mason, at one o'clock afternoon.

March 30 the propts met according to the agreement, and by reason of the comeet making a mistake in reconing with the Tresherer, agorned to the thirteenth day of April, at three o'clock afternoon, at this place. April the 13 the propts met at the time and place, and voted to agorn the meeting to the third Wednesday in May, One o'clock afternoon, at this place. May the 19, then the propts met at the time and place and agorned to the first tuesday of June Next, att one oclock afternoon to this place. Test Thomas Tarbell propt Clerk."

Sic exit in furno,—thus vanish into shadows, the original proprietors of Mason. This is their last appearance. Whether the mistake made by the "comeet in reconing with the Tresherer" was ever rectified, does not appear, and will never be known by those who at this late day, endeavor to peer into their doings. They were a worthy body of men, and deserved well of the town and of their country, for their indefatigable efforts under circumstances of great embarrassment, in "carrying on the settlement" of the place.

Undoubtedly, before this apparently last and inconclusive meeting, all the land, except perhaps the lots reserved for schools and for the minister and ministry, had become the property of individuals; so that there was little if anything left for the proprietary to concern itself with. The town was incorporated, and was thus made capable of taking and holding the fee in the said lands, for the uses set forth in the original grant of the territory. It seems that the "delinquent propts" lands had been sold, and this last meeting had been called for the purpose of a general settlement of all out-standing claims, against the proprietary; which it is hoped and trusted was satisfactorily made, although it does not appear of record.

CHAPTER III.
MUNICIPAL HISTORY.

Proceedings and incidents in the Municipal affairs of the town from the year
1768, to 1858.

[Copy of the Charter.]

**PROVINCE OF
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

George the Third, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain,
France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c.

To all to whom these Presents shall come,

Greeting:

Whereas, our Loyal Subjects, Inhabitants of a Tract of Land within our Province of New Hampshire, known by the name of No. One, and containing about five miles Square, and bounded as hereafter mentioned, have Humbly petitioned and requested us, that they may be erected and incorporated into a Township, and enfranchised with the same privileges which other towns within our said Province, have and Enjoy by Law, and it appearing unto us to be conducive to the General Good of Our said Province, as well as of the said Inhabitants, in particular, by maintaining good order, and Encouraging the culture of the Land, that the same should be done; Know ye, therefore, that We, of Our Especial Grace, certain Knowledge, and for the Encouraging and promoting the good purposes and Ends aforegaid, and with th'e Advice of our Trusty and Well Beloved John Wentworth, Esq., Our Governor and Commander in Chief, and of Our Council for said Province, Have erected and Ordained, and by these presents, for us, our Heirs and Successors, Do will and Ordain, that the Inhabitants of the Tract of Land aforesaid, and others who shall inhabit and improve therein hereafter, the same being butted and bounded as follows, viz : Beginning at a stake and stones on the Province line, thence running on the same line, five miles and twenty rods, to the SSE corner of New Ipswich, then running north on New Ipswich line, five miles to a white pine tree, to Wilton corner, then running east, on the south line of Wilton, five miles to a hemlock tree, then running south, five miles, by

the Needle, to the bounds first mentioned, be and hereby are declared to be a Town Corporate, and are hereby erected and incorporated into a Body Politic and Corporate, to have continuance forever, by the name of Mason, with all the powers & authorities, Privileges, Immunities & Franchises, which any other towns in said Province by Law have and Enjoy, to the said inhabitants, or who shall hereafter inhabit there, and their successors forever, always reserving to us, our heirs and successors, all white pine trees, which are or shall be found growing and being on the said Tract of land, fit for the use of our Royal Navy; Reserving also to us, our heirs and successors, the power and right of dividing the said town when it shall appear necessary and convenient, for the Inhabitants thereof: Provided, nevertheless, and it is hereby declared, that this charter and grant is not intended, nor shall in any way or manner, be construed to extend to, or affect the private property of the soil within the limits aforesaid; and as the several Towns within our said Province are by the Laws thereof enabled and authorized, to assemble and- by a majority of votes present, to choose all such officers, and transact such affairs, as in the said Laws are declared, We do by these presents, nominate and appoint, Obadiah Parker, Gent., to call the first meeting of said Inhabitants to be held within said town, at any time within forty days from the date hereof, giving legal notice of the time and design of holding such meeting, after which the annual meeting of said town shall be had for the choice of said officers &, the purposes aforesaid, on the second Monday of March, annually.

In testimony whereof, we have caused the public seal of our said Province to be hereunto affixed. Witness John Wentworth, Esquire, the aforesaid Governor, the twenty-sixth day of August, in the eighth year of our reign, Anno Domini, 1768. J. WENTWORTH.

By his Excellencie's command, with advice of Council.

T. ATKINSON, JR., Sec'y.

PROVINCE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.—*Secretary's Office.* Recorded in the Book for recording Charters of Incorporation, Pa. 303, 304.

T. ATKINSON, JR., Secretary.

At the proprietors' meeting, held January 5th, 1768, Obadiah Parker was chosen "to Goo to Portsmouth" to get the incorporation, and was authorized to "disburst the money" therefor. This duty he attended to, and procured the charter, a copy of which is found on the preceding pages. The original charter shows the name of the town, first inserted, to have been Sharon, according to the vote of the proprietors, but it was erased, and the name Mason substituted. This was, undoubtedly, done in compliment to John Mason the original proprietor, or to John Tufton Mason, who was one of the grantees of the original township. The above copy was transcribed, from the town records; it is not certain that it is a true copy of the original Charter. Acts of incorporation in those days, were granted by virtue of the executive or prerogative power of the Governor and not by legislative enactment. At that time it was a long and tedious journey from Mason to Portsmouth. Parker must have performed it on horse-back, or not unlikely, on foot. His "disburstments and charges for this service," appear by the record of the town meeting, November 7th, to have been £12 6s. 6d. 3q. Under date of March 21st, 1769, is recorded an order to pay him £9 4s. 11d. 0q and interest for the charges of the incorporation. The items of the bill would at this day, be a matter of great curiosity; but they cannot be recovered.

Parker was by the charter, authorized to call the first meeting of the inhabitants, in their corporate capacity, and he issued his warrant therefor, a copy of which, being the warrant for the first town meeting of the town, is here inserted.

"PROVINCE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE. By order of his Excellency, JOHN WENTWORTH, Esquire, and the Honorable Council, for calling a meeting of the Inhabitants and Freeholders of Mason, in order for the choice of Town officers, &c. I therefore notify and warn the Inhabitants and all Freeholders and voters by law of the Town of Mason, to meet att the meeting-house in Mason, on Monday, the nineteenth of September instant at ten of the clock in the forenoon, and when assembled and duly mett, then and there to act on the following articles; viz:

1st. To chuse a moderator.

2ly. To chuse a town clerk, Selectmen, and all other town officers, as the law directs.

3dly. To see whether the town will except the road lately laid out by Mr. Thomas Barrett's and Amos Deakin's mills and build a bridge over the river, now the water is low, and to act upon any other article, that they shall then think proper for to bring forward the town.

MASON, Sept. ye 5, 1768. OBADIAH PARKER."

At the meeting, Parker was chosen moderator: Josiah Wheeler, clerk; Josiah Wheeler, Obadiah Parker and Joseph Bullard, selectmen; Beuben Barrett and John Swallow, constables ; Nathan Hall, treasurer; John Asten and Jonathan Winship, tythingmen; Thomas Barrett, Enosh Lawrence Jr., Lemuel Spaulding and Josiah Robbins, surveyors of highways; Capt. Thomas Tarbell, sealer of weights and measures; John Asten, sealer of leather; Richard Lawrence and Joseph Blood fence viewers; Samuel Lawrence and Joseph Lowell, hog constable ; Aaron Wheeler and Oliver Elliot, deer officers.

"Voted to except the road as it was lately laid out to Mr. Thomas Barrett's and Amos Deakin's mills. Voted that all the roads formerly laid out by the proprietors, and now upon file, shall stand as town roads. Voted to build a bridge over the river by said Barrett's and Deakin's mill; therefore, voted that Amos Deakin, Thomas Barrett and Aaron Wheeler be a comtee to effect the same."

Thus the town was fairly set up and provided with officers, its roads recognized and made valid. How the committee succeeded in building a bridge without means will in due time appear. It was also voted that the selectmen should serve without pay; a scheme which, although it had a look of economy, did not, in the end, as will appear, work well. Although everything looked fair, there was trouble ahead. Some of the officers chosen at

the town meeting, refused to take the oath of office, and "therefore the selectmen appointed a town meeting in order for a new choice of such officers," &c. The meeting was called to be held on the 7th of November. In the warrant for the meeting, among other articles, was

" 3dly. To see if the town will raise a sum of money to pay the charges of incorporation, to hire preaching, to purchase the Province laws and town books, and to defray other necessary town charges.

"4thly. To see if the town will come into any measure for further finishing the meeting house; also, to choose comtee to effect the same."

At this meeting most of the recusant officers were rechosen. The only change was in the highway surveyors. The new board were Blias Eliot, Ens. Enoch Lawrence, Jonathan Jeffs and Joseph Blood, and in the deer officers, Aaron Wheeler taking the office alone. The sum of £33 6s. 8d. 0q. lawful was raised to pay charges of incorporation, to hire preaching and to defray other charges. At this meeting it was,

"Voted, To except a road laid out two rods wide, from New Ipswich line, through Amos Deakin's land, beginning at a heap of stones on a stump and running to a hemlock tree on the banck of the river, then running as the marks direct to the bridge," &c.

"A heap of stones on a stump," would not be regarded, in these days, as a suitable boundary to mark the limits of a road. Much exactness was not then required in the description of the boundaries, angles, courses and distances, in laying out roads. A most remarkable sample of such work, is found in the records of Townsend. It is as follows, under date of 1737: "Voted, a highway from the Pearl Hill brook to the place where the timber is cut to build a bridge, and from the said bridge to the Little Goose pond, near where Horsely and Wallis and Brown and Wyman and Woodbury, goeth along for their hay, from thence we come down the path to the hither Goose pond and over the dam thereof, from thence as marks direct across the plain, and so down the little footpath till

we pass the little brook and into the carpath by the knoll, this side of James Stevens' house, from thence down by said last path till we come to the hollow beyond Horseley's field, so along Horseley's west line to Deacon Spaulding's meadow lot, from thence over Backkoon brook and across the corner of Manning's land, and from thence across the plain to the corner of the lot Daniel Sartell lives on, and turning said corner on John Stevens' land, and come along near the line between the lot Sartell lives on, and Stevens' land, to Hartshorn's brook, where the cartway goeth over, from thence on said Stevens' land between the lot aforesaid and Hartshorn's farm to John Scales' old house place, from thence to Scales' nor east corner, which we found to be three miles and one hundred and sixty pole."

At this meeting the town,

"Voted, To allow Obadiah Parker's accompt for getting the town Incorporated, which sum is £12 6s. 6d. 3q."

Then follows in the record, a copy of the warrant to "Mr. John Swallow, one of the constables, &c., commanding him in his majesty's name, to collect .£17 15s. 6d. 2q." For the assessment and collection of taxes the town was, from the first, divided into two districts—the east and the west; two constables or collectors were chosen, one in each district, to whom separate warrants were issued for the collection of the "rates." John Swallow was the constable or collector for the west side, and Reuben Barrett for the east side. A copy of the assessments committed to them is here inserted, by which it will appear who resided and were taxed on each part of the town, and what was their relative apparent ability to pay taxes; each warrant bearing date, January 28th, 1769.

FIRST TAX LIST. WEST SIDE.

	£	s	d	q		£	s	d	q
Josiah Robbins	1	2	4	0	David Lowell, Jr.	0	7	5	1
Ens. Enosh Lawrence	1	1	6	1	Nathan Whipple	0	9	0	0
Samuel Lawrence	0	8	8	1	John Jefts	0	6	1	1
John Swallow	0	11	4	2	John Asten	0	7	8	0
Isaac Holdin	0	8	7	0	Joseph Barrett	0	9	2	2
William Badcock	0	9	6	0	Nathan Procter	0	7	0	0
William Barrett	0	7	5	1	Liet. Obadiah Parker	0	19	0	2
Nathaniel Barrett	0	19	9	1	Joseph Bullard	0	12	0	1
Jonathan Foster	0	6	0	0	Josiah Wheeler	0	7	6	1
Stevens Lawrence	0	7	0	0	Zachariah Davis	0	1	5	1
Thomas Robins	0	6	0	0	Reuben Tucker	0	2	10	0
Enosh Lawrence, Jr.	0	10	7	1	Joseph Tucker	0	0	8	2
Aaron Wheeler	0	14	0	2	Capt. Amos Lawrence	0	0	8	2
Nathaniel Hosmer	0	6	1	1	Mr. Will Lawrence	0	4	11	1
John Dutton	0	6	2	2	Amos Deaken, Barrett	0	0	8	2
Widow Burge	0	4	2	2	Edmund Town	0	1	5	1
John Eliot	0	18	10	0	Joseph Lowell	0	6	0	0
Moses Lowell	0	12	0	1	Cornelius Cook	0	6	0	0
Richard Lawrence	0	9	6	0	Benjamin King	0	6	1	1
Joseph Merriam	0	9	5	1	Dennis McLain	0	6	0	0
David Lowell	0	13	8	0	Sum Total	17	15	6	2

A similar warrant was issued to "Mr. Reuben Barrett, Constable for the East side," to collect £17 10s. 7d. 1q., as follows:

	£	s	d	q		£	s	d	q
Capt. Thomas Tarbell	1	10	10	0	Oliver Eliot	0	11	5	2
Elias Eliot	0	14	11	1	Daniel Fisk	0	3	6	0
Jason Russell	0	9	2	0	Mary Jefts, Widow	0	1	6	0
Nathaniel Smith	0	9	3	1	Thomas Jefts	0	6	2	1
Joseph Ross	0	11	3	1	Jonathan Jefts	0	14	1	1
Nathaniel Tarbell	0	6	0	0	Nathan Hall	0	15	7	1
Edmund Tarbell	0	6	0	0	James Hall	0	6	3	1
Jonathan Williams	0	9	11	1	Patience Fish, Widow	0	18	0	0
Reuben Barrett	0	19	10	1	Eleazer Fish	0	6	2	0
Hannah Eliot, Widow	0	1	6	1	Ebenezer Blood	0	14	2	0
Samuel Scripture	1	0	9	1	Jason Dunster	0	9	6	0
James Weathee	0	10	9	0	Joseph Herrick	0	6	11	0
Lemuel Spaulding	0	8	4	0	Jonathan Winship	0	19	0	0
Elizabeth Powers, Widow	0	6	4	2	Samuel Tarbell	0	6	8	2
Joseph Blood	0	6	0	0	Nathaniel Barrett, Jr.	0	6	0	0
Abel Shedd	0	6	0	0	John Leonard	0	6	11	2
George Woodard	0	6	2	0	Jonathan Fish	0	6	8	2
Jabez Kendall	0	8	9	0	Sum Total	17	10	7	1

An important duty of the selectmen in those days was, to take due care that the town should not be made chargable for the support of paupers, whose residence was in other places. Among the earliest official acts of the first board of selectmen, was the issuing of warrants to warn such persons to remove from the town, by which process they were prevented from gaining any lawful settlement by residence in the town, so as to make the town liable to support them, in case they should become unable to support themselves. As a sample of the mode in which this provision of a by-gone age was carried out, a copy of the first such warrant issued by the selectmen, and of the return of the officer thereon, is inserted:

WARRANT.

PROVINCE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE. To Mr. John Swallow, constable in Mason, in said Province : Whereas, a person, named Dorothy Stevens hath, for some time, resided in the town of Mason, in said Province, and [is] likely to become a lawful inhabitant in said town, unless lawfully prevented, these are, therefore, in his majestie's name, to will and require you, the said constable, forthwith to warn the said person to depart out of said town, within fourteen days, and to remain in said town no longer. Hereof fail not, as you will answer your default in the penalty of the law, and make due return of this warrant and of your doings therein, within fourteen days. Given under our hands and seals, at Mason, the 19th day of January, A. D. 1769, and in the ninth year of his majestie's reign.

OBADIAH PARKER, Selectmen
JOSEPH BULLARD,
JOSIAH WHEELER,

RETURN.

PROVINCE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE. Mason, January 20, 1769. By virtue of this warrant, I have warned the within named Dorothy Stevens, to depart out of said town, within fourteen days, and to remain in said town no longer.

JOHN SWALLOW, Constable in Mason.

Similar warrants and returns are recorded for warning out Mary Jefts and her b. child, January 26, 1769; Elizabeth Parker, February 25, 1769; Samuel Bennett and Sarah Worrer, July 24, 1769; Jonathan Cafford, July 27, 1769; Jonas Perry, February 27, 1770. After which, nothing is recorded but the names of the parties and dates of the warrants.

At the meeting, March 13, 1769, "Voted, To allow Amos Dakin and Aaron Wheeler's accompt for building a bridge over the river by said Dakin's mills, which sum is £8 0s. 9d. 3q. starling money of Great Britain."

March 21, 1769. Treasurer is ordered to pay Josiah Wheeler £0 11s. 9d. 0q. for town books; Obadiah Parker .£9 4s. lid. 0q. and interest, for the charges of incorporation; John Swallow £0 3s. 3d. for warning several persons out of town; Obadiah Parker £0 14s. 4d. for boarding Mr. Coggin; Obadiah Parker .£3 12s. 0d. 0q. "for to pay Mr. Jacob Coggin for four days pritching."

The proprietors having voted to give the meeting house to the town, at their meeting held March 22, 1769, there was an article in the warrant for the town meeting to be held May 9, 1769, "To see if the town will except the meeting house, provided those men that own pews take them for their seats; also, to determine whether the town will do anything towards finishing said house, and how far they will go in finishing it."

At the meeting held May 9, "Voted, That the town excepted the meeting house if the men that own pews take them for their sets. Voted, To bild the seats and to nail the Bords on the outside of sd house. * * Voted and chouse Enosh Lawrence, John Asten, Aaron Wheellear, comete to hier priching. Voted and chouse John Asten, John Swallow, Nathan Whipel, comete to Bild the seats and nail the Bordes on sd ouse. Voted, To chuse a comete to see into the steat of he selectmen, assessors, and into the state of the Trespure. Aron Wheellear, Ruben Barret, Oliver Alet were chouse cemete men. * * Voted, The

road throu William Badcock's land where it now goes to Josiah Wheeler's and to New Ipsshed. The sixt articakel not acted on. * * Voted and chouse a comete to pich upon a place or places for a grave yard. Enosh Lawrance, Samauel Scriptor, Nathan Hall."

At the meeting Sept. 11th, 1769, "Voted to except the money that two of the 'cool lots was sold for by the proprietors last Febueary in lew of the lots that was sold."

January 11th, 1770, the treasurer was ordered to pay Josiah Wheeler One pound four shillings Lawful money, to pay Mr. Josiah Willard for one day preaching in the year 1768. Also to pay Stephen Lawrence six shillings for boarding Mr. Nathan Bond while preaching in 1769. Also to pay John Swallow two shillings and eight pence for keeping Mr. Nathan Bond's horse while preaching in 1769.

The town seems at an early period, to have been troubled with "idle persons." In the warrant for the annual meeting, in 1770, the 9th article is, "To see if the town will provide a work house in order to set Idle persons to work, also, to appoint an overseer for said house." At the meeting, it was "Voted that there be a work house provided and that Reuben Barrett be the overseer and master of said house," a vote that may have operated in terrorem, and frightened away the idle persons; for although no house was provided, yet it is some years before any new complaints appear, of the prevalence of idle persons.

At the same meeting, "Voted to have but one graveyard. Voted to except of that piece of ground for a graveyard which the committee, that was appointed to lay out graveyards have laid out at the west end of lot No. 6, in the ninth range on the west side of the road that goes to Townshend, running on said road twenty poles from the south line of said lot, containing two acres."

Aug. [10] 1770. Ordered one pound twelve shillings paid to Samuel Scripture "for boarding Mr. Bigglow and Mr. Ward while preaching in Mason." Also, to Obadiah Parker " twelve shillings seven pence for going after a minister," and same date to James Withee 4s. 10d. "for paying John Asten for nine dinners for the ministers Mr. Bigglow

and Mr. Ward." Mr. Asten probably lived at the nearest house to the meeting-house, the cellar of which now remains in the north west corner of the Rev. Mr. Hill's old orchard.

A meeting was called August 27th, 1770, among other matters, "to see if the town will give Mr. Jonathan Searle an invitation to settle among them in the Gospel ministry and what they will offer him as settlement and salary."

"5thly. To see if the town will raise money to release Samuel Scripture the difficulty about Mr. Brown's preaching." At this meeting it was "voted unanimously to give Mr. Searle a call; to give him one hundred pounds Lawful, settlement, half in six and half in twelve months after ordination, sixty pounds lawful as salary, the first ten years, and at the end of ten years £66 13s. 4d. as yearly stated salary."

"Voted not to act on the 5th article," so Mr. Scripture was not "relieved of his difficulty."

1770, December 18th, the treasurer was ordered to pay James Withee 18s. "for paying Mr. Jona. Searle so much."

"Dec. 24. The Treasurer was ordered "to pay Aaron Wheeler £8 8s. to pay Mr. Ward for seven days preaching."

1771, Feb. 18. The Treasurer was ordered to pay Thomas Tarbell £4 4s. "for boarding Mr. Searle 14 weeks."

At the annual meeting 1771, a rate was made for improving the school lot, to be paid. in labor. A man was allowed 2s. 8d., and a yoke of oxen, 1s. 4d. a day. "Voted to allow the town Treasurer 2d. 2q. on the pounds for taking [in] and paying out the towns money." The school lot here referred to, is the lot on which the meeting-house was built.

1771, March 7th, the treasurer was ordered to pay Ens. Enosh Lawrence £1 6s. 8d. "for boarding Mr. Searle 4 weeks."

Mr. Scripture still being "in trouble about Mr. Brown's preaching," applied to the town for relief. In the warrant for the meeting June 3d, 1771, the second article was, "To see if the town will make Mr. Samuel Scripture any allowance with respect to the charge and trouble he has been put to relative to Mr. Brown a late preacher in said town; he the said Scripture being the person that employed him for that business, and he has been sued and put to cost and charge upon this account, and to say what he shall have allowed him for the same." The town voted not "to allow him for the same," for what reason does not appear.

November 18, 1771, "Voted, To hire Mr. Newcum [Newcomb] one month upon probation, in case he will supply us." Same date, Treasurer ordered to pay Insign Enosh Lawrence £2 7s. 3d. 1q. "in part for boarding ministers the summer past."

January 3, 1772. To the same, 12s. "in part for boarding ministers the summer past."

April 29, 1772. An order "To pay Thomas Tarbell eight shillings for providing for a fast we had on account of giving Mr. Searle a call."

At a meeting August 10, 1772, the call to Mr. Searle was renewed, with the same settlement and salary. This call was accepted. Of his answer, a copy is inserted on pages [67 and 68], in this chapter.

September 7, 1772. At a meeting called to appoint a day for the ordination; &c., "Voted, To accept Mr. Searle's answer, and that the 14 of October be the day of ordination, and to send to the following nine churches under the pastoral care of their ministers to assist, viz : Hollis, Rev. Daniel Emerson; Byefield, Rev. Moses Parsons; Pepperell, Rev. Joseph Emerson; New Rowley, Rev. James Chandler; Townshend, Rev. Samuel Dix; Linebrook, Rev. George Leslie; New Ipswich, Rev. Stephen Farrar; Old Rowley, Rev. Jedediah Jewett; Temple, Rev. Samuel Webster."

"Voted, To give Lieut. Obadiah Parker, eight pounds fourteen shillings and four pence, L. money, to entertain the council, together with all the other gentlemen of the clergy, and Mr. Searle's relations and friends, that may attend the ordination."

"Voted, That Mr. Searle may be absent two Sabbaths in a year yearly, in order to visit his relations, in case it may not be in his power to provide a supply."

Josiah Wheeler, Amos Dakin and Obadiah Parker were chosen "A committee to send out letters missive for the ordination. Voted, To choose a committee to prop up the galleries in the meeting house, as they shall think proper, before the ordination." David Blodgett, Jacob Blodgett, Lieut. John Swallow, Samuel Scripture and Enosh Lawrence Jr., were chosen a committee for that purpose. "Voted, To chuse a committee to tend the meeting house doors, and keep the body seats the men's side for the church, and the women's side for the council, on ordination day." Edmund Tarbell Jason Russell, Reuben Hosmer and Nathaniel Hosmer, were chosen for this purpose.

The call or invitation to Mr. Searle is not recorded, nor has any copy of it been found. His answer is entered at length in the records. It is characteristic of the man, and as it is one of the few memorials of him left, it is here inserted:

"To the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of Mason: Beloved Friends; As God, who has the Hearts of all Men in his hands, has called me, tho' most unworthy, to preach in several Places, and of late in this Place; so I Humbly hope, through Grace, that it has been and is still my real Desire to hearken to his Voice in Providence, and readily to comply with the same. And as you have proceeded according to the Coppy of your Votes, which the Committee lodged in my hands, to renew your Call for my Settlement in the work of the Ministry among you, and that, as I understand, with much Harmony and good Agreement, I look upon myself bounden in Duty to encourage the same; since I trust God has, by his Spirit, made such an application of his word and Providence to my mind as leads me to see that I'm called not only of Man but of God: Accordingly, I do cheerfully

give up myself to God, to serve him by his Grace in the Gospel of his Son; and it is my Purpose to give myself to you by the will of God.

"I take it for granted in your vote respecting my settlement, you mean to give me One Hundred Pounds, in addition to and over and above those Lands given by your Charter to the first minister, and upon that condition give an affirmative Answer to your request.

"I beg a constant and fervent Remembrance in all your Addresses at the Throne of Grace, that God would abundantly furnish me for the Work of the Ministry, with the Gifts and Graces of his holy Spirit.

"And now Sirs, may God graciously smile upon and bless you in all your concerns, particularly respecting your settlement in Gospel Order. I do fervently commend you "to God and to the Word of his Grace which is Able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified," And Subscribe myself your Servant in our Common Lord.

JONATHAN SEARLE.

"P. S. Whereas my Relations live at some considerable Distance whom 'tis likely I shall incline to visit once a year, when it may not be in my Power to provide a Supply, I should take it very kindly if in your next meeting, you would take this Matter into Consideration, and give Liberty that I may be absent two or three Sabbaths in a year, as you may think proper."

This is all that appears upon the town records, in reference to the call and ordination of Mr. Searle. In the History of the New Hampshire Churches, page 23, it is stated, that Mr. Searle received a call to settle at Candia, N. H., between 1768 and 1771, which he seems to have declined in favor of Mason. This connection commenced with favorable auspices, was not a happy one. Difficulties soon arose, of which the details will appear in their proper place. The call, it may be remarked is not in accordance with the principles

upon which congregational churches now claim to be established. This call proceeded from the town alone. There was at the date of these proceedings no church. That was not organized or formed until the 13th of October, the day before the ordination. The "letters missive" were issued by the town. It is now the prescribed and universal rule, for the letters to be issued by the church, and for the town or society by their committee to join with the church in sending out the letters. The call also should proceed from the church, in the first instance, as it is from the church alone that it has any ecclesiastical or binding force, as a religious institution or ordinance. The action of the town is merely subsidiary, and has reference only to temporalities, such as the salary, settlement, use of lands, parsonage, &c. Such rights, towns in their corporate capacity, continued to exercise, a concurrence on their part with the church, being requisite for the lawful settlement of a minister, until the act of the Legislature, passed July 1st, 1819, took away from towns all such power; and parishes, or societies came in place of towns, in the contracts for settling ministers. The clergyman, in those days, was the minister, that is, the servant of the town and people; but the pastor, that is the keeper, the shepherd of the church. Then permanence gave dignity and authority to the office; gravity, learning, and a paternal interest and care for the whole people, made the minister the first and principal man in the town, whose character, especially if for good, impressed itself thoroughly and permanently, upon the whole town, and all its interests and institutions. That he should be right-minded, able and faithful, was as important for the prosperity of the town and people, as such characteristics are in the husband and father of a family, for the peace, happiness and prosperity of the domestic circle. What a change a half century with its new notions, has brought about. The reverence paid, and authority yielded to the clergy, is gone, and with them are gone much of the peace, order, sobriety and prosperity of our communities, especially in the agricultural regions. The old-fashioned charity, hospitality and brotherly kindness have vanished away, and their place has not been supplied by any gifts or graces, that should cause their loss not to be noticed and lamented. Possibly, in worldly prosperity, some show of advance has been made, but in domestic felicity and neighborly good feelings, the by-gone days may fearlessly challenge a comparison with the present times.

November 17th, 1772. The treasurer is ordered "To pay Mr. Jacob Burnap fourteen pounds eight shillings L. money for preaching and supplying Twelve Sabbaths in Mason."

January 6, 1773. The Treasurer is ordered "To pay Insign Enosh Lawrence £3 10s. 0d. 3q. L., which sum, with what he has already rec'd, amounts to the sum total of his account for boarding Mr. Steward, Mr. Burnap and Mr. Wioth, while preaching in Mason.

February 27, 1773. Order "To pay Lieut. Obadiah Parker £10 16s. L., which sum he paid Mr. Jonathan Searle, in part for preaching in the town of Mason, in the year 1770," and same date, order to pay Nathan Coburn, three shillings "for carrying Mr. Jacob Burnap's money to him, which was due to him for preaching in Mason in the year 1771." Same date, Mr. Nathan Hall, as treasurer, is charged as "Dr. to the selectmen £1 1s. 4d., the Rev. Jacob Burnap having abated so much out of the sum the selectmen ordered the treasurer to pay him."

March 5, 1773. Order "To pay Abijah Allen £4 6s. 8d for boarding Mr. Ames seven weeks, when preaching in Mason, and for boarding the Rev. Mr. Searle seven weeks, while preaching m. Mason, before his ordination, and for expenses to Concord in going after Mr. Ames."

March 24, 1773. Order "To pay Elisha Withington three pounds for keeping school in Mason two months last winter."

This is the first entry that appears, of money paid for schools. Mr. Withington continued for many years to be employed as a school master. There were then no school districts, or school houses. The whole management of the schools was under the superintendence of the selectmen. They employed the teacher and directed when and where the schools should be kept. The only memorials left, of the schools and teachers, are to be found in

the records of the orders for the payment of their wages and expenses of wood and rent of rooms.

May 31, 1773. Order "To pay Lt. Obadiah Parker 8s. 9d. 3q. for his cost in sending for a law book, paying for a juror box, and paying Esq. Goss, for swearing the selectmen to the Inventory taken in April last."

May 31, 1773. Order "To pay Lt. Obadiah Parker £2 1s. 5d., which he paid to the Rev. Jonathan Searle in full for his preaching in the town of Mason, in the year 1770, and likewise £2 17s. 1d., in part for what he preached in the year 1772, before his ordination."

In the warrant for the town meeting, July 12, 1773, one article was, "To see if the town will provide a work house, or determine what method they will come into for the support of the poor." Another was, "To see if the town will give liberty to Mr. Stevens Lawrence to build a house and horse stable on the school lot, for his own use on Sabbath days." Another, "To see if the town will accept of a piece of ground of Capt. Thomas Tarbell, for a graveyard." The town voted, "That there be a work house provided," that "Stevens Lawrence, or any other man, may have liberty to build a house or horse stable on the school lot, for their own use on Sabbath days." The work house was not built. The threat to build it probably induced the "idle persons" to withdraw, or go to work. The piece of ground for a graveyard, was that now occupied for that purpose, in the east part of the town, near where Capt. Thomas Tarbell then lived, about one mile east of the old meeting house. Under the liberty to build on the school lot, horse stables and houses for Sabbath days, two such houses were built, both of two small rooms, with a fire place in each room—one of them, by Stevens Lawrence, Jonathan Searle, Aaron Wheeler and John Swallow, the other by Col. James Wood, Joseph Woods, Oliver Hosmer and Timothy Wheeler. A long line of horse sheds or stables was built, on the west side of the road opposite to the meeting house, and another line of stables on the north side of the meeting house. The earliest built were stables, in form and fact, being wholly enclosed and shut by a sliding door. These were fitted only for the accommodation of horses without

carriages. The primitive mode of conveyance to the public meetings, for worship, was on horse back. The father of the family with his wife behind him on the pillion, each with an infant child in their arms and with their Sunday dinner of brown bread, nut cakes or dough nuts, and cheese and apples in their pockets, left the humble cottage dwelling in the cleared patch, surrounded by the original forest, accompanied by the other members of the family, children and hired men, or relatives, inmates of the same, on foot, the procession wending its way, over the road but partially cleared of rocks and stumps, proceeded to the rough boarded, unpretending meeting house. The horse was well provided for in the close stable, sheltered from wind and storm. The people resorted to the Sabbath-day house, or as it was more generally called "noon house," at the season of intermission, where, by a good, comfortable fire, they enjoyed their homely but healthy fare of a dinner, with a social drink of cider, and such friendly and cheerful chat as served to keep up an intimacy and neighborly intercourse which tended to preserve personal friendship and good feeling in society.

September 22, 1773. Order "To pay Josiah Wheeler £9 12s., for paying Mr. Sylvanus Ames for preaching eight Sabbaths in Mason."

March 14, 1774. Order "To pay Ens. Enosh Lawrence £5 14s. 8d. 2q. for paying Mr. Wyeth for four days' preaching, and 16 months interest for the same."

July 15, 1774. At a meeting called expressly for that purpose, Amos Dakin "was chosen to send to meet the several towns in the Province at Exeter, on the 21st of July, in order to choose a committee to join the Congress at Philadelphia, on the first of September next, in order to consult what measures may be best to be taken to secure our rights and privileges." This is the first distinct notice, that appears on the records of any action of the town in reference to the great struggle that was then impending, the successful result of which is destined to work a greater revolution, for the better, in human affairs, than any other event, that has occurred since the introduction of the Christian religion. The subsequent records show, that this little community, amidst poverty and privations, were

not, in proportion to their means, second to any in the land, in their efforts to secure to themselves and their posterity, the great boon of political freedom and self-government.

August 22, 1774. Josiah Wheeler was, at his request, excused from further services as town clerk and selectman. He was a leading and active man in the affairs of the town and church, from the first organization of each, till this date. He served in the office of town clerk, to which he was chosen on the first organization of the town, every year but one, and as one of the selectmen every year, till he resigned both offices, as above, probably on account of ill health. By the record of deaths, it appears that he died October 17, 1774. His records are very well made, in a plain and distinct hand, and are now perfectly legible, in that respect comparing favorably with any of his successors, and very much superior to most of them. In what year he came into town has not been ascertained. His native place was Concord. He was one of the original members of the church, and took an active part in its proceedings. The birth of his eldest daughter, Lucy, is recorded January 16, 1765. This was anterior to the commencement of the town records. The entry is made by himself, as town clerk. He probably then lived in town. He lived upon the farm afterwards owned by Hincksman Warren. His widow continued to live upon the farm till October 25 1775, when she was married to David Blodgett, who lived on the farm several years after the marriage, and probably till it was sold to Warren. In the first assessment of taxes in the town, he was rated at 7s. 6d. 1q. The list contains seventy six names. Two or more were non-residents. The highest rate in the list of residents, that of Josiah Robbins, was £1 3s. 4d. 0q the lowest, that of Joseph Tucker, 8d. 2q. Thirty seven were higher and thirty eight lower than Mr. Wheeler, showing him to have been placed in that happy state of mediocrity, in which, alone, the true enjoyment of life is to be found. Probably none of his descendants reside in the town. No monument shows where he rests from his labors.

The storm of revolutionary troubles now began to wear a dark and threatening aspect. October 23, 1774, a warrant was issued, calling a meeting on Monday, the 24th of October, "To choose a committee to send to Amherst, to meet the sessions, and also to act on some other articles, that may be then thought proper." At the meeting, Lieut. Obadiah

Parker and Mr. Joseph Barrett were chosen a committee to meet the sessions, and Amos Dakin, Samuel Brown, Abijah Allen, David Blodgett and Lieut. Obadiah Parker, were chosen a committee of correspondence for the county. The notice for this meeting was issued, on Sunday, to meet the next day, thus verifying Mr. Webster's remark in his Baltimore speech, that "revolutionary times know no Sundays." Immediately after the record of this meeting, but without any preface, introduction or explanation, is entered, in the records, in the hand writing of Benjamin Mann, town clerk, the following paper, copied verbatim and literatim:

"THE COVENANT OF NON-IMPORTATION AND AGREEMENT, 1774.

"We, the Subscribers, Inhabitants of the Town of Mason in N.H. Having Taken into our Serious Consideration the Precarious State of the Liberties of N. America, and More Especially the Present Distressed Condition of our Sister Colony of Massachusetts Bay, Embarrassed as it is By Several Acts of the British Parliament tending to the Entire Subversion of their Natural and Charter Rights, among which is the Acts for Blocking up the Harbor of Boston; and Being Fully Sensible of our Indispensible Duty to Lay Hold on Every Lawful Means in our Power to Preserve and Recover the Much Injured Constitution of our Country, and Conscious at the same [time] of no Alternative between the Horrors of Slavery, or Carnage and Desolation of Civil War, But a Suspension of all Commercial Intercourse with the Island of Grate Britain, Do, in the Presence of God, Solemly and in Good Faith covenant and Engage with each other:

"1st. That from Henceforth we will suspend all Commercial Intercourse with the said Island of Grate Brittain, until the Parlaiment shall Ceas to Enact Laws Imposing Taxes upon the Colonies without their consent, or until the Pretended Rights of Taxing is Dropped, and Boston Port be opened, and their and our Constitutional Rights and Privileges are Restored to ye Colonies.

"2dly. That there may be less Temptation to others to Continue in the said Now Dangerous Commerce, and in order to Promote Industry, (Economy, Arts and

Manufactures among ourselves, which are of the Last Importance to the Welfare and Well-being of a Community, We do in like manner Solemly Covenant that we will not knowingly Buy, Purchase or Consume, or suffer any Person by, for or under us, to Purchase, nor will we use in our Families In any manner whatsoever, any Goods, Wares and Merchandize which shall Arrive in America, from Grate Britain aforesaid from and after the last of August Ensuing; Except only such articles as shall be Judged absolutely necessary By the majority of the Signers hereof; and as much as in us Lies to Prevent our Being interrupted and Defeated, in this only Peaceble Measure entered into for the Recovery and Preservation of our Rights and the rights of our Brethren in our Sister Colonies; 'We agree to Brake off all Trade and Commerce with all Persons, who Preferring their Private Interest to the Salvation of their now almost Perishing Country, who shall still Continue to import Goods from Grate Britain, or shall Purchase of those who import after the said Last Day of August; until the aforesaid Pretended Right of Taxing the Colonies shall be Given up or Dropped, Except so much as Christian Duty Requires Toward them.

" 3dly. As a refusal to come into this or a similar agreement, which promises deliverance of our Country from the Calamities it now feels, and which, like a torrent, are rushing upon it, with increasing violence, must, in our opinion, evidence a disposition enimical to, or criminally negligent of the common safety, it is agreed that all such ought to be considered, and shall by us be esteemed, as encouragers of contumacious importers.

"4thly. We hereby further engage that we will use every reasonable meathord to encourage and promote the production of manufactures among ourselves, that this covenant and engagement may be as little detrimental to ourselves and fellow countrymen as possible.

"Lastly, we allow ourselves liberty to comply with the result of the General Congress. Also we agree to make such alterations as shall be thought suitable by the majority of the Signers, after [being] notified in a public manner by a committee chosen for that purpose, eight days before said meeting."

No names are recorded as being signed to this document. It is without date, except of the year. The original has not been found, nor any list of the names. Immediately following the above record, is a notice of a meeting to be held November 7th, 1774. "To make such alterations in the said covenant, &c., as shall be thought proper." In the record of the meeting, it is set forth that " the signers, &c., met and agreed on the following articles to be exempted that the above signers may have liberty to purchase, Viz : Arms and ammunition, also steel sewing needles, pins and awls, and Doctor drugs that cannot be purchased in this country of equal value. Voted, That those persons that have not signed the Covenant of Non-Importation are to do it within a fortnight, or else have their names returned to the other towns.

BENJAMIN MANN, Town Clerk."

At a meeting, November 21, 1774, it was "Voted, to sell to Stephen Lawrence, the ministry lot of land that he now lives on, being lot No. 1, Range 8, for £53 6s. 8d," and the Rev. Jonathan Searle was to be paid sixteen shillings yearly for it, which he agreed to take during his ministry, and a committee was chosen to make the conveyance and take the acquittance of Mr. Searle. This subject had been before the town at former times. It seems that it was not settled by this vote of the town, for a meeting was called January 2nd, 1775, " To see if the town will make further enquiry relative to the ministerial lands" &c., and to see whether the privilege of improving said lands belongs to the Rev. Jonathan Searle, or to the town. Also to see what enquiry should be made, and whether at the expense of the town." At the meeting, it was, voted " to make the enquiry, at the expense of the town, and that David Blodgett, Benjamin Mann and Samuel Smith, be a committee to draw up articles to send to Sqr Varnum, in order for advice relative to said ministry lands." What advice was obtained of "Sqr Varnum" is not on record.

A meeting of the signers of the covenant, &c., was called January 12th, 1775, at which it was "Voted, To adopt the resolves of the Continental Congress." Also, Voted, To send one committee man to meet at Exeter, January 25, in order to choose a committee to

"joyn the Congress at Philadelphia," &c. Joseph Barrett was chosen. The committee chosen October 24th, was continued, and two more added to the number, to wit: Reuben Barrett and Samuel Smith. "Voted, That the aforesaid committee, viz: Messrs Amos Dakin, Samuel Brown, Abijah Alien, David Blodgett, Lieut. Obadiah Parker, Reuben Barrett and Samuel Smith," be a committee of inspection to see that "the Resolves of the Continental Congress is Duely observed."

March 9th, 1775. Order "To pay Amos Dakin 19s. 6d. for finding hors and expenses to go to Exeter in ye year 1714. "

At the annual meeting March 17th, 1775, it was, " Voted To pass over the 5th article of the warrant, of discontinuing the Rode that leads from the widow Powerses up by James Scriptures and his fathers, which was a request of Ebenezer Muzzy and others in the warrant, For which James Scripture declared in the meeting that he would [give] said Ebenezer Muzzy Free Liberty to Pass and Repass threw His Land to said Muzzy Land, with said Muzzy's Being Injenias and keeping up the bars." It was also, " voted to draw out of the Treasury" [that is for the town to pay] the town's proportion of " the charge of the Continental Congress ye present year, which sum is £2 8s. 0d. 0q." Amos Dakin was chosen a "Deputy to send to Exeter." At this period of time, the habits of the people were such as to render them independent, in a great measure, for the comfortable supply of the wants of life, of articles not produced in the town. Tea was prohibited by the non-importation agreement. For sugar and molasses, the rock maple was a reliable resource. Every common article of food and clothing was produced in the town, or at least in the neighborhood. The clothing was made of wool and flax of domestic growth, spun and woven by the kitchen fire, by the busy and industrious hands of the mother and daughters. Native woods and plants furnished coloring matters suitable and satisfactory to their simple tastes and unostentatious habits. Economy, thrift, and a happy contentment with their lot were characteristics of the times and people. In point of real independence, the comparison of their condition with that of their successors would be much in their favor. But there was one important article of which there seems to have been very vivid apprehensions that the supply, by reason of the war, might fail. That

article was salt. This, they had no means of producing, nor had they any substitute to take its place. The subject was of so much consequence that it was taken up as a town matter. At a town meeting, held May 12, 1775, It was, "Voted, To purchase 30 hogsheads of salt as a town stock upon the town credit. Voted, That Dea. Amos Dakin, Lieut. Obadiah Parker, Lt. Ephraim Sattwell, be a committee to agree with any person or persons who shall appear to bring up the salt, and upon what terms. Voted, That Mr. David Blodgett should go to Salem to procure said salt, and to allow him six shillings for his trouble. Voted, To give two shillings per bushel for bringing up said salt.

"Voted, That there be two companies in said town, and that the alarm company be separate from the military company. Voted, To choose officers for each company." This is the first notice of the military affairs of the town. Who were chosen officers is not stated. The alarm company, or "alarm list," or "elerum list," as it is sometimes called, was an important institution. It was a body of able men, practiced in the use of arms, ready to assemble at any time, on the "alarm" at the beat of the drum, or other signal, at the shortest possible notice, in battle array, prepared with arms and equipments, to march to meet the enemy and repel invasion. This institution of the alarm list was kept up long after the occasion—the war of the Revolution—that gave rise to it, was passed. Even within the recollection of the writer, it was usual, at the annual May training, for the veterans, the alarm list, to turn out and assemble with the arms and equipments that had seen service at Bunker Hill, at Saratoga, at Ticonderoga, at White Plains, at Rhode Island, and various other battle fields of the Revolution, and parade in due form under their old officers, to show the "boys" how the thing was done. After marching and counter marching, displaying various intricate evolutions, winding up with that most wonderful performance, whipping the snake, it was customary, on retiring from the active duties of the day, to indulge, often times too freely, with an article then known and used in the form of toddy and flip, which had much better be let entirely alone. In happy contrast with those times, it may now be said that no decent body meddles with the poison.

In May, 1775, a convention of delegates met at Exeter, for the purpose, in fact, of taking from the hands of the Provincial authorities, the government of the State, and devising a

new mode of carrying it on. It continued in session, with little interruption, till late in November. One hundred and two towns were represented by one hundred and thirty three members. Governor Wentworth, after a fruitless effort to repress the spirit of liberty in the body of the people and in their representatives, had adjourned the assembly to the 28th of September. But this body met no more. Alarmed by some demonstrations of popular feeling, he retired to the Isles of Shoals, and there issued a proclamation, ordering a further adjournment to the next April. This was the closing act of his administration. He soon after withdrew to the British territories, leaving the government of the State in the hands of the patriots.

The convention appointed a committee of safety, which exercised the authority of a supreme executive. Theodore Atkinson, the former secretary, by order of the convention, delivered up the Province records to a committee, which was sent to receive them. Ebenezer Thompson was appointed in his place. George Jaffrey, the former treasurer, delivered up the public money in his hands, and Nicholas Gilman was appointed in his place. The convention was chosen for six months only. They made provision to call a representation of the people, who should be empowered by their constituents to assume the government, and continue it one year. Every elector was required to have an estate of twenty pounds value, and every representative an estate of three hundred pounds value. Each town of one hundred families was to have one representative, and one more for each additional hundred families. Towns with a less number were to be classed. An enumeration of the people in each county had been ordered, and it was determined that the number of the representatives should correspond with that of the people, as follows:

CENSUS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Counties.	Population.	Representatives.
Rockingham,	37,850	38
Strafford,	12,713	13
Hillsborough,	16,487	17
Cheshire,	11,089	15
Grafton,	4,101	6
	82,200	89

This ratio would give one representative for about nine hundred and twenty three inhabitants. Under this arrangement, Mason and Baby, now Brookline, were classed for the choice of a representative, and these towns continued to be so classed until 1793, in which year Joseph Merriam was chosen to represent Mason alone, under a new classification. Brookline was afterwards classed with Milford. Benjamin Farley was chosen to represent Raby and Milford in 1796. The number of inhabitants in Mason, according to an enumeration made by the assessors October 30, 1775, was 501. Males under 16, 148; males from 16 to 50 not gone to the army, 86, all males above 50, 12; persons gone in the army, 27; all females, 227; negroes and slaves for life, 1. Total, 501. The number of guns, 48; pounds of powder, 14a, "The number of those that have not guns is 49." This is the earliest census of the inhabitants of Mason. The enumeration was taken, by the assessors, in obedience to the Provincial Congress. At this time, Portsmouth had 4590 inhabitants; Londonderry, 2590; Exeter, 1741; Dover 1666.

A meeting was called by warrant, dated November 1, 1775, article third was, "To see what the town will do in regard to the town stock of salt, wheather it shall remain preserved as a town stock any longer, or wheather it shall be *Disbusted* to every one according [as] he shall need the same, and also in what manner it shall be distributed to every one.

"4thly. To see what the town will do in regard to that cow that the town purchased for the benefit of Mr. Nathaniel Barrett's family this year, wheather the town will sell said cow or have her kept this winter."

At the meeting, November 6, Samuel Brown was moderator. "Voted, To pass over the third article." So it seems that the salt did not get "*Disbusted*" at this meeting. On the fourth article, the town directed the cow to be sold at public vendue. Also, on the fifth, "Voted, that Joseph Barrett be one of the committee of Inspection for the town in Mr. D. B——'s room."

The first warrant for choice of a representative, was issued by the selectmen, November 23, 1775. It was for a meeting of the freeholders, &c., of Mason to meet at the meeting house, on the 11th of December, "To choose a suitable person having real estate to the value of two hundred pounds, Lawful, to represent them in General Congress, to be held at Exeter the 21st of December next." A like warrant is recorded, issued by the selectmen of Mason, for a meeting of the *freeholders, &c., of Raby*, at the same time and place, and for the same purpose.

The record of the meeting is as follows: "At a legal meeting, held in Mason, at the public meeting house in said town, December yell, 1775, the electors of Mason and Raby, then present, "Voted, To act upon the precept sent from the Provintial Congress to the selectmen of Mason, to notify the legal inhabitants of the above said towns of Mason and Raby, to meet and choose a man to represent them at the Provintial Congress, to be held at Exeter, the warrant that was put up for the above said purpose, being blown away by the wind.

"Chose Mr. Samuel Brown moderator.

"Voted, To send one man to represent them, at the Provintial Congress, the year ensuing.

"Voted, That those men that sent their votes, by Joseph Merriam, to the moderator of said meeting, have the privilege of putting in their votes, for the choice of the above said representative, namely: Obadiah Parker, Joseph Ball, Jonas Fay, Abel Shed, Thomas Robbins, Nathan Wheeler, Seth Robbins, John Lawrence.

"Voted, That James Scripture and William and Elias Eliot have the liberty of putting in a vote for their fathers, according to their fathers' desire, their fathers being absent, whose votes were wrote after the meeting began. "Voted, That the aforesaid Obadiah Parker, Joseph Ball, Jonas Fay, Abel Shed, Thomas Bobbins, Nathan Wheeler, Seth Robbins and John Lawrence have their votes thrown out. "The above said electors of Mason and Raby personally present, chose Amos Dakin, of Mason, to represent them the year ensuing.

Attest: JOSEPH BARRETT, Town Clerk, P. T.

The style of the heading of warrants for town meetings had been, up to February 26, 1776, "Province of New Hampshire, 'Hillsborough, ss."; but on August 19, 1776, it was changed to "Colony of New Hampshire, Hillsborough, ss." Probably the Patriots thought that to use the style of Province, &c, was, in some sort, to acknowledge the authority of the kingly government, under which the Province had been established, and so to avoid even the appearance of longer submission, they repudiated the name of Province. In the warrant for the next meeting, the Colony disappears, and the State assumes its place, the State government having been established.

It seems that dissatisfaction was felt and manifested with the doings at the meeting of the electors of Mason and Raby, at which Amos Dakin was elected representative. Whether it was that the votes sent by Joseph Merriam were received, or because they were thrown out, or because certain worthy citizens, in dutiful obedience to the wishes of their absent fathers, were permitted to write and put in votes for them, does not appear and cannot now be known. If it arose from any dislike to the man of their choice, it seems not to have been of a deep or "lasting nature; or, at least, not to have been wide spread nor

permanent, for the same gentleman continued, by repeated elections, to represent the same constituency most of the time till his death, April 28th, 1789.

The difficulty assumed so serious an attitude, that a town meeting was called, to be held March 7, 1776. In the warrant, the second article was, " To see if the town will approve of the proceedings of the electors of this town, that were present at the last town meeting, that was called for the choice of a representative for this town and the town of Raby; and also to see if the town, after due deliberation on this matter, will approve of the representative then chosen to be chosen according to Liberty and Justice, or to be the free choice of the electors of the town. 3dly. If the town shall not approve of the above said representative as being legally chosen, to see what measures the town will take in regard to the matter."

At the meeting, it was, " Voted That the town look upon it that the meeting, &c., was not conducted according to Liberty and Justice, and that they do not approve of the same. Voted, to send a man to the General Court to present to the Hon'ble Court the proceedings of the town meeting held at Mason, ye 11 of December, 1775, which was called for the choice of a Representative, &c., and also the proceedings of the town meeting held at Mason, March 7, 1776, Samuel Lowells vote being put by his saying that he never paid taxes in any place. Voted, To send Joseph Barrett to present the proceedings of both the above said town meetings to the General Court. Voted, That if the General Court do not approve of the proceedings of the town meeting held, &c., in the choice of a representative, that the above said Joseph Barrett pray the General Court to set them in some way agreeable to their pleasure for to the have privilege of representation." As nothing more appears upon the records, on this subject, it is probable that the general court did not consider these matters of grievance, if they were ever presented, as showing any valid objection to the right of the member elect to his seat.

And now the town's salt appears again. January 9, 1776. Order, "To pay twenty shillings to Joseph Merriam for money borrowed for the benefit of the teamsters in bringing up the

town stock of salt," and same date, an order for the same sum, for the same purpose, to Joseph Barrett. February 22. In several distinct orders, the treasurer was directed to pay

	£	s.	d.	q.		£	s.	d.	q.
Samuel Smith	2	14	9	2	Samuel Brown	2	3	6	0
James Scripture	2	0	6	0	Nathan Hall, Jr.	2	2	7	0
Silas Bullard	0	17	8	0	Obadiah Parker	1	13	0	0

each, "for his bringing up a part of the town's stock of salt." Also, to John Larned 10s. 8d. and Jonathan Williams 10s, 8d, each, "for his oxen in bringing up the town stock of salt."

April 3, 1776. Like order to pay to,

	£	s.	d.	q.		£	s.	d.	q.
Enosh Lawrence, Jr.	1	13	6	0	Joseph Merriam	1	18	0	0
Aaron Wheeler	0	12	0	0	Stephen Lawrence	2	8	0	0

each, "for bringing up a part of the town's stock of salt," and John Swallow, for his oxen, twelve shillings. The salt had arrived, and the salt troubles soon began, It must be paid for. How shall the money be come at ? Some of the inhabitants will not pay; shall they have their share ? Some of the tax payers are non-residents; shall they be compelled to pay for what they do not have, and do not want? All these questions came up to trouble the fathers of the town. Such difficulties will always arise, when municipal bodies leave their legitimate duties, and undertake business for which they are not fitted.

March 11th, 1776. At a town meeting it was "Voted, that a proportion of the money for the salt be made directly, and the money be collected within four weeks from our annual meeting, and at the end of four weeks, the salt be awarded to every man according to his rate, and every one that shall neglect, or refuse to pay his .proportion of rates by the said time, "Shall forfeit his Part of thee Salt." In the warrant for a meeting May 6th, 1776, the second article is, "To see if the town will sell a part of the town's stock of salt at Public Vendue, or any other way to make up the Non-Residence part, or proportion which they were rated for, which sum is £2 11s. 0d. 0q." At the meeting it was "Voted, to sell the Non-Residence part of salt, which they were rated for, and neglected to pay the money, and take the salt, which sum was £2 11s. 0d. 0q. and sold ten bushels of salt for £2 12s. 6d. 0q." This would be nearly eighty seven cents per bushel.

"Voted to have the remainder of the salt divided by the rate.

"Voted, To choose a committee of Inspection for the Insuing year, Messrs. Joshua Davis, Amos Dakin, Abel Shead, Nathaniel Tarbell and Joseph Barrett was chosen for the purpose aforesaid."

August 19th, 1776, a town meeting was called. The second article was, "To see what instructions the town will give their Representative, previous to the choice of field officers, for the regiment we belong to. 3dly. To see if the town will have a town stock of powder, lead, flints and fire-arms provided for said town, or lther of these necessary articles for our defence, 4thly. To see if the town will recommend any suitable person to the Great and General Court, for a Justice of the Peace." At the meeting it was "voted to refer the choice of field officers to the General Court, to raise £15 0s. 0d. 0q. to be added to .£12 0s. 0d. q. already raised to purchase a town stock of powder, lead and flints for said town. Voted to pass over the 4th article." Probably so many thought themselves fit for the office, that it was difficult to find a majority for any one.

May 6th, 1776. An order "to pay Gapt. Miles Ward £20 1s. 0d. 0q., it being to pay Capt. Jonathan Peele for our town's stock of salt."

At the meeting September 2d, .1776, it was "Voted, That the bridge by Dea. Dakin's and that by Elias Eliot's [mills], and that between Nathaniel Hosmer's and Jonas Fay's, be maintained by the town."

At the meeting of the town of Mason and Raby, November 18th, 1776, for the choice of Representatives, Dea. Amos Dakin was chosen representative. It was "Voted, To send Mr. Samuel Brown to join with the committee of the State of Massachusetts, in order to Repel the exhorbitance of our trade, &c. What effect this effort had on the "exhorbitance of our trade" does not appear.

May 31st, 1776. Order "to pay Amos Dakin £1 1s. 4d. 1q, it being for his going to Exeter at the first Congress on service of the town."

In the warrant for the annual meeting in 1777, was an article "to see if the town will raise any sum of money to purchase any number of tickets in the Continental Lottery"; which the town declined to do. At the meeting, Obadiah Parker, Reuben Barrett, Samuel

Brown, Abijah Allen and Benjamin Mann were chosen a committee of inspection. At an adjournment of this meeting it is recorded that "a petition was laid before the town of a number of paragraphs. Voted, That the first paragraft be a matter of grievance Also, voted that the paragraft be a matter of grievance. Voted, To accept the prayer of said petition, all but the clause where it respects the forming and regulation of the militia in this State; and where it respects the Courts sending writs to every town, to send a man to the convention therein mentioned. Voted Benjamin Mann, Capt. Tarbell and Lt. Obadiah Parker be the committee aforesaid."

What this petition so full of grievances was, the records do not show; nor will posterity probably ever know, what "paragraft" of the petition was, by the town, voted to be "the second matter of grievance," inasmuch as the clerk has inadvertantly omitted the number of that unfortunate "paragraft." At the same meeting it was "voted, to choose a committee to procure a graveyard, for the use of the town. Dea. Hall, Benjamin Mann and Lt. Blodgett were chosen for the aforesaid purpose."

"Voted, That Lt. Swallow and Mr. John Whitaker dig the graves that are reasonably needed in said town." What provision should be or could be made for graves unreasonably needed ?

"Voted, To choose a committee to seat the meeting house. Mr. Samuel Brown, Capt. B. Barrett, Benjamin Mann, Lieut. Obadiah Parker and Mr. Abel Shead, were chosen the committee aforesaid. Voted, That the inhabitants are seated according to their age and pay. Voted, To sell the ministry lots of land. Voted, That the selectmen seat said meeting house."

The "piece de resistance," the standing, unconquerable difficulty of seating the meeting house, like Mons. Tonson, is always "coming again," to plague the patriots, even in the midst of the alarms of war, of troubles of false brethren, to be looked after by the committee of "Inspection," as well as of sisters slyly taking a clandestine cup of tea, in violation of the articles of non-importation, of salt troubles, now happily at rest by the

sale of ten bushels of salt, to raise the money which the wicked non-residence "would not pay, and of the election of a representative made "not according to Liberty and Justice." How this seating difficulty will be settled, or, perhaps more properly said, be left unsettled by the grave committee of five, chosen for that purpose, but from whom, before they had time to act, by a vote "not according to Liberty and Justice," the subject, and their authority to act, was taken away, being referred to the selectmen, remains to be seen, and will be faithfully reported, as soon as it shall appear.

April 1, 1777. A meeting was called. The second article was, "To assist in some way and manner, as the town shall see fit, in raising fourteen "affecting, able-bodied" men, for the term of three years, or during the war with Great Britain; as that is our proportion from orders received from Colonel Moses Nicols, [Nichols] pursuant to orders from the council and general assembly of the State." At the meeting, it was, "Voted, To raise our proportion of men as a town. Voted, To raise \$1400 as Incorriagement for soldiers to enlist into the Continental service. Voted, To choose a committee to estimate the turns. Voted, Lt. Blodgett, Lt. Parker, Capt. Barrett, Mr. Abijah Alien and David Brown, be the committee aforesaid. Voted, Not to accept the report the committee made. Voted, To reconsider the vote concerning the raising the \$1400. Voted, To choose a committee to join the commissioned officers to make an estimation. Voted, William Eliot, Dea. A. Dakin, David Blodgett, Joseph Merriam and Lt. Obadiah Parker, for the committee to estimate each man's proportion. Then adjourned to the next Friday." At the adjourned meeting, "Voted, To take in all above sixteen years old into the estimation. Voted, To approve of what the town had done as to the estimation, of the turns done in the services and calculation of the three years forward." The proceedings of this meeting did not seem to accomplish the business. A meeting was called the 28th of April, 1777, " To see if the town will come into any other method different from what hath been already acted, with regard to raising of a sum of money, for the purpose of hiring soldiers, that is now called for into the service of the United States of America." At this meeting it was, "Voted, To raise \$1400, for the purpose," &c. Also, "To accept the estimation the committee made with regard to the prices of every campaign." "Voted, To exempt those who have done their turns from any cost of procuring said soldiers, until it properly

comes to their turns. Also, chose a committee to hire men, and appointed a collector to collect the money and pay it to the committee." May 8, 1777. At an adjournment of the meeting, "Voted, That all those men that neglect paying their proportion for hiring soldiers for the three years' service, as was levied, by a committee chosen for that purpose, are to be the persons looked upon subject to the first draft when made. Voted, That Benjamin Mann receive the aforesaid proportion. Voted, That those persons that were procured by the committee are to go for the squadrons whom they expected to go for when they engaged. Voted, To reconsider the first vote above mentioned. Adjourned to May 12." At the adjournment, "Voted, To divide the town stock of ammunition to individuals, as they need. Voted, That each person that received ammunition belonging to said town, and don't give a satisfactory account of said ammunition when properly requested by said town, each person so neglecting or refusing, is to pay a fine of twenty shillings, L. money. Voted, That Samuel Brown procure the aforesaid ammunition. Voted, To purchase one hundred weight of powder, two hundred weight of lead, and four hundred flints. Adjourned to May 15." At the adjournment, "Voted, That if said arms are procured and are needed by individuals, they are to have them at the cost that said town is at for them. Voted, That if Mr. Samuel Brown, who is pitched upon to purchase said arms, does procure them) he is to hire a carriage to transport them to Merrimac river. Voted, That the selectmen borrow the money to pay for the powder .that is already procured, that is not paid for. Voted, To sell the meeting house lot for the sake of accommodating a blacksmith, all save about fifteen acres, around said meeting house. Voted, To allow Mr. Abijah [Alin] \$12, as a town, for his time and expenses in going to Ticonderoga, in behalf of said town, in 1777. Adjourned to May 27." At the adjournment, "Voted, To reconsider the vote to allow Abijah Allen \$12 for going to Ticonderoga. Voted, That the town stock of powder be brought to Benjamin Mann's, to be divided the next training day, which is in three weeks from this day." June 17. It was, "Voted, To reconsider the vote to divide the ammunition. Voted, To allow the three soldiers that enlisted to go to Portsmouth for one month, twenty shillings for each man, as a town charge. Voted, Not to make any return in the valuation to court, of buildings and wild land, and the moderator dissolved the meeting." The reader will think it was time

somebody "dissolved the meeting." The record is given as a sample of the mode in which such matters were then managed.

May 5, 1777. An order to pay David Blodgett "for making a coffin for Mr. Nathaniel Barrett." May 8, 1777. An order "To pay Capt. Miles Ward for 4 molasses Hds. and 1 Dry cask .£0 18s. 0d." June 26, 1777. An order, "To pay Wid. Abigail Barrett twelve shillings, for her taking care of the meeting house one year, from August, 1775."

Town meeting, August 19, 1777. The second article sets forth, that the vote formerly passed, "That the soldiers procured by the committee should go for the squadrons they expected to go for when they engaged, *seems to appear to a number of the inhabitants very detrimental to the cause.*" It was proposed, "To see if the town would supercede that vote." At the meeting, it was "Voted, To go on as a town, and tax said town for all the money and cost of raising the three years' soldiers. Also, voted, that if the money that the town doth raise for the aforesaid purpose, doth not effect the purpose, that those men that are now delinquent in paying, or procuring the men, shall be the men that shall be subject to the first draft, and shall go, or procure said delinquent soldiers for three years, now called for. Voted, To choose a committee to procure the delinquent three years' soldiers now called for. Chose Joseph Barrett, Samuel Brown and Stephen Lawrence."

September 12, 1777. "Voted, That the committee that was chosen for that purpose at a former meeting, agree with Mr. Samuel Abbott for a piece of land for a graveyard." This is the same land referred to on page 68. The land finally taken and occupied for the graveyard, was a part of lot No. 6, Range 8, lying next to and adjoining this tract on the south.

December 15th, 1777, a meeting was called. The second article in the warrant was as follows: "Whereas, the general Court of said State, of late passed an act, that all said State's money is to be called in, and State notes on interest to be given for the same, which appears to many to be a grievance; this, therefore, is to see if the, said town will consult on some measures, that may be thought more agreeable, and petition said Court for

redress." It was "voted to send a petition to the Court, that the said act may be repealed, and the square money so called, to pass as specified on the face of said bills, or until the above said bills may be called in by a tax."

This vote, is the first indication of the difficulties arising from a deficient, disturbed, inadequate and unsound currency. The troubles arising from this source, were severely felt, from this time, through the whole period of the war. There was, at the commencement of the war, no national mint, or power to regulate the currency, except under the authority of each province.

The people having discarded and refused to obey the provincial authorities of New Hampshire, were under the necessity of assuming the government of themselves; and they at once proceeded to provide, as well as their want of experience in such matters would allow, for the continuance of civil government. For this purpose, a convention was called, which met at Exeter, in May, 1775, and continued, with little interruption, till November, as has been stated on page [80]

During the year, under the authority of the convention, three emissions of paper bills were made—the first of ten thousand and fifty pounds, the second of ten thousand pounds, and the third of twenty thousand pounds. For the amount of those sums, the treasurer gave his obligation in small notes, which passed for a time as current money, equal in value to silver and gold. But as emissions were multiplied, as the redemption of the bills was put off to distant periods, and the bills themselves were counterfeited, it was impossible for them long to hold their value. In 1776, more paper bills were issued, to pay the expenses of the war, and provision was made for redeeming some of the bills by taxes. But the depreciation, after it began, proceeded rapidly. After the year 1777, the State issued no more bills. Those that had been issued were called in, and exchanged for treasury notes on interest, in sums not less than five pounds. It was against this act that the vote of the town, just recited, was directed. Probably it was feared, that if the "square money," as the paper money was in common parlance called, should be withdrawn, there would be nothing left to serve as money and maintain a currency for exchanges. The

continental bills still continued to pass, but were daily and rapidly depreciating, until, in the spring of 1781, they suddenly, and by general consent, went out of circulation, and solid coin succeeded in their place. To show the rapid depreciation of this paper money, for which the faith of the government was pledged, but for the redemption of which, no reliable means or funds were provided, it is sufficient to refer to the scale of depreciation, which was established and recognized, and according to which the people endeavored to regulate their business and payments. The scale commences in January, 1777, at which time <£100 of silver was represented by £104 of paper. The same amount of coin was worth in paper, in December of 1777, by £310; 1778, £620; 1779, £2393; 1780, £7300, and in June, 1781, by £12,000, at which rate no wonder the currency ceased.

January 5, 1778. The selectmen abated the poll taxes of Joseph Lowell, Timothy Lowell and Joseph Hodgman, Jr., for the year 1776, "they being excepted by the act of the General Court, from paying any poll tax, by reason of their engaging in the continental service for the year 1776." At the town meeting, February 4, the town voted to abate Joshua Smith's rates for 1776, and Christopher Mann's rates for 1775, probably for a like reason, and February 26, by order of the selectmen, the poll taxes of Joseph Lowell and of Jacob Blodgett, for 1775, were abated, "being excused by vote of Congress." Also, an order was issued, "to pay Joseph Huribut one pound, being voted to him for going to Portsmouth one month last May." Also, one pound to Joseph Hodgman, "for his son Nathan going to Portsmouth, &c., one month."

At the annual meeting, March 9, 1778, "Chose Samuel Brown, Lemuel Spalding, David Blodgett, William Eliot and Zachariah Davis, Committee of Safety."

March 27, 1778. An order issued to pay Samuel Brown £8 10s. 8d. 0q., "it being for his going to Exeter, for ammunition, and time spent in getting the continental men, and service as treasurer."

April 20, 1778. "Chose David Blodgett, a representative in the convention for forming a constitution to meet at Concord, June 10th."

April 20, 1778. An order "to pay Lt. Obadiah Parker £1 17s. 8d. 0q., for sugar and rice he sent to our militia that went on the Blerum at the evacuation of Ticonderoga."

December 8, 1778. Chose Dea. Amos Dakin representative, and the meeting was adjourned to Tuesday next. "The meeting at the adjournment not attended by reason of the badness of the weather, was Naterly dissolved."

Town meeting, March 30, 1779. The selectmen were appointed "a committee to make a proportion of the several campaigns, and to call all former committees that were chosen to procure continental soldiers, to account, and take the money that may be found in said committees' hands. Voted, That each person that shall neglect or refuse to bring in his receipts for men hired and turns done, in service and term of time in actual service, since last estimation, their money and term of actual service shall be forfeited to the town. Voted, That the inhabitants shall bring in their invoice in the month of April, or be doomed."

April 22, 1779. Town meeting. The third article of the warrant was, "To see what measures the town will pursue to procure our quoto of men during the present war, now called for. 5th. To put out Asa Fish, by vendue, to the lowest bidder, till he is one and twenty years of age." The meeting "Voted, To raise 2000 dollars as a State and Continental bounty, to procure four men to enlist during the war." What was done with Asa Fish is not stated, but May 7th, an order passed "to pay James Mann £3 19s. 11d., for keeping Asa Fish 3 weeks," being 22s. 6d. per week, equal to \$3.75 a week for keeping a child about six years old.

July 6th, 1779, at the town meeting, "Voted, to raise our quoto of continental and Rhode Island men as a town;" and further details are recorded of the arrangements made about "estimating campaigns, hiring men, &c." A meeting was called August 17th, 1779. Article 2nd, "to see if the town will approve or disapprove of the bill of rights and plan of government, formed by a convention chosen for that purpose, or alter the whole, or any

part of said bill of rights, or plan of government as they may think fit. Voted to approve of the proceedings of the town of Portsmouth, and appointed David Blodgett to meet said Portsmouth with other towns at Concord, to take into consideration our sinking currency." At an adjournment of this meeting held October 25th, "Voted and Improved [approved] of the proceedings of the convention at Concord, for stipolating prices, for sundry articles of the necessities of life. Voted that Mr. Elias Eliot, Benjamin Mann, Benjamin Hodgman, Joseph Merriam, Joseph Ball, David Blodgett, Jacob Blodgett, William Chambers and John Wood be a committee to "Stipolate" prices among us, seven of whom are a "corum."

What was the action of the town on the bill of rights and plan of government, the record does not show. At the meeting, this subject was postponed. The meeting was adjourned sundry times, through the months of August, September and October; the great and absorbing subject before the town, being the. controversy with the Rev. Jonathan Searle. If any vote was passed upon the subject of the bill of rights, and plan of government, it was not recorded. A convention was held in 1779, to propose a plan of government, by which a system of government was drawn up, and submitted to the people, which was undoubtedly that referred to in this article. It was so deficient in its principles, and inadequate in its provisions, that it was by the people, in their town meetings, rejected. Another convention was appointed. It continued more than two years, from June 1781, to October 1783. A system was by this convention submitted to the people, providing for a senate of twelve, and a house of fifty members; apportioned twenty to Rockingham, eight to Strafford, ten to Hillsborough, eight to Cheshire and four to Grafton, to be chosen in county conventions, consisting of one delegate for every fifty rateable polls. The plan was printed, and sent to every town. The inhabitants were requested to state their objections distinctly, to any particular part, and return them at a fixed time. The objections were so many and various, that it was found necessary to alter the form, and send it out a second time. In the amended form, the representatives were to be chosen by the towns; each town of one hundred and fifty polls, choosing one, and of four hundred and fifty, two. This plan was generally approved, but it was not laid before the people in season to be adopted, before the close of the war. The old form of government having

expired with the war, was, by the order of the people, continued a year longer, in the mean time, the new form was perfected, and adopted, and went into operation in 1784.

It will be recollected, that the town approved of the proceedings of the town of Portsmouth, &c. This was a proposal for a convention, to take into consideration "our sinking currency," or in other words, the financial difficulties of the times. David Blodgett was chosen a delegate to this convention. He attended, and shared in the labors of the convention, and, what is very remarkable, and perhaps without a parallel in history, he returned after the close of the convention, and brought the report of their proceedings, and submitted it to the same town meeting by which he was chosen, it having continued by adjournments till the 25th of October. The report of the committee, appointed in pursuance of the recommendation of this convention "to Stipulate prices," is not recorded. It was a very common notion in those days, that the evils of a depreciated currency, could be alleviated, and perhaps wholly cured, by regulations establishing prices, which would compel persons in buying and selling, to conform to the prices established by law, and that thus, the nominal rates of the currency would be maintained. But the remedy was never resorted to, until the disease had assumed a desperate type. Its tendency when applied, was rather to hasten, than to retard the catastrophe. It is vain by legislation, to attempt to bolster up a paper currency. Its only value is its credit. When that has no basis, the paper becomes mere rags. Neither laws, nor regulations can give it value. As well may the laws require a man to breathe a corrupted atmosphere, and derive from it health and vigor, as require a community to use for a currency, an irredeemable and worthless paper, at its par value, and derive from it the benefits and efficiency of a sound currency, founded on intrinsic value. The complaints of a depreciated currency were general, and the remedy by "Stipulating prices," was generally resorted to. The town records of Townsend, under date of February 20th, 1777, show, that after a meeting of the committees of G-roton, Lunenburg, Fitchburg and Shirley, on this subject, "the Selectmen and town of Townsend agreed that the following articles shall not exceed the following prices.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Wheat per bushel	6	8	Dinner at tavern of boiled and	1	0

			roast victuals		
Rye per bushel	4	4	Dinner at tavern for either boiled or roast only		10
Corn per bushel	3	4	A mug of West India Philip		11
Sheep's wool, per pound	2	0	A mug of New. Eng. do.		9
Fresh pork		4			
Salt pork		8			
Salt per bushel	14				

But these prices, although "Stipulated" and agreed to, did not remain, firm and unchanged. They rapidly increased, so that in 1779, August 17, a committee of that town, chosen "to state the price of the several articles necessary for the support of life and trade in the town," made a report, which was accepted, in which they established the price of the following articles, as below:

	£	s.		£	s.	d.
West Indian Rum, per gallon	6	11	Beef, per lb.		4	6
New England Rum	4	18	Mutton		3	6
Molasses	4	15	Butter		11	0
Coffee, per lb.		18	Salt pork		11	0
Tea	6	0	Cheese		5	6
Brown sugar, from 12 s. to		15	Oats, per bushel	1	16	0
Cotton wool	1	18	Eng. hay, per cwt	1	15	0
Salt, per bushel	12	0	Cyder, per bbl	5	2	0
German steel, per lb.	1	17	Sheep's wool	1	4	0
Refined iron		10	Flax		12	0
Wheat, per bushel	7	13	Men's shoes	6	0	0
Rye	5	2	Women's do.	4	0	0
Corn	3	14	Shoeing a horse	4	16	0
Beans	5	2	Common boards	18	0	0
Potatoes	1	0	W. I. Phlip		15	0
Turnips	1	0	N. E. Phlip		12	0

This table shows a pretty rapid appreciation of prices. In the same town, at this town meeting, the town. "Voted, To give to each soldier, of onr quota, of the nine months continental service, 1000- dollars, or 20 bushels of rye," by which it appears that rye was worth more than ten dollars a bushel. No record was made of prices in Mason "stipolated" by the committee appointed for that purpose.

October 1, 1779, the town of Townsend voted to "raise 1000 pounds for the support of the Rev. Samuel Dix and his family, the present year, including his salary." His salary, by the contract, was £66 13s. 4d. At the town meeting, March 6, 1780, the town voted that "labor on the highways be £6 a day till the first of September, aftpr that, £4 10s., and July 4, "Voted, .£6000 to make up Mr. Dix's salary to 4th of September next." At the town meeting, March 5, 1781, "Voted, That labor on the highway be 40 dollars a day till the first of September, oxen 30, and carts 10 dollars a day. These facts show how little success attended the stipulating of prices, in that town; some of the same character appear in the records of Mason. For example, April 20, 1780, an assessment was made of "the Continental and State tax for the present year," the amount being £13,948 10s. 9d. lq. Of

this tax, the assessment to Deacon Amos Dakin was .£110 6s. 1d. 2q. August 4, 1780, a tax was assessed "to purchase beef for the continental army" of .£15,000. September 12, 1780, "Voted, To raise £14,000 to pay the soldiers that were hired in July last, making in all £42,948 10s. 9d. 1q. assessed in one year, for State and Continental purposes. A committee was appointed to purchase the beef. At a meeting December 6, 1780, Capt. Joseph Barrett, for that Committee, made a report, that "the prime cost of the beef which the committee purchased for the town, was £11,750." February 6, 1781, an order "to pay Nathan Wood £25 10s. for a pair of overhals delivered to Deacon Amos Dakin, for one of the soldiers." March 26, 1781, an order "to pay Oliver Scripture £90 for two sheep delivered to one of the three months' men, for the year 1780. May 25, 1781, an order to pay "Richard Lawrence £470 for a cow which he delivered to the selectmen, for the purpose of paying Abraham Merriam part of his hire for three years' service." June 8, 1781. In a warrant committing a "rate of £528 3s. 5d. 1q., it being our State tax for the present year," are set forth the various currencies then afloat, and the rate of allowance in each, as follows: "The whole to be paid in bills of the new Emission, or in notes of ten pounds, or of five pounds issued by the authority of the State, commonly called soldiers' bounty notes, which were dated before the last day of April, 1777, estimating one pound of said notes equal to one pound of said bills, or in such of the notes issued by the authority of said [State], commonly called depreciation notes, as were due on the 31st day of December, 1780, with compound interest on said bounty and depreciation notes, estimating one pound of said depreciation notes equal to one pound sixteen shillings and sixpence of said new bills, provided that the same are paid into the treasury by the last day of June instant; or in the old bills emitted by the State or by Congress, estimating £40 of said bills equal to one pound of the bills last emitted."

The faster prices were raised, the faster the currency went down. Here are four kinds of paper money, differing in value as compared with each other, at rates ranging from par, up to forty for one. In short, so worthless was the currency, that it would take a sack full of paper notes, to pay for a pipe full of tobacco. The evil became intolerable, and a resort was had to silver money. September 13th, 1781, " Voted, To raise £40 silver in lue of £3000, raised at the last annual meeting, to defray town charges." For State and

Continental taxes, the State treasurer was bound to receive the paper money at the rates above specified; but to defray the town charges with £3000 of that currency, was found impracticable, and so its place was supplied with the very modest tax of £40 silver. The bubble burst, and prices resumed their former moderate and reasonable rates.

December 6th, 1779. At town meeting of Mason and Baby, Dea. Amos Dakin was chosen representative.

April 10th, 1780. The main purpose of the meeting was, to procure and forward to the state government, the evidence of the services, and payments by the town, for services of soldiers. David Blodgett, Joseph Barrett, and Obadiah Parker, were chosen a committee "for the matter about the services of the soldiers, &c.; and to petition the general court, for liberty to tax wild land." "Put to vote, to see who would carry the receipts the continental soldiers gave, to Exeter, the cheapest, with the accounts of the same; Mr. Joshua Davis bid it off, for two hundred dollars." The object in asking for liberty to tax wild land, probably was, to enable the town to tax the unimproved lands, of the original grantees of the town, which, by the terms of the grant, were exempted from taxation, until improved. For many years, the assessments and tax bills after this period, had a list of rates headed "Lord's Proprietors/" in which these lands were included.

June 27th, 1780. At the town meeting "Voted, To raise four men towards completing the battalions of this State, in the continental army, and that the selectmen hire the men on the town's cost. Appointed Abijah Allen, Capt. Joseph Barrett and James Scripture a committee to procure our proportion of beef, for the army."

" The selectmen of Mason, being called upon to raise and send forward soldiers immediately, into the public service, without loss of time, immediately notified the town's people, to meet at the meeting house on July 3d, 1780."

This is the record in the book, instead of the ordinary record of the warrant for a town meeting. The record goes onto say, "Met, and chose a committee to hire six men for

the term of six months, into the public service, and two, to go to Coos, for six months."

July 11th, 1780. "Voted, to reserve six acres for the meeting house and common, the form to be square, and the house near the centre; and to sell all of the lot east of the road, and appointed a committee to make the sale, and give the deed."

October 31st, 1780. "Voted, To allow creditors 90 for one in the war rate. Voted, To fence the burying ground, and chose Ens. John Wood, Lt. Swallow and Capt. Benj. Mann a committee for that purpose." This was the burying ground on the road from the meeting house, to Townsend. See p. 65.

February 6th, 1781. "Voted to raise four men towards committing the continental army."

May 7th, 1781. Chose Benjamin Mann to represent the town in the convention at Concord, to form a constitution. June 9, 1781. It appears from orders given, that Jonathan Foster, Joseph Wilson, son of Edward Wilson, and Abijah Batton, were soldiers.

August 14, 1781. "Voted, To hire preaching, and to raise twenty pounds silver for that purpose, and adjourned to the 21st. Then Voted, To reconsider the vote to hire preaching, and adjourned to the 28th. Then Voted, To hire preaching and to raise £20, hard money. Voted, To leave it to Mr. Abijah Allen to pay or not, as he pleases, and chose Deacon Hall, Joseph Merriam and Ens. John Wood, committee to hire preaching."

September 13th, 1781. "Voted to raise MO silver, for the purpose of clearing and fencing the school lot, that the meeting house stands on," and a committee was chosen to lay out the money. It was to be paid in labor, if the payer chose. " Voted that man's labor be 3s. 4d., and ox labor 2s. a day."

November 1st, 1781. "The selectmen made a rate of £18 1s. 2d. 0q. L. mo. silver, for the purpose of purchasing sixty-three and a half gallons of West India Rum for the use of the Continental army."

November 15, 1781. Benjamin Mann was chosen to represent Mason and Raby, at Exeter.

January 2, 1782. "Voted, To direct the committee to hire preaching, to apply to Mr. Kimball to supply the pulpit for some further time. Voted, to engage him for three months. Voted, Not to allow seats for the singers to sit together. Voted, To choose another *querister* to assist in setting the Psalm, and chose Amos Dakin, Jr."

February 12, 1782. Voted, That the selectmen "strain on the Treasurer amediately."

By orders, given in February and March, 1782, it appears that Joshua Richardson and Simon Fish were soldiers for the town in 1779 and 1780; Zebulon Dodge, in 1779, and Jacob Weatherbee, in 1780.

March II, 1782. Annual meeting. "Voted, To hear Mr. Kimball six Sabbaths after the time he is now engaged for. Voted, to seat the meeting house, and that the committee have reference to age, and the last year's? invoice, in seating the meeting house."

By orders, given in March and April, it appears that Joseph Herrick, Benjamin Mann, Ephraim Nutting, Ebenezer Blood, Jr., Asa Blood and Reuben Hosmer, were soldiers in the service for the town.

April 30, 1782 A meeting was called, "To see whether the town will concur with the church in giving Mr. True Kimball an invite to settle in this town as a gospel minister." At the meeting, "It was put to the town by the moderator, whether any person had any objection to the town proceeding in concurrence with the church, to give Mr. True Kimball an invite to settle in this town for their gospel minister.— Voted, To give Mr. Kimball an invite as above. Accordingly, the moderator called for the votes to be brought in, yeas or nays; the votes being called, not one negative vote appeared." It was also "Voted, To .exempt Mr. William Dodge for his poll paying any tax to the minister

rate. Voted, To give Mr. True Kimball one hundred and eighty pounds L. mo. as settlement, and to be two years in paying said settlement. Voted £66 13s. 4d. to be paid yearly, as salary. William Eliot and Abijah Alien dissented in the face of the meeting, against the two above votes of settlement and salary, as a town. Reason, because to go on by way of a town, and to use coercive measures, obliges persons to help support a man, that the major part of the people, in any town, shall see fit to hold as their minister; whereas, the said Eliot and Allen think the gospel is free, and every person has a right to hear, where he can be best edified; if so, then to choose his own teacher, and to support him and no other." A committee, Ens. John Wood, Gapt. Benjamin Mann and Capt. Joseph Barrett, were appointed to wait upon Mr. Kimball, with a copy of the above vote; and the meeting was dissolved.

The vote under date of June 9th, 1781, to leave Abijah Allen to pay or not as he pleases, and this dissent of William Eliot and Abijah Allen, are the first indications, upon the records of the town, of the prevalence of baptistments in the town. Mr. Eliot was the first minister or elder of the Baptist church, soon after formed in the town.

"On August ye 18th, 1782, Mr. True Kimball gave his answer to ye town of Mason (to their calling him to settle with them in the ministry) in the negative.

"Attest: WM. ELIOT, Town Clerk."

August 28, 1782. Town meeting. Sixth article. "To see if the town will allow those men that served in the continental army three years, the sum of money that was taken out of their wages, and the town is now credited for, or do what the town think proper in the affair." The town "Voted, To allow Mr. David Fuller the sum of money that was taken out of his son Ezra's wages, by the court, and the town is now credited for in the State tax."

December 3, 1782. "Proceeded to take under consideration the bill of rights and plan of government. Chose a committee to revise the abovesaid constitution, and make what

remarks they think proper, and make report to the town at some future day. Chose Deacon Amos Dakin, David Blodgett, William Eliot, Ens. John Wood, Joseph Merriam, Samuel Smith, Joseph Barrett, Abijah Alien and Timothy Wheeler, for said committee. Voted, to ratify, the northwest corner of Mason, according to the agreement of the selectmen with the selectmen of the other towns. Voted, To take that part of the State tax, which is over paying the State treasurer (by reason of a certificate that came from the State treasurer, on account of the town's paying soldiers' bounty and wages), to defray town charges. Adj'd to the 16th. Then Voted, To dismiss William Eliot as clerk, and chose David Blodgett, town clerk, P. T."

"Voted, Not to accept of the constitution as it now stands. Voted, To accept of the bill of rights, with the amendment of the 28th article. Voted, To accept the constitution with the following amendment, and then the meeting was dissolved." No paper or record has been found which shows what these several proposed amendments were. The perambulation of the west line of the town is recorded as follows:

"On October the 28th, A. D. 1782, the selectmen and committee of the town of New Ipswich and the selectmen of the town of Mason, met at the north west corner of said Mason) and after establishing said corner, proceeded to perambulate the line between said towns, and agreed that the stake and stones south of Mr. Edmund Town's, about 25 rods, to be a bound between said towns. Also, that a maple tree is a bound; said tree stands south of the road, that leads from Dea. Dakin's to New Ipswich, from thence to a heap of stones in Lt. Stratton's pasture, and so on to a heap of stones south of the road that leads from said Stratton's to said Mason, then to a stake and stones on the north side of the great road below Mr. Pierce's, from thence to the road that leads from Col. Hale's to Prospect, a heap of stones on the south side of said road, and from thence to the corner of said towns, viz: the south west corner of Mason and the south east corner of New Ipswich. Said corner is a heap of stones on the Province line, with a large hemlock tree marked, fell down on said stones.

JOSEPH PARKER,

Committee
For
New Ipswich

BENJAMIN HOAR,
PAUL PRITCHARD,

WILLIAM ELIOT, Selectmen
SAMUEL SMITH, Of
JOSEPH MERRIAM, Mason

A true entry, per me,

WM. ELIOT, Town Clerk."

To this perambulation reference is had in the vote "to ratify the north west corner of Mason," passed December 3, 1782.

March 10, 1783. Annual meeting. "Chose Mr. David Blodgett and Benj. Mann, Esq., to take care of what was blown off the meeting house, namely: boards, shingles, nails, &c. Voted, To mend the meeting house, and chose Jacob Blodgett, James Wood and Thomas Robbins, a committee to mend the meeting house. Voted, To double board the part that the "wind blew the roof of from."

May 26, 1783. Order "To pay Capt Wm. Chambers 4s. L. mo., it being for two mugs of Philp, that the arbitrators had, that set on the dispute that the town had with Ensign Joseph Ball, and for two mugs that the Selectmen had when they vendued the shingles and nails that blew from the meeting house."

December 9, 1783. Chose Benjamin Mann, Esq., to represent Mason and Raby.

November 3. [No year.] Town meeting. "Voted, To raise £32 11s. 4d., to pay the cost of building the bridge by Mr. John Stevens' saw mill." This is probably the mill near Frederic Jones'.

March, 1784. Annual meeting. "Voted, That £40 be added to what was raised to hire preaching the ensuing year, in order to pay the ministers that the town oweth, and that the selectmen be directed to assess the same as soon as possible, and it shall be called the

ministers' rate, and that the constables be ordered not to take any order for said rates, but what shall be given by the ministers; and shall be ordered to pay the same to the treasurer."

Benjamin Mann was chosen to represent Mason and Raby.

July 19, 1784. Town meeting. The second article was, "To see what measures the town will pursue to find a candidate to supply the pulpit, inasmuch as the committee have not been so happy as to find any. This article was inserted by request of Enosh Lawrence and others. The town voted to pass it over, probably thinking the committee competent to their duty.

At this meeting, it was "Voted, To make up to Mr. Samuel Abbott, for his son Ebenezer's bounty, as good as the State would [have] paid him if the town had not been credited for the same; in State notes, on interest, or other pay, as we may agree."

August 19th, 1784. An order "to pay Capt. W. Chambers for keeping Mr. Bailey and Mr. Emerson, three Sabbaths."

October 5, 1784. "Voted, To build a meeting house for the use of said town. Voted, To set the house on Captain Chambers' hill, above his orchard, if the town and he, the said Chambers, can agree to exchange lands for that purpose. Voted, To choose a committee of three men to agree on the aforesaid exchange. David Blodgett, Benjamin Mann, Esq., and Dea. Amos Dakin, were chosen for the aforesaid committee. Then the meeting was adjourned to Monday, the 18th instant. At the adjournment, Voted, That the meeting house shall be raised sometime in the month of June, 1786. Voted, That the said house shall be fifty five feet long and forty five broad, the height to be in proportion to the bigness. Voted, To provide boards, shingles, nails and glass, window frames, and all materials for finishing the outside of said house, by the time affixed for the raising. Voted, To accept the report of the committee that was chosen to exchange lands with Captain Chambers, which was to exchange six or seven acres off the south west corner of

the school lot, for the same quantity of acres on the top of said Chambers' hill. Voted, To choose a committee to compute the quantity of stuff it will take to finish the outside of the house, and the cost of the same. Chose William Hosmer, Jacob Blodgett, David Blodgett, Joseph Woods and Benjamin Mann, for said committee." Adjourned to November 10, at which time neither the moderator nor the warrant could be found, and nothing more was done.

The site selected for the house, at this meeting, was one commanding a view hardly to be surpassed in New England, embracing a great portion of the counties of Middlesex and Worcester, and including the whole valley of the Nashua river and its branches. On the north west the Grand Monadnock, on the south west Watatook and Wachuset, and on the north the Jo English hill in New Boston, and on the east a long sweep of the valley of the Merrimack river, formed portions of a landscape worthy of admiration. But it seems difficulties arose, and objections were made to the site, and it was eventually abandoned. At a subsequent meeting, December 16, 1784, it was "Voted, To build a meeting house, and to set it about twenty feet north of the old one." This was not satisfactory, for the record proceeds to reconsider that vote with a proviso, "That there be an article inserted in the next warrant for the annual meeting, for the town to determine where it shall stand. Chose a committee to provide stuff for the window frames and sashes, Benjamin Mann, David Blodgett, and Samuel Smith."

November 1, 1784. An order to pay Capt. Chambers for entertaining ministers, namely: Messrs. Langdon, Whitman, Bruce and Dix.

In the History of New Hampshire Churches, it is stated that Mr. Bruce, who was settled at Mont Vernon, received a call to settle at Mason. No evidence of that fact appears upon the records of the town or church. This order shows that he was employed by the town as a preacher.

March 15, 1785. An order "to pay Capt. Thomas Tarbell £1 2s., it being for boarding Mr. Bruse and his horse three weeks in October, 1784. Also, March 21, for monies paid to Phinehas Wright."

Warrant for the annual meeting, March, 1785. Article 4. "To see if the town will supersede a vote of a late town meeting, for setting a meeting house upon Capt. Chambers' hill, and determine where said meeting house shall stand. At the meeting, it was "Voted to supersede a vote of a late town meeting, which was to set a meeting house upon Capt. Chambers' hill. Voted, To set the meeting house 16 or 20 feet north of the old one. Voted, To waive the building of a meeting house till we can agree better." The record states, that at this meeting, "37 votes for Mr. George Atkinson, for a president of the State," were given. The meeting adjourned to March 21, at which time it was "Voted, To withdraw the vote for senators and proceed to a new choice. There were 61 votes for John Preston, Esq., 60 for Benjamin Mann, Esq., and one for Matthew Thornton. Voted, To withdraw the vote for a President and begin again. There were 44 votes for George Atkinson, Esq., for President." Also, "Voted to take the above vote respecting a meeting house under consideration for debating. Voted, The above vote for setting the meeting house 16 or 20 feet north of the old one, shall not stand. Voted, The proposed meeting house stand about four or five rods south or west of south [of the present place.] Then, Voted, To raise £300 to build a meeting house with. Voted, To build a bridge over the brook near Mr. John Stephens' saw mill. Chose Jonas Fay, Stephen Lawrence and William Hosmer a committee to build it;" and thereupon, this somewhat extraordinary meeting was adjourned. It would be considered, in these days, a great stretch of power, for a town to vote to supersede ballotings, which had taken place at a former meeting, for governor and senators, and try it over again, which seems to have been done in this instance, without objection. The result was, to increase the vote for governor, (then styled president.) How the original vote stood for senators, is not recorded; nor is any clue left for even a conjecture, as to the reasons of this anomalous proceeding.

June 10th, 1785. An order "to pay Abijah Allen £1 for boarding Mr. David Daniels, while preaching in town."

October 1st, 1785. An order "to pay Jonathan Chandler 10s. in full, for going to Concord after Mr. Whipple, to supply the pulpit."

September 3d, 1785. At a town meeting, the town "Voted, that the town will take good merchantable rye, in Leu of the town and minister tax, to be delivered at Dea. Amos Dakin's, at any time from the first of November, to the last of December. Dea. Dakin to take it, at 4s. per bushel, and give receipts."

March, 1786. Annual meeting. Benjamin Mann chosen to represent Mason and Raby.

November 2, 1786. Townmeetmg. Article 2. "To see if the town will accept the plan proposed, to make paper money, or point out any other method for the same, as they shall think proper." On this article, the town "Voted, Not to make any paper money." The vote so laconically recorded, would seem to be conclusive of the wishes of the town, but it was not so, for,

December 4, 1786, another town meeting was called about paper money. The action of the town is recorded as follows: "Voted, Not to have paper money on the plan proposed by the court, No. 17; none appearing for said plan. No. 17; not for paper money on any plan. No. 3; for said money on some plan."

The meeting house controversy comes back again. At a town meeting May 28th, 1787, it was "Voted, to build a meeting house. Voted to set it just back of the old meeting house. Then voted to reconsider the last' vote, and to choose a committee to say where it shall stand, chose Maj. Abiel Abbott, Timothy Farrar and Daniel Emerson, Esqs., and chose a committee of five to wait on the committee, and chose for that purpose, the selectmen, Benjamin Mann, Esq. and Samuel Smith."

September 4th, 1787. At a town meeting "Voted, to accept the report of the committee, on the place for the meeting house. Voted, that the selectmen assess the money raised for that purpose."

"Voted, that the selectmen assess one hundred and fifty of the three hundred pounds raised heretofore, for the purpose of building the meeting house, and chose Benjamin Mann, Esq., Lt. James Scripture, Mr. H. Russell, Elias Eliot and Joseph Woods a committee to affect the purpose of building a meeting house in the town." The selectmen were ordered "to furnish the committee a copy of the assessment, and that the receipt of a majority of the committee, or of the chairman, shall be sufficient to discount with the constables for each ones tax."

March 30th, 1788. Chose Obadiah Parker to represent Mason and Baby. It appears by the record of the warrant for this meeting, that it was issued by the selectmen of Mason, alone. The record shows their warrant, directed to "the freeholders, and other inhabitants paying taxes in the town of Raby, to meet at the meeting house in Mason, for the choice of a representative."

June 16th, 1788. "Voted to build the meeting house on the plan proposed by the committee.

Voted to let out the west part of the school lot, to Dea. Amos Dakin for fifteen years, [for] his clearing and fencing the same with stone wall, 4 ft. 4 inches high." This contract was not carried out. Dea. Dakin died April 28, 1789.

May 4th, 1789. "Voted, that the Selectmen stake out the spot for the meeting house. Voted to set the front according to the three north stakes, set up by the Selectmen.

"Voted to postpone the building of the meeting house, till the first day of August, providing Mr. Kendall's business will submit to it." Mr. Kendall was of Ashby, was a celebrated master builder, a faithful and a good workman. It seems his business would

not submit to the postponement, for it appears by the following letter, which is inserted as illustrating the times and characteristics of the people, that early in September of that year, the meeting house was raised. The letter is directed to Sr. — Hill, Preacher in Ashby. The title, Sir, was once commonly given to graduates of universities. It seems to have been the English equivalent of the Latin Dominus, or Magister; but was, perhaps, exclusively bestowed on the clergy; [See the Odorherty Papers.] To return to the letter. The original is in the hand writing of Jonathan Searle, Esq., and is as follows:

"Much respected Sr. Hill,

We in the Capacity of a Town's Committee for building a meeting House in Mason, take this method to wait upon you with our sincere Regards for your Person Wellfare, and with our earnest Desire (as we expect with the Leave of Providence, next Week on Wednesday to begin raising the meeting House in this Town) that you would give us the Pleasure of waiting on you in town next week on Tuesday at farthest, since it is agreed upon, you should lead in Prayer early the next Morning. Pray Sr. don't disappoint us of this our desire, as you will much oblige your humb. Servts

BENJAMIN MANN,

Chairman
of Said
Com'tee.

Mason, August ye 29th, 1789.

The above letter is copied verbatim from the original, preserving the orthography, punctuation, abbreviations, and use of capital letters. It was once a custom with English writers and printers, to commence every noun with a capital letter, which rule has, except in a few instances, been observed in this letter, and the common error of the illiterate, of commencing with capital letters other words than nouns, is sedulously avoided. The service requested, it is reported, was performed, in an appropriate manner and with due solemnity. This letter further brings to mind a distinguishing characteristic of our fathers, a feeling, and a ready public acknowledgment of, their dependence on the divine blessing in all their ways. The letter is one of the earliest documentary evidences that has been found of the connection of Mr. Hill with the affairs and interests of the people and town. It was not, however, his first appearance on public service in the town, where he preached four or more Sabbaths, commencing in April, 1789, but was, at the date of this letter, preaching in Ashby.

The raising of a meeting house in a country town was a matter of no small moment. As the records of Mason have preserved no details of the preparations for and of the proceedings on this occasion, resort will be had, as in former instances, with much profit, for interesting details of various matters and proceedings, to the records of Townsend. At a town meeting in that town, on May 28, 1770, it was "Voted, That the corn mite chosen to take care for the raising of the new meeting house, be directed to provide jins and ropes necessary for the same, and also to choose such hands to raise the same as they think proper, and make suitable provision for their entertainment as they think proper at their discretion; and also to provide some person that can splice ropes if they break, all at the town's cost, except their services in town."

The next proceeding of the town of Mason on record, has an intimate connection with the subject of the preceding page.

At a meeting, called October 15, 1789, and adjourned to October 19, the record states as follows: Then the town did concur with the church, in giving Mr. Eben^r. Hill a call into the work of the ministry. To negative. Voted, To reserve "the ministry right of land 'in the town, for the use of the town."

Voted, one hundred and fifty pounds settlement to Mr. Hill, provided he should accept the call of the church and town; one half of the above to be paid in money, the other half in neat stock and farm produce, one half in one year after his settlement, and the other half in the next year following.

Voted sixty six pounds, thirteen shillings, and four pence yearly, as salary during his ministry with us. Chose Jonathan Searle, Esq., Lt. Obadiah Parker and Capt. Isaac Brown, a committee "to wait on Mr. Hill, with the above proceedings."

In the meantime, without waiting for the result of this action, the business of building the meeting house went on. At a town meeting, December 14, 1789, "Voted, To accept a plan

of the body pews, drawn by Lt. Kendall, and of the wall pews, by Lt. James Wood, and to sell the pews by vendue; that the purchaser of a pew below, should pay twelve shillings, and of a pew in the gallery, six shillings, as a forfeiture for not paying for the pew. Chose a committee to give and take security, Jonathan Searle, Benjamin Mann and Joseph Merriam, and at an adjournment, [apparently after the sale,] then proceeded to business, to wit, for each man that purchased a pew, to give in to the town's committee to build the meeting house, what articles he would procure against next April, necessary to finish said house."

The following is a copy of the proceedings of the church in Mason, in making choice of Mr. Hill to become their pastor, and in presenting their call to him, to the work of the ministry with them.

"Oct. 13th, 1789. At a church meeting, Rev. Samuel Dix of Townshend, was chosen moderator for the said meeting. After prayer, the church chose Mr. Ebe^r Hill for their pastor and teacher, and determined to invite him to take the oversight of them, and the people of this place, as their minister.

"Voted to choose a committee, to wait on Mr. Ebe^r Hill, and inform him of the above determination of the church; chose for that purpose, Deacon Nathan Hall, Mr. Jason Dunster and Mr. Samuel Smith.

"Voted that Deacon Hall, the standing moderator of the church, communicate to the inhabitants of the town, at their meeting on thursday next, a copy of our proceedings at this time, with respect to the choosing, and calling, of Mr. Ebe^r. Hill to settle with us in the ministry of the gospel.

Attest, SAMUEL Dix, moderator."

On the margin is the state of the vote of the church, as follows:

"Deacon Nathan Hall, yea.

John Russell, yea.

Jason Dunster, yea.

Edmund Tarbell, yea.

Samuel Smith, yea

Hubbard Russell, yea."

Also, is added on the margin: "Capt. William Chambers, John Winship, Hinksman Warren, Jonathan Bachelder, Abel Adams, Joseph Woods, Timothy Dakin, members of other churches, expressed their desire that Mr. Ebene^r. Hill should settle here." These brethren -were then. resident in the town, and afterwards united with the church.

February 16, 1790. The town "Voted, To provide thirty cords of wood yearly, for Mr. Hill, so long as the town can procure the same without a tax, and if that measure should ever fail of providing said thirty cords of wood as above, then the town will add to his salary so much as to make it seventy five pounds, lawful money, yearly, during his ministry in said town.

"Voted, To pay Mr. Ebenezer Hill one half of the settlement the said town voted him October ye 15th, 1789, in six months after his ordination in said town, the other half in eighteen months after said ordination, provided he should be in necessity for the same.

"Voted, That Mr. Joseph Merriam and Joseph Barrett wait upon Mr. Hill with the above proceedings of the town."

Mr. Hill had preached several months in Marlborough, N.H., and been called by the church in that town to become their pastor, and the town, at a meeting held November 30, 1789, by their vote, concurred in the action of the church. This call he had under consideration at the same time as that of Mason; after due deliberation, he declined the call of the church in Marlborough, and accepted the invitation of the church and people of Mason, to become their pastor and minister.

The following is a copy of his answer:

"To the church of Christ and people in Mason:

"My Christian brethren and Friends,

"It hath pleased Almighty God so to order in his Providence that I have been called to preach the Gospel of Christ among you,—I have been so long time with you as to give all an opportunity, who are so minded, to have personal acquaintance with me, and to be acquainted with my sentiments, and public performances; as it is now about 15 months since I first came among you, and it has pleased you, unworthy as I am, to invite me to settle with you in the work of the Gospel Ministry. It is [a] long time since I have had your call under consideration, and the longer perhaps, as I have been so unhappy, as to have another call, at the same time from another church and people, but I hope and trust I have made it a matter of serious and prayerful enquiry, seeking direction from the Father of Lights —and considered it, as it is, a most solemn and' important undertaking, and who is sufficient for these things ? O to have the charge of Souls is a most awful charge! Since if any perish, thro' the carelessness or unfaithfulness of the Watchman, his blood shall be required at the Watchman's hands;—and to be guilty of the blood of souls is dreadful! I hope I am, in some measure, sensible of my insufficiency of myself, for such an undertaking—that all my own strength is weakness, and that my sufficiency must be of God, who chooseth the weak things of the world to confound the wise. I trust he hath called me to this work, therefore relying on his mercy and grace, and requesting and depending upon your prayers for me, that I may have grace to be found faithful, and be more and more furnished for the work, and depending upon your assistance as fellow helpers to the truth, I accept of your invitation, provided there shall arise no matter of difficulty before any further relation may take place. Again I request, brethren, pray for me, that I may be willing to spend and be spent in the service of Christ, that I may be a faithful Minister of the New Testament—and a helper of your joy. And may the pure religion of Jesus Christ prevail everywhere, in this town in particular, that God may be glorified among us is the prayer of

Your Humbl.. Servt. in the Lord,

EBENEZER HILL."

This document is without date, but was communicated to the town, probably, in July or August, 1790. While these proceedings were in progress, the affairs of the meeting house were in hand. At a meeting, March 8, 1790, it was "Voted, To dismiss the committee to build the meeting house, and chose in their stead, Joseph Merriam, Hubbert Russell and Lt. James Wood."

September 23, 1790. In the warrant for the meeting, the second article was, "To see what time the town will prefix for the ordination of Mr. Ebenezer Hill into the work of the Gospel Ministry, 3d. To see what provision the town will make for said ordination."

At the meeting, "Voted, That Mr. Ebenezer Hill be absent two Sabbaths in a year, yearly, if it may not be in his power to procure a supply. Voted, To accept of Mr. Ebenezer Hill's answer upon the Invitation of the Church and Town to settle with them in the work of the Gospel Ministry.

"Voted, That Wednesday, the third day of November next, be the day prefixed for the ordination of Mr. E. Hill into the work of the Gospel Ministry in this town.

"Voted, To send to seven churches to assist in the solemnity of the ordination, viz:

To the Church of Christ in				
Rindge under the Pastoral care of the Rev.				Seth Payson,
Hollis,	"	"	"	Daniel Emerson,
New Ipswich,	"	"	"	Stephen Farrar,
Pepperell,	"	"	"	John Bullard,
Wilton,	"	"	"	Theophilus Fiske,
Temple,	"	"	"	Noah Miles,
Townsend,	"	"	"	Samuel Dix.

"Voted, To pay five dollars down, and the other part of the one half of the cost for entertaining the council, in money, in three months; the other half to be paid in rye, at 4s.

per bushel, and corn at 3s. per bushel, the whole to be paid in three months from the ordination. Voted, To give Benjamin Mann, Esq., five pounds for entertaining the council, with all other gentlemen of the clergy, and Mr. Hill's relatives and friends, that may attend the ordination. Chose Lt. Obadiah Parker, Jonathan Searle, Esq., and Dea. Nathan Hall, to send letters missive to the several churches above mentioned,"

The sum thus to be paid for entertaining the Council, &c., amounted to \$16,66.

These preparations having been made, the ordination was conducted in due form. The council met on the 2d day of November, 1790. The following is a copy of their proceedings. As such documents are rarely to be found in print, this will be looked upon by such as feel an interest in the minutia of the ecclesiastical proceedings of the New England churches, with a deeper sentiment than that of mere curiosity.

"An Ecclesiastical Council, by virtue of letters missive from the church of Christ and congr. in Mason, desiring their advice and assistance in the ordination of Mr. Ebenezer Hill, to the work of the Gospel Ministry among them, on Wednesday, the 3d day of November, 1790; consisting of the following churches of Christ, Viz.: ye chh. of Christ in Hollis, ye chh. of Christ in New Ipswich, ye chh. of Christ in Townsend, ye chh. of Christ in Wilton, ye chh. of Christ in Pepperell, ye chh. of Christ in Rindge, and ye chh. of Christ in Temple, met as requested, at the house of Benjamin Mann, Esq., in said Town, on the evening proceeding said day.

"After some deliberation upon the subject of their meeting, Voted, To embody, and made choice of Rev' Daniel Emerson as moderator, who led the council in prayer to God for light and direction upon the important occasion. Then the council made choice of the Rev'd John Bullard as scribe, and proceeded to consider the call of the church and people to Mr. Hill, to the pastoral office among them, and his answer to said call, and being satisfied as to the regularity of both, they examined the candidate for ordination as to his qualifications for the work of the ministry, and his views in undertaking it, carefully

attending to his confession of faith. Then voted to adjourn till next morning at nine o'clock.

"Wednesday, A. M. Met according to adjournment. After prayer, the council being satisfied as to the character, sentiments, qualification and views of Mr. Hill, upon the church receiving him into their holy fellowship and repeated requests to have the pastor elect separated, to the work to which he was called, Voted, Nem. con., to proceed to his ordination, (and he was ordained accordingly.)

"Mar., Nov. 3d, 1790. JOHN BULLARD, Scribe.

"N. B. The solemnity was introduced with prayer, by Rev. Mr. Fiske; Rev'd Mr. Payson preached upon 2 Cor. 5; 20. Rev'd Mr. Emerson made the ordaining prayer. Rev'd Mr. Farrar gave the charge, Rev'd Mr. Dix gave the right hand of fellowship, Rev'd Mr. Bullard made the closing prayer."

Here it may be proper to remark, that these proceedings were in full accordance with the principles of Congregationalism ; that is the absolute independency of each church. The candidate was not ordained, until he became a member of the church; and being such, was by the church chosen as their pastor and teacher, and at their request, being one of their brethren, was by the council, set apart and ordained as their pastor. This land mark of the order, is not now so carefully preserved, as it should be. It is apprehended that it will be found, in many instances, that the pastors of congregational churches, are not members of their churches. If the notion prevails, that by being ordained over the churches, they by that act become members of the churches, it is one that has no foundation in congregationalism, and is at total variance with its fundamental principles and doctrines.

This connection between the pastor and church thus formed, proved to be a happy one. It continued with the town till December 19th, 1835; when the civil contract with the town,

was, at his request, dissolved. Of the church he remained pastor, till his decease, May 20th, 1854.

December 2d, 1790. At a town meeting "Voted, To sell the old meeting house at vendue, exclusive of the sash and glass. Voted, That the men that built pews in the old meeting house, hold them as their property." John Brown became the purchaser. He was a merchant. He removed it to the south side of the common, at the foot of the hill on which it formerly stood; and placed it at the corner, on the west side of the road leading to Townsend; where Freeman Elliot's house now stands. It was occupied as a dwelling house and store by Mr. Brown, and afterward by Thomas Whiting and Jabez Prescott, for the same purpose.

It was afterwards occupied by Henry Jefts, and perhaps some others, as a dwelling house, till it was purchased by Hollis Amsden of Mr. Parkman, who resided in Charlestown. Mr. Amsden occupied it for many years as a dwelling house and turner's shop. He sold it to Abraham Robbins, by whom it was taken down, removed, and set up again where it now stands, on the farm formerly occupied by Seth Robbins, a little way off from the road leading to Townsend.

Up to this period, the town had been but poorly furnished with school houses. Being provided with a meeting house and a minister, attention was now directed to the schools, one of the most important institutions in New England.

At a meeting March 14, 1791, it was "Voted, To raise 180 pounds to build school houses, viz : 20 pounds for each school district," and a committee was chosen, consisting of Jonathan Searle, Benjamin Mann, Obadiah Parker, Reuben Barrett, Samuel Smith, Jotham Webber, Stephen Lawrence, Oliver Scripture, John Lawrence, James Scripture, Joseph Saunders, David Hall and Joseph Barrett, to divide the town into school districts, and fix the place in each for the school house. Their report was made and accepted, and recorded. The town was divided into nine districts, the description and numbers of which will appear in a subsequent chapter.

The next interest which the fathers looked after was, to put in order the grounds around the new meeting house. At the meeting March 14, 1791, it was "Voted, That a single head pay one shilling, and other estates accordingly, towards wharfing around the meeting house, and making a parade." It was further " Voted, That it be assessed and put into separate columns, in the surveyors' lists, and committed to the surveyors; the price of work per day and utentials, as for highway work." Benjamin Mann, Isaac Brown and James Wood, were chosen a committee, to direct the surveyors what work should be done; and it was further ordered, "that it be done by the 10th of June next." "The making the parade," was preparing the ground for a training field.

Now appear the first symptoms of a division in town affairs, which afterwards was the occasion of much trouble and heart-burning; that is the taxing the Baptists for building the meeting house. If the, house had been built solely for public worship, there would seem to be no good reason to require those who did not use it for that purpose to pay the expenses of the erection; but that rule would apply to some who did not pretend to be Baptists, but from indifference to all religious teaching, or for other reasons, absented themselves from public worship. All these persons were ready enough to use the house for secular purposes, and in those days, when town meetings were seldom less than a dozen a year, the use of the house for that purpose, was almost as important in itself, and was quite as wearing and destructive to the building, as its use for religious purposes.

August 22, 1791. In the warrant for the meeting, the second article was, "To see if the town will direct the selectmen to order the constables who have demands on the Baptists in this town, or other 'towns not belonging to this State, to make distress immediately on such delinquent persons, of that denomination, as have not paid their several taxes to the minister or the meeting house, in the town, or to see if the town will strike upon measures of an amicable nature with the Baptists, respecting their said taxes, as they appear fond of the latter, but entirely averse to paying either of said taxes, except being obliged by law, unless happily agreed to by the parties." This article exhibits an amusing jumble of ideas. The doings of the meeting partook somewhat of the same character. It was "Voted, That

the Baptists have the liberty to pay their proportion of the first assessment of £150, or not to pay anything at all. Voted, That the non-resident Baptists pay their proportion of the above tax of £150, or be liable to be called upon for the whole of the tax now assessed against them to said meeting house. Voted, That the Baptists in town and out of the State, be exempted from paying any minister's tax made against them since the first invoice after they can procure a certificate that they have joined a sect or denomination of Baptists." On the 27th of September, at another meeting, the vote respecting the Baptists out of the State, was reconsidered, and a vote passed to exempt the Baptists out of the State from paying anything to the tax for building the meeting house. The result was, as appears by the records, that those who had not paid were excused, and those who had paid received back their money out of the treasury, by orders drawn in their favor.

The titles to the lands in the town were granted upon the express condition that the town should, within a specified time, build a meeting house, and, as is undoubtedly implied in those terms, should maintain it and rebuild it as often as necessary, and as the grantors had given valuable lands, for the ministry and the support of the ministry in the town, the undoubted intention of which was, that the town should support a minister, and as the town had enjoyed the full benefit of that grant, and had sold the ministry land and received the money for it, the town was morally, if not legally bound to maintain a minister, and continued to be so liable, until the laws of the State abridged the powers of the towns in this particular. There can be no doubt, that the conditions of the grants and the acceptance of the charter by the original grantees, made their lands chargeable with the burdens of building and maintaining a public meeting house for the town, and that all who held lands under this grant, or derived their title from the original grantees, under this charter, held them subject to those charges. No change had then been made in the law, with regard to the house; and it is doubtful if any had been made concerning the support of the minister which would exonerate the owner of lands in town from the payment of assessments on their lands for this purpose. Such being the fact, one knows hardly which most to admire, the confidence with which the claim, on the part of the Baptists, to be exempted from the expenses of building the house, were urged, or the

readiness with which the other inhabitants took upon themselves the whole burden of building and keeping in repair the meeting house.

March 12, 1792. Annual meeting. Obadiah Parker was chosen to represent Mason and Raby.

May 20, 1792. "Voted, To sell Dr. Wm. Barber a part of the parade ground at the rate of 52s. per acre." At a meeting, this year, an article of the warrant was, "To see if the town will give leave to introduce the small pox by inoculation, and to set up a hospital."

"Voted, Not to have the small pox brought into town, by any person or persons being inoculated. Voted, not to have a hospital set up in said town."

March meeting, 1793. Chose Joseph Merriam "To represent the town of Mason." The population of the town had now become large enough to be entitled to choose a representative, and to Mr. Merriam belongs the honor of being the first representative, under this apportionment. No citizen of Mason was ever more worthy of this mark of the confidence of his townsmen. Mason, as has already been stated, was for many years classed with Raby, for the choice of a representative. In those years in which no mention is made in Mason records of the choice of a representative, there is no doubt that the representative chosen was an inhabitant of Raby and that the choice is recorded in Raby records.

At this meeting, John Brown was chosen collector for the whole town. He refused or declined to serve, and a meeting was called July 8, 1793, to choose a collector in his room. At the meeting, "Voted, Not to excuse Mr. Brown. Voted, That he pay a fine of 20s. Voted, To accept an order of 20s. upon the town treasurer, from the Rev. Mr. Eben^r. Hill, for said 20s." Such was the law of the land; persons chosen into town offices who refused or declined accepting the office, were liable to be fined, unless excused by the town.

At a meeting in September, the town " Voted, To have two companies of militia in the town of Mason. Voted, To have the town divided for that purpose, according to the tax bills."

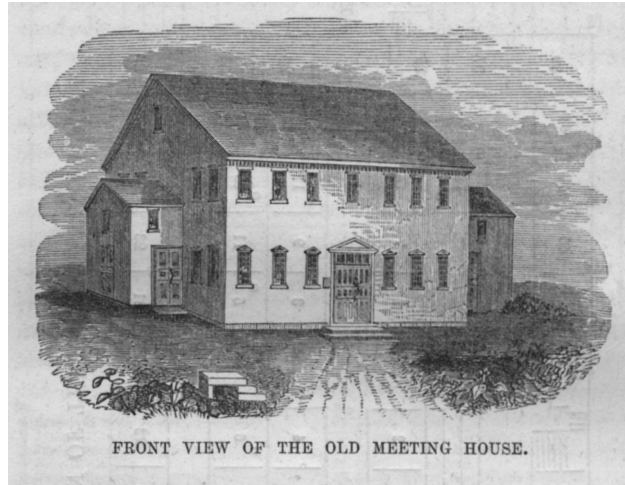
At the annual meeting, March 10, 1794, Obadiah Parker was chosen to represent the town. The ninth article in the warrant was, " o see if the town will let Benjamin Mann, Esq., have that old road formerly trod by Mr. Brintnall Witherell's shop neat to the bridge, by Mr. John Brown's Pirlash, or pay said Mann for the road as now trod on said Mann's land." The town voted to give him the old road for the new one. Mr. Brown's pearlashery stood on the south side of the road on the east side of the stream, below the bridge, near the present residence of Mr. Ephraim Russell.

March meeting, 1795. Joseph Barrett was chosen representative.

May 18, 1795. "Voted, To each man who shall turn out as a volunteer in the service of the United States, for the term of one year, 12s. bounty, and to make up the wages to \$10 per month." This bounty was paid by the town, to the following persons: Samuel Merriam, Blisha Buss, Ezra Newell, Aaron Wheeler, Jr., Thomas Bobbins, Jr., Joseph Merriam, Jr., Capt. James Wood.

October 22, 1795. "Voted, To have the meeting house dedicated on Thursday, the 26th day of November next, if agreeable to the Rev. Mr. Hill, and that the selectmen assist Mr. Hill in making entertainment for the ministers." On the 26th day of November, 1795, in pursuance of this vote, the meeting house was dedicated. No record has been preserved of the proceedings on that occasion. In the memoir of the Rev. Mr. Hill, will be inserted a fac simile of the first page of his sermon preached at the dedication.

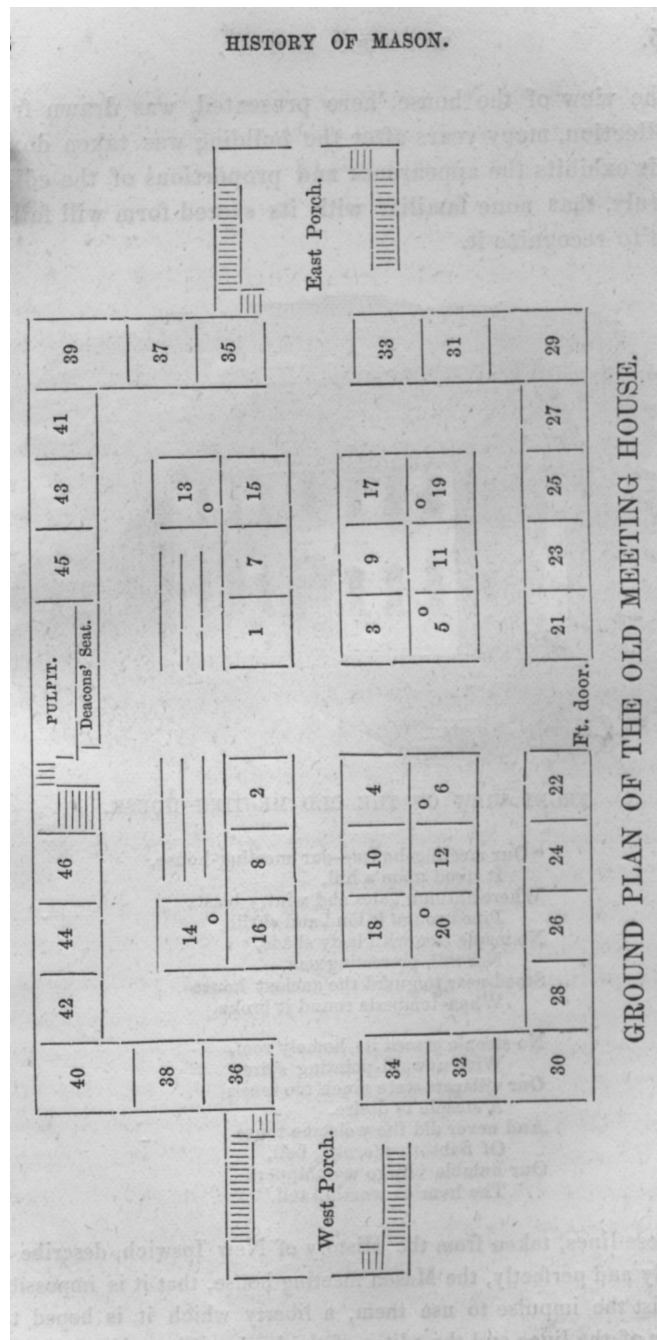
The view of the house, here presented, was drawn from recollection, many years after the building was taken down; but it exhibits the appearance and proportions of the edifice so truly, that none familiar with its sacred form will fail at once to recognize it.



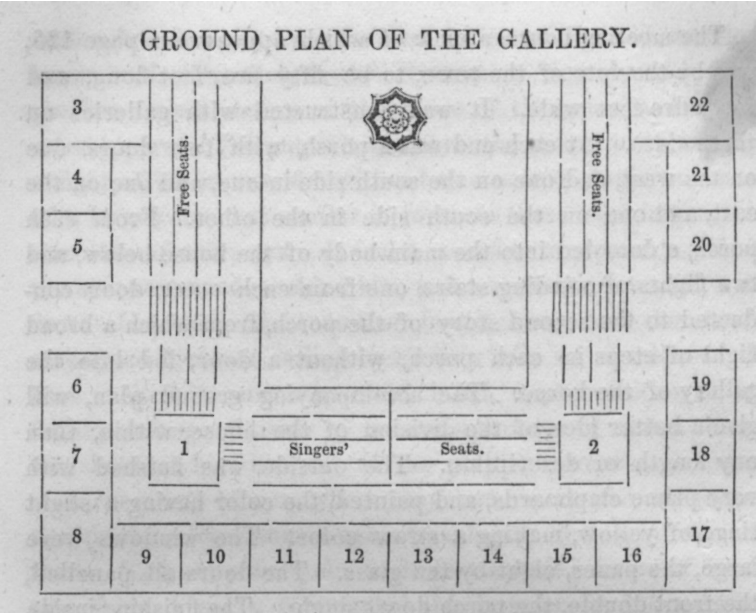
" Our meeting-house—our meeting-house,
It stood upon a hill,
Where autumn gales and wintry blasts
Piped round it loud and shrill.
No maple tree with leafy shade,
Nor tall, protecting oak,
Stood near to guard the ancient house
When tempests round it broke.
No steeple graced its homely roof,
With upward-pointing spire;
Our villagers were much too meek
A steeple to desire.
And never did the welcome tones
Of Sabbath morning bell,
Our humble village worshippers

The hour of worship tell."

These lines, taken from the History of New Ipswich, describe so happily and perfectly, the Mason meeting house, that it is impossible to resist the impulse to use them, a liberty which it is hoped the author of the lines and the editor of the book, will pardon.



GROUND PLAN OF THE OLD MEETING HOUSE



GROUND PLAN OF THE GALLERY

NAMES OF PEWHOLDERS.

GROUND PEWS.

No.

- 1 Benjamin Mann, Esq.
- 2 Joseph Merriam.
- 3 James Wood, Esq.
- 4 John Whitaker.
- 5 Oliver Hosmer.
- 6 Dea. Rogers Weston.
- 7 Captain James Scripture.
- 8 Stephen Lawrence, Esq.
- 9 Abel Adams.
- 10 Timothy Wheelock.
- 11 Jonas Fay.
- 12 Dea. Nathan Hall and Jeremiah Boynton.
- 13 Samuel Smith.
- 14 Timothy Wheeler.
- 15 Captain Jesse Barrett.
- 16 Captain Joseph Barrett.
- 17 Thomas Tarbell, Jr.
- 18 Jonathan Searle, Esq.
- 19 Capt. Benjamin Barrett and Dea. Hezekiah Richardson.
- 20 Silas Bulliard.
- 21 Jason Dunster, Jr.
- 22 Thomas Hodgman.
- 23 Lieutenant John Swallow.

No.

- 24 Joseph Woods.
- 25 Deacon Noah Winship
- 26 Captain John Barrett>
- 27 Samuel Townsend.
- 28 Jason Russell and Hollis Amsden.
- 29 David Brown and James Brown.
- 30 John Winship.
- 31 Samuel Merriam, Esq.
- 32 Edward Wilson and Captain Thomas Wilson.
- 33 Ebenezer Shattuck.
- 34 Jonathan Bachelder.
- 35 Captain Amos Flagg.
- 36 Jonathan Williams.
- 37 John Swallow, Jr.
- 38 Hinksman Warren and Samuel Hill.
- 39 Lieutenant Obadiah Parker.
- 40 Joseph Tufta and Jason Dunster, Senior
- 41 Deacon Timothy Dakin.
- 42 Doctor William Barber.
- 43 Hubbard Russell.
- 44 Elias Elliot.
- 45 Joel Ames.
- 46 Reverend Ebenezer Hill.

GALLERY PEWS.

- 1 Captain Samuel Smith,
- 2 Amos Holden
- 3 Captain Stun Stevens Parker

- 4 Joseph Saundes and John Blodgett, Esq.
- 5 Seth Robbins
- 6 Major Abijah Elliot.
- 7 Nathaniel B~ynton.

8 Deacon Timothy Dakin.

9 Amos Russell.

10 Ezra Brown and Capt. Artemas Manning.

11 James Wood, Esq.

12 William Barrett.

13 Captain Ebenezer Hodgman.

14 Lieutenant Joses Bucknam.

15 Josiah Flagg

16 Joseph Blood.

17 James Withee and Micah Russell

18 Ezra Merriam and Ephraim Russell

19 Captain Samuel Withington

20 Stephen Lawrence, Esq.

21 Lieutenant Ebeneser Gilman

22 Amos Blood.

The meeting house, a view of which appears on page [125], was by the vote of the town, to be fifty five feet long, and forty five feet wide. It was constructed with galleries on three sides. At each end was a porch, with two doors, one on the west, and one on the south side in one, and one on the east, and one on the south side in the other. From each porch, a door led into the main body of the house below, and two flights of winding stairs, one from each outer door conducted to the second story of the porch, from which a broad flight of steps in each porch, without a door, led into the gallery of the house. The accompanying ground plan, will give a better idea of the division of the house within, than any length of description. The outside was finished with very prime clapboards, and painted, the color having a slight tinge of yellow, making a straw color. The windows, were large, the panes, eight by ten glass. The doors all panelled, the front double, the porch doors single. The finishing inside was ceiling, up to the bottom of the windows. The walls above, and ceiling overhead, of plaster; the fronts of the galleries were finished with panelled work, and a heavy cornice; the whole supported, by Ionic columns, on which rested the heavy oaken beams, which furnished the groundwork of the galleries. These beams were planed and painted, and not enclosed by the plaster. The posts were very large, extending the whole height of the house, and projecting into the house; towards the top, where they were to receive the beams, they were enlarged, somewhat like the capital of a column. They were of the finest white oak timber, and finished and painted like the gallery beams. The pews were square, of panel work, with a balustrade of miniature Ionic columns. The pulpit was finished with panel work, outside and in, with angles and curves, which would tax the skill of an artist to describe in words;

surmounted by a sounding board, octagonal in form) also of panel work, in the highest style of art of that day. All the work was in the best style, and of the best material. The following description, taken with a few changes, from the description of the old meeting house in New Ipswich, in the History of New Ipswich, will present a vivid picture of the inside of the house, and of the worshippers. The pulpit was lofty; the ascent to it was by a flight of stairs outside, with a balustrade of Ionic columns, of a larger size, but similar in form, to those used in the construction of the pews. It had a recess or rostrum, in which the speaker stood; behind him, was a curtainless arched window; above him, the sounding board hung near his head, suspended from the ceiling by an iron rod, so slender as to have excited in many a youthful mind, apprehensions of its falling, and speculations of the consequences of such a disaster, beneath him, in front of the pulpit, were the deacon's seats, in a sort of pen, where they sat facing the congregation, with the communion table hanging by hinges, in front of them. The pews were about six feet square, a row of hard, un-cushioned seats, surrounded the interior, and generally, there was one or more high-backed, flag-bottomed chairs in the centre, most usually occupied by the grand-mothers of the family, a shake of whose head, had a wonderful effect in reducing to instant sobriety, any youngster, attempting any trespasses upon the solemn decorum of the place. The seats were hung by hinges, so that they might be turned up as the congregation rose, at prayer, as was the goodly custom of our fathers; and the slam-bang, as they were turned carelessly down, at the close of the prayers, not unlike a volley of musketry, was no inconsiderable episode in the ceremonies.

Behold now the congregation, as it assembles on the Sabbath. Some of them are mounted on horses; the father, with his wife or daughter on a pillion behind him, and perhaps also his little boy astride before him. They ride up to the stone horse-block and dismount. The young men and maidens, when not provided with horses, approach on foot. They carry in hand a rose or a lilac, a pink, a peony or a pond-lily, (and this was the whole catalogue of flowers then known) or what was still more exquisite, a nice bunch of fennel or caraway seeds. Instead of this, in winter, they bear a tin footstove, containing a little dish of coals which they have carefully brought from home or filled at some neighboring house or noon-house; and this was all the warmth they were to enjoy

during the two long hours of the service. They have come a long distance on ox-sleds, or perhaps have skimmed over the deep, untrodden snow on rackets. They enter the house, stamping the snow from their feet and tramping along the uncarpeted aisles with their cow-hide boots. Let us enter with them. The wintry blast howls and shrieks around the exposed building; the ill-fastened windows clatter; and the walls re-echo to the thumping of thick boots, as their wearers endeavor to keep up the circulation in their half frozen feet, while clouds of vapor issue from their mouths; and the man of God, as he raises his hands in prayer, must needs protect them with shaggy mittens. So comfortless and cold, it makes one shudder to think of it. In summer, on the contrary, the sun blazes in, unscreened by blind or curtain ; the sturdy farmer, accustomed to labor all day in his shirt sleeves, takes the liberty to lay aside his coat in like manner for the more serious employments of the sanctuary, especially is this the case with the singers, who have real work to perform.

Every man is in his appropriate place; for it was little less than sacrilege, in the days when the Sabbath was kept with all puritan gravity and severity, to stay away from meeting, let the weather be what it might.

The prayers are offered; the sermon begins, and advances by regular approach up to 8thly, and even to 16thly; the elderly men, unaccustomed to long sittings, occasionally standing erect or leaning against the partitions of the pews, to relieve the fatigue of their position; Tate and Brady is lined off, two lines at a time, by a person selected for the purpose, and sung with good nasal twang and hearty good will to some good old tune, Wells or St. Martins; and, finally, the benediction is pronounced. The congregation still remains in its place to go out in prescribed order: first the minister —and as he passes the deacons, they follow—then those in the front seat below, and at the same time those in the front gallery seat and those in the pews—then those in the second seat, and so on in successive order. Would that a like decorum in this respect could be substituted for the impatient and irreverent rush of modern days. They separate for a short intermission and to dispatch their lunch of dough-nuts or apples, in summer they stroll in the graveyard, to hold silent converse with those who sleep there, and impress the lesson of their own

mortality; and in winter those from a distance take refuge before the blazing hearth of some friend in the village, and are perhaps regaled by a hospitable mug of cider; and soon all are reassembled for the afternoon service.

After this, they wend their way home, to partake of a hearty warm dinner, the best of the week, in most instances too, prefaced by an exhilarating draught of hot toddy; and finally "to say the Catechism." That Westminster Assembly's Catechism; who that was trained in the early part of the century will forget it! Its pictorial alphabet of aphorisms,

In Adam's fall -we sinned all;
My Book and heart shall never part,—

the story of John Rogers, with the picture of the martyr at the stake, surrounded by the grim officials, and, standing near, his wife and nine children, certain; (whether the one at the breast was one of the nine, or one to be added to that number, was a problem too deep for youthful minds to solve,) Agur's Prayer; and Dialogue between Youth, Christ and the Devil;—it was the only book beside the Bible and Psalm Book allowed in the hands of youth on the Sabbath. The Catechism concluded the religious observance of the day. Then the children were let loose, and in summer, all the family walked over the farm to observe the crops and salt the cattle.

As those who were actors in these almost forgotten scenes recall them, with a thousand associations which it is impossible to recount, it must seem almost a dream; and those who are now in the morning of life would doubtless smile could these old times and customs be but once presented in reality. But they were good old times; and the Sabbath and the sanctuary were then regarded with a strictness and reverence which we should be glad to see observed in our day.

The meeting house was so far finished that it was used at the ordination of Mr. Hill, November 3, 1790, and from that time to the time of the dedication, it continued to be used for public worship. The date of the year of the erection. of the house appeared in

large, gilded figures, 1790, on the capital of the two columns supporting the gallery, one on each side of the aisle in front of the pulpit, the position of which, in pews five and six, is indicated by the mark ° in the plan, on page [126]. It was probably nearly completed at that time. Why the dedication was deferred till 1795, is not stated in any record or memorial of the times. This house continued to be occupied by the church and congregation over which Mr. Hill was settled as minister, till November, 1837, when a new society having been formed under the laws of the State, in connection with the church, and a new house built for their use in a more convenient and eligible locality, they removed to it, abandoning the old house. It continued to be used by the town, as a town house, for town meetings, and occasionally, by other societies and denominations, as a place of worship, until the town house was built in 1848, soon after which, it was sold and removed. It stood upon the top of the hill where the road leading to Brookline leaves the Wilton road. The locality, although at first it appeared pleasant and suitable for a village, proved wholly unfit for such purpose, it being impossible to dig cellars or wells, by- reason of the ledges cropping out too near the surface. The first plot occupied in the town for a graveyard, was in the rear of this house; and after a few years it was abandoned, for the same reason. Some of the dead, originally deposited there, were removed to the burying ground south of the centre of the town; others still rest in their lonely graves. A few monuments, the oldest in town, remain to mark their places of repose.

March meeting, 1796. Joseph Barrett was chosen representative.

March meeting, 1797. Joseph Barrett was chosen representative.

"Voted, To make a present to the Rev. Mr. Ebenezer Hill, of the obligation he gave the selectmen, dated March 13, 1793, for \$105. Voted, To leave the fixing of the burying grounds to the selectmen, provided they can have a sufficient title from Thomas Tarbell, of that burying ground near said Tarbell's house."

June 23d, 1787, sundry orders "To Capt. Wm. Chambers, £5 15s. 1ld.2q., it being for sundries he let the Rev. Mr. Dix have, and also for dining the Rev. Mr. Whitman, and keeping his horse; also for answering Mr. Whitman's order upon the town or selectmen, and for Lt. Parley's rats, that was abated, and for boarding Mr. Dix."

September 4th, 1787. Capt. Wm. Chambers £2 19s. 1d. it being for boarding several ministers, and finding the committee that was chose to place the meeting house, a dinner, and for paying the Rev. Mr. Dix for preaching on fast day."

December 11th, 1787. "Joseph Merriam, for boarding Mr. Jesse Remington, 5s. 0d. 1q."

April 26th, 1788. "Hubbert Russell 7s. paid Mr. Warren, and for boarding Mr. Warren 3 weeks and three days, £1 7s."

June 16th, 1788. "Jonathan Searle for keeping school, £1 13s. 0d. 0q."

June 21st, 1788. Eleazer Fish, "for a pair of steers he turned in to the town, to pay a debt due to Mr. Whitman for preaching, £9 5s."

October-9th, 1788. To Wm. Chambers, "for paying a note to Mr. Jesse Remington, and for paying a debt to Mr. Nahum Sargent, and for keeping Mr. Aiken's horse and Mr. Remington's horse, £5 6s. 6d.

December 5th, 1788. Lt. James Wood, in all, £2 8s. for boarding Mr. Nathan Church," another order, "for boarding Mr. Church, 6s., and for paying him 7s."

February 2d, 1789. Isaac Brown, two orders, in all £2 6s., "for a saddle he let the town have, to pay a debt due Mr. Benjamin Green, for preaching."

February 16th, 1789. William Chambers, 13s., "for drink for the committee, when they vendued the timber for the meeting house."

March 17th, 1790. Order, To pay Jonas Fay 3s. 4d, "for a pound of tea, he let Mrs. Betty Locke have, towards her keeping school in 1788."

March 12th, 1791. Aaron Wheeler, "for his meeting house tax in 1789, 12s. 10d. 3q."

April 28th, 1791. Order to pay Dr. William Barber £2 8s. 9d., "for keeping school in the South District in 1789."

January 31st, 1792. William Eliot, "for his meeting house tax in 1789, 12s. 2d."

Messrs. Eliot and Wheeler were Baptists, and their taxes were abated, pursuant to the order of the town. See page [122].

1793. John Brown, "for two palls, or funeral cloths, £2 8s."

1795. The following persons were paid 12s. each, for bounty, for enlisting as volunteers; Samuel Merriam, Elisha Buss, Ezra Newell, Aaron Wheeler, Jr., Thomas Robbins, Jr., Joseph Merriam, Jr., Capt. James Wood, James Withee, according to the vote of the town. See page [124].

1796. Order "to pay Capt. Joseph Barrett \$4,19, it being so much he paid at Hopkinton court in December, 1796, with his own money, for a lawyer to speak respecting the north road, to our petition, for entering said petition, and for being recognized twice at said courts, and for expenses of myself and horse." It must be admitted, that, for all these items, it was a very moderate bill. This is the first time the federal currency appears in the town's accounts.

November 17th, 1797. "The Selectmen, ordered the Treasurer, to pay S. M. 25 cents *in full*, for killing a crow, the town, by a vote, allowing the same."

A bill for articles furnished for building a school house, by Timothy Dakin, a merchant in the town, the following prices appear, of this date. Board nails, 8s. per m; shingle nails, 2s. 4d. per m; double tens, 6s. for 500 ', a pair of door hinges, 4s. 6d.; a bushel of lime, 2s. 6d.

In December, 1798, eleven persons petitioned the selectmen to call a town meeting, "To take some measures to petition Congress in regard to the land tax," the petitioners "viewing it to be unequal and injurious to the rights of the people." A meeting was held December 13th, 1798, pursuant to this petition, and the subject considered, and Dea. Jotham Webber, John Blodgett, Joseph Tuffts, Dr. Joseph Gray, and Dea. Rogers Weston, were appointed a committee to petition to the Court, &c., for redress of grievances, &c., and the meeting was adjourned four weeks. At the adjournment, "Proceeded to read the report of the committee," &c., and then "Voted, Not to be so much dissatisfied with the land tax, so called, as to petition Congress upon the subject."

Most of the persons appointed on this committee, were leading men in the democratic party in the town. The land tax, one of the measures of John Adams' administration, was, with that party, very unpopular. No doubt the design of this movement was, to encourage and incite opposition to his administration. The report of the committee, which was read, is not found in the records, or on file. The manner in which it was disposed of by the town, at the adjournment of the meeting, shows that the object of the petitioners was not favored by the citizens.

April 5, 1798. Orders. Maj. James Wood, \$4,17 in full, for his "procuring and conveying articles for Mr. John Goddard, such as rum, sugar, raisins, and other necessary articles when he was sick, and for making and carrying a coffin. to his house for said Goddard."

March 9, 1799. "Benjamin Mann, eight dollars in full, for making a piece of road [near] Mrs. Chambers', and for liquor at the vendue of Mary Jefts, and doing writing when the selectmen received a deed of John Smith and for toddy at the time, and for liquors at the

vendue of the town land and pound, and the wall round the graveyard, and assisting at said vendue, and for one cord of wood, delivered at the school house in the centre district, for 1798." One would think that for all this, eight dollars was cheap .enough.

March 20, 1799. James Withee's taxes abated. "The town favored him on account of his losing his barn and rye and hay by fire."

The municipal history is now brought down to the close of the eighteenth century, also to the close of the first half century of the proprietary and corporate existence of the town; within which time, the forest has been subdued, the roads have been made, the mills, meeting house, school houses, and farm houses and barns, have been built, and the town and church, with all their institutions, put into successful operation. In the extracts from the records and comments upon them thus far given, the object has been, to let our fathers, as far as might be, become their own historians; therefore, whatever it was judged would exhibit the characteristics of the people and of the age, and would illustrate their manners, habits, customs, and modes of thought, and way of managing their affairs in church and state, has been freely used for that purpose. The municipal history of the next fifty years will occupy much less space. It is, in itself, less note worthy, less important, and less illustrative of the manners of the people. To pursue it in as full detail as has been given to the preceding period, would occupy space required for other matters, and would swell the book to a size beyond what was contemplated. Besides, it is but fair to leave something for the historian of the next one hundred years. It is a remark worthy of consideration, that those communities are by no means the happiest which furnish the greatest amount of materials for the historian's page.

At a town meeting, November 5, 1804, "Chose Thomas Wilson and Joseph Winship saxtons."

March 12, 1805. Annual meeting. After the choice of moderator, "Then chose Col. James Wood and Mr. Joseph Merriam, a committee to wait upon the Rev. Mr. Eben^r. Hill, in order to open the meeting with prayer. Then Voted, That all the voters should take the east side of the meeting house before they voted, and pass to the other side when they voted, so as to change sides when they carried in a vote." This extraordinary measure indicates that a fierce struggle for party ascendancy was impending. This year, for the first time, a democratic majority was found in the town. The votes for governor were, for Oilman, federalist, 64; for Langdon, republican, 64—a tie. For Senator, J. K. Smith, republican, 64; ,for Frederic French, federalist, 63. For counsellor, Benjamin Pierce, republican, 71; for Phillip Greeley, federalist, 54. "Voted, To add one hundred

dollars to the Rev. Mr. Eben^r. Hill's salary, for this year only." A similar addition of one hundred dollars to his salary was voted in 1807 and in 1808. This custom of inviting the minister to attend and open the annual meetings with prayer was observed many years. It may be justified by the same reasons as the employment of chaplains by legislative bodies.

1809 The law of the state required the towns to make provision for the feeding of the militia on the field, at the regimental musters. It was the custom for the selectmen to make a schedule of the provisions required, and let the furnishing by auction, to the lowest bidder. Several of these schedules are recorded. That of 1809, is copied as a sample. "Provisions for the soldiers, at the muster at Temple, On Oct. the 6, 1809, Viz: One hundred weight of good beef, to be well cooked, that is, either roasted or baked; one bushel of good wheat, made into good bread, and one bushel of good rye, made into good bread; twenty five weight of good cheese; five gallons of good West India Rum; five pounds of good lofe sugar; one barrel of good new cider, all to be at the mustering field, at Temple, by the time that the battalions meet on Friday, the 6th day of Oct., 1809,"bid off by Josiah Russell, at \$24,50. Well does the writer, though then but a lad, remember, on the gathering of the companies around the cart, upon the parade ground, getting a generous slice of the beef and bread, and a drink of the cider, and probably of the rum, for then it was thought to be good for every body, old or young. A boy's appetite, sharpened by a walk of some seven or eight miles, on a raw October morning, would have made an indifferent piece of beef and bread an acceptable oblation to the god of hunger, if such god there be; but he is ready to testify, even after the lapse of so many years, that in this instance, the beef and the bread fully came up to and answered the requirements of the schedule.

September 26, 1815. The town "Voted, To make up to the soldiers who volunteered [for the defence of Portsmouth] their wages to \$15 a month."

1816 The small pox appeared in the family of Silas Lawrence. The town was at once in commotion. Several town meetings were held, in reference to that subject. The first was January 29th, at which "Chose a committee of five men, all to consist of such men as have had the small pox, to advise with the selectmen on means to be taken to prevent the further spreading of the small pox. Chose Jedediah Felton, Lt.Joses Bucknam, Ezra Merriam, Joseph Tuffts and Dea. Jotham Webber. Voted, That the selectmen give leave that two or more persons, not exceeding five, who have had the kine pox and have been exposed to taking the small pox, may be enoculated with the small pox, provided that Mr.

Willard Lawrence is willing to have the enoculated persons go and remain in his new house until they have gone through [the] operation, at their own expense." A second meeting was called, February 5, at which it was "Voted, To send for Dr Spaulding, of Amherst, forthwith, to examine Ira Lawrence and give his opinion whether he had the kine pox or small pox. Then Voted, The small pox committee cleanse the Wid. Abigail Richardson's house, and keep it for the purpose of putting in any persons who, in the judgment of said committee, hath simptoms of the small pox, until it be known whether they be likely to have the small pox or not. Then Voted, To have two more added to the small pox committee, and chose Abel Adams and Henry Isaacs." It was the custom then, on the appearance of any contagious disease in a town, for the selectmen to cause the highways leading by the house in which the disease was found, to be closed against all passing, by fences across the same, and to cause to be exhibited at the fences a signal, usually a red flag, as a warning to avoid the place. Such precautions were taken in the present instance, that the disease did not spread beyond the family in which it appeared. Silas Lawrence died of the disease; also his mother, an aged lady. His son, in whom the disease first appeared, recovered. The deceased were buried upon Mr. Lawrence's farm, as interments of persons who died of contagious diseases, were not then permitted in the public burying grounds. The funeral services were attended by the Rev. Mr. Miles of Temple, the only clergyman in the vicinity who was qualified, by having had the small pox, to officiate on such occasions.

January 19th, 1819. In the warrant was an article, "To see if the town will vote that each religious society in said town of Mason, shall have the use of the public meeting house their proportion of Sabbath days, and also at other times." The result of the vote on this article is, "Voted, Not to give the Baptist Society their right in Mason meeting house." At the annual March meeting, the next year, was an article " To see if the town will rectify a mistake or erroneous vote, by said town, January 18th, 1819," reciting the vote as thus recorded. The town "Voted, To rectify the mistake or erroneous vote, and "instead thereof, that we are willing that they should, have their right in said house."

How they could claim any right, in a house which they had refused to aid in building, and also, to aid in repairing is a problem not easily solved upon any principles that should govern the conduct of men. The more sedate and substantial men of that society were not in favor of this movement. But there are, in every community, some unprofitable persons, whose moving principle of action is, to make mischief and disturbance. It is only in scenes of confusion and tumult, that they can shine. A state of peace and quiet, is for them, a state of insignificance. Although the town had voted that, "they were willing the Baptists should have their right," still, nothing further was done. They never appeared to claim it. There is no evidence that Elder Eliot or the leading men in his society took any interest or share in these movements, or that he had any desire to disturb his old neighbors and friends in the enjoyment of their rights. They never made any claim to the use of the house, or to interfere with its occupation. The effect intended was produced. The mischief was done. The society, which, under the laws of the state, had rightfully occupied the house, at the time it was built, and which no subsequent laws had in any manner deprived of that right, finding, from this and subsequent movements in the same direction, that their peace and quiet were subject to constant interruption, withdrew from the house, and built one for their own accommodation, after a fruitless effort, in accordance with a vote of the town, to secure to themselves the peaceful and undisturbed occupation of the house, in pursuance of which vote they expended a large sum of money in repairing it; and thus the connection between the Congregational denomination and the town, which had existed from the earliest period of its history, was severed, and each religious denomination was left to manage its own affairs in its own way.

March 16, 1820. "Sarah Smith's clothing was allowed to be equal to what it was when Mr. Abraham Robbins took her to keep on March 19, 1819." The articles are thus minutely described: "Gowns, 1 good silk one, 5 of calico, 1 cambric, 2 gingham, and 1 woolen, Petticoats, 2 of wool, 1 cotton, 1 linen, 1 muslin, 1 tow; one good loose coat, 1 green ditto, middling good; six good shawls, 49 yds. of woolen cloth for another, and 1 linen sheet, two good cotton sheets, two calico aprons and two pairs of shoes that are not very good." One would think this was a pretty good supply of clothing for a town

pauper. This individual had been maintained by the town for many years, and continued to be a town charge until she died, April 19, 1754, at the age of ninety six years.

March, 1820. An order "to pay Benjamin Weatherbee, Samuel Wardsworth, Ira Hall, Joseph Saunders, Jr., Josiah Elliot, Jr., Joseph Woods, Jr., and Elijah Knapp, their bounty for enlisting," &c., in 1814. Also, a subsequent order in favor of Asa Merriam, John Boynton, Hubbard Amsden, and Elias Elliot, Jr., drafted to go to Portsmouth in 1814.

March meeting, 1821. This was in politics the "era of good feelings," indicated by the votes for governor, which were, for Samuel Bell 16, Josiah Butler 1, David L. Morrill 9, Horace Sawtell 3, Joel Tarbell 1, John Kimball 1; D. Stewart, county treasurer, 71; Isaac Brooks, register, 72; for revising the constitution, yeas 0, nays 71. The people did not care a fig for the governor, but the keeping of the money and of records of deeds, were matters of consequence, and these officers got a full vote. Nor would they have the constitution meddled with. At this meeting, a vote was passed to prohibit all horses, neat cattle, sheep and swine from going at large in the highways, and from that time the public highways have ceased to be used as pastures.

This year, John Blodgett, Esq., declined a re-election to the office of town clerk. He was first elected to this office in 1799, and continued in office, with few exceptions, till the present year, having served nineteen years in all. He also served as chairman of the board of selectmen during most of the same period, and as such, was charged with the duties of town treasurer, and had the oversight of the town's expenditures. He was a very careful, prudent and economical manager of the affairs of the town, and deserved well of the community, for his labors and cares in office. A vote of thanks, for his long and faithful services as an officer of the town, was offered by the Rev. Mr. Hill, and unanimously passed. His reply is recorded as follows: "My friends, accept my grateful acknowledgments for the repeated respects you have shown me for many years. May it please the Supreme Ruler to cause his blessing to rest upon this town, that the olive branch of peace may be planted and nourished in every breast; may it become like Aaron's rod, ever budding, ever blossoming, ever bringing forth the fruits of brotherly

love and Christian charity, to the latest generations." He soon after removed from the town and resided in Dunstable or Tyngsborough, in Massachusetts, to the close of his life. He died in extreme old age, having arrived to nearly if not quite one hundred years of age.

The selectmen of this year seem to have entertained and acted upon the notion, that when a town takes a pauper to maintain, they take him *cum onere*, with all his liabilities, and become liable therefor, in the same manner as a husband is liable for the debts of his wife contracted before marriage. April 11, 1826, is recorded an "Order to pay Aaron Warren, Esq., \$3,71, in full, for a note and account he had against Elijah Morse, the town's Poor." Also, May 11, an "Order to pay Amos Herrick \$5,93, in full, for a note and account he had against Elijah Morse in favor of Arrington Gibson, *given to said Gibson previous to said Morse throwing himself upon the town.*"

July 10, 1826. A meeting was called "To see if the town will let the Baptists have the use of the meeting house a proportion of the time, according to their polls and estates, or to see what other measures the town will take to satisfy the Baptists with regard to their claims on said house." The town "Voted, To pass over the article."

At the annual meeting, March, 1832, the town voted to purchase a farm, on which to support the poor, and chose a committee for that purpose, consisting of Timothy Wheeler, Jonathan Bachelder, Jr., Elisha Barrett, James Taft and John Stevens. This committee was authorized to purchase stock, farming utensils, &c., and to employ a person to take the charge thereof. The committee purchased the farm formerly owned by Zaccheus Barrett, and then owned by his son, Capt. James Barrett, being lot No. 6, range 5, on the plan. See page [32]. By the report of the committee appointed to settle with the selectmen and treasurer, dated March 10, 1832, it appears that the cost of the poor farm, including, probably, repairs of and additions to the buildings, was \$2500, and that of the stock, utensils, furniture, and improvements, was \$863. This farm has been used for the purposes intended to the present time, and has furnished a comfortable home for many of

the aged and destitute, who had outlived their friends and means of support as well as for many others, dependent, from various causes, on public charity.

April 18, 1830. A meeting was called, "To see if the town will vote that each religious denomination in said town, may occupy the public meeting house in said town, their due proportion of Sabbaths and other times, in proportion to their polls and estates." The vote was in the negative.

May 31, 1830. A meeting was called, "To see if the town will raise a sum of money to repair the meeting house." At this meeting, the town voted to give the use of the house to the Congregational church and society, -for twenty years, provided they would keep it in good repair, and let the town have the use of it for a town house, and let those who have private property in said house, have it to worship in when the Congregational church and society are not using it. The selectmen were a committee to carry the vote into effect, and to take a sufficient bond, &c. That church and society repaired the house, and occupied it for some time, but it is believed that, owing to some disagreement about the terms of the bond, none was given.

At the annual meeting, March, 1832, the town voted to pass over the article to raise the salary of the Rev. Mr. Hill but at a meeting called for that purpose, March 31, the salary was voted. A meeting was called, April 21, "To see if the town would dismiss the Rev. Eben^r. Hill from being minister of said town. The vote was in the negative." December 19th, 1835. " Voted, To comply with the request of the Rev. Ebenezer Hill, to dissolve the civil contract between him and the town of Mason, as minister of said town, and it is on our part dissolved, after paying his salary, to the month of March next. Voted, The thanks of the town be given to the Rev. Ebenezer Hill, for his ministerial labors, for the space of forty five years." Upon the record is entered the consent of Mr. Hill to this arrangement, as follows: "Whereas, the town of Mason, agreeably to my request, have by their vote in legal town meeting, consented on their part, that the civil contract existing between the town and me as their minister, should be dissolved, as in said vote is expressed, which contract was formed in the year 1790, I hereby express my consent on

my part, that said contract be dissolved in accordance with the vote just passed, and I do accordingly relinquish all claim for salary, from the town, after the first of March next. Mason, December 19th, 1835."

November, 1840. Nathaniel Shattuck, Esq., was chosen a committee to "examine, and report whether any society or individuals were responsible to keep the town house in repair, and if none, to proceed to repair the house, and chose Nathaniel Shattuck, Josiah Russell and Samuel Smith a committee for that purpose." This was the old meeting house. April, 1843. "Voted, to instruct the Selectmen to repair the town house, in a proper manner, and also to look after those who have in any way injured the house, and prosecute if they think proper and necessary."

Annual meeting, 1848. Article 14th. "To see if the town will sell or repair the meeting house, or do anything in relation to the same. Voted, to choose a committee of five, to dispose of the old meeting house. Chose Jonathan Russell, Jona. Bachelder, Oliver H. Pratt, Willis Johnson, Charles Scripture and Orlando W. Badger. Voted, To instruct the committee to proceed legally in disposing of the house. Voted, That the selectmen call a town meeting to hear a report of said committee, when said committee is ready to make their report."

The old meeting house, being no longer occupied for public worship by any society, was fast falling into decay. It was exposed to depredations, the windows were broken, the doors were often found open, exposing the building to the effects of storms. The location was unsuitable and inconvenient for town meetings to be held there, and therefore it was concluded to dispose of the old house, and build a town house.

May 23d, 1848. A meeting was called, to hear the report of the committee, to see if the town would build a town house, to fix its location, and to raise money to build, or purchase a town house. At the meeting, Voted, "To accept the report of the committee. Voted, To build a town house. Voted, To locate it at the centre of Mason. Voted, To raise \$1000 to build the house. Voted, To appropriate the balance of the sale of the old

meeting house, for the building of the town house. Voted, That the expense is not to exceed \$1200. Chose Jonathan Bachelder, Charles Scripture, Willis Johnson, Asher Peabody and Samuel Smith, Jr., a committee for building the town house." The town house was so far completed, that a town meeting was held in it, November 7th, 1848.

The frame of the old meeting house, was used and worked up into the frame of the saw and grist mill, built by Mason mill company, near the centre of the town.

Thus the town is left without a minister, or a meeting house; and such is the change in the habits, views and feelings, that, as a town, they will probably dispense with these once useful institutions, for all time. There is to be no more a servant of religion, in whom all feel a common interest; no more a place where all can assemble on days of public worship, and meet as townsmen, on common ground, but the meeting houses are matters of private interest, and although they are in numbers much multiplied, it may well be doubted, whether there is in the town, more genuine piety and veneration for religion, than in those days, when all assembled in one place, and listened to the teachings of the town's minister.

1856 This year will be remembered in the annals of the town, for the very liberal donation to the town, of the sum of ten thousand dollars, made by the Hon. John Boynton of Templeton, Mass., to be invested in stock or other good securities, and the interest to be applied, forever, for the benefit of the common schools in the town. This gentleman is a native of Mason. His father, the late Jeremiah Boynton, became a resident of the town as early as 1789, and continued to be an inhabitant till his decease, October 27, 1839. He was a farmer, a worthy, industrious man, a good citizen, and much respected and esteemed. The liberal donor of this fund, was his eldest son. Having retired from active business with an ample fortune, acquired by industry, economy, and a successful management of his affairs, he has not forgotten the place of his nativity; nor has he left it for the hand of an executor to- carry into effect his generous design; but while in full health, and vigor of body and mind, has himself seen to the execution of his purpose, and to securing, in a proper form, the efficiency and permanency of the aid thereby given to

the great cause of the education, for all coming time, of the children of this, his native town.

The object of his bounty is the common schools, to which he was indebted for all the means of education by himself enjoyed in early life; and to which our common country is more deeply indebted for its intelligence and for the preservation of its liberties and free government, than to all other means of education, or institutions of learning. His purpose to make this endowment, he made known to some of his friends, inhabitants of the town, in the summer of 1856. Desirous, on the one hand, to make the provisions of the endowment such, that its benefits should be sacredly secured to its object, the education of every child in town, and at the same time to place it under such provisions and safeguards, that it should never become a source of contention or party strife, after consultation with a committee of the citizens, he submitted, for the consideration of the town, a proposition to make the endowment under certain restrictions and limitations, which, with the action of the town, appears in the following extract from the records of the doings of a town meeting, called for that purpose:

At a legal town meeting, holden September 17th, 1856, "Article 2d, it was Voted, To receive of John Boynton, Esq., of Templeton, Mass., the sum of ten thousand dollars in money, or in securities for the payment of money, upon the following conditions, viz: That the same shall forever be kept upon interest, and shall forever be known as 'The Boynton Common School Fund,' and that the interest or income thereof shall annually forever be applied by said town of Mason, to the support of district or public schools in said town, in proportion to the number of scholars in such districts or schools, between the ages of five and fifteen years. And whenever the said town shall fail so to apply the interest or income of said money annually, in addition to the sum that shall be required to be raised by law by said town, for the support of district or public schools, the said town shall repay the same sum of ten thousand dollars to the said John Boynton, his executors, administrators, or assigns.

"Voted, To choose a committee of three to receive the said sum of ten thousand dollars in money or securities for the payment of money, of said John Boynton, Esq., and also to authorize said committee, for and in behalf of said town, to execute an agreement, that the said town of Mason shall repay the said sum of ten thousand dollars, to the said Boynton, his executors, administrators, or assigns, whenever the town of Mason shall fail to apply the interest or income of said sum of ten thousand dollars, in addition to the sum that shall be required by law to be raised by said town, for the support of district or public schools in said town of Mason, and to divide the said income or interest annually between the several districts or public schools in said town, in proportion to the number of scholars belonging to said districts or public schools, between the ages of five and fifteen years.

"Voted, That the aforesaid committee consist of Doctor Thomas H. Marshall, Jonathan Russell, 2d, and Charles Scripture.

"Voted, To choose a committee to petition the legislature, for an act to authorize the town of Mason, to choose five trustees, who shall, under the direction of the town, have the care of the Boynton Common School Fund, and to see that the same is safely invested, and upon interest.

"Chose Dr. Thomas H. Marshall, Jonathan Russell, 2d, and Charles Scripture for that committee."

On application to the legislature, an act was passed, of which the following is a copy:

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

AN ACT authorizing the town of Mason to elect trustees of the
Boynton Common School Fund.

Whereas, John Boynton, Esquire, of Templeton, in the State of Massachusetts, has given to the town of Mason, the sum of ten thousand dollars, in trust, the income of which is to be appropriated for the maintenance of common schools in said town of Mason; and, whereas, by the provisions of the grant, the said grant is to be under the control of five trustees, to be elected by said town of Mason; therefore,

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

Section 1. That said town of Mason shall, on the second Tuesday of March, A. D. 1858, choose, by ballot and by a major vote, five trustees, to be called Trustees of the Boynton Common School Fund, one of whom shall hold the office for one year, another for two years, another for three years, another for four years, and the other for five years, and till some other person is chosen and qualified instead of each; the term of office of each to be determined by lot at their first meeting, and a record thereof made in the office of the town clerk of said town. One such trustee shall be chosen annually, at the annual meeting of said town, after said second Tuesday of March, A. D. 1858, by ballot, and by a major vote, to fill the vacancy which will annually occur by the expiration of the term of office of one of the incumbents.

Section 2. The said trustees shall have the entire control and management of the Boynton Common School Fund, and shall invest the same in a safe and prudent manner, and shall annually pay to the treasurer of said town of Mason, in the month of January, the income of said fund, to be divided among the several districts or common schools in said town, in proportion to the number of scholars, between the ages of five and fifteen years, in said districts or schools.

Section 3. The trustees shall, at each annual meeting of said town, make a report of the state of the fund, and the income of the same; and the town may require of them bonds for the faithful discharge of the duties of the office.

Section 4. In case of the death or resignation of either of the trustees, or in case either of them, by sickness or otherwise, be disqualified for the duties of the office, they may, at the annual or at a special meeting called for that purpose, elect another person for the unexpired term.

Approved, June 26, 1857.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTROVERSIES WITH THE REV. JONATHAN SEARLE.

No document, record, or entry, has been found, which shows at what time the troubles and misunderstandings between the Rev. Jonathan Searle and his church and people, were first manifested; nor are the grounds of the controversy and difficulties anywhere clearly set forth. They are to be gathered rather by inference, than from any satisfactory or positive statement. The records of the church, during the time of the controversy, are exceedingly meagre, and contain very little information upon the subject. The town records, however, contain entries which give some insight into the matter. Probably there is no document or living memory remaining, which can throw any light upon such parts of the transactions as are not, by the entries in the town records, sufficiently set forth to be understood. It will be recollected that the salary voted to him on his settlement, was £60 lawful, a year, to be increased at the end of ten years to £60 13s. 4d. He was ordained, October 14, 1772. A town meeting was called, January 5, 1779. Among other articles was one for inquiring "into the conduct of the Rev. Jonathan Searle, in his not giving receipts in full for the money he hath received for his yearly salary, &c., and for increase of his salary." The record proceeds as follows: "Mr. Searle being present, Voted, That the moderator ask him whether he would discharge the town of his salary, if said town would pay him up the nominal sum from the first settlement, &c., and trust the town's generosity for an addition to said salary; the question being asked by the moderator, his answer was in the affirmative. The moderator called on the constables to make a settlement with Mr. Searle; the said constables readily complied with the terms; the moderator at the same time wrote a receipt and read it to Mr. Searle, and asked him whether he would sign such a one. His answer was that he would, or any one that the town should require. The town then proceeded to get the money that was his due as salary from the first of his settlement in said town, until the 14th day of October, 1778, and pay it to him. Said money being offered to Mr. Searle by the selectmen, requiring him to sign said receipt, he utterly refused to sign said receipt, or a similar one. For which reason, the town voted to assess the last year's salary, and order it into the

treasurer's hands, there to remain until it should be ordered otherwise. By said town, Voted, That Lt. Samuel Brown take the money and make a lawful tender to Mr. Searle, of the whole of his salary that yet remains unpaid from the first of his settlement in said town, until the 14th day of October, 1778, and require him to sign such a receipt as was approved by said town." Then adjourned to the 8th instant. At the adjournment, "Voted, To choose a committee to desire the Rev. Jonathan Searle to attend the meeting by adjournment, in order for him to make some proposals to the town, on what terms he would settle with the town, and if he refused to come, for him to send in writing, by said committee, on what terms he would settle." Dea. Amos Dakin and Lts. Samuel and Isaac Brown, were the committee. The town, after transacting some other business, adjourned to the 12th of January. At the adjournment, "After hearing the Rev. Jonathan Searle's letter directed to the moderator read, Voted, That it was not an acceptable answer, according to the town's request. Voted, To choose a committee to reason with Searle and make a report to the town." The committee were Joseph Barrett, Joseph Merriam, Dea. N. Hall, William Eliot and David Blodgett. Adjourned to the 20th instant. At adjournment, "Voted, Not to make any addition to the Rev. Jonathan Searle's salary, for the time being." The authority of the committee was continued, and they were directed to report at the next meeting. Adjourned to February 9. It was at the adjournment, "Voted, That the Rev. Jonathan Searle's conduct hath been dissatisfactory to the town, with regard to what hath been acted on his part, relative to his falling from his first agreement, as well as at other meetings held after adjournment." "Voted, That the town call upon the Church of Christ in this place to desire the Rev. Jonathan Searle to join in a mutual council, and have all matters of aggrievance subsisting between Mr. Searle and this people brought before said council for their wise determination. Voted, That the town and church are connected together in paying the cost of said council. Capt. Joseph Barrett, Dea. Nathan Hall, and Mr. Edmund Tarbell, each entered their dissent against the proceedings of this meeting, so far as what is comprehended in the second vote of said meeting."

At the annual meeting, March 8th, 1779. The seventh article was, " To see if the town will pay the Rev. Jonathan Searle his salary, for the year 1778." On this article, the town

"Voted, To pay the salary of the Rev. Jonathan Searle, provided he give a receipt in full, &c."

At a meeting called March 30th, 1779. " Voted, To pass over the article about the Rev. Jonathan Searle."

At a meeting called April 22d, 1779. "Article 2d. To see what method the town will pursue, for a settlement with the Rev. Jonathan Searle, and if a settlement cannot be effected, to see if the town will vote him a dismissal, or discontinue him as our minister." At the meeting, a committee was appointed to request the attendance of the Rev. Jonathan Searle. An addition of .£30 was voted to the nominal sum of his salary for 1778, "provided, he give such a receipt, as he proffered to the town in January last." "Voted, Not satisfied with his conduct, in not securing the town for the money paid by the constables for his salary, with other things." William Chambers, Joseph Merriam and. Abijah Alien were appointed a committee, "to offer him the nominal gum, and interest, and the addition above voted, and to make a legal tender, and demand a receipt in full from his first settlement." Adjourned to Friday. At the adjournment, "Voted, That the committee have a record made of the tender to the Rev. Jonathan Searle, according to law," and adjourned.

July 6th, 1779. A meeting was called, "To see if the town will join with the church in a council," &c. " The motion being moved by the Rev. Daniel Emerson, whether the town would leave it to a reference, previous to other matters being left to a council respecting negligence of pay, or fall of money being made up, or any part thereof, to the Rev. Jonathan Searle; it passed in the negative," and then the meeting was adjourned to July 7th; and at that meeting "Voted, To concur with the vote of the church of Christ in this town, on the 6th of July, instant, for dismissing the Rev. Jonathan Searle from his pastoral relation in this town. Voted, The meeting house doors be kept shut up, during the town's pleasure. Voted, The selectmen have power to open and shut the meeting house doors. Chose a committee to make a tender to the Rev. Jonathan Searle, &c."

A meeting was called, August 17th, 1779. Among other matters, was this article, "To see if the town will join with the church to make the following proposal to the Rev. Jonathan Searle; to leave it to a mutual council, to determine, whether Mr. Searle is *constitutionally* dismissed from his pastoral relations in this place, and if the council result that he is not dismissed, then, would have the council take under consideration, the difficulties subsisting between the parties; the advice of the council to be accepted by the parties." At the meeting, "Voted, To concur with the proposals of the church, to the Rev. Jonathan Searle, and on Mr. Searle's compliance therewith, to leave all matters now subsisting between said parties, to a mutual ecclesiastical council; the town being at the cost of said council." Adjourned to the 31st. "Chose Benjamin Mann, Joseph Merriam and Abijah Allen a committee to provide for the ecclesiastical council to sit in October, 1779. Chose David Blodgett, Wm. Chambers, Thomas Tarbell, Timothy Wheeler and Reuben Barrett, a committee to receive complaints from the Rev. Mr. Searle, against the town, and also to prepare complaints against the said Rev. Mr. Searle, and also, bring them before the council." The meeting was adjourned to the fifth and to the sixth of October; at which time, Abijah Allen and Joseph Merriam were added "to the committee, for carrying on the complaints against the Rev. Jonathan Searle, before the council." Adjourned to the seventh and to the eighth. "Voted, That the committee call on the Rev. Mr. Searle, to make out the negligence of pay, and that the committee be ready to settle with him. Voted, That the present committee of the town be empowered, in behalf of said town, to leave the substance matter of Mr. Searle's complaint against the town, to reference, and that Esq. Abbott's method be adhered to;" and adjourned to one o'clock. Then "Voted and agreed to the form of an agreement, between Mr. Searle and the town of Mason, drawn by the Rev. Mr. Farrar." Adjourned to the 9th. Then "Voted, Not to allow any sum of money, for the negligence of pay to Mr. Searle, from his first settlement, to October 14th, 1777. Voted, To make a grant of money to Mr. Searle. Voted, To open the meeting house doors," and adjourned to Monday, October 25th; then adjourned to the 26th; then "Voted, To accept of Mr. Searle's acknowledgment of his fault, to the town as satisfactory," and then after accepting some roads the meeting was dissolved.

The following entries in the record are in the hand writing of Mr. Searle, and were signed by him:

"Mason, Oct'r 9th, 1779. This day received of the town of Mason, by the hand of the selectmen, one hundred and twenty pounds, L. money, in full of all my dues and demands of every name and nature whatsoever, from the first day of my settlement with said town up to this day. Received per me,

JONATHAN SEARLE.

"Attest: DAVID BLODGETT.
 SAM'L BROWN."

"Mason, Oct'r 26, 1779. That whereas, there was a civil contract effected between the town of Mason and myself, on the 14th of Oct'r, 1772, as to my ministerial support, so long as I should remain their Gospel minister, this is a full and final cancel, on my part, of said contract ', and in testimony of this my free act, I hereunto set my hand.

JONATHAN SEARLE.

"Attest: DAVID BLODGETT.
 SAMUEL BROWN."

Thus this town meeting, commenced August 17, and continued by adjournment, to nine different subsequent days, was concluded. The long battle was fought, and the town won. Undoubtedly, on the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th days of October, there was a council in session; but as the church records, then in the hands of Mr. Searle, are silent on the subject, no means remain of determining who composed the council, or what were the articles of complaint on the part of the church or of the town against him, or on his part against them. One would suppose, judging from the entries in the book above recited, that all connection between the town and Mr. Searle was ended, and that there would be no more controversy between them. But it was not so, as will presently appear. It is not unfrequently the case, that the expenses of a controversy very much exceed the amount of

the sum in dispute. So it was in this case. The sum paid by the town to Mr. Searle was £120, being two years' salary. The expenses paid, by the town for entertaining the council were £327 19s., paid as follows: to William Chambers, £199 10s.; Abijah Allen, £66 18s.; Samuel Abbott, £116s.; Ephraim Sartell, £14: 12s.; Lieut. Isaac Brown, £16; Jacob Blodgett, £8 8s.; Jonathan Searle, £23 13., in all, \$1092,07, a pretty round bill for entertaining some half a dozen of the clergy and attendant lay delegates, one week. Probably the depreciation of the currency was an element which had something to do with the magnitude of this bill, as it was undoubtedly the foundation, and if not the only origin, one of the sources of the difficulty. But as no distinction is made as to the currency in which the £120 was paid to Mr. Searle, and that in which the £327 19s. was paid for entertaining the council, the matter is left somewhat in the dark. Probably he was paid in a currency equal to gold and silver, and the bills for the expenses, were paid in the depreciated currency.

April 10, 1780. At a town meeting, Mr. Searle again appears. The fourth article was, "To see if the town will concur with the church and receive the Rev. Jonathan Searle as their minister, according to an agreement between him and the church." The town "Voted, To accept the first article of the agreement that was formed between the church and the Rev. Jonathan Searle, October 26, 1779, which is as follows: We agree that there shall be no compulsion about the ministerial support, every one in church and town shall be left at liberty to contribute what sum he pleases, or none at all. This article proposed by Mr. Searle. Voted, To receive Mr. Searle upon the above mentioned agreement." How, then, stood the case? He had, by his agreement of October 26, discharged the town from the contract, and by the vote of April 10, to which he was a party, had agreed that he should have no claim for support on church or town, except the voluntary contributions of his friends. Yet it seems he continued to make claims of the town, for at the meeting, October 31, on an article on this subject, the town "Voted, That it is the mind of the town that the Rev. Jonathan Searle discharge the town from October 14, 1779, to October 14, 1780, of any demands he hath or may have against the town."

December 6, 1780. "Voted, To accept of a discharge that the Rev. Jonathan Searle wrote and sent to the town, which is as follows: Mason, Dec. 6, 1780. Know all men by these presents, that I, Jonathan Searle, for and in consideration of what my friends, in and out of town, have done for me in the course of the year past, do fully discharge the town of Mason from all legal demands in future, respecting my ministerial support the last year, beginning Oct. the 14, 1779, and ending Oct. 14, 1780, excepting what is due to me from said town on special obligation, either of note or bond, which is not and cannot be supposed to be included in this discharge. As witness my hand,

JONATHAN SEARLE.

"Voted, Not to pay the Rev. Jonathan Searle the note he has against the town, at present. Voted, To reconsider the vote not to pay the Rev. Jonathan Searle his note, &c., and Voted, To pay it, and to make the money as good as when the note was given, and appointed a committee to go to him and pay him."

January 18, 1781. The second article was, "To hear the report of the committee, &c., to wait on Mr. Searle to see whether he would take the money due him upon his note given in October, 1779, and if, on hearing the report, they find he hath not complied with the request, then, 3dly. To see if they will choose a committee to make a lawful tender. 4thly. To see if the town will make any enquiry into Mr. Searle's conduct in breaking over the result of council respecting that part of the advice of the venerable council, which was for him to give up all his demands upon the town for his ministerial. support, up to the 14th day of October, 1778, except the nominal sum, and likewise, in breaking over the agreement he voluntarily made with the town, in compliance with the result of council, and likewise said he would give up all but the nominal sum, to October 14, 1778," &c. At the meeting, "Voted, Not to make the tender. Voted, Not to make the Inquiry. Voted, To reconsider the vote not to make the tender. Voted, To make a tender, and chose a, committee for that purpose, and dissolved."

March 12, 1781. "Voted, To order the selectmen to take the invoice of the Rev. Jonathan Searle's real and personal estate, and tax him to the Continental, State and War tax accordingly."

April 11, 1781. At a town meeting, on an article to that purport, the town "Voted, To own the Rev. Jonathan Searle to be their minister. The persons whose names are underwritten entered their dissent against the Rev. Jonathan Searle being any longer their minister: Wm. Eliot, Jonas Fay, Jonathan Foster, Jr., Andrew Eliot, Silas Bullard, Abijah Allen, Nathan Whipple, Enosh Lawrence, Joseph Lowell, Jonathan Chandler, John Adams, John Lawrence, Joseph Ball, Thomas Blood, Amos Dakin, David Blodgett, Zaccheus Davis, Simon Ames, Thomas Robbins, Oliver Scripture, Edmund Adams, Stevens Lawrence."

June 21, 1781. "Voted, Not to concur with the church in their vote passed 4th of May last, to dismiss the Rev. Jonathan Searle from his pastoral relation to said church."

August 14, 1781. The second article was, "To see if the town would concur with the church in their vote to dismiss Mr. Searle, 4th of May last." It was "Voted, To concur. Voted, To hire preaching, and to raise £20, silver, for this purpose." Adjourned to the 21st of August. Then "Voted, To reconsider the vote to hire preaching, and adjourned to the 28th. Then Voted, To hire preaching, and to raise £20, hard money. Voted, To leave it to Mr. Abijah Allen to pay or not, if he pleases, and chose Deacon Hall, Joseph Merriam and Ens. John Wood, committee to hire preaching. "

March 11, 1782. "Voted, To direct the selectmen to apply to Mr. Jonathan Searle, for a settlement of a note that he has against the town, said note to be liquidated by the scale to balance his taxes."

August 28, 1782. The seventh article was, "To see what the town will do with regard to making out a settlement with Mr. Searle, as he is advised to leave the matter to the generosity of the town." "Voted, To make out legal settlement with Mr. Searle as soon as

may be, and chose as a committee, Benj, Mann, Wm. Eliot and Joseph Merriam, for the purpose."

February 20th, 1783. At a meeting called for that purpose, Voted, That if Mr. Searle will settle a note he has against the town, and take the money according to the scale of depreciation of this state, that for the sake of peace, the town will abate his rates for the year 1781. Chose a committee to make the settlement, James Withee, Benjamin Mann, Esq. and Wm. Eliot. It was further Voted, That if he would not accept the proposition, the town would leave it to men," &c.

Annual March meeting, 1785. "Article 5th. To see if the town will desire the church to call upon Mr. Jonathan Searle, in an ecclesiastical manner, to make satisfaction for words he has spoken, which is thought to be a scandal upon said town and church; and be at the cost of it, should it end in advice of council." The vote was in the negative.

September 4th, 1787. "Voted, To leave the complaint which Jonathan Searle, Esq., exhibited against the church and people, &c., for neglecting to pay him for his support in 1779, together with a bond and order he had against the town, to arbitration; that the Rev. Mr. Payson, of Rindge, be one of the arbitrators, and act as chairman; and chose Joseph Merriam, Dea. Amos Dakin, Benjamin Mann, Esq., Hubbert Russell and Joseph Barrett, a committee to. agree with Jonathan Searle, Esq., in choosing the other two arbitrators, and to conduct the defence before the arbitration."

January 1st, 1788. "Voted, To raise sixty pounds, to pay Jonathan Searle, Esq., his due, by the award of arbitrators. Voted, To make the rate to pay Jonathan Searle, Esq., in two columns."

Thus," a controversy which lasted as long as the Trojan war, and which exhibited about as many vicissitudes, as did that memorable contest, was brought to a close. All that can now be known of the merits and different aspects of the controversy, has been above exhibited; and it is left for the candid minds of readers, to draw their own conclusions.

Soon after these difficulties arose, Mr. Searle ceased to preach. He owned a valuable real estate in the town, o which he continued to reside, till the close of his life. He was commissioned as a justice of the peace, and acted in that capacity many years. He took an active part in the building of the meeting house, and in the settlement of his successor as has already appeared. He was frequently employed in matters of town business, but from some time near the close of the last century, he, in a great measure, withdrew from all active concerns in business affairs, and devoted himself almost entirely, to agricultural pursuits. He died, December 7th, 1812, aged sixty eight years.