

---EARLY HISTORY OF DURHAM, STRAFFORD COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE---

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VARIOUS SOURCES Including But Not Limited To:  
History of Strafford County NH and Representative Citizens by John Scales, Editor, Dover Daily Democrat, Richmond Arnold Publishing Co., Chicago IL, 1914

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From: Gazetteer of the state of New Hampshire, by Eliphalet Merrill, Exeter, C. Norris & Co., 1817 [Excerpts]

#### DURHAM

A township in Strafford county, lying on Oyster river at the junction with the Piscataqua. It contains a population of 1449 and is bounded on Madbury S.... on Lee, N., ..... on Newmarket S., ... The N.H. turnpike from Portsmouth to Concord passes through this town.

The first settled minister in Durham was the Rev. Hugh Adams, who was ordained in 1711, and dismissed in 1739. The Rev. Nicholas Gilman, Hugh Adams and Curtis Coe have been his successors, all of them congregationalists. The compact part of the town, near the falls contains a handsome meeting-house, 37 dwelling-houses and 7 stores and small shops. In this town resided Maj. Gen. Sullivan and Col. Adams of the revolutionary army., Hon. George Frost and Ebenezer Thompson were also citizens of DURHAM. The annual average number of deaths in this place for many years past has been computed at less than 15. In DURHAM is a situation that remarkable rock weighing 60 or 70 tons and lying so exactly poised on another rock as easily to be moved with one hand.

DURHAM was included in Hilton's patent which was granted in the year 1630. In September 1675 the Indians made an attack at Oyster River, then a part of Dover, and now constituting DURHAM. They burned two houses, killed several men, and carried away two captives. Two days after this attack they made another, destroyed several houses and killed two persons.... [more info found here: <http://archive.org/stream/gazetteerofsta00merr/page/122/mode/2up> ]

The family of Col. John Davis of this town (who died at the age of 88) were equally remarkable for longevity and superior stature. Five of them lived until the age of 85, and one to that of 99.

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From: The Statistics & Gazetteer of New Hampshire, compiled by Alonzo J. Fogg, Concord NH, D.L. Guernsey, 1875

This town is favorably situated on the Piscataqua and Oyster rivers, both as to water power and transportation. Oyster River is a branch of the Piscataqua, takes its rise in Wheelwright's Pond in Lee, and after running nearly its whole course in Durham, furnishing several good mill sites, meets the tide water at Durham village. The river takes its name from the abundance of oysters formerly found near its confluence with the Piscataqua.

Lamprey River, another branch of the Piscataqua, runs through the westerly part of the town, over several falls well adapted for mill sites, then into the town of New Market and meets the tide water at Lampey River village in that town.

MANUFACTORIES: There is considerable manufacturing in town. One Paper Mill annually manufactures 300 tons wall paper, valued at \$69,365. Nut and Bolt manufactory, annually manufactories 250 tons of nuts and bolts, valued at \$40,000, eighteen thousand pairs of boots and shoes are annually made, valued at \$22,500.

SUMMER TOURISTS: Durham is quite a resort for invalids and pleasure seekers, some forty staying here through the warm weather.

FIRST SETTLERS: Durham was originally a part of Cover and was included in Hilton's grants, but as the number of settlers increased, it soon became a distinct parish by the name of OYSTER RIVER. Before any settlement had been made by the white men, it was a famous rendezvous for the Indians, and for many years after the settlement it suffered exceedingly by Indian depredations and murders...

Major-General John Sullivan, of the revolutionary army was a resident of this town, and died here Jan. 23, 1795. He was a native of Berwick, Maine, and was a distinguished commander during the war; was President of the State three years, and afterwards District Judge of New-Hampshire.

The Hon. Ebenezer Thompson, Col. Winborn Adams and Hon. George Frost, were also residents of this town. The town was incorporated May 15, 1732.

FIRST MINISTERS: Rev. Hugh Adams, settled in 1718, dismissed in 1739; Rev. Nicholas Gilman, ordained in 1741, died in 1748; Rev. John Adams, settled in 1748, dismissed in 1778; Rev. Curtis Coe, settled in 1780, dismissed in 1805.

BOUNDARIES: North by Madbury, east by Little and Great Bays, south by New-Market, and west by Lee. Area, 14,970 acres; improved Land: 9, 918 acres.

DISTANCES: Thirty-five miles south-east from Concord, eleven north-west from Portsmouth and five south from Dover.

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From: History of Rockingham and Strafford counties, New Hampshire : with biographical sketches of many of its pioneers and prominent men - Hurd, D. Hamilton, Philadelphia 1882

DURHAM: (page 286)

From 1693 to 1732, May 15, when it was incorporated as the town of Durham, the territory was a part of Dover, and was known and called "Oyster River in Dover." An act of the Provincial Assmbeley made it the "Parish of Oyster River in Dover," May 4, 1746. Up to that time there had been separate ministerial services in the section from 1655. The first settles in the Oyster River parish has been commenced before 1640.... The Meeting house was on Meeting-House Hill, Dover Neck. On June 30, 1656 the town voted to build a house at Oyster River. In 1662 the tax list shows that twenty-eight taxpayers lived on Dover Neck, twenty-nine lived at Cochecho, twelve at Bloody Point, forth-two at Oyster River and one William Ffollett at Belle-Man's Bank.  
<http://archive.org/stream/historyofstraffo00lcsal#page/288/mode/2up>

In 1695.. the Oyster River people presented a petition to the Provincial Assembly of New Hampshire asking to be made a township. The petitioners included: John Woodman, Stephen Jones, Paul Davis, Sampson Doc, James Bunker Sr., Jeremiah Crommett, James Durgin, William Williams, Elias Critchett, Nathaniel Meader, John Cromwell, Jeremiah Barnum, John Smith, Thomas Bickford, John Pinder, Ffrancis Mathes, Henry Nock, John Willey, Thomas Edgerly, Edward Leathers, Henry Marsh, Joseph Meader, Edward Wakcham, Philip Cheley Sr., Thomas Chesley Jr., George Chesley, William jackson, Joseph Bunker, John Smith, Joseph Jones, John

Doe, John Williams, Thomas Williams, William Durgin, Henry Vines, Philip Cromell, John Meader Jr., William Tasker, Philip Duly, Eli Demeritt, Joseph Jenkins, James Bunker, James Thomas, John Edgerly, William Durgin, Joseph Smith, Thomas Willey, Thomas Chesley and Francis Pitman.

The next record in regard to this question appears in the Provincial Records, May 4, 1716 as follows: In Answer to ye Petition of Capt Nathaniel Hill and ye People of Oyster River." The first minister of the new parish was Rev. Hugh Adams....

The Oyster River Massacre of July 18, 1694 [includes a description of various Durham garrisons including, Charles Adams Garrison, Thomas Drews Garrison, Thomas Edgerlys Garrison, John Meader's Garrison, William Beard's Garrison, Stephen Jones Garrison, James Bunker Garrison, Joseph Smith Garrison, John Davis Garrison, Thomas Bickford Garrison, Burnham Garrison, Capt. John Woodman Garrison. Burial Grounds associated with these garrisons are described. <http://archive.org/stream/historyofstraffo00lcsal#page/292/mode/2up>

The parish was incorporated as a town 15 May 1732, and received the name of Durham, apparently at the request of the Rev. Hugh Adams who had been minister of the parish a number of years.

The men of the parish took an active role in the French and Indian wars preceeding the opening of the Revolutionary struggle.... [brief genealogy of Gen. John Sullivan].

Paul Revere arrived in Portsmouth on the afternoon of December 13, 1775. On December 14th John Langdon and others organized a party to For William and Mary, capturing the gun powder, cannons and guns there ... getting nearly a hundred barrels (of gun powder) and taking it by small boats to Durham, the nearest point of safety, where it was hidden under the meeting house floor. Later the British frigate, Scarborough, arrived in Portsmouth to get the powder, but it was already well hidden. [To read more] The capture of the powder and arms was the first overt act of the Revoulutionary war, ante-dating the encounter at Lexington and Concord by four months. <http://archive.org/stream/historyofstraffo00lcsal#page/304/mode/2up>

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Source: The History of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire (Oyster River Plantation) with genealogical notes, by Everett Schermerhorn Stackpole, Lucien Thompson and Winthrop Smith Meserve, 1913

<http://archive.org/stream/historyoftownofd02stac#page/n5/mode/2up>

#### GENEALOGICAL MATERIAL FOUND IN THIS SOURCE:

- Charles Adams, b abt 1623. His son Charles married Temperance Benmore.
- John Adams, who had a wife Avis, and is found in a document dated 1684. His daughter Jane was born in 1686. (genealogy through the 5th generation)
- Rev. John Adams (John-6, Dr. Joseph-5, Joseph-4, Joseph-3, Joseph-2, Henry), cousin to President John Adams, b. 14 Feb 1791 in Newington NH
- Thomas Ash who married 1) Hannah Cehsley; 2) widow Mary Rollins/Rawlins
- John Ambler, b. 1703 property in Oyster River Point. He married Hannah, widow of Robert Watson.
- Joshua Ballard, b. Aug 1760, son of Timothy & Sarah (Abbot) Ballard of Andover MA
- William Beard at Oyster River in 1640; had a garrison. Wife Elizabeth.
- Arthur Bennett (Bennick), b abt 1640, married Mary Goddard (genealogy through the 4th generation)
- John Bickford of Oyster River Point, was 60 years of age in 1669. He had a wife Temperance. Genealogy of five generations.
- Thomas Bickford, b. 1640 married Joanna Libby. Genealogy of four generations.
- Benjamin Bickford receives grant of 30 acres in 1694; wife Sarah.
- Henry Bickford, bought house lot in Portsmouth 1704, wife Sarah; weaver and mariner;

- unclassified BICKFORDS in the Durham area.
- Henry Bodge and wife Elizabeth, living there as early as 1669.
- James Bunker, b abt 1628; will of June 1698; wife Sarah (genealogy seven generations)
- Robert Burnham b abt 1614, m. Frances --. (genealogy 7 generations)
- Rev. John Buss, to Oyster River from Wells Maine; minister and physician. Married Elizabeth.
- James Butler m. Hannah Chesley; She m2d) Daniel Young; children from both
- John Buzzell (Samuel-2, Isaac-1) of Salisbury MA; wife Sarah
- Philip Chesley, witness to deed 1642; wife Elizabeth. (genealogy through 8 generations)
- Abraham Clark, land mentioned in 1680; wife Anna.
- John Clough b 1613, lived Watertown MA to Salisbury MA to Oyster River. First wife Jane, 2nd wife Martha Cilley
- Rev. Curtis Coe (Dea. Joseph-5, Capt. Joseph-4, Capt. John-3, Robert-2, Robert-1) b Middleton CT 1750; m. Anne Thompson.
- Elias Critchett, deposed 1671; m. widow Thomas (nee Goddard).
- Philip Crommett (Cromet, Crummett, Cromele, Cromel, Cromwell) taxed 1662-1667; wife Mary. (genealogy of five generations)
- Philip Cromwell, b 1612; Dover Neck, m1) Elizabeth Tuttle; m2) Elizabeth Leighton.
- Daniel Croxford, b 1752 m1) Mary Bennett; m2) Mrs. Peggy Stockbridge
- Dea John Dam / Dame, b 1610; m. Elizabeth Pomfret
- Joseph Dame (Moses-5, John-4, John-3, John-2, John-1) b 1747; m. Abigail Leathers
- John dame, son of Richard-4 and Elizabeth (Leighton) Dame; m. Elizabeth Furber
- Davey Daniel(s), taxed 1661; wife Naomi (deposition against her by Joseph Grafton as to bewitching a cow). (genealogy three generations)
- James Davis of Marlborough England, freeman at Newbury MA 1634. Wife Cicely. His son Ensign John Davis b abt 1623 m. Jane Peasley of Haverhill and moved to Oyster River. (genealogy of 8 generations)
- David Davis apprentice to John Lang of Portsmouth in 1768. He built a garrison house at Lubberland 1695, afterward known as the Smith Garrison. He was killed by Indians. His widow Susanna married James Durgin.
- Lieut David Davis b abt 1730; m. Anna Stevens.
- John Davis, b 1768; m. Hannah Hall, resided Nottingham NH
- Jeremiah Davis, had share in common lands 1734; m. Sarah Jenkins
- Eli Demerit (Demeritt) (Demrey) had a grant of forty acres in Dover 1694; wife Hope. (genealogy 6 generations)
- Salathiel Denbow (Denmore, Dinsmore) b abt 1642; m a daughter of William Roberts.
- John Derry signed a petition in 1689; His widow Deliverance married Nathaniel Pitman.
- Nicholas Doe, witnessed will 1666; wife Martha;
- William Drew in Oyster River in 1648, d. 1669; wife Elizabeth Matthews. She m2) William Follett. (genealogy several generations)
- Hugh Dunn, a grant before 1663; moved to Piscataway NJ with a small colony from the Pascataqua that settled there. [See NH Genealogical Record, Vol 1, pp 145-150]. Nicholas Dunn taxed at Oyster River 1682.
- William Durgin, b 1648; m1) --; m2) Katherine, widow of Thomas Footman, nee Matthews. (genealogy five generations)
- Philip Duley, seaman in 1679; wife Grace Roberts who m2) Timothy Moses
- Philip Durrell, grant in Exeter NH 1697 (genealogy 4 generations)
- Thomas Edgerly, inhabitant 1665; married widow of Henry Hallowell, nee Ault. (genealogy 4 generations)
- John Ellison, born in Barrington NH 1806; married Martha Stevens
- Michael Emerson, the emigrant, baptized 1627; settled in Haverhill MA, m. Hannah Webster. (genealogy 6 generations)
- Moses Emerson son of Jonathan & Hannah (Day) Emerson, b abt 1718; married twice 1) ? Rebecca Taylor; m2) Abigail Burnham
- Francis Elliot her ein 1722 when his wife Mary was baptized and infant sons John and Francis. John Elliot Jr was tythingman in 1758 who m. Ruth Flanders.
- Darby Field, b Boston England abt 1610; removed to Boston abt 1636, was of Piscataqua April 1638. He was the first [European] to ascend Mount Washington.
- John Farnham b 1792 m1) Susan Giles; m2) Eliza Hilton

-- Hilliard F. Fogg b 1836; m. Ann Bennett

-- Early Folletts in Dover; Capt. Nicholas Follett deputy in 1689, left widow Abigail who m. Richard Nason of Kittery. (genealogy 3 generations)

-- Thomas Footman rated at Oyster River in 1649; married Catherine Mathews. She m2) William Durgin.

-- Hon. George Frost, b. Newcastle NH 1720; m1) Widow Richards of London; m2) Mrs. Margaret Smith, widow of Dea. Ebenezer Smith, and daughter of Major Weeks.

-- John Fowler, m. 1817 Abigail Dame.

-- Patrick Furness taxed 1783; supposed to be father of Robert Furness whose widow Mary French married John Gleason.

-- Gideon Garland, soldier of the Revolution, married Mary Ayers.

-- John Goddard, b abt 1608, one of Capt. John Mason's colonists, came over in the Pied Cow 1634; constable in 1655. His widow Welthea or Welthen m2) John Symonds.

-- Capt. Edward Griffiths b 1781; m1) Judith Taylor; m2) Martha C. Bennett

-- George Grover m Sally Evans, d. 1849, aged 92

-- Ephraim Hanson b 1780; m. Abigail Leighton

-- Chauncey E. Hayes, b. VT 1847; m. Addie M. Luce

-- Dennis Hicks of Kittery Point ME; wife Sarah

-- Valentine Hill to Oyster River in 1649; m1) Frances Freestone; m2) Mary Eaton (genealogy through four generations)

-- William Hill b 1646; married Hannah Roberts

-- Joseph H. Hodgdon, b. 1827; m. Melvina Bunker

-- Gen. Alfred Hoitt (Samuel-6, Stephen-5, Daniel-4, Benjamin-3, Thomas-2, John-1 of Salisbury MA) b. 1806; m. Susan Demeritt

-- Enoch Holt married Lovely Langley

-- Robert Huckins b abt 1620 signed the Dover Combination of 1640; James Huckins his son b abt 1644, m. Sarah Burnham (genealogy 4 generations)

-- Thomas Hull m. Joanna Peson 1572. Their son Rev. Joseph Hull b 1594, removing to the American colonies living in Weymouth, Hingham, Barnstable and Yarmouth MA, and York Maine; served as minister in Oyster River in 1662.

-- Walter Jackson captured at Battle of Worcester in 1651, sent to Boston; wife Jane 1663, wife Ann in 1667

-- Reynolds Jenkins b 1608; wife Ann

-- Stephen Jones m Elizabeth, daughter of Darby Fields (genealogy 5 generations)

-- Samuel Joy, (Samuel-3, Samuel-2, Thomas-1) b Salisbury MA 1706; m Mary Burley.

-- James Keille (Kelley) came to Dover about 1730 and married Deborah Styles.

-- Nathan Keniston b 1781, m. Lydia Willey

-- Oliver Kent taxed 1648; widow Dorothy (genealogy 6 generations)

-- David Kinkaid, to Boston 1684, settled at Oyster River; married 2) Anne widow of Stephen Jenkins. She married 3) Thomas Potts

-- Samuel Kidder, b 1852; m. Lucia A. Soule

-- John Knight, in Portsmouth NH 1681; m. Bridget Sloper

-- James Langley b 1714 a farm in Oyster River; m. Mary Runnels. (genealogy 6 generations)

-- Robert Lapish d. 1815, age 77, wife Temperance.

-- John Laskey of Kittery m. 1817 Abigail Wakcham

-- Edward Leathers or Letheres age 70 in 1709

-- Thomas Leighton b abt 1604; wife Joanna who m2) Job Clements (genealogy 5 generations)

-- Henry Marsh, aged 44 in 1704; m. Elizabeth Jackson

-- Peter Mason, grant in 1694; his widow Mary admitted to church 1728.

-- Francis Mathews (Mathes), m. 1622 Thomasine Channon; came over with Capt. John Mason's colony in 1634 (genealogy 9 generations)

-- John Meader b 1630 married Abigail Tuttle before 1660 (genealogy of 6 generations)

-- John Mellen b 1722; m. Rebecca Prentiss

-- Clement Messervey (Meserve) b 1655; taxpayer in Portsmouth NH in 1673 (genealogy of 7 generations)

-- Peter Mundro (Munroe) living Oyster River 1714; wife Mary

-- Col. Hercules Mooney from Ireland in 1733; m1) Elizabeth Evans; 2) widow Mary Jones

-- John Moore, b. 1696; married Hannah Sias.

-- Abraham Morrison m. Naomi Cilley  
 -- Timothy Moses of Dover in 1700; wife Mary Jackson. He m2) Grace (Roberts) DUBY  
 -- William Munsey of Kittery ME 1686; married Margaret --.  
 -- Dea. Nathaniel Norton; wife Lydia; m2) Meriel (Adams) Burnham  
 -- Jacob Odell, b 1777; m. Sarah Davis  
 -- William Odiorne, b 1710; m1) Sarah Hatch; m2) Avis Adams  
 -- Stephen Paul, b 1777; m. Temperance Ellison  
 -- Stephen Pendergast (Prendergast); m. at Greenland NH bet 1715-1720; (genealogy of 3 generations)  
 -- Thomas Pendexter m. Temperance Leathers  
 -- William Perkins, taxed at Oyster River 1662-75  
 -- Charles Holmes Pettee, son of Horace, m. Luella Swett  
 -- John Pinder, 26 in 1675; m. Elizabeth  
 -- Abijah Pinkham b 1734; m. Rachel Huckins  
 -- Alfred Pinham, son of Daniel, b 1810; m. Harriet Burnham  
 -- William Pitman, b abt 1632; m1) Barbara Evans; m2) Ann Roberts  
 -- Frances Rand, b 1616; wife Christian  
<http://archive.org/stream/historyoftownofd02stac#page/310/mode/2up>  
 -- Richard Randall, in Portsmouth NH 1757; (genealogy 5 generations)  
 -- William Reynolds of Plymouth MA 1634; m. Alice Kitson  
<http://archive.org/stream/historyoftownofd02stac#page/314/mode/2up>  
 -- William Roberts, fined 1643  
 -- Robert Rogers, wife Susanna of Newbury Mass by 1651; sons John, Robert, et al.  
 -- John Runlett, d. Conway 1846; m. Christianna Fox  
 -- William Sawyer in Salem MA 1640; wife Ruth;  
 -- Clarence W. Scott, b VT 1849; m. Harriet Field  
 -- Samuel Shepherd admitted to church 1726 with widow Anne Shepherd and her mother. He m. Margaret Creighton  
 -- John Cyas (Sias) of Wells Maine 1698 when he married Ann Pitman (genealogy 3 generations)  
 -- Andrew Simpson b 1835 Nottingham NH; m. Sarah Lapish  
 -- Edward Small, b abt 1651; m. Mary Woodman  
 -- John Smart, to Hingham MA 1635; Enoch Smart b 1692 m. Hannah Glover.  
 -- George Smyth mentioned 1641 appraiser of John Phillip's estate.  
 -- James and Joseph Smith of Oyster River  
 -- Joseph Smith, b 1640; m. Elizabeth Bickford (genealogy 5 generations)  
 -- Thomas Snell of Durham, bap 1723; m. Joanna Pinkham  
 -- Ebenezer Spencer m. Abigail Leathers 1729.  
 -- Jonathan Steele, b Peterborough NH 1760 m. Lydia Sullivan  
 -- John Sullivan of Limerick Ireland b 1690; father of Gen. John Sullivan of NH American Revolution fame.  
 -- Sergt. John Stevens b abt 1611; wife Katherine  
 -- Jonathan Stevens Jr. b Lee 1773; d. 1854; m. Patty Davis  
 -- Thomas Stevenson (Stephenson) (Stimpson) grant at Oyster point in 1649; d. 1663; wife Margaret  
 -- William Stilson, m. Sarah Roberts; captain in Revolutionary War  
 -- William Tasker, deposition in 1696; m. Mary Adams (genealogy 6 generations)  
 -- James Thomas signed petition in 1669; m. Martha Goddard  
 -- THOMPSON families (various) including David Thompson who m. Amias Cole who married 2) Samuel Maverick. son John. ALSO William Thompson in Dover 1656. (genealogy 8 generations)  
 -- Benedictus Torr m. 1704 to Leah Knight, widow of John Knight.  
 -- James Twombly, b 1800; m. Sarah R. hart  
 -- Thomas Wakeham subscription 1671. Edward Wakeham age 43 in 1703, married Sarah Meader.  
 -- David Watson, m. Elizabeth Odiorne; son David Wilder Watson m. Hattie Soule.  
 -- Edward & Margery (Hardy) Wells of Durham NH  
 -- John Wheeler, b Concord MA 1668p m. Elizabeth Perkins  
 -- Capt William Wiggin m. Lydia Chesley  
 -- Thomas Willey owned land at Oyster River Point in 1645; m. Margaret widow of Stephen

Crawford.

-- William Williams came with Thomas Wiggin to Dover Neck in 1633; he m) the widow of Darby Field, ?Agnes.

-- Edward Woodman, bap 1606, came over in ship James in 1635; wife Joanna (genealogy 6 generations)

-- William Wormwood in Kittery Maine as early as 1640; removed from the Isles of Shoals in 1647; wife: Catherine

-- Samuel Yeaton, cooper, soldier in 1775, d. 1820; m. Margaret Snow

-- Richard York deposed 1652; widow Elizabeth m2) William Graves

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