

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

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

page 131

FARMINGTON in Strafford county was formerly a part of Rochester. It was incorporated in 1722 and in 1810 contained 1272 inhabitants; bounded N.E. by Milton, S.E. by Rochester, S.W. by New Durham, comprising 20,811 acres.

Cochecho river flows through the N.E. part of this town, and the Frost mountains extend through it from N. to S. From the summit of this ridge, called Mount Washington, the seacoast and a large part of the state may be seen. There is in this town a handsome meeting-house, several mills, and trading stores.

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

page 156

Farmington--Strafford County. The surface of this town is broken and rugged, but the soil when properly cultivated yields fine crops.

RIVERS. The Cochecho River passes through the north-east part of the town affording some interval lands along its banks.

MOUNTAINS. Blue Hill, or Frost Mountain, extends in a north and south direction nearly through the town. Mount Washington, Mount Monadnock, and hundreds of less elevations, together with ships in Portsmouth Harbor, can be seen from its summit, in a clear day.

VILLAGE. About one mile north-west from what is called the Dock, is Farmington village. The inhabitants are extensively engaged in the manufacture of men and women's boys and youths boots, brogans and shoes--the number of pairs made exceeding that of any town in the States. There are 13 manufactories with a capital of \$500,000 which employ nearly 1000 males and females, who annually receive for their labor about \$300,000 and produce 1,300,000 pairs of boots, shoes &c valued at \$1,700,000. Part of these shoes are bottoms in the adjoining towns. There are two banks, three church edifices, one large high school building, twenty-five or thirty stores of all kinds, one job printing office, two hotels, three livery stables, post office, express and telegraph office, three lawyers, three physicians officers, one dentist's office and about three hundred dwelling houses. It is a very pleasant and busy villag, and as idleness is a stranger in this place, so is poverty.

EMPLOYMENT: Manufacturing and mercantile trade are the principal employments of the

inhabitants, although there are some very nice farms, and good farmers in the town.

RESOURCES: production of the soil, \$48,498; mechanical labor, \$504,000; stocks and bonds, \$10,900; money at interest \$6,500; deposits in savings banks \$143,635; stock in trade \$55,300; professional business \$10,000

CHURCHES and SCHOOLS: Congregational, Rev. J. Smith, pastor; Freewill Baptist, Rev. G.W. Park, pastor; Methodist, Elder Tebbets pastor; Advent, Rev. J. Smith pastor. There are fourteen school districts and eighteen schools in town. Average length of schools for the year, twenty-four weeks.

LITERARY INSTITUTION. Farmington High School, E.J. Goodwin Principal--School Fund \$3,000

HOTELS & EATING HOUSES: Elm House, Mechanics Hotel; and Bickett and Wedgewood Eating Houses.

FIRST SETTLEMENT: Farmington was originally part of Rochester, but was incorporated as a district town December 1798.

FIRST MINISTER Rev. James Walker, Congregationalist, 1818.

BOUNDARIES: North by New Durham and Milton, east by Milton, State of Maine and Rochester, south by Rochester and Strafford and west by Strafford and New-Durham. Area, 21,000 acres; improved lands 5,449 acres.

DISTANCES: Thirty-five miles north-east from Concord and eighteen north-west of Dover.

RAILROADS: Cocheco Railroad passes through this town in a north-westerly and south-easterly direction.

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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

FARMINGTON: (page 488)

The early history of Farmington will be found principally in the history of Rochester, of which this town originally formed a part. The early record history, Revolutionary, names of early settlers, etc are incorporated in the history of that mother-town.

Among the first who settled in this section were Benjamin, Samuel and Richard Furber, Samuel Jones, Benjamin Chesley and Paul Demeritt, who located near Merrill's Corners from 1770 to 1783. On the Ten-Rod road Joseph and Levi Leighton were located; on Chestnut Hill, Moses Horne, Caleb Varney, Judge Wingate, and others in various parts of the town. Among the men from this town who have held public positions in the state and United States legislative halls, now deceased are Nehemiah Eastman, Esq. who held a distinguished position at the bar for many years. He was elected State Senator and also a member of the Nineteenth Congress... Dr. Joseph Hammond was a member of the State Legislature and also of the 21st and 22nd Congress. George I Whitehouse was a deputy sheriff for 6 years, a judge of the court of common pleas for the county of Strafford for 14 years and also a member of the House of Representatives. Judge Whitehouse has also been extensively engaged in railroad surveys in this and other counties. Jeremiah Dame, John D. Lyman, George M. Herring and Alonzo Nute were members of the State Senate; Thomas T. Edgerly and Josiah B. Edgerly were registers of deeds. Jeremiah Jones was the first man born in the town who was elected to the State Legislature. The late Henry Wilson, United States Senator from Massachusetts was born on a farm about two miles south of Farmington village.

The first meeting house was built on Robert's hill about two miles south of Farmington Village. The first schoolhouse was built at Merrill's Corners in the southern part of the town about the year

1791.

<http://archive.org/stream/historyofstraffo00lcsal#page/488/mode/2up>

EARLY MERCHANTS--One of the first merchants in Farmington was Jonas C. March who came here from Portsmouth about the year 1780, and also built a store in what is now the lower end of the village, on premises now owned by G.N. Eastman. Mr. March subsequently removed to Rochester and was succeeded as the "trader" of the town by John Googin, whose stock in trade consisted chiefly of molasses, tea, spiceberries, pepper-corns, tobacco, rum, etc. . . In 1830 Nehemiah Eastman was the lawyer here, and Joseph Hammond the doctor. Peter and Levi Pearl were at the head of the militia and J.H. Edgerly called the roll of names among whom were the Nutes, Burnham and Isaac, George R. Dame, Samuel Bunker, Hiram French, etc. At that time "Jerry" Wingate was postmaster.

How Farmington Dock was named [see original document].

The village of Farmington is situated on what was formerly known as the "Old John Ham farm." The first dwelling was a log house, occupied by one Berry. The first frame house was erected in 1781 or 1782 by John Roberts, and here he reared a numerous family. The second frame home was built by Jonas C. March previous to 1792.

The town of Farmington was incorporated 1 December 1798, the notification for the town dated Feb 23, 1799 and signed by Aaron Wingate. The first town meeting was held 11 March 1799 at the house of Simon Dame, when the following officers were chosen: Moderator, Aaron Wingate; town clerk, Jonas C. March; selectmen Ichabod Hayes, Ephraim Kimball and David Roberts; auditors, Capt. Samuel Furbur and James Roberts; assessors Thomas Canney and Paul Demeritt; surveyors of highways, James Roberts, James Leighton, Joseph Thompson Jr., Paul Demerett, Benjamin Furber, Joseph Emerson, Daniel Canney, Jonathan French, Edward Knight, Samuel Jones Jr., Thomas Davis, John Downs, and George Leighton; surveyors of lumber, Jonathan French and David French; hogreeves, Richard Furbur, Joseph Holmes, Aaron Wingate, Jonas C. March, Ephraim Perkins, John Murray, Ichabod Pearl, Ichagod Hayes, and Paul Demeritt; tithingmen, Edward Varney, Anthony Peavey, James Nutter, Ezekiel Ricker, Samuel Varney, Alexander Berry and Richard Rundlet; fence-viewers, John Walker, Ezekiel Ricker, Joseph Holmes, Elijah Meder, and David French; field-drovers, James French, Benjamin Runnals, Joseph Thompson Jr., Moses Whitehouse, Paul Twombly, Moses Varney and Samuel Drowne. The "constable birth" was bid off by Ensign Samuel Knowles for twenty-one dollars and twenty-five cents. At the meeting John Taylor Gilman received one hundred and thirty-three votes for Governor. Richard Furbur was the town's first representative to the General Court.

In 1799 licenses to retail "foreign distilled spiritous liquors" was granted to the following persons: Joseph Holmes, Lakeman & Marsh, Benjamin Runnals and Eleazear Pearl. The following tavern licenses were granted: Joseph Holmes, Col. Richard Furbur, Samuel Knowles, Edward Knight and Ephraim Perkins.

page 492 Ecclesiastical History

The Congregational Church in Farmington Sept 15, 1819 with the following members, Benjamin Furber, Peter Akerman, Noah Ham, Mary Furber, Muhitable Hayes, Mary Furber, Elizabeth Roberts. [more info in original document]

The Free Will Baptist Society was organized Oct 21, 1854. A church was organized inside the society or parish Nov 8 of the same year with a membership of thirteen, five men and eight women. [more info in original document]

FARMINGTON'S SHOE MANUFACTURES

In 1836 Elijah H. Badger came to Farmington and commenced the manufacture of shoes, known at that time as Natick Sale work, that place being then the banner town in the country for the manufacture of this peculiar grade of goods, brogans. He continued in this business about one year, and then became financially embarrassed, and left town not to return again. About this time

Martin L. Hayes commenced in a small way in the manufacture of shoes.... About 1838 or 1848 George M. herring started in the shoe business here...Mr. J.F. Roberts, was the next to open a shoe shop in the village. He was succeeded by two brothers, George E. and Henry L. Roberts. Messrs Alonzo and J.O. Nute commenced business. Others identified in the business of the town were Luther Wentowrth, H.B. Edgerley and Israel Hays. [additional manufactures and businessmen in the original document]

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FARMINGTON NH IN THE WARS

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Farmington supplied 234 men in all departments of the service during the Civil war. Some men held high positions, Louise Bell, capt. of Co. A, First Regiment, later promoted to colonel, killed Jan 15, 1855; Alonzo Nute, quartermaster of the Sixth Regiment; Rev. Daniel Poor Cilley, chaplain of Eighth Regiment; Albert W. Hayes, second lieutenant, Sixth Regiment, promoted to captain in 1862; Ralph Carlton, captain Co. I, Third Regiment; Henry A. Flint, first lieutenant Co. F, Second Regiment. Captain Carlton was killed July 17, 1862; the Grand Army Post of Farmington was named in honor of his brave career. A fine soldiers monument has been erected on one of the most valuable lots in the village, the gift of Mr. James Bartlett Edgerly, a descendant of Col. Thomas Tash and of Col. John Waldron of the Revolution, who is a member of the Carlton post. The Woman's Relief Corps did a large amount of work in raising funds to procure the monument. The noble stature that surmounts the monument was modeled from a brother of Seth Low, who was mayor of New York several years ago. The figure very appropriately faces southward, as Farmington men faced and helped conquer the great rebellion.

As Farming was simply the Northwest Parish of Rochester during the American Revolution, the wawr record of its citizens is given in the history of that town, but in the lesser wars of the nineteenth century were: C.B. Roberts, Timothy Davis, J.G. Watson, G.L. Whitehouse, Asa and Jeremiah Willey, whose graves are honored on Memorial Day by the Grand Army veterans.

Farmington has many fine buildings...the ... opera house was opened in 1881 with Sol Smith Russell as the great attraction; since then its walls have echoed to the notes of many famous people among them, Mr. Blaisdell of Concord, Camelia Urso, Walter Emerson, Emil Lubliny, Miss Hall, the Fiske jubilee singers, and excellent orchestra from time to time. Mr. Tompkins of the Boston theatre sent some of his best companies...

of FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS, Free Masons, Odd Fellows, Knight of Pythias, Improved Order of Red Men and others.

In view of the immense amount of good work auxiliary to the church and state and to the fraternal societies, special mention in terms of unqualified praise is due to several organizations of Farmington weoman; among number are: Mrs. Adelaid Cilley Waldron, Mrs. L.H. Plamer, Mrs. L.A. Small, Mrs. Knox and Mrs. Thayer of lodges, and Mrs. C.W. Talpey, Mrs. J.F. Cloutman, Mrs. A.W. Shackford, Mrs. E.F. Eastman and Mrs. Larson A. Fernald of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and societies auxiliary to religious bodies.

The Farmington Savings Bank was chartered in June 1868 [additional info in original document]

NOTED MEN OF FORMER GENERATIONS

The State of New Hampshire has furnished one President of the United States, Franklin Pierce and one Vice-President, Henry Wilson, both in the same generation; one of Concord, the other of Farmington....

He (Henry Wilson) was born Feb 16, 1812 in Farmington NH; he died Nov 22, 1875 in Washington DC. His birth name was Jeremiah Jones Colbath, but after he became of age he had the Massachusetts Legislature change it to Henry Wilson (why the change was made is not known); when he was ten years old his parents being very poor he was apprenticed to a farmer in Farmington to "serve his time" as was the old custom in New England. It took eleven years to

finish that contract, which terminated Feb 16, 1833. During the time he was allowed to attend the winter school in that district, about six weeks, each winter, a little over a year in the whole time, but he made good use of it in reading, writing and ciphering.... [more biography in the original document]

<http://archive.org/stream/historyofstrafo00lscal#page/502/mode/2up>

OTHER BIOGRAPHIES:

Judge George L. Whitehouse, John F. Cloutman, Hon. Alonzo Nute, Dr. David Taylor Parker.

Historical Sketch of Farmington NH from The Leading business men of Dover, Rochester, Farmington, Great Falls and Berwick, illustrated, Bacon, George F. (George Fox), 1890, Boston, Mercantile Publishing Company - Internet Archive

<http://archive.org/stream/leadingbusinessm00bacon#page/68/mode/2up>

Leading Businessmen of Farmington include: Sanitine Remedy Company (Proprietors of Blake's Vegetable Remedy for Constipation and other items); A.F. & H.C. Waldron, Carleton & Bennett, George W. Bailey, Blake's Pharmacy, D.E. Ederly Dry and Fancy Goods, Groceries and Provisions; F.J. Hanson manufacturer of Boot and Shoe Heels; J.M. Berry & Co. manufacturers of Men and Boys Shoes; J.F. Safford, Watches and Jewelry, Silver Ware etc.; J.E. Fernald & Son Publishers and Proprietors of the Farmington News; H.W. Roberts & Co., Steam Grist Mill; A.E. Carter & Co. Furniture Dealers, Curtains, Carpet and Bedding; J.P. Tibbitts Furnishing Undertaker Carriage and Sleigh Manufacturer; Thomas Pride & Son, Granite Works; C.H. Pitman, Book, Card and Job Printer; Wallace, Elliot & Co., manufacturers of Ladies' Misses and Children's Fine Boots; George W. Lane, Jeweler; Wilson House, E.T. Cotton, Proprietor; Amasa W. Shackford Photographer; Farmington Savings Bank; Roberts & Peavey Druggists and Stationers; John H. Barker & Co. dealers in General Merchandise; L.S. Flanders & Son, manufacturers of Lasts and Sole Patterns; E.T. Wilson, dealer in Groceries, Flour, Grain, Crockery, Paints and Oils, Shoe Findings and Hardware; A. Nute & Sons manufactures of Men's Shoes; Mrs. L.A. Small Millinery and Fancy Goods; Dr. J.E. Nichols Dentist; Frank E. Farwell market; Strafford House, Frank H. McAlpine; Frank Pearl dealer in Choice Family Groceries Dry and Fancy Goods; J. Wesley Locke Livery and Sale Stable; I. Hayes & Sons Shoe Manufacturers; W.F. Thayer dealer in Stoves, Tinware, Pumps, Lead, Pipe, Kitchen Furnishing Goods; J.E. Fernald dealer in Groceries, Harware, Findings, Paints, Oils, Glass, Books, Stationary, etc.; F.E. Mooney dealer in Coal and Wood; Charles H. Berry, Fruit, Confectionery; G.A. Jones & Co., Furniture, carpets and room paper; P.M. Frost, Dry and Fancy Goods; W.A. Elliott, Ice Cream, Fruit, Confections; M.W. Small, dealer in Groceries, Grain, Crockery, Glas-ware and Farming Tools; H.P. Hall & Co., Druggists and Stationers; C.W. Jenness, manufacturer of Wood and Paper Boxes, Job Sawing, Planing and Mill Work.

Source:

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